

WRITINGS OF CODEX VERONENSIS

by Codex Veronensis

Writings of Codex Veronensis (c. AD 500). Codex Veronensis was an early church father whose writings have been preserved for the edification of the church.

2 Chapters

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Writings of Codex Veronensis

Commentary on Job

Commentary on the Book of Job

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Translated into English using ChatGPT.

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Commentaries on the Book of Job

The commentary on Job, which the editor from Verona had added as an appendix to his commentary on the major prophets in order to expand the fifth volume, we have translated here in order to keep our volume within proper limits, following the biblical order from elsewhere.

Prologue

Job, who was grieving, or rather, representing a great person, bore the figure of Christ. But his friends hold the image of heretics, who, under the name of Christ, blaspheme and attack Christ. Indeed, Helius and Balaam (also called Baldad) represent the type of philosophers, because placed outside of faith, they plot against the Church of God. For these individuals, they impose upon themselves precious names as if they themselves were the gold of God, or the chief of His observers. Eliphaz indeed in Latin, my God's gold resounds. Bildad, the foremost, reveals ancient

secrets. Zophar, the watcher, or trumpet. For they, inflated with pride, were proclaiming cunningly about the goodness of nature, boasting in their hearts about severity, even though they are supporters of lies: because they speak concerning Christ, not in accordance with His divinity, but in accordance with their own impiety.

Chapter I.

There was a man in the land of Uz, named Job. And that man was blameless and upright, and feared God and shunned evil. And he had seven sons and three daughters. Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household. This man was the greatest of all the people of the East. And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day. And the senders called their three sisters to eat and drink with them. And when the days of the feast had gone around, Job would send and consecrate them: rising in the morning, etc. Huz and Buz were the sons of Nachor, the brother of Abraham, the sons of Melcha, the sister of Sara, from whose lineage Job descended. Not as some falsely suspect, that he was from the offspring of Esau (Jerome, Questions on Genesis). For Eliphaz was born to Esau's wife Ada, and he reigned in Theman, from which he was also called a Themanite. Theman, Idumaea, Seir Daroma, Zebora, were regions of Esau. But Job, a great man, lived in the land of Huz, which means counselor. And Elkanah, which means possession of God, was the father of the most holy Prophet Samuel. He was called a man of one purpose: for he was not easily moved or shaken by various things, but remained steadfast and unshaken. And for this reason, he dwelled on the fruitful mountain of Ephraim. In the high contemplation of virtues, so that the sublimeness of his mind would not be brought down by the agitations of vices that lay beneath and surrounded, nor would its unity be broken. Therefore, this great and outstanding man Job is said to have lived on the land of Huz, which means counselor. For it was not the earth of his flesh that overcame his soul, but he did everything according to the counsel of his ruling mind. Hence, he himself says: I have made a covenant with my eyes, not to even think about a virgin. Therefore, they once made this plan and agreement with each other, his inner and outer self: that the earth, that is, his flesh, by obeying, would become a counselor to the spirit, so that wickedness would not rule over it. And because the man, according to divine testimony, was simple, dwelling in a house: he was supported by these four virtues, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance.

He offered a burnt offering for each one. For he said: Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts. So Job did all the days. But on a certain day when the sons of God came to stand before the Lord, Satan was also present among them. And the Lord said to him: Where do you come from? And he, answering, said: I have gone round about the earth, and walked through it. And the Lord said to him: Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and avoiding evil? Then Satan replied, 'Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.' And the Lord said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.' And Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Then one day, while his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, a messenger came to Job and said: The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing

nearby, and the Sabeans attacked and took everything, and they killed the servants with the sword. I alone escaped to tell you. While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said: Fire from God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I alone escaped to tell you. But while he was speaking, another person came and said: The Chaldeans made three raiding parties, and they attacked the camels and took them; they also struck down the servants with the sword, and I alone escaped to tell you. While he was still speaking, another person came in and said: Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, when suddenly a strong wind blew in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house, causing it to collapse on them. They are all dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you. For his sons, whom he governed in such a way that he sought divine mercy through constant sacrifices not so much for present crimes as for hidden sins in their hearts, which can also escape human notice. However, the privilege of offering sacrifices belonged especially to firstborns or kings, on account of their exceptional wisdom or noble lineage. And since we have said that Job is a foreshadowing of Christ, let us now see what the land of Uz signifies in Christ. We understand this earth, assuming true human from Mary, which, therefore, is called the counselor, because through the assumption of the Son of God, the hidden treasures of divine wisdom and knowledge dwell in it; which he has so inseparably connected to himself that he himself is one in the Trinity, the Son of God. However, the seven sons seem to signify the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit; and the three daughters seem to signify the law, prophecy, and the Gospel to us. The sheep represent the people of Christ, who, because of their innocence, have shed the filth of sin in baptism. The camels, on the other hand, symbolize the depravity of the Gentiles, who come to Christ burdened with the weight of their crimes and twisted desires. The oxen represent the clean animals, that is, the Jewish people. And the donkeys, the unclean animals, represent the Gentile nations. Therefore, as Isaiah says: The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, that is, both the birth of Christ in the flesh and the recognition of the Jews on the one hand, and the Gentiles on the other. And in the manger of the Lord's altar, it signifies that clean animals have approached through baptism. Perhaps it refers to this passage in the Gospel: For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. In the yoke, the Jews; in the donkey, to whom the burden belongs more, the Gentiles, as we have said above, are signified. Christ is called great among all the Orientals, according to this: Your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions. But the number of animals is seven thousand and three hundred, and it is consecrated in five hundred. For seven, according to the authority of the Scriptures, signifies a certain fullness of sacred mystery: as there, seven spirits, seven candlesticks, seven Churches. But in three thousand: soul and body and spirit, or the triform knowledge of doctrine, can be understood in the holy Scriptures, or the sacrament of the blessed Trinity: because every multitude of believers, walking the path of three days, desires to reach the perfection of eternity. However, five hundred, arising from five multiplied by fifty-five, signify that after the weaknesses of a slippery age have been completed, they have passed into a perfect man; and by fifty times ten they reach fifty times ten more, thus ascending to five hundred. Similarly, the entire Church, which symbolizes the pillar and foundation of the truth of Christ: in it our senses receive either purification or forgiveness of sins: because in this number not only the forgiveness of sins, but also the coming of the Holy Spirit is declared. The sons of God, either angels or saints, are to be understood, who are called sons of God by the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Among these, the devil is said to stand: because by permission of God he often dares to tempt the saints. How great is the brotherly harmony of Job's children! But

because we have shown that Job is a type of Christ: we say that these seven graces are symbolically represented by them, who partake in the spiritual banquet of the sacraments, namely, the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels: as if they were three sisters, they are satisfied by the feast of divine eloquence and understanding. However, the ruin of Job's house, which crushed his children, represents the persecution or cruelty against the Church by ancient rulers and kingdoms. But the fact that he alone remained to report indicates the rarity of the persecutors themselves. The Sabaeans are interpreted as captives, and the Chaldeans as if they were demons. Namely, these captive demons attack the Church. They not only drive away the Lord's flocks wherever they can, but they also consume them with their own fire, which they claim is from heaven, through heresies or the wickedness of superstition. The presence of kings also shakes the house of Christ, confirmed by the four Gospels, like violent winds shaking a building, so that the aforementioned seven sons and three daughters, along with the house itself, perish.

Then Job arose, and rent his garments, and shaved his head, and fell upon the ground, and worshipped, and said: Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. And Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped. He humbled himself, taking on the form of a servant from the form of God. He came forth naked from his mother's womb, having been untouched by the stain of original sin. As a human, he said, 'The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away.' The Father has given the good ones an inheritance and separated the evildoers from the kingdom of his Son. In all these things, Job did not sin with his lips, nor did he speak anything foolish against God. This is what he said: because the wisdom of the Father could not speak foolishly, nor could the spotless Lamb commit sin.

Chapter II. Now it happened one day that the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them and stood before Him. And the Lord said to Satan, 'Where have you come from?' So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.' Then the Lord said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil, and he still maintains his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.' But you have stirred me up against him, so that I would afflict him in vain. And in response, Satan said: Skin for skin, and all that a man has he will give for his life. Otherwise, stretch out your hand and touch his bone and flesh, and then you will see that he curses you to your face. So the Lord said to Satan: Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself while sitting among the ashes. But his wife said to him, 'Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.' But he said to her, 'You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?' In all this Job did not sin with his lips. Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had considered that they would come to visit him together, and console him. And when they had lifted their eyes from afar, they did not recognize him. Not that God is unaware; but to teach us what Satan, who is interpreted as adversary, responded. And they cried out and wept, and they tore

their clothes and threw dust on their heads towards the sky. And they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his pain was severe. For all the enemies of Christ claim to be his friends, boasting that they have been redeemed by his blood. And afterward, they become his enemies, attacking his Church. And when they saw his affliction, they tore their garments and threw dust on their heads, representing those heretics who believe that Christ is God in heavenly glory but do not believe in his incarnation and passion. Instead, they are offended by his reproaches and humiliations, bursting into blasphemy and breaking away from the unity of the body of Christ. And they, throwing dust upon their heads, cover and bury their hearts with earthly and dead understanding. And throughout all the time of their life, which is contained in seven days and nights; their unworthy mouth condemns divine confession with mute unfaithfulness and their speaking mouth is obstructed by unjust words.

Chapter III. After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed his day, and he spoke: Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said: A man-child is conceived. Let that day be changed into darkness. After this, as the writer of this story, whom the opinion holds to be Moses, says, Job opened his mouth and cursed his day, saying: Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said: A man-child is conceived. Job, who symbolized the Savior in himself, mourned the mortality of the human race, which was inflicted upon man by the just sentence of God because of sin. Let the day perish on which I was born; let eternal life come through Christ, which Adam lost by the guilt of his transgression, and let death depart from me, which I contracted by the sin of another. And Jeremiah: Cursed be the day on which I was born. Hence, there is no doubt that all these deplore the transgression of Adam. Therefore, spiritually speaking, the day with its night can be understood as the devil and mortality: not because it is day, but because it was when it remained with God, from whom it became night by departing, or because it seems to be day for the impious and sinners who rejoice in this prosperity and happiness. Unde dicitur: His light shall be taken away from the wicked. May God not seek him from above. This is so his memory may not be before God for good. And let it not be illuminated by light. Recognition of God, or of repentance.

Darkness obscures him and the shadow of death. Darkness, sins are and envy.

Let darkness overtake him, and let him be enveloped in bitterness. That is, the blindness of the heart.

Let that dark whirlwind possess the night. Because it provokes God to bitterness, just like his other attendants: seized by the fury of God's wrath, he will be surrounded by all evils and enveloped. Let that dark whirlwind possess the night: that is, the devil, who took away the day of happiness from humans and brought in the troubled night of life.

It should not be calculated in the days of the year. The year is understood as Christ, who encompasses and contains everything in himself. Therefore, in these days of the year, the devil should not be calculated: that is, he should not be joined in the number of the saints. And they are not counted among the months. By the months in this place, we rightly understand the holy apostles, who, like the trees of paradise, bring forth spiritual fruits for the Church. That night was lonely and not worthy of praise. It was the preaching of the Apostles, where the day of salvation is recognized, which Abraham saw and rejoiced in.

Cursed are those who curse the day; who are prepared to awaken Leviathan. The holy ones of the day of their transgression curse with detestation: those who, by not serving vice, provoke against themselves the dragon, the most powerful enemy. The stars were obscured by its darkness. Indeed, sinners who in the night, think they shine with the riches and honor of the world, are obscured by the darkness of blindness, and because of their own merit, they do not see the light of the Gospel.

Let him expect the light and not see it. Neither can the night of deceit and death, in which the devil holds his kingdom, know the light of the Redeemer Christ; nor those who are born in it, unless they have destroyed it by being reborn through baptism. And the rising of the dawn. It signifies the resurrection of Christ: hence, in the psalm, it is said 'morning watch'.

Because he did not close the gates of the womb that carried me, nor did he take away the evils from his eyes. Why did I not die in the womb? Why did I not perish immediately after coming forth from the womb? Why was I received on knees? Why was I nursed at breasts? Under his mask, he weeps for the miseries of the human race: why will he die again and suffer the ills of this life? Why did not death itself extinguish mortal in the womb?

Now if I were sleeping, I would be silent, and I would rest in my sleep with the kings and consuls of the earth, who build themselves solitudes: or with the princes who possess gold, and fill their houses with silver. Princes, and kings, and consuls, even if they suffer the foulness of Tartarean torments in hell: now, however, they do not feel torment in their bodies. I would have wished for the death of these on this condition to come to me. But just as an aborted fetus does not subsist, or those who were conceived do not see the light. In various ways and examples, he says that he should not have suffered those punishments in which he was. Why was I not dead in the womb? And further he says: But now, sleeping, I would be silent, and in my sleep I would rest with kings and consuls. Perhaps there is an example against those who say that they will not rise again unless they have been born in proper order. For if the conceived ones die in the womb, it is necessary that they were alive: and whatever dies, doubtless it will rise again. So what was lost and lived in the members, and what nature had given less: this will be restored to fullness by resurrection: for thus the restoration of the human race will make the whole better, which nature had defrauded. He also says that abortion, which has degenerated in human nature, is exempt from punishments, for they build solitude for themselves rather than homes. For the devil dwells in desolate cities and deserted houses. Those who do not have God as their guest possess gold, the philosophers and other wise men of this world use the brilliance of good intellect and the splendor of eloquence.

There the wicked ceased from their tumult. Without a doubt in hell. And as the Septuagint translated, there the wicked laid down their fury, that is, typhus and pride, with the cruelty of those boasting in this world, were humbled in hell. And there they rested, weary in body. As another translation has it: And there they rested, weary in body, freed from oppression and misery, and also from the toil of this world. And once equally bound without suffering. He says that both the conquerors and the conquered in hell dwell together, without injury or annoyance to the bound: not like in that place where, besides punishment, men are also compelled by captivity or servitude to different other calamities, through the dominion and injustice of the wicked.

They did not heed the voice of the exactor. They do not fear the commands of the rulers or the unjust demands.

There are small and large there, both the servant and the free from their master. Why has light been given to the miserable, and life to those whose souls are in bitterness? They wait for death, and it does not come, like those who dig for treasure: and they rejoice greatly when they find the grave. Since, as I see, there is equality of persons in hell, and no one fears the domination of another: why has this light been given to me, miserable as I am, and a life similar to those who are in the bitterness of their soul, when the prisons of the underworld are better than this miserable life of the world, full of tortures: where men seek death because of their hardships, and eagerly await its coming. He gave an excellent example, saying: Like those who dig up a treasure, for surely they rejoice when they find the desired burial. The man whose life is hidden; and God has surrounded him with darkness. He says about himself: So I was walking in God's commandments, believing that the fruit of my righteousness would respond to me; but the merit of my life is hidden, and for this I am surrounded by the darkness of punishment: so that the good is taken away from me, and the evil is added. But listen to what follows about the name of the punishments of darkness:

Before I eat, I sigh, and my groaning is like overflowing waters. Among other torments, the devil had inflicted this ailment upon me, which ailment the doctors call 'bolimiodes,' and it is said that this ailment has such a punishment, that the sick person is twisted before food, and after food, the pains are relentless. Hence, it is said: 'My groaning is like overflowing waters.'

Because the fear I feared came upon me. For I was afraid to offend God by sinning, and he, being offended, may exercise his wrath upon me in his justice. But what good did it do to avoid sins when, in fact, I am tormented as the guilty of all sins? It follows: And what I feared happened. In other words, he repeats what he said earlier. Such repetitions are often made in the Scriptures to confirm a statement. He does not say these things arrogantly, to do harm to God, but he speaks freely with a rightly informed conscience. Did I not conceal? Not by returning do I repay evil to those who repay me with evil. Did I not keep silent? In order to not err with my tongue, I set a guard at my mouth. Did I not rest? Knowing that when God rises to judge, He will save all the meek of the earth. And indignation came upon me. Indignation in this place refers to the weight of the blows, which he says have fallen upon him, and by their weight and pains he groans, being overwhelmed. Although he himself was, as he said before, chastised by diseases; which punishments can be called arrows in the following passages, as he says: The arrows of the Lord are in me: the indignation of which will consume my spirit; or, as the other translation has it, will consume my blood. And properly the arrows can be understood as worms, because he was stung by them with incessant stings: as Job himself says: And they that eat me, do not sleep. The demons made themselves even more fierce to eat him, and they dug into his flesh with bites as if indignant and angered, so that their arrows would penetrate the internal organs. It concludes where Job cursed the day of his birth.

Chapter IV.

But Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: If we begin to speak to you, perhaps you will take offense. But who can hold on to a thought? Therefore, words conceived are expressed to the detriment of the listener, and he says the following:

Behold, you have taught many. That is, you have brought back the most through your cleverness and kindness from their mistakes. And you have strengthened weary hands. You have confirmed the faltering words, and you have supported trembling knees. But now a blow has come upon you, and you have become weak. It has touched you, and you are troubled. Where is your fear, your strength, your patience, and the perfection of your ways? Therefore, these things are said to holy Job with mockery, and they have this meaning: if you had done these things that I have spoken of, you would never have fallen into such great evils as an example to mortals, because we know God, the good and just creator of all things.

Remember, I beseech you: who indeed has ever perished being innocent, or when have the upright been destroyed? Rather, I have seen those who work iniquity, and sow pain, and reap it, being destroyed by the breath of God and consumed by the spirit of his wrath. Therefore, do you not know that Abel was innocently killed in the beginning, and that Abraham the patriarch was endangered because of his wife? And not understanding this, you give a general judgment, that when some of mankind are chastised by the Lord, it is for their correction, while others are tested, of whom this person is: why then do you reproach him as if he were guilty, with the punishment? Rather, those who worked iniquity perished, with God breathing upon them, that is, the judgment of the judge, like a most violent wind, took them away from the hope of eternal life. The roar of the lion, and the cry of the lioness, and the teeth of the lion cubs were shattered. In the roar of the lioness and in her cry, she wanted to indicate the ferocity of a predator. The tiger died because it did not have prey, and the lion cubs were scattered. Furthermore, it has been said to me that there is a hidden word. In the tiger, its speed to plunder humans and to capture prey is described, whose cubs, similar to it, were scattered and killed. In another edition, instead of a tiger, it is a myrmecoleon, that is, an ant, and a lion, whom we might more accurately call the devil: when it is in pursuit of prey, it is to be regarded as something holy, like a lion; but when it seeks to take the smallest thing, it is to be called an ant. And just as the ant takes the grains from the granary, so he takes good thoughts from the hearts of people. And as if my ears secretly received the veins of his whisper. In the horror of a nocturnal vision, when sleep usually overtakes people, fear held me, and trembling, and all my bones were terrified. And when his spirit passed before me, the hair on my flesh stood up. A certain one stood, whose face I did not recognize, an image before my eyes, and I heard a voice like a gentle breeze. Shall a man be justified in comparison with God or shall a man be more pure than his maker? That is, secretly to the ear of my heart, the power of the sentence has penetrated like a certain breath.

Behold, those who serve him are not steadfast, and in his angels he finds wickedness. How much more those who dwell in houses of clay. Indeed, it is said of the devil, who was once a holy angel, that he did not remain in truth and fell from his angelic exaltation by his own will: but nevertheless, this is not continuously general: so that just as in him, so too in all angels, wickedness, which is sin, is found. For every nature, undoubtedly created, is capable of sin; as it appeared in the angel I mentioned: because he did not remain in truth: yet through the gift and grace of their creator, they were so transformed by the love of that charity that they no longer desire to sin, nor can they.

Those who have a terrestrial foundation will be consumed like a moth. If our bodies are made of clay: the foundation of our houses, it must be believed that this life is temporary, and when it is taken away, the clay houses collapse into death. From morning until evening they are cut down, and because no one understands, they will perish forever. But those who remain will be taken

away: they will die, and not in wisdom. In one day, he showed the entire life of human beings, which blossoms in the world. It flowers in the young, strengthens in the youth, and matures in old age: in the elderly, it is consumed like fruit, and finally in decrepit old age, which he called evening. Where is that in the Psalm: Let it pass as the grass in the morning, etc.: It falls in death, it hardens in the corpse.

Chapter V. Therefore, call if there is someone to answer you, and turn to one of the saints. Anger kills a foolish man, and envy kills a little one. I saw a foolish man with strong roots, and I immediately cursed his beauty. His children will be far from salvation, and they will be crushed at the gate, and there will be no one to deliver them. It is foolish to boast of one's own merits. But here he calls beauty the name of false happiness: which is to be cursed and abhorred because eternal destruction follows it. The famished one will eat his harvest and the armed one himself will snatch it, and the thirsty will drink his riches. Let nothing on earth be without reason, and from the ground will not come forth pain. The thirsty, the famished, and the armed: they can be understood as the devil and his own, who receive power from God to lay waste the wicked: or the thirsty for the death of men, namely every good thing of nature and what is called wealth, is absorbed by them as if a draught is drunk: or unjust men, who oppress their subjects.

Man is born for labor, and the bird for flight. Therefore, I beseech the Lord, and I will lay my words before God. That is, labor reminds man to walk chastened by all vices.

He who does great and inscrutable things, and wonders without number. He who gives rain upon the face of the earth, and waters all things with his waters. He who raises up the lowly to the heights, and uplifts the sorrowful to safety. That in the Son of God, the man Christ Jesus, there is God, and through him the Church.

He disperses the evil thoughts of those, so that they cannot accomplish what they had planned. Specifically, the Jews who believed they could extinguish Christ and erase his name from the earth. He also disperses the thoughts of those who persecuted the Church through the martyrs, like Herod with Peter. And likewise: Their hands do not accomplish what they desire, because some of them are freed for a time, while others are led through the door of death into life, and God will save both these and those. Liberating them openly, crowning them secretly.

He who captures the wise in their cleverness and frustrates the plans of the wicked. Specifically, he convinces the philosophers or the Jews with apostolic doctrine, and reduces their errors to nothingness.

They incurred darkness day by day. This was for the Jews, who boasted of their kingdom, priesthood, law, and even the religion of one God: but not believing in Christ, they fell into the darkness of unfaithfulness. And as if in the night, they will grope in the midst of the day. Certainly, their prosperity, which, with the usual splendor of this happy age, was more vain glory, when they thought themselves fortified by long security, that they would possess it even until the evening of their life: in sudden tribulation, which is called by the name of night, being greatly astonished, being restricted in narrowness, being struck even by the fear of death, they are said to grope, certainly lost in counsel, ignorant of what they should do.

Furthermore, He will save the poor from the sword of their mouth, and the needy from the hand of the violent. He will save Christ from the blasphemies of the Jews: for their tongue was a sharp

sword, saying, Crucify him. And there will be hope for the poor; but iniquity will close its mouth. Blessed is the man who is corrected by the Lord. Therefore, do not reject the chastisement of the Lord, for he wounds and heals; he strikes, and his hands will heal. In six troubles he will deliver you, and in the seventh no evil will touch you. In famine, he will deliver you from death. It shows the power of the resurrection of Christ. And in war by the hand of the sword. But let us see, lest perchance he may call fighting a sin, battling against the soul of a man, in order to crush it as subject to himself. This sin is called by the name of the sword, as the prophet says: If the lookout sees the sword coming.

If you restrain the lash of the tongue, you will hide, and you will not fear when calamity comes. If you turn to God, the innermost parts of yourself, the swords of words hurled by the tongue will not penetrate, and you will not fear calamities or the evils inflicted by God upon sinners. In vastitude and hunger you will laugh. You will laugh, he said, for he will rejoice and you will be glad, and happy when you see others being afflicted by hunger, whether physical or even intellectual. And you will not fear the beasts of the earth. This is the seventh and final tribulation. The beasts of the earth, and even those irrational creatures that exist without reason, are given the power to devour humans, and evil humans are called beasts, having manners similar to the manners of beasts, against whom the Apostle says he fought at Ephesus. Therefore, he says, you will not fear this evil, when you have been corrected by the Lord and have entered the path of amendment. But with the stones of the regions, your covenant. By stones, he metaphorically spoke of stable and quiet men, who are indeed just and holy: for these, like firm stones, are established in God, in various regions. Therefore, with them, you will have a covenant of solid charity, so that tribulation can never tear you away from them. And the beasts of the earth will be peaceful to you. Indeed, wild and evil men, once innocent, have become like sheep; however, they retain their original name, as it is said about Matthew the evangelist: Matthew the tax collector. And you shall know that your tent has peace. From all these, which are like enemies, your tent is not attacked, nor your dwelling, nor the house of your body. And by visiting your appearance, you will not sin. This is what it means: Show yourself, O Job, worthy of divine visitation, both in your dwelling and in the name of the one who dwells in it. The whole and complete man has been marked. And you will know that your offspring will be numerous, and your descendants like the grass of the earth. In a spiritual sense, we can understand this as referring to the children having good works. These children, conceived from the seed of thoughts, are born in deeds, and the saints of this generation boast in their multitude, for they desired to please God more than their carnal offspring. Therefore, Eliphaz could have said to Job, as if giving him advice: If you turn to God in such a way that you regret your past works, you will abound in the virtues of your heart, like seeds. From these good works, you will be able to bring forth offspring like children of holiness, so that the offspring of your works may be compared to a multitude of flourishing herbs, whose roots, if firmly planted in the hope within your heart, will produce flowers and fruits in your land.

Enter the tomb in abundance, like a heap of wheat brought in its time. With the years of advanced age fulfilled and full of days, you will rest in the tomb, so that in the time of the just judgment of God, having been cleansed from the smallest and lightest stains of sins, you may be found like wheat that is gathered into the barn.

Behold, as we have investigated this, it is so, as it has been understood by the mind. This says that whatever has been said by me to you, you should know carefully investigated truths, which

you yourself should understand in your heart for your improvement.

Chapter VI.

But Job answered and said: Would that my sins, for which I have deserved anger and the calamity that I suffer, were weighed in a balance, and that this calamity, heavier than the sand of the sea, would appear. Therefore, my words are full of pain. You say that I suffer these things because of my sins, so I wish that my sins would be weighed against this calamity that I suffer, and immediately you would see that this very calamity, like the sand of the sea, outweighs the merits of these sins.

Because the arrows of the Lord are in me, of which the indignation drinks my spirit, and the terrors of the Lord fight against me. It can be seen here, that by the name of arrows, worms are said above: by which he was continually stung, and not allowed to speak: not that the worms had such a sense as to do this by their own judgment, but by permission of God, from the power of the adversary, so that they would be more acute, even in their own movements: just like the locusts, flies, and frogs in Egypt. But when he says, 'The terrors of the Lord fight against me,' it can be understood as the devil himself and his minions. They inflicted torment on Job, seeking to cause him to lose his innocence and holiness, and threatened him with terror. Many persecutors, servants of the devil, also wished to do this to the holy martyrs. They surrounded my camp on all sides. Here he clearly shows that, like enemies and adversaries of the devil, they fought fiercely against him and his own. These evil spirits, in different ways, exercise power: for the damnation of some, the improvement of others, and the testing of still others. Depending on their own character or ministry, they are called evil, or terrors, or even robbers. He gave everything into their hands, that is, the pirates. Everything indeed that he had, whether it be my sons or his possessions: just as God also gave myself into the hands of the devil, or his followers. Will the wild donkey roar when it has grass, or will the ox moo when it stands before a full manger? Just as those, when they have an abundance of food, do not emit any voice of complaint, in order to express that they lack food: in a similar way, he says, even I, if I were to have peace and tranquility instead of war in my limbs and in my soul, would not utter any bitter or harsh words. Or can anything taste insipid that is not seasoned with salt? Just as nature does not allow anything insipid to be eaten, so I have done nothing insipid, nothing foolish against God, nothing that would not be seasoned with the salt of faith. Or can anyone taste that which brings death, unless the one who tastes it is already dead? For to a hungry soul even bitter things seem sweet. Just as no one eats something deadly in order to be an enemy to their own life, so I feared that sin might come upon me.

What my soul previously did not desire to touch: now my anxieties are about my food. This is, now that the shepherd speaks with harsh and bitter words, which extort from me an immense punishment. For I used to fear to utter these things with my mouth, when I lived in holiness and righteousness with peaceful tranquility. But it must not be passed over, because Job also suffered this among his other punishments, that even his food seemed foul to him: as the smell of a lion, certainly deadly, and excessively harsh: when this odor erupted from his bowels, his food tasted to him what his internal fevers exhaled. Which he himself expresses when he says: My insides are boiling without any rest; that is, they are already cooked and spoiled. Who will grant that my petition be heard, and that God grant me what I expect? May this be my consolation, that I obtain an end to my punishment or torment, and receive the remedy of death. And let him who has

begun, crush me himself. Let him stretch out his hand and cut me off; and let this be my consolation, that he afflicts me with pain and does not spare me: nor do I contradict his holy words. For what is my strength that I should endure: or what is my end that I should be patient? Thus Job wishes to be released from this divine power, so that by falling from it, he may fall into this temporary death, in order to escape present punishments: when, like a tree, he is cut off from this life.

Neither is the strength of stones my strength: nor is my flesh of brass. My flesh is corrupted by the filth and decay of wounds: because there is not in me such strength, like that of stones, that I do not feel pain.

Behold, there is no help for me within myself, and even my close ones have distanced themselves from me. Just as the prophet said, this applies both to oneself and to Christ's person.

He who withholds mercy from his enemy forsakes the fear of the Lord. My brothers have passed by me like a swiftly flowing stream in the valleys. Mercy is to be moved by the sorrow of the heart in order to have compassion for those who are in distress: while you do not extend it to a friend, you forsake the fear of the Lord.

Those who fear frost, snow will fall upon them. In the time when they have been scattered, they will perish. I used to fear even the smallest sins, lest God's vengeance would rage against me because of them: and behold now I am punished as if I had committed monstrous crimes. And when they grew warm, they melted away from their place. When his name began to be famous among the people, he did not appear in the place of his glory, like snow that dissolves with heat. The paths of their steps are twisted: they will walk in emptiness, and they will perish. He said that the paths are virtues of the soul, in which he strove diligently to please God: he says that these paths, which he suffered to be twisted and entangled with evil, were mingled with the good things of his life and the evils of punishment.

Consider the paths of Teman: the routes of Seba, and wait a little while. They are confused because I had hoped. They have also come to me, and they are covered with shame. That is, look at these places that I mentioned, and in quiet reflection, you will know that what I said is true. Look at the roads of different kingdoms: through which the crowds of all nations used to gather to me, and you will see them deserted, devoid of people.

Now you have come, and seeing my wound, you fear. Did I say: Bring me, and give me of your substance: or deliver me from the hand of the enemy, and rescue me from the hands of the mighty? Teach me, and I will be silent, and if perhaps I have ignored something, instruct me. Why do you detract from the words of truth, when there is none among you who can refute me? You only fabricate words to rebuke, and speak empty words into the wind. He says this because both his friends, following his example, feared a similar ruin for themselves. Did I not rest? Did I not dissimulate? Clearly, I exercised either patience or revenge for the evils. Did I not keep silent, restraining my tongue with silence, so as not to respond to those reproaching me with evils; or so that in the whole my injustice would not be mentioned. Therefore, in these words of truth, you detracted, since indeed you judged me deceitful not only in these matters, but also guilty in other things: when none of you is so free from sin that they could rebuke anyone with a clear conscience.

You attack a defenseless child and try to overthrow your friend. However, carry out what you have started. Listen and see if I lie. Indeed, abandoned by parents and friends.

Respond, I beseech you, without contention, and speak that which is just, and judge. And let not injustice be found in my tongue, nor foolishness resound in my mouth. Let there be no desire to contradict, for it generates the disease of contention: and only then, untouched by the darkness of animosity, will you be able to judge that which is just in me and in yourselves.

Chapter VII. The life of man on Earth is a battle, and his days are like the days of a hired soldier. Struggling against unseen adversaries. As the deer longs for the shadow, and as the hired worker awaits the end of his work: so have I had empty months, and I have counted laborious nights for myself. If I sleep, I say when I will rise? And again I will wait for evening, and I will be filled with sorrows until darkness. My flesh is clothed with rotteness. Similarly, I also thought to attain but for the shadow of refreshment, I encountered the heat of punishment, and for the reward of my work, I was dismissed empty. And my skin has dried up with the filth of dust, and it has shriveled. My days have passed by faster than the weaver's loom cuts the threads, and they have been consumed without any hope. Remember, for my life is like the wind: and my eyes will not return to see good things. This also belonged to the pain of tortures, that the pus which flowed from the putrefaction of the burning wounds, infused with the filth of dust, would dry out his skin and contract it. The sight of a man will not behold me. In that peace, and glory, wealth, and honor, where I once was, I am no longer to be seen by men. Your eyes are upon me, and I shall not endure. Like a cloud is consumed and passes away, so he who descends to the underworld will not ascend again, nor return to his own house. For your eyes are filled with anger, and therefore they are fixed upon me, that they may heap more severe wounds upon me from my enemy.

He will no longer recognize his place. Therefore, I will not spare my mouth: I will speak in the anguish of my spirit, I will converse in the bitterness of my soul. Am I the sea or a whale, that you have enclosed me in a prison? If I say, my bed will comfort me, and speaking with me, I will be relieved. That is, the former way of this world, will not be changed in a man. In my bed you will terrify me through dreams and you will shake me with horror through visions. This is what Job said he was suffering from God, which he was suffering from demons: who received the power from God to do these things, who undoubtedly appeared to him in dreams with fierce and threatening faces: gnashing their teeth, and opening their mouths as if to devour him, so that he would be shaken with horror by the unusual vision in his bed, and wake up and flee from sleep where excessive pains usually diminish, and constant sleeplessness would torment him with unrelenting torments. Whether the wounds that he saw with his waking eyes every day, the putrid pus, and the multitude of worms running through the pits of the wounds, were shown to him in his dreams by demons.

Therefore my soul has chosen hanging, and my bones death. It is better, he says, and much more tolerable for sin, if, defeated by torments, I reflect on my death, than if I inflict blasphemy on your majesty.

I despaired. I will not live any longer. I despaired, speaking these things, which I should not have said. Therefore, with this word, by which he laments himself fallen into sin, he immediately professes repentance saying: Have mercy on me, O Lord, for my days are nothing. What is man, that you should magnify him, or that you should set your heart on him? You visit him in the

morning and suddenly test him. As if you were saying: in this time, receive the one who repents, and be appeased to the one who pleads for this sin.

How long will you not spare me? That is, you do not cease from inflicting these punishments on me. And you do not allow me to swallow my own saliva? Among other evils of pain and torture, it is said to have synanche, in which the breath of a wounded person is blocked by swelling, and often he is extinguished as if strangled by a noose.

I have sinned. What shall I do to you, O keeper of men? I have sinned in the things I have said above, which I should not have said: what can I do to you, who are just?

Why have you set me up against yourself? You have given me the opportunity to respond, so that I might say to you: Punishments that are imposed on sinners do not befit a just man; while I say these things to God: the creature to the Creator, the clay to the potter. And I became heavy with myself. Because as a servant, I should not have answered my Lord with such a complaining voice.

Why do you not take away my sin, and why do you not remove my iniquity? Behold, now I will sleep in the dust: That is, you take away my sorrows, through which I, who was hitherto righteous, am now compelled to sin? And if you seek me in the morning, I will not remain. After the night of this century, at the beginning of the future century, when there will be a happy resurrection of the blessed: when I am sought, I will not be found: because I will not be worthy to stand before your face, who will be rewarded with holiness. But if I have departed as a sinner, to whom you have not shown mercy before: afterwards, in the presence where the other saints are, I will no longer be.

Chapter VIII. But responding, Baldad the Shuhite, said: How long will you speak such things, and the multiplicity of words from your mouth? Baldad was offended by the words of the holy Job. First, because he had spoken rashly to God; secondly, because he had said that he had been more outstanding than other kings in his reign, and that he was suffering this punishment unjustly. And Baldad himself notes that he was speaking not with a free and sober mind, but rather driven by some unknown spirit. Does God pervert justice, or does the Almighty overthrow what is right? This is said because you suffer the justice that you deserve.

Even if your sons have sinned against him and he has handed them over to the power of their iniquity, if you rise early in the morning and implore the Almighty, if you walk in righteousness, he will immediately watch over you and restore the dwelling place of your righteousness, to the point that if your former things were small, your latter things will be greatly multiplied. He says, if your sons, doing evil, are dismissed by God so that the power given to destroy them because of their wickedness has an effect, it will not be able to harm you in any way. However, if you yourself still lie in the darkness of foolishness, if you rise in the morning to the recognition of divine justice and implore God, who can grant all things, for your errors and sins. The one who seemed to be almost asleep, not by hearing you, of course, nor seeing, will immediately wake up to you and will strive to prepare your happiness. So much so that if your previous things were small, your last things will be multiplied too much. Therefore, if you turn to God, he said, from the injustices for which you now suffer punishment, and through satisfaction you want to reconcile him, who is very angry with you because of your merits: you will immediately possess such great grace from him that it can suddenly compensate for the comparison of your last goods, your previous ones will be considered small and minimal enough. The son of that sinner, as mentioned in the Gospel, who,

living a life of pleasure, squandered his inheritance like a prostitute with her riches, is killed as a penitent calf, Christ: the ring of faith, by which all promises are confirmed with a reliable seal, is given to him in his hand: and he receives protection for his steps, so that he may walk securely over snakes and scorpions: he is also given the eternal robe of immortality. For inquire of the former generation, and diligently investigate the memory of the fathers. For we are of yesterday, and we know not: for our days upon earth are but a shadow: and they themselves shall teach thee. Speak to thee, and utter words out of their heart. This is to say, that we are of yesterday, inquire of the ancient, and thou shalt find others in the flood, others in Sodom, or in different places having received diverse judgments for their sins. Can a bulrush grow without moisture, or can a sedge grow without water? This is to say: just as a bulrush or sedge cannot live without water, so you could not at all remain in your former happiness without the nourishment and moisture of justice.

While it is still in bloom and not yet plucked by hand, it withers before all other plants: thus are the ways of all who forget God. Holy Job says that he flourished like the grass: before he could reach the maturity of established glory, he was thrown into such great evils, so that in his own time, like a kingdom in its fullness of days, when the hand of God's power, on which all kingdoms rely, is withdrawn from the world. Therefore, because you did not act in peace, devoting all your time to your grave, you were dried up before all the herbs, that is, before all the sinners who are often called by the name of herbs; that is, when you yielded to unfaithful afflictions in your heart. And as for what he says, you dry up before all the herbs: whoever is burdened with many injustices, like you are, begins to pay the punishment before the rest of the sinners. And the hope of the hypocrite shall perish. The hypocrite feigns sanctity of life: but here, according to God's testimony, he was simple, upright, and innocent: If I have walked in vanity.

He will not be pleased with his madness, and his confidence is like the webs of spiders. Truly, great madness is to pretend and deceive before God, for it will not lead to prosperity, as He is the searcher of hearts and minds. Such people are rebuked in the Gospels: those who are adorned outwardly with the appearance of holiness, but are full of the rottenness of sin inside, like tombs of the dead.

It will be built upon its own house, and it will not stand. Trusting in oneself, and strengthening the flesh of its arm, it will not be able to stand: but rather it will fall by pride. For all flesh is grass.

He supports her, and she will not rise. She tries to stand by her own strength, but she will never be able to rise: because the Lord is not her strength. Those who lean on him are held very securely.

He seems moist before the sun comes. The happiness of a successful man is said to be this: when he is struck by the heat of affliction, he is broken by adversity, and all the greenness of his former joy is consumed, dried up by sadness. And from its rising, its shoots will come forth. In the beginning, he says, the sinner seems to prosper in his happiness, but it will not last, like green grass: this is sudden joy, as in the psalm: When sinners have sprung up like grass, and have appeared: that is, like grass emerging into the greenness of present joy: soon they will perish when the heat comes. But the righteous will not flourish like grass: to whom, as I said, the glory of sinners is compared: but he will flourish like a palm tree, says the prophet. Which is so firmly rooted in the deep, that it fears neither storms nor the heat of the sun. And when it reaches a hundred knots under the sacred number, by which its height is securely contained, then it will bear the sweetest fruits of charity, namely at the pinnacle of perfection, in which it boasts to have

ascended through the growth of virtues, as if through the ages of many years. On the pile of rocks its roots will be crowded, and it will dwell among the stones. For its roots are set deep in solid ground, to bear the fruit of patience, not planted, but rather squeezed tightly on the pile of rocks, lacking moisture of life there: dying certainly, it will first be dried by aridity. And he will dwell among stones. Metaphorically: stones can be understood here as the faithless and hard-hearted, among whom each sinner will dwell in a likeness of life, who do not perceive God like dull metals. Or certainly, he called sins stones. Hence the prophet says: Remove stones from the path: that is, take away sins from the path of holy conversation.

If he has absorbed him from his place, he will deny him, and say: I do not know you. When he is about to be transferred from this life to the filthy places of the underworld: he will be denied to be worthy of the sight of God. The place of a man can be said to be the quality of his conversation; where it stands either by way of life or by way of mind: that is, the discipline or grace which he has received or chosen to follow. For this is the joy of his way: 'Ironicos' is said: this is the joy of his way: as if he were saying: Thus he walked in good works, pleasing to God, while he lived: so that he would attain to eternal hardships. So that others may sprout forth from the earth once again. Indeed, God, like a just judge, excluded the unbelieving Jews from the promises that are in Christ because of their unfaithfulness, and admitted the Gentiles because of their obedience. Whether appointing Matthew in place of Judas or declaring his righteous judgments.

God does not reject the innocent, nor does He extend His hand to the wicked. He says this: it does not please Him to favor those who practice iniquity, and yet He extends His hand of mercy to convert sinners to repentance. May your laughter be filled with joy, and your lips with jubilation. In laughter, understand the happiness of the heart. In jubilation, listen to the voice of the exultant.

Those who hate you will be clothed in confusion. When you are such as I have described above, those who hate you will rightly be confounded. And the tent of the wicked will not stand. Some say this about Job, but they are mistaken. For it is clear that the tent of the wicked will perish forever: that is, the devil and his ministers, or even the present age.

Chapter IX. And Job answered and said: Truly I know that it is so, and that a man composed of God cannot be justified. If he should wish to contend with Him, he cannot answer Him one time out of a thousand. He is wise in heart and strong in strength. Therefore, do not think of me in this way, that I may at least dare to think this, since I know that a creature cannot be compared to its Creator in any way. Who resisted him and had peace? Who, acting against God, did not stir up war and wrath upon himself, just as Dathan and the others?

He who moved mountains, and those whom he subverted in his fury did not know. He who shakes the earth from its place. Metaphorically, mountains are understood as men, or angels: the elevation of their minds swelled so much that they were compared to lofty mountains. And its columns are shaken. Let us understand the columns in this place as stability of the earth: which God has founded upon itself with an immovable mass.

He commands the sun, and it does not rise, and he seals up the stars as if under a seal. He stretches out the heavens alone and walks upon the waves of the sea. We see that all things are daily accomplished by the arrangement of God, governing through the vicissitudes of day and night.

He who made Arcturus, Orion, the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. In these constellations of the stars, which are better known than almost all the other stars in the sky, he says that the entire host of the stars belongs to the rule of God, which is great and wonderful and unknown to humans. Hence the Lord himself says: Do you know the order of the heavens, and do you establish its rule? Likewise, morally, he who shakes the earth from its place. God moved man from his place of former life and shattered and weakened the delightful but harmful thoughts on which he was supported as if on pillars, leaning and resting in them, in order to transform him to a life of holiness. He who commands the sun, and does not rise. Christ, the righteousness of justice, does not rise for sinners struck with blindness of heart, nor does He rise for the stars, that is, the merits of the Saints, by which some differ in brightness from others; for while these are hidden here, they are as it were shut up under a seal. He who stretches out His heavens. He scatters the Apostles and other saints, made heavens everywhere, by the preaching of the Gospel; or He opens the Scriptures to them, which are often signified by the name of heavens, revealing them to their hearts; as it is said: For I will see the heavens, the work of Your fingers. He will come out on the waves of the sea. On the people of this age, surely restless, arrogant, and turbulent: so that they may be crushed into gentleness and placidity with their swelling removed. He who makes the Bear, that is, the first ones in the resurrection of the Church: so that they may be glorious, shining like the midday sun, ignited by the warmth of God's love, and illuminated by the light of faith.

He who does great and incomprehensible things and wonders, of which there is no number. It is great what God does, that He establishes frail and mortal man through Christ in the hope of blessed resurrection. And the innermost parts of the East. Where a seven-branched candlestick, namely the seven-fold spirit of grace and shining understanding, is placed.

If he comes to me, I will not see him; if he departs, I will not understand. If suddenly he asks, who will respond to him? Or who can say, why do you do this? God, whose wrath no one can resist. It is said furthermore, that the presence of the coming God is made known when it becomes known to man, and when it is concealed, it indicates the absence of the departing. And under whom those who carry the world are bent. How great then am I, that I may answer him, and speak my words with him? Even if I have something just, I will not respond, but I will plead with my judge. Those who carry the world, the holy ones, are rightly understood: they who are great and powerful in the sight of God by the glory of their merits. Therefore, with the humility of their hearts, they are bent in order to intervene for sinners in His presence. Thus the holy ones carry the world, sustaining it with the strength of their prayers so that it does not fall and perish. The columns of heaven tremble and fear at His command. The apostles, prophets, and all apostolic men, as well as the saints and other faithful, are to be understood: among whom are Peter, James, and John, who seemed to be pillars: or holy ones bowed before God, and prostrating themselves in worship, who carry the world, that is, their entire selves: whom the learned call the lesser world: they place it upon the perfection of the Cross, and, so that it may not be dissolved or deviate by the thoughts of worldly vanities, they rule and contain it within themselves by binding it tightly through the grace of God. And when he hears me calling, I do not believe that he hears my voice. He allows the injuries of those who attack me, even as I strive to live blamelessly. He was heard in this, in order to deserve the blessings of God. But he does not believe himself to be heard, because he suffers evil. For the whirlwind shall consume me, and my wounds shall multiply without cause. The whirlwind can be understood as the devil, who like a whirlwind assailed Job to devastate him. My spirit does not

allow itself to rest. It is called asthma: it is a weakness that is generated in the lungs. Certain passages of the lungs, which the Greeks call pores, become obstructed, and thus they are compressed and closed in the lungs, as the doctors say, so that the lungs, which have become narrow, cannot adequately give or receive breath. This is repeated with great pain and hurried sighing, and a cut-off breath is emitted. And he fills me with bitterness. If strength is sought, he is the strongest. If fairness of judgment, no one dare speak for me. If I try to justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me. If I show myself innocent, it will prove me wicked. Even if I were blameless, my soul itself would not know it, and my life would be loathsome to me. There is one thing that I have spoken, and he consumes both the innocent and the wicked. Surrounded and besieged by all kinds of afflictions and infirmities, filled with bile and blasphemy, my soul is filled with bitterness. So that my mouth is forced to speak harsh and harsh words, and I am tired of my life. However, I only know this, that I am punished for the evils of my present life.

If he is whipped, let him be killed once; and let him not laugh at the punishment of the innocent. Here he has spoken harshly enough against God. In this whole book, indeed, there is no place harsher than this, and another one placed above it, where he says: Therefore my soul has chosen hanging, and my bones death: from these speeches he responds to God at the end of the book: I have spoken one thing, which I would rather not have said, and another thing to which I will add nothing more. The whole debate of Job with his friends is here, in which they pronounce him just, while they pronounce him impious. The earth is given into the hands of the wicked. The flesh of Christ into the power of Herod or Pilate. Or Job himself into the power of the devil. His judgment covers his face. But if it is not him, then who is it? My days have been swifter than a runner; they have fled and have not seen good. They have passed by like ships carrying fruit; like an eagle flying to its prey. This judgement of the mind in this place, which is hidden by God's righteous judgement, he calls it. The eyes of the wicked devil's servants must be blinded; those judges that he named there, to more cruelly torment the holy Job. When I say this: 'In no way will I speak like this. In no way does he speak like this,' that is, when, compelled by torment, I speak harshly against God and say cruel things, at the same moment, I come to my senses and decide that I should not speak like this to God.

I change my face and am tormented by sorrow. I fear all my works, knowing that you will not spare the guilty. But if I am still wicked, why have I labored in vain? That is, due to the excessive pain, I contract and lament, and in the very moment of defining myself, I am so tormented and tortured by sudden and sharp stings of pain that I utter again words of bitterness and gall.

If I am washed, as if by snow, and my hands are shining as clean as can be: yet you will plunge me into filth. Therefore, in the washing of snowy waters, the brightness of the mind is revealed, and in the hand, the cleanliness of the fruits of holy works is demonstrated. And rightly can the baptism be compared to snow. In the rain, and the pouring rain, the legislator wanted to indicate the speech of doctrine. But in the dew and in the snow, the sense penetrates with the illumination of its innermost being. And they abhorred my garments. For I will not answer a man who is like me, nor will one who is equal with me be heard in judgement with me. For so much evil has been brought upon me, that even the things that are insensible detest the filth of my wounds and rottenness, if it can be said.

There is no one who is able to argue both sides: that is, who is there that can accuse God of injustice, as if it were unfair, unless they are reckless and blasphemous? Who can, as it were, extend their hand like a judge against injustice? Indeed, Job, according to the testimony of God, by which he was praised, because he was innocent, truly said to himself that there was no one among those with whom he was arguing who could rightly accuse him: because he dares to judge another most justly, whose conscience as a defendant is not bound by those things about which he judges another. And he should lay his hand on both of them. Let him take his rod away from me, and let his terror not frighten me. I will speak and not fear him, for I cannot respond in fear. Securely, he says, and firmly, then I will be able to respond, if he removes these two things from me: namely the magnitude of his power and the punishment of these tortures.

Chapter X.

My soul is weary of my life: I will give free course to my complaint; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked? Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth? Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days, That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin? And you should know that I have done no wickedness, for there is no one who can deliver me from your hand. Your hands, Lord, have made me and fashioned me completely, and yet suddenly you cast me aside? Remember, I pray, that you made me like clay and will turn me into dust. Did you not curdle me like cheese and clot me like milk? You covered me with skin and flesh, and bound me with bones and sinews. And as for what he says about being formed completely, he is speaking against the heretics who say that the soul is made by one God and the body by another.

You have given me life and mercy, and your visitation has guarded my spirit. Although you conceal these things in your heart, I know that you remember all things. If I have sinned and you have allowed it for a time, why do you not allow me to be free from my iniquity? And if I am wicked, woe to me, and if I am just. The soul itself is called life here, not the life of the soul: because actions of the soul can also be called life.

I will not lift my head, weighed down by affliction and misery. And because of pride. That is, bound by the pain and torment of the inner organs: I cannot elevate my head from the lowest point, filled with confusion and sorrow.

You will take me like a lioness. To this beast, says Job, you liken me, a humble and despised man. And I was miraculously tormented upon my return. He said that God was returning to himself, when he felt both ancient and recent punishments miraculously in his own body.

You are setting your tests against me. This he says, because our corrections and punishments are witnesses of divine justice. Whether tortures, I consider them called witnesses, because while he was howling and roaring, the torments were like a testimony to God. And you have multiplied your anger against me, and punishment wages war against me. Why did you bring me forth from the womb, that I might have perished before any eye saw me? I should have been as though I had not been, carried from the womb to the grave. Will not the fewness of my days come to an end soon? The wrath of God can be understood as the devil, by whose ministry Job suffered bitter pains. But

punishment wages war within itself: because by following a certain order of evils, they exercise the duty of the cruelty committed to them.

Therefore, forgive me, so that I may lament my pain for a little while. That is, grant me respite from these torments, so that I may mourn the slight amount of pain that I endure in my body, or that I dread to experience in hell.

Before I go, and do not return to the dark land, and covered with the gloom of death: the land of misery and darkness: where the shadow of death and no order, but eternal horror dwells. There is no doubt that he described the land of the underworld; there is no order of life there: it is dark, as I said, undoubtedly like a prison, into which sinners and the wicked who hated the light, like sons of darkness, are cast. Which land is covered with the darkness of death: so that those who are shut in eternal night may never see the light of penance. Where is the shadow of death for the wretched, which is in this place of punishment: for just as shadows of bodies are not far from the bodies that cast them: so too, punishments are not far from death, which inflict death. I will not return to this mortality, where I suffer such great evils. The divine spirit, which is in my nostrils, urged him with the strength of consolation, as he gasped in the distress of pain. Who will grant me that you protect me in hell and hide me until your wrath passes, and establish a time for me when you will remember me? The fury of God's wrath has passed over, which Adam deserved by sinning, when the coming of Christ erased the handwriting of the death of his children. Therefore, it should not seem strange to anyone among the saints who are freed from hell by the coming of the Lord, and who, by the example of Christ's resurrection, are established in the hope of their blessed resurrection.

Chapter XI. But in response, Sophar the Naamathite said: Does one who speaks a lot not listen? Or will a verbose man be justified? It is as if he were to say: Can a verbose man be admired or praised for his words when he is disliked due to excessive verbosity? Rather, he should listen to what he deserves, so that he does not consider himself wise solely out of vanity. Will only you keep silent, and when you mock others, will no one refute you? These are not the consolations of friends, but the weapons of enemies. So now let us say this about you: The teeth of men are their weapons and arrows. For He said, 'My word is pure, and I am clean in Your sight.' He did not say this to mean that His word is pure and He is clean, that is, that He existed before God in thought and word, immaculate; but He said, 'I have not done anything wicked.' And I wish that God would speak with you, and open His lips to you. He said by what judgment Job should be condemned. For in speaking the voice of God, whose sound the ears receive, He wanted, as I believe, to indicate. But in opening the lips, He showed the understanding of the voice. In order to show you the secrets of wisdom, and how manifold its law is. That you may understand the hidden and remote judgments of his heart, in which there is manifold and inscrutable knowledge. And you would understand that you are much less important to him than your wickedness deserves. That is, you should suffer more torments than you declare yourself able to endure.

Perhaps you will grasp traces of God, and you will find Him to be perfect and omnipotent. Those traces of God are when He becomes known to humans by His own grace. And so, we track Him when He deigns to manifest Himself to us in some way. Therefore, these are the traces of God, when you understand and believe Him to be incomprehensible. The sky is higher, and what will you do? Deeper than hell, and where will you understand? Longer than the length of the earth and

wider than the sea. If He overturns everything, or compresses it into one: who will contradict Him? or who can say to Him: Why do you do this? We believe that God is everywhere, and within Him are contained all things that have been created by Him. For he knows the vanity of mankind, and does he not consider the injustice? For he knows the deeds of the wicked, and does he not ignore the unfair? For he punishes the wicked and the ungodly. A worthless man is lifted up in pride and thinks himself born free like a wild donkey's colt. He says that Job is similar to a wild donkey's colt, a creature without bridle and wandering aimlessly, because he thinks this is how Job sees himself, someone who does not belong to anyone. But you have strengthened your heart and stretched out your hands to him. You have strengthened your heart, saying: not to satisfy God through repentance, to remove this worst wound raging in your flesh. You stretched out your hands to him: that is, you have inflated false merits of works with empty words: because in many places, actions are designated by the name of hands.

If you remove the iniquity that is in your hand and injustice does not remain in your tent. Job reproves with accusation, saying: If the iniquity that is in the work of your hands and the injustice in the tent of your heart does not remain.

Then you will be able to lift up your face without blemish, and you will be steadfast and not fear. Holding a holy conscience, and raising your face freely to pray to God. For Cain, the fratricide, lived in the land of Nod, that is, he became unstable. Therefore, so that Job would not incur a similar punishment and eternal fear of death, Zophar exhorts him, saying: If you do these things that we have mentioned, you will be steadfast. It must be understood that there is a disturbance in which a sinner, remaining in his sins, does not stand before your face. Your face is like pure water, and you will be stripped of filth and not be afraid. The one with a sincere and purified mind, and clean from all filth, fears vices: having been stripped of them like rags, he will shine forth as if brought out of darkness. The man who presents the bright face of his mind signifies the radiant people of the Jews, who in a certain way killed Christ their Father.

Moreover, you will forget your miseries, and you will not remember the waters that have passed. Therefore, in the passing of waters, Zophar understands this: that the pains can depart from him so quickly, if Job, however, is willing to amend himself, just as waters flow away within a moment to other places, and in this way the wretchedness of this affliction can be completely wiped away from him, so that he remembers his misfortune with a very faint memory, as though it had not occurred. And as if a midday radiance, a light will rise for you towards evening. And when you think you are consumed, you will rise like Lucifer. This can be understood spiritually: a light will rise for you towards evening, that is, in the completion of the labors of your evils, the consolation of the sun of justice, Christ, will come to you; or after death, rising again in glory. Likewise, in this very decay of yours, in which you daily waste away with such great corruption, and melt away, as if you entirely think yourself consumed: if you do what I have already said, being completely and utterly consumed, you will suddenly rise like Lucifer; who, traveling through the hidden paths of his course, is said to appear after two years in the brilliance of his dawn. So therefore, for you too after the night, and for the darker shadows of that prolonged temptation: if you recognize your faults, it may come to pass. And you will have confidence, having a set hope, and buried you will sleep soundly. You will rest, and there will be no one to frighten you. And many will implore your face. You will have this confidence, that buried in death and certain of resurrection, you will sleep soundly, rest in the underworld, established in the hope of certain hope, and there will be no

torture, adversary, or enemy there to frighten you and inflict infernal punishments upon you, but rather whoever they are, they will pour out supplicating prayers to you, so that by your prayers the Tartarean torments may be tempered for them. But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and their refuge shall perish from them: and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost. That is, the expectation of the wicked shall be ended with this conclusion: that in a time of another's glory, they shall be found not worthy of absolution, but of abomination.

Chapter XII. But Job responded and said: So you are the only men, and wisdom will die with you? My heart is the same as yours: I am not inferior to you. For who does not know these things that you know? He who is laughed at by his friend like me will call upon God, and He will answer him. Truly, the simplicity of the just is laughed at. This is to say, what do you alone say is wise, and do you think that there will be no wise man after you? The lamp, despised among the thoughts of the rich, is ready for the appointed time. The huts of pirates abound, and they boldly challenge God, when he himself has given everything into their hands. The lamp, calling itself despised by the rich, undoubtedly denoting them as proud, because they despised him afflicted with torments and the contempt of his relatives; who, however, shone inwardly with great faith and the oil of good works. Likewise, the lamp despised by the rich, Christ despised by the Jews, who, rising from the dead, illuminated the whole world with the splendor of his grace. The Jews were called rich because they received the words of God.

Undoubtedly, ask the animals and they will teach you, and the birds of the air and they will tell you. Speak to the earth, and it will respond to you, and the fish of the sea will inform you. Who is unaware that the Lord has created all these things? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all flesh of humankind. Does not the ear discern words, and the palate of the eater taste food? In the ancients is wisdom, and in much time is prudence. With Him is wisdom, and strength, and He has counsel and understanding. That all things pertain to the providence and governance of God, even those things that are irrational and insensible, respond in a certain way to the questioning of truth. According to the mystical understanding, unrefined and irrational individuals can be understood as animals. Birds, on the other hand, are understood as demons or those who are light and arrogant, or perhaps astrologers. The earthly and carnal people who are devoted to earthly pleasures are referred to as the land. Pisces, philosophers, and others like them, who are excessive in their inquiries about the things of the world and its qualities. Otherwise: Horses are good creatures, which animals will live in the Lord's inheritance: to whom the voluntary rain of the Gospel is separated from the unbelievers. Birds, on the other hand, are those who have their hearts set on high and desire heavenly things; or those who will go to meet Christ in the air when they rise from the dead: the flesh of the saints is rightly understood, which will exult with the Lord reigning. Those fish, indeed, who swim amidst the waves and tempests of this worldly life, see for themselves safe places of eternity and tranquil. Or those fish are to be understood, who receive life through water; who immediately migrate from the fountain of baptism to Christ, or to God, as others say.

If he destroys, there is no one who can build up. It is clear that whatever he desires to scatter and destroy by the judgment of his own wisdom, no one can withstand his power. Just as he destroyed the tower and the kingdoms of many nations, and even Jerusalem, where the very legal precepts themselves were written like stones, he declared that they would be dissolved in the presence of his grace. And so, according to the prophecy of Job, the wall of enmities, the law of

commandments, was indeed destroyed through Christ; so that he might create in himself one new man, making peace. God Christ destroyed and opened the prison of hell, and he who had the power of death, He dethroned the kingdom of dominion. Therefore, God Christ destroyed death, while He deemed it worthy to die in it, and while on the cross He destroyed the body of sin, he killed our old man there, who was killing us: in order to restore the way to eternity for us. Thus, He destroyed death and illuminated life: He destroyed the plans of those who persecute the Church, those who plot to dig out His name from under the heavens, namely the Jews and the Gentiles. He destroyed the dogmas and various errors of the heretics from the Church: the unbreakable building of right faith: about which Solomon said: The wise man ascended the cities of the strong and destroyed its fortifications. He also destroyed all the worship of idols.

If a man is enclosed, there is no one who can open it. God enclosed Noah in the flood: Lot in Segor: Jonah in the belly of a whale: Jeremiah and Baruch that they would not be found. He also enclosed those of whom it is said: He will send his angel around those who fear him, and he will deliver them. If a man is placed under the sentence of death through the judgment of God, who can bring him back? Pharaoh was enclosed in the midst of the waters: Dathan and Abiram were enclosed alive in hell: the people of Israel were enclosed in the desert for forty years. God includes man to be refined by trials: or certainly he surrounds the sinner to be scourged by corrections so that he may amend. Who is there who might open a way of escape as it were for someone to decline, so that he might avoid: just like Job himself, who says: God has enclosed me with the wicked, and has handed me over to the hands of the wicked. In this place, the devil can be understood: who, when he has been imprisoned in hell, did not free himself, and who abominably considers himself against God the most powerful.

If the waters continue, everything will dry up, and if they are released, they will destroy the earth. This happened during Noah's time, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, and we do not doubt it at all. However, now the waters of doctrine are contained spiritually within the Jewish people, so that the rivers of the law may become a desert for them, and the outflows of the waters may become their thirst. And may these waters destroy and demolish earthly desires and luxuries, left behind in the Church's reasonable image of a worldly person, and may they progress in converting themselves to the spiritual life. In him is strength and wisdom. This is the Son with the Father, and the Holy Spirit.

He knows both the deceiver and the one being deceived. Balaam knew, as did Ahab, that a false prophet named Aeneas would rise up. He knew Aeneas, but through this he showed the deserved punishment of a sinful people: that by pronouncing false prophecies, he would declare their destruction, and those who do not want to listen to God and the true prophets would be deceived by the false prophecies of the pseudo-prophets. The children of Israel, as we read in the Book of Judges, were also deceived by the most just judgment of God. And when, according to the law, the Levites had gathered together against the Benjamites on account of their wife, so that the crime of adultery might be punished: first, the crime of sacrilege itself was avenged, because they should have first corrected themselves: or certainly kill those who worshipped idols to the injury of God: for the offense against their brother was greater than against God, and therefore it was first avenged in them. But the Lord knows both the deceiver and the deceived by His foreknowledge, which can also be understood concerning Abel, and Cain, and Delilah, and Samson, who mystically possessed the grace of the Holy Spirit in the seven locks of his hair. Indeed, God knew

all these things before they happened, being foreknowledgeable about the future; but He allowed man, who used his free will, to disobey God's command and, moreover, believing that he could become a god, to justly endure the punishment of disobedience. All of these had the characteristics of Christ. In Samson, who held and killed the lion, and found honey in the mouth of the dead lion, it was signified that in the proud, in whose mouth there had been the stench of blasphemy, there would afterwards be the sweetness of praise and grace from God. And that same Samson, thirsty from the molar tooth of the donkey, invoked God and brought forth water to drink; so also Christ, satisfied as a refreshing people from the unclean and hard nation of the believing faithful. Also, with the jawbone of the same donkey from which abundant water had flowed, he killed a thousand men. In the jaws and teeth, the eloquence of the mouth is understood. Therefore, the teaching of those who believed from the nations is completed by a certain perfect number. But Samson indeed killed and destroyed his enemies and adversaries in three ways: some perish by not believing, while others die believing in faithfulness. This work is called the lifting up of the jawbone. For in this way the teaching and preaching of the Gospel has been magnified over all the earth, so that all nations everywhere marvel at it being elevated. Therefore, it is figuratively represented by those foxes: so that through the cunning and enemies of true faith, whose authority is in their tails, a part left behind is devastated, and a part around the fruits of Christ is laid waste by those who oppose Christ.

He brings counselors to a foolish end, and judges to astonishment. As he did against the magicians of the Egyptians, who said to Pharaoh that the king of the Chaldeans would not come to destroy Egypt, either by making Nebuchadnezzar mad, or by terrifying Belshazzar.

He undoes the belt of kings and girds their loins with a rope. In the belt, the glory of the reigning is understood; in the rope, the ignominy of the dethroned king is signified, as happened to Zedekiah and Manasseh by God's command. Thus also the people of the Jews, who were distinguished from the kingdom of Christ by their unfaithfulness. But now, even the kings who are reborn in Christ, are all called to the adoption as sons of the eternal King. Truly, they are rightly distinguished by that sublime honor, whoever have accomplished deeds worthy of repentance. As the prophet says: Gird yourself with a rope.

He leads the disgraced priests. Like the sons of Heli, or many others of the same nation. And He supplants the nobles. God does not supplant with deceit, in whom there is no iniquity, but it is said to supplant in this way, when He removes the unjust and the wicked and substitutes a worthy man, a good and just man, in the place that someone unworthy appears to hold, as David in the place of Saul.

Changing the lying lip, and taking away the doctrine of the elderly. He pours contempt upon princes, and lifts up those who were oppressed. When, on account of their sins, the promises being taken away, he is compelled to give the flames of eternal hell to those who are adopted.

He who reveals the depths from darkness and brings the shadow of death into light. He who multiplies peoples and destroys them, and restores them completely when overthrown. He who changes the heart of the rulers of the earth, and deceives them, so that they walk in vain through impassable paths. They will grope in darkness, not in light, and he will cause them to wander like drunkards. The shadow of death itself is the devil: he who does not protect mankind, but press them into death: he is brought into light when separated from a faithful soul.

Chapter XIII.

Behold, my eyes have seen all these things, and my ears have heard them, and I have understood each one. According to your knowledge, I also know: I am not inferior to you. But nevertheless, I will speak to the Almighty and desire to argue with God, first showing you the makers of falsehood and the followers of perverse doctrines. And I wish you would be silent, that you might be considered wise. Therefore, listen to my rebukes and pay attention to the judgment of my lips. Does God need your deception, that you speak deceit for Him? Do you accept His face and strive to judge for God? Will He be pleased with someone who can hide nothing? Will He be deceived, like a man, by your fraudulent ways? There were deceptions in them, for they struck Him to the heart with consoling words.

He himself will reprove you, because you receive his face in secret. As soon as he stirs himself, he will trouble you, and his terror will rush upon you. Your memory will be compared to ashes, and your necks will be reduced to mud. Be silent for a moment, so that I may speak whatever my mind suggests to me. You are worthy to be reprovved by God: you hide his face in you, that is, as if he were ignorant of it, you receive his person in order to condemn me. As if anything could be hidden from him, so that you would want to deceive him.

Why do I tear my own flesh with my own teeth? Tormented by excessive agony, he would tear his own hands or lips with his teeth. And I carry my soul in my hands. Even if it kills me, I will hope in Him. Yet I will argue my ways in His presence, and He Himself will be my savior. For not every hypocrite will come before Him. Hear my words, and perceive the riddles with your ears. If I am judged, I know that I will be found just. Who is there to contend with me? Let him come. Why am I consumed in silence? Only do not do two things to me, then I will not hide from your face. Keep your hand far from me, and let not your fear terrify me. Call me, and I will answer you; or let me speak, and you respond to me. The amount of my iniquities and sins is great. She says that life itself, which is usually called the soul, carries itself in its hands: now, with the soul failing and departing, I carry it as if it were to be carried out.

Show me my crimes and sins. So that I may know why I am tortured like this.

Why do you hide your face and consider me your enemy? Like a leaf that is blown away by the wind, you show your power, and you pursue dry straw. For you write bitter things against me, and you seek to consume me with the sins of my youth. You have put my feet in stocks and closely watch all my paths, examining every footstep. I am being consumed like rotten wood, like a garment that is eaten by moths. While you allow me to be punished in this way, whom you believe to be like an enemy, it grieves me that you yourself know very well that harm should be done to those who opposed you instead.

Chapter XIV. A person is born of a woman, living for a short time: filled with many miseries. They come forth like a flower, and are crushed, and flee like a shadow, and never remain in the same state. In this fleeting moment, let us understand the fragility of the human race, not the fragrant beauty and charm. And you deem it worthy to open your eyes on such a matter, and bring him with you to judgment. Who can make the world out of unclean seed? Are you not the only one? The days of man are short, his number of months is with you. You have set his limits, which cannot be passed. This is worthy of you, that for the sake of the human race, you desire your Only Begotten

Son to be born as a man. Or else, allow me to also speak with you, and recount my miseries.

Therefore, step back a little from him, so that he may rest, until the desired comes, and his days are like those of a hired man. This is, remove your whip from me, and do not allow me to be tempted in this way any longer. The wood has hope. If it is cut, it grows again, and its branches sprout. If its root grows old in the earth, and its trunk dies in the dust, it will sprout with the scent of water, and it will produce foliage, as if it were newly planted. It is to be believed that the wood is reasonable, of which it is said: For it is the hope of the tree. Therefore, this wood was cut off through disobedience: when it dwelled among the trees of paradise, before the sentence of God's death, from which in baptism, oldness is cut off, so that it may revive in the new life of Jesus Christ, through the resurrection of faith, and its branches may sprout with virtues: that is, its works may advance by living holy lives. But when a man dies and is stripped and consumed, where, I ask, is he? However, a man without hope in Christ, like the nations who do not know God, when he dies not having been reborn through baptism, destitute of life and stripped of present delight, undoubtedly he will receive the sentence of eternal damnation.

Just as the waters depart from the sea and a dried-up river dries up, so a man, when he sleeps, will not rise again. Until the heavens are destroyed, he will not wake up, nor will he rise from his sleep. Who will grant me this, that you may protect me in the underworld and hide me until your wrath passes, and that you may establish a time for me to be remembered? Do you think a dead man will live again? All the days that I now serve in the military, I await the change that will come. If it can happen, he says, that the waters of God's salutary precepts cease to recede from the sea of holy Scriptures, to which they do not fail in perpetual abundance; and if it can happen that the river of sacred baptism is dried up by a certain lack of divine mercy, and the grace of God is not full, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit do not overflow: in this way it can happen that when a man has died, he does not rise again.

You will call me, and I will answer you. You will stretch out your right hand to the work of your hands. All the dead will be called in the last age, and they will be awakened from the tombs by the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God. And all will respond in this manner, with the word of his majesty and power. The ash and dust of human bodies will be brought to life, and the incorruptible will rise from the dead.

Indeed, you have counted my steps; but forgive my sins. The thoughts and actions of my youth.

You have sealed my sins as in a bag, but you have cared for my wickedness. The bag, with its telling name, can be seen as the entire mass of the sinful generation of Adam: in which, as if under the seal of his image, Adam begot his offspring in his own image and likeness, all of whom became transgressors. God held this offspring, bound by sin, captive for many ages, and yet in the last times of the world, he healed the wounds of their sins through his redemption. But if Job seems to have said this about himself, as I think, this is the understanding: If, therefore, I have committed any sins against God throughout the entire course of my life, you have gathered them all together in different periods of time, so that according to the strictness of your justice, you may repay all things to me simultaneously. The falling mountain collapses, and the rock is transferred from its place. Water erodes stones, and gradually the land is consumed by alluvium, and thus likewise do you destroy men. Therefore, we must consider this mountain as a devil, or as a man inflated with pride, who, going against God, swells up like a mountain in the exaltation of his mind,

and thus, by elevating himself, falls headlong, to flow away, and is reduced, having been loosed, to dust, to nothingness. Truly, I think these are likened to stones, who, when they should have remained alone with similar steadfastness in the good of nature, have been changed by their own will into a certain foolishness and hardness of heart, and thus they are to be cast down from the dwelling of their detestation, because they presumed to have, like stones, a dwelling from their own merits. But these waters, which always seek the lower places, through which destruction also once came, signify opposing powers, and the storms and whirlwinds of the world. These waters, therefore, I say, wear down those men who presume themselves to be the bravest and strongest, and confident in their own virtue, as stones are compared to them, with unceasing decline. But I believe that these are the people who, not removing temptations and dangers, allow themselves to be weakened. Therefore, you will likewise destroy men: that is, your saints, who keep your image in themselves.

You have strengthened him a little, so that he may endure forever. This is, in this life you have not allowed your saints to be overcome by temptations.

You will change his face, and you will send him forth. That is, when this mortal has put on immortality and incorruption, or in another sense, we understand the face as the soul, which, when it has received its natural serenity, contemplates the glory of the divine majesty, which, together with its body, will rejoice, not being wounded by any disturbance of any vice.

Whether his children are noble or ignoble, he will not understand. This is to say, not children of the flesh, but children of the mind: that is, the works of virtues. Therefore, the saints in this life before the day of judgment do not understand for certain what kind of children they have: whether they are pleasing to God or not pleasing. You have strengthened him for a little while, so that he may pass on forever, according to the form of a servant that he assumed. I think that these things cannot be attributed to Christ as God. For when, in the part in which he is a man, his neighbor was weakening in his passion, the evangelist says: But an angel of the Lord appeared from heaven, strengthening him. Therefore, for a brief time, our redemption, administered in perpetuity, passed through the heavens, reaching the eternal age. You will change his face: that is, when the whole man passed into God. However, save the property of both substances in the unity of the person.

However, while his flesh is alive, it will suffer, and his soul will mourn for himself. Thus our Savior assumed true flesh, so that he could feel pain. Or his soul suffered, as he said: My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Likewise, the Church, which is his flesh, grieves when it is pressed by the troubles of the world: because the Church herself is a daughter in him, who is initiated into Christ through the faith of baptism. And again, she is a mother, when he who is incorporated into the members of Christ takes up the ministry of baptism.

Chapter XV. But Eliphaz the Temanite responded and said, 'Will a wise man answer with empty knowledge, speaking into the wind? By this understanding, it seems as if he has begun: Does anyone not wise, and a student of philosophical discipline, become so possessed by frenzy and madness that he speaks without any fear of God or regard for religion, as if he were similar to a gust of air and the wind that is dispersed? Therefore, Eliphaz dared to rebuke the holy Job, who was humble in spirit and timid in the face of the wind's power.' And he will fill his stomach with ardor. By the name of ardor, he desired to indicate his soul, exhausted by the gall of anger, which presumed to be angry against God as if He were equal to himself. Another interpretation has it this

way: And he will fill his stomach with pain. Let us understand that the stomach is a certain receptacle of the soul: just as there is a certain receptacle of the vital organs in the body which we call the stomach, so he said, by a change of name, that the soul has a certain power capable of exercise, so that it is filled with thoughts, just as the stomach of a man is filled with food. Therefore, Job is reproached by Eliphaz because he has filled his belly with such pain, that is, he thinks about things that torment his soul, or from which he rightly suffers bodily pains.

You accuse with words him who is not equal to you, and you speak what is not advantageous to you. By saying this, you indicate him as rebellious and opposing God. Perhaps for this reason, because in the previous discourse Job said to God among other things: And you think of me as your enemy.

You have a great deal within you, you have banished fear, and you have offered prayers before God. You are so elevated, he says, that you are completely free from divine fear, and you no longer consider it worthy to supplicate God. This is why he says: 'and you have offered prayers before God,' that is, as if you have taken away from yourself things that are not necessary for you. For your iniquity has taught your mouth: and you imitate the language of blasphemers. Therefore, the evil of your mind, your mouth has learned to speak, and for this reason you are an imitator and a disciple of those who always have their tongue ready for blasphemy against God. Your own mouth will condemn you, not I, and your lips will answer for you. That is, you will receive the consequences of your words. Were you the first man born, and were you formed before all the hills? Therefore, before the human race existed, you began to exist, giving you the greatest gift of wisdom above all other men: where in a mocking conversation Adam could have first said: whom we certainly know to have been made the wisest by God. Thus, he is attacked in a holy manner in Job, saying: were you before the father of the human race, and did you begin to exist before the existence of the angels? Have you heard God's counsel, and will his wisdom be inferior to yours? He often accuses excessively, and reproaches one who is pleasing to God, and vehemently rebukes, saying that he not only thinks he knows God's counsel: but also that his wisdom is inferior to his. It therefore appears that his mind is full of envy, directing the arrows of reproaches against a just man without cause, in order to overwhelm the innocent with insults.

What do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that we do not understand? A lot: first and foremost, he knew God himself more, then he saw with the spirit the mysteries to be revealed in Christ. And the old people, and the ancients are much older in us than your fathers. The old people, and the ancients placed with us, who have attained much knowledge and wisdom through their long life: did not dare to speak rashly against God, as you do. Is it too great for God to console you? But your perverse words prevent this. It is evident that it is neither great for the Almighty, nor difficult for the mercy of God, to console man: to hear him when he calls upon Him, and to deliver him from the oppression of tribulation; but by belching blasphemies, you further provoke God to punish you, whom you could appease through humility and satisfaction.

What lifts up your heart, and as if thinking great things, you have astonished eyes? What does your spirit swell against God, that you utter such words from your mouth? What is man, that he should be blameless, that a child of woman should appear just? Behold, among his holy ones no one is unchangeable, and the heavens are not pure in his sight; how much less abominable and useless is man, who drinks iniquity like water? The heart, eyes, and spirit all signify the entire soul

of man, but let us seek wisdom in the heart of man. In the eyes, the clarity of understanding. But in the spirit of that soul, there is a movement by which it is incessantly moved to do whatever needs to be done. In the lifting up of the heart, and with eyes wide open, there is also a swelling of the spirit: very proud against God, and excessively inflated. This is what Job's friend Eliphaz reproached him for. He was offended by those words that blessed Job had previously spoken to God. If I am judged, I know that I will be found just, and I speak against that statement: What is man that he should appear blameless?

I will show you, listen to me, what I saw I will tell you. I speak of an experienced matter, which you know I have known and seen. The wise confess and do not hide their fathers. Thus, he wants to restrict and bind him in various ways and examples, as if to force him to confess the punishment he endured for his merits. Or thus: by not defending themselves and their fathers who are like them, or by imitating the parents they began to have; they do not hide or conceal their own sins or the sins of their parents. Whether they do not conceal their fathers, that is, their elders, or their priests, to whom it is beneficial to confess sins. To those to whom the earth is given, and strangers will not pass through them. Frequently God, because of the sins of the wicked, delivers the land to other nations. Therefore, concerning the entrance and coming of conversation, and the entrance of Zophar to Job, he speaks: In their bitterness, they will come and go upon him horribly, that is, moved as if by the anger of vipers, and turned into bitterness and fury by the poison of envy: they will constantly dwell around you, he says. Whether morally. Those who are wise in Christ, and foolish in this world, faithfully confess their sins or errors of heresy, converting themselves to God through the satisfaction of repentance. They reveal the authors of their crimes or doctrines, so that they may possess the earth of their body alone, that is, so that vices or hostile wickedness do not dominate them. And let no stranger pass through him, that is, let the devil not have power over him. He is truly to be called a stranger, because he has made himself a stranger to God and the company of angels.

Every day the wicked man boasts and the length of his tyranny is uncertain. Eliphaz seems to direct these words against Job, which he continues until the end of his speech. However, I believe that under the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy, he could have said all these things about any wicked person, whether it be the devil himself or his companions. The sound of terror is always in his ears. Just like the Egyptians suffered. And when there is peace, he always suspects plots. The wicked person persists in evil, always with a guilty conscience, for he knows according to the just judgment of God, what retribution awaits the wicked.

He does not believe that he can return from darkness to light. In vain, deceived by error, he thinks that he can be redeemed at some cost. This wicked person, sinking into the depths of sins, has despaired of being able to attain life. And therefore, he does not believe that he can return from the darkness of sins to the light of repentance. But he explains the cause of this lack of confidence, saying:

Looking around on all sides with a sword. That is, from here and there: either awaiting death. We have said that the devil is given as food to unclean spirits, because they live by his malice: but sinners themselves, who are like vultures, and unclean are understood. Therefore, when these have been converted, then they themselves will have the enemy devouring them as food in return, because he is the dragon who was given by God as food to the people of the Ethiopians, who

once were sinners because of the darkness of their sins, but now have become light through faith in the Lord. They consume and devour this impious one or dragon: while they introduce every body of his, who are certainly sinners, through faith into the body, that is, into the Church: according to this, which was said to Peter: Rise, kill, and eat. Hence also Moses compelled the sons of Israel to drink the broken calf, so that just as they had been absorbed by it in error: so they would pass over into the body of the people of God, leaving behind the error. When he moves to seek bread, he knows that the day of darkness is prepared in his hand. The movement of minds is the beginning of thought. Therefore, when he has been reminded of this, guilty and always conscious of his evil, he can think of nothing else but that horrible day of God's judgment, in which he dreads the infliction of eternal punishment.

Tribulation will terrify him, and distress will surround him, like a king preparing for battle. Before the appointed day arrives, he will be tormented by the evil of fear; he will be hemmed in on all sides by pressures and distress, as if a king setting out for battle. I believe that under the name of the king, an impious man or the devil is signified, who fights against God daily, preparing battles of blasphemies and contentions, or fights of vices. For he stretched out his hand against God, and against the Almighty he strengthened himself. In arrogance, or the spreading out of his hand, he shows resistance to God, calling himself even in his swollen pride robust.

He ran towards him with his head held high. His sudden and reckless behavior indicates a proud and arrogant mind: because being possessed by madness against God, he did not advance with slow steps while resisting. And he was armed with a fat neck. By calling the fatness of the neck, he indicated an excessive and overflowing pride. As the prophet says when speaking of the same pride of men, saying: Their iniquity has prospered as if from fatness, this testimony in a new edition says more clearly: Their eyes have gone forth from fatness, that is, the senses and thoughts of the excessively proud have burst forth into blasphemy. His face was covered with thickness. The face itself is usually understood as the mind or soul of the spirit, as the Apostle says: But we, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. This face, the devil or impious man does not have serenity, holiness or humility, but it is covered with the thickness of pride, which is blind and dull in heart. Another edition: His face was covered as if with fat; as if to say: namely, black pride, the author of all vices: it did not clothe itself with the thin and transparent virtue of humility, as with a precious garment, but made itself in a way a mockery of itself, and an obscure garment, by which it might dull the thick blindness of pride in heart. And from its sides hangs the love of agriculture. Its sides can be understood as ministers or companions, who have been similar to it. Not surprisingly, ears are also understood, which are nourished in hearing: hence excessive deafness is generated in stubborn people, according to, 'The heart of this people is made fat.' Another edition: It makes a little head on the thighs. This little verse seems to contain the meaning of this kind, that in this impious person is reproached, because he did not want to have the restraint of discipline, by which he could be held back to virtues, but rather he threw himself into a certain dissolution, having set aside the rigidity of his mind, so that he might be led by a loose rein to pleasure and luxury.

He dwelled in desolate cities and deserted houses which have been reduced to mounds. The habitation therefore of unclean spirits of beasts and birds says: those who dwell in humans whom God has forsaken. For it dwells in humans abandoned by God, and for this reason, graves have become the abodes of the dead. And if sins are sometimes called dead in scripture, then sinners

and the wicked are necessarily the tombs of the dead. Therefore, in the cities, there can be a general name for all sins, but in households, a specific name for each sinner and wicked person.

She will not be destroyed, nor will her substance endure. Here, substance does not refer to material wealth, but to sins: as the Holy Spirit says in the Book of Revelation of John. 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! It has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit.' When it says 'she will not be destroyed,' it seems to me that it is saying that her life in the wealth of misdeeds will not last long, since even the accumulated substance of her vices will not endure. Nor will he send his root into the earth. That is, because like an uprooted tree he will die: therefore, he will not have eternal stability in the land of the living or their companionship: because he did not first send forth the hope or the root of faith: he will not even have the breath of salvation, to live under the shadow of refreshment.

He will not depart from darkness. Others have said, he will not escape darkness: that is, he has undergone eternal punishments, and will not escape darkness. However, he will not depart from darkness: we understand this as darkness of unbelief. This wicked man refuses to come to the light of repentance. The flame will dry up his branches. In the branches, let us understand the fruits of evil works, as Solomon says: The fruits of the wicked are sins. But these, like wood, hay, and straw, will be consumed by the fire of Gehenna. And the breath of his mouth shall be taken away from him. Therefore, since his mind is filled with rage against God, he does not cease to breathe out blasphemies against Him: of his mouth, He says, he is condemned by judgment. According to the ancient edition, I believe that the root or branch signifies the origin of impious life, which the Spirit of God, the judgment's sentence, strikes like a wind hovering: so that, just like a withered tree, the impious one immediately dies, and thus all the flower of his honor and glory drains away.

He will not depart in vain, deceived by error, because he must be redeemed at some price. Therefore, perhaps the devil says this, and the wicked man persists in impiety through the hardness of his heart, because God does not reward him according to his merits: while God in no way spares him, and if he prays for this with powerful and composed words to obtain it, since he is already condemned to eternal torments according to God's just judgment.

Before his days are completed, he will perish. The day of each person is said to be fulfilled when the retribution of good men and evil men comes. Therefore, this man, whether human or devil, anticipated the day of the clear judgment before the Lord will give it to them in the judgment: he has foreseen in predestination (Al. he foresees): just as in, etc. And his hand shall wither. Surely not having any fruit of good work in itself.

He is wounded like a vine at its first flowering, and like an olive throwing off its flowers. In the bunch it is clear that the fruit of the work is understood. Therefore, the flower of temporal joy will not be able to lead to the maturity of eternal fruit, because it will be dissipated by the hot wind of pride in the very hope of false glory. Whether injured by the cold of God's love, as if by frost, as I think is said in the following in the same sense. And as if casting away its flower like an olive. For in the divine Scriptures, the olive and the vine are sometimes understood as representing only a man: sometimes a people, whether good or bad. And when he says it will be laid waste or overturned, it is to be understood as it is written in the Apocalypse: 'Whoever keeps the commandments of the Lord will not be harmed by the second death.' Therefore, the vine and the

olive can be understood as the people of the Jews. Therefore, this vine will lose or forfeit the fruit of holiness and justice, which did not want to have Christ as its first and best flower, and all saints in the field of the law. For He Himself says, 'I am the flower of the field.' But, as if an unbeliever and incredulous, so that the faith of Christ might not blaze in him, she cast Him off from herself. And while she casts Him off outside the vineyard and shakes Him off from herself like a flower, she herself, torn away from the root of the patriarchs, is uprooted, and, separated from Christ, is shaken off from the fruit of our salvation. For the congregation of hypocrites is barren. The robber and violent one is represented by Job in these speeches, and it is said that wealth collected through iniquity will not benefit him: for thus he spoke against Job in the first discourse, where he also compared him to a lion and lioness, and to the cub of lions and a tiger. But it is more trustworthy to believe God, who, praising him, said that he was not a simulated person, but rather innocent and sincere. But as Eliphaz says. And fire shall consume their tents, who gladly receive bribes. No harm can happen to the holy man Job. For he himself, as I have already said, spoke thus concerning himself, testifying according to God's testimony of himself, and said this, that though a stain adhered to his hands, when he spoke of bribes. By mentioning fire, he surely signified Gehenna, because the tents, that is, the bodies of the wicked, are to be consumed. Concerning this fire, also Zophar says in what follows: The fire that is not kindled shall consume him, that is, the impious.

She conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity, and her womb prepares deceit. David also later said of such things: Behold, she has given birth to injustice, she conceived sorrow, brought forth iniquity. Therefore, sorrow is injustice, and iniquity. Thus the wicked person brings forth what they have conceived, and yet the womb of their heart does not cease to prepare deceit. These are then brought forth when their actions come to fruition. Therefore, in a concept, an unjust thought is understood, just as in giving birth the result of evil thoughts is recognized. Eliphaz spoke all these things against Job; but we have already said before that these things can be seen as coming from the devil or any wicked person through the ministry of prophecy, as well as other things that his friends have spoken.

Chapter XVI.

But Job answered and said: I have often heard such things; all of you are burdensome consolers. Will windy words have an end, or is it something bothersome to you if you speak? I could speak similar things to you. And I wish that your soul were in place of my soul! If you, he says, were enduring these things that I endure: I would not deal with you in such a way that you do not cease to act towards me.

I would console you with my words, and I would shake my head over you. I would strengthen you with my mouth, and I would move my lips as if sparing you. Surely I would encourage you with the sweetness of my words: I would also support your minds, which have been aggravated by bitter afflictions, so that you would not fall into blasphemy, and I would sustain you with gentle and peaceful speech. But what should I do? If I speak, my pain will not cease, and if I remain silent, it will not retreat from me. That is, whether I speak these words to you now or remain silent: I confess that I am tormented by unceasing grief. But now my pain has overwhelmed me, and all my limbs have been reduced to nothing. This also must be understood of Christ. My wrinkles testify against me. The contraction of the skin, which is dried up by the same pus, I suffer, in a way, gives

evidence against me, and as if speaking, reveals how many pains or torments I endure. And the deceiver rises up against my face, contradicting me. He has gathered his fury against me. Here either Eliphaz himself speaks falsely because he reproaches holy Job, saying that he endures these things because of merits of sins, or the devil, who called him a sinner. Otherwise, the deceiver is to be understood as Judas or the Jewish people, who gave false testimony against Christ. And he gnashed his teeth against me, threatening and roaring. With the mouths of friends, who disputed against the holy Job, the devil threatened: or the Jews gnashed their teeth against the Savior. Another interpretation: The arrows of the pirates fell upon me. Those pirates are either ministers of the devil, whether they are men or demons: who are then called pirates in the Scriptures, when this world is called the sea. But the arrows can be understood as pains or torments that he suffered, so that blasphemy may die because of being pierced by them. And thus indeed, the gold and silver of his wisdom and knowledge, as well as precious garments of virtues, hope and faith in God will be taken away from him, and exchanged for valuable necklaces. My enemy looked at me with terrifying eyes. In those terrifying eyes, he described the invisible enemy who wounded the soul within himself, whether through nocturnal visions or through the terrifying countenance of friends, intending to threaten: and so, while Job's friends spoke wicked things with holy understanding and even with mockery, it must be understood in reference to Christ.

They opened their mouths against me, and reproaching, they struck my cheek; they were satiated with my punishments. Therefore, in the cheek, there is a certain nobility of character or honor that is evident. And as others have said, he was fiercely struck on the cheeks, to the extent that he became estranged from honor, nobility, and wealth when he willingly presented his cheek to be struck in accordance with his faith, which the devil attempted to disturb by striking, as if breaking open a doorway of divine confession, or when they falsely testified against Christ, or when they said, 'Crucify him.'

God has concluded me with the wicked, and delivered me into the hands of the impious. That is, to the devil and his angels. Or it can be understood in reference to Christ, when he was delivered into the hands of the Jews.

I, that once wealthy person, suddenly am crushed. He held my neck, broke me, and made me his own as if a sign. That is, from rich to poor: or Christ, from God born as man.

They surrounded me with their spears: they wounded my loins. They did not spare, and poured out my entrails on the ground. These spears, mentioned in this place, are clearly understood as the wounds of affliction that Job suffered: or they can be understood as the blasphemies against Christ that he endured from the Jews. But Job not only decayed throughout his entire body, but also liquified with the stench of pus: so that Job himself said, my wife recoils from my breath. All around his loins have rotted. If it is to be understood about Christ, he wounded my loins. Because the Jews persecuted the apostles up to this point, who were born as it were from the loins of their doctrine, in order to wound them with the wound of unbelief by denying Christ: while Peter says, I do not know the man. And he held my neck, or as others have said, holding my hair he tore it out. Therefore, let us now understand with what madness the devil has moved and shaken this man with his power, or broken him, so that he even tried to pull out his hair. Or concerning Christ it is to be understood in this way: at the time of his passion, the adversary held him by his own permission, and he inclined even to the sleep of death, whom he had already broken by beatings

and the fastening of nails, and they placed a sign of salvation on the opposite side.

He has struck me with a wound upon a wound: he has fallen upon me like a giant. While my weaknesses and wounds multiply, countless blows are added to me, and I am completely divided and broken down, so that no residue of my limbs remains that sustains any solidity. The same must be understood about Christ: When Judas was killed by a deadly wound of apostasy, he did not spare him; for he was so consumed with cruelty that he even proclaimed the evil he had conceived in his mind with his mouth: they added wounds of nails to the wounds of the cross.

I sewed a sack over my skin, and covered my flesh with ashes. And it seems to me that this saying, to the humiliation of his kingdom pertains to me. But the horn is called kingdom in the Scriptures: according to that, He will exalt the horn of His Christ. But Christ called that nation from which He was born a sack. And He covered the princes of the Jews with ashes, when He transferred the kingdom from them, due to the sacrilege of denial, to the Gentiles. My face swelled from crying, and my eyelids darkened. Crying or tears are generated in a person from pain or sadness; but tears sometimes flow silently down the cheeks: crying, however, is accompanied by tears, not without sound and bodily movement: Job testifies that he had such crying, which arose from the afflictions of his soul and from the torments of his sufferings. Likewise in another way: the prophets understand the face of God because they know the future: when they contemplated the destruction of the wicked in the spirit, let us understand that they wept for them with constant groaning. The eyes of Christ also grew dim, while the martyrs or saints, wavering and troubled in temptations, were disturbed: but they remained in the light, liberated by the grace of God.

I have endured these sufferings without iniquity, as I have had clean prayers to God. None of the saints have prayers to God that are as clean and immaculate, without any stain or slightest thought of sin, as the mediator of God and man, Jesus Christ, who did not sin and no deceit was found in his mouth. Indeed, it is to be believed that he has prayers and supplications according to the humanity he assumed, when he himself, according to his divinity, hears with the Father. Whether they are saints, who for his name have suffered without any iniquity of rebellion or any crime, and have been killed by persecutors: as for those persecutors, they have been given over to death without charge.

Earth, do not cover my blood, nor let my cry for hiding find a place in you. This is all that it says, that the merit of the innocent, and of one who is conscious of his innocence, may not go unnoticed, especially when he himself has suffered such great evils. By the name of blood, he wanted to express the condition of this present life. But by placing the cry in this location, he calls attention to his own holiness which protests against the punishments inflicted deservedly upon the wicked for vengeance, but upon the just for testing. Sometimes in the Scriptures, a cry of the emotions and the focused mind is shown towards God, or even a cry of the wickedness of the people, who were expected to produce grapes, but produced thorns. Not every cry is called wickedness, but only that which is done publicly. For behold, my witness is in heaven, and my conscience is in the highest. For God has borne witness of him. My verbose friends. One who speaks words that do not pertain to God is called verbose; but one who speaks the words of God cannot be judged as verbose. My eye drips to God. With tears he calls upon God. And I wish that a man would be judged with God, just as the son of man is judged with his colleague. This is what he said: I wish I had the opportunity to argue with a man, so that I could prove myself innocent. But

I do not want my God to enter into judgment with me, for He is the one who searches hearts and minds; He is God, whose judgment cannot be deceived; and He Himself does not need to be questioned by anyone. For behold, the short years pass, and I walk a path from which I will not return. Thus he believed that he would not return either to his mortal body or to the tortures of his body.

Chapter XVII. My spirit will be weakened, and my days will be shortened. This means that in the shortness of his life, his spirit will gradually diminish and fail. And only a tomb remains for me. For death is the end of all torments.

I have not sinned, and my eye remains in bitterness. It is true, that I have not sinned in a way that is pleasing to God. And although this passage can be understood to mean that he has not sinned in God, and yet has sinned as if in Him, he suffers the consequences of the blasphemers. And perhaps because he is praised by God in the present, he had not sinned: but he admits to having sinned in the past times of his youth.

Deliver me, and place me next to you, and let anyone's hand fight against me. Therefore, he desires to hide under the shield of God's protection: fortified and defended, he does not fear the raging enemy.

You have made their heart far from discipline: therefore they shall not be exalted. For Job speaks these things to God, concerning the devil and his servants who preceded sins: indeed for which they received the punishment of hardness. Therefore, the reason for which we speak, they were distanced so as not to attain discipline, because they lost the exaltation of their good nature due to their own will.

He promises prey to his partners, and the eyes of his sons will fail. He has made me as a proverb of the common people, and I am an example before them. The partners or sons of the devil are his servants: but they are called partners because of their close association in conspiracy against God. The sons are called so because of their imitation of the devil himself. Therefore, these demons promised the blessed Job as prey, their father, and the head of rebellion, the devil, while believing that they could drive him to blasphemy through such great sufferings and that he would thus be abandoned by God, or when he stripped him of all the glory of his house and his sons. My eye was filled with indignation, and my limbs were reduced to nothingness. According to the Gospel: The lamp of your body is your eye. Therefore, Job laments that his eye has become blind due to that indignation, which preserved the merits of his holiness: because he suffered unjust punishment with a clear conscience. The righteous will be astonished by this. Marveling at the just judgments of God, how the righteous, who are without crime, are afflicted with punishments. And the innocent will rise up against the hypocrite. The hypocrite is the devil himself, who, being of darkness, that is, the inventor of sin, by departing from the true light, becomes dark. Like Lucifer, who set his throne in heaven and transformed himself into an angel of light. Indeed, Job called each of his friends a hypocrite because they deceitfully spoke deceitful words under the guise of consolation. And the righteous shall hold to their path, and with clean hands shall add strength. In which indeed virtues manifest themselves more so as to grow.

Therefore, all of you convert and come: and I will not find any wise person among you. Convert, he says, from the perverseness of your way of thinking, in which you constantly strive to condemn

me. Come: the speech of the inviter is for the advancement of a better life: which is, oh you hypocrites, and not true, nor faithful friends, come to the recognition of truth, which you least know how to possess.

These are my days that have passed. These days of departed happiness can be understood, in which the blessed Job lived, strong in virtues. Therefore, he speaks with a sigh that these days have passed, when he was surrounded by many misfortunes and endured unbearable pain. My thoughts are scattered, tormenting my heart. They turn night into day, and again, after darkness, I hope for light. When I am continually placed in the intention of one contemplation, and have my thoughts always directed towards God: the wounds of this approaching misery, I see those same thoughts of mine scattered from their unique solidity in me, and for this reason my heart is tormented: because it is torn apart by their fragmentation, seeing me endure evils incongruous with my simplicity.

If I endure, my home is hell, and in darkness I have made my bed. Tormented by the punishments of the body and the torments of thoughts, as it is said, he was driven mad with ceaseless time, and therefore he cried out that he was already suffering the torments of the underworld. Or perhaps that separation by which he was made different from other people, sitting in filth, was called darkness, because they did not have the light of human consolation.

I said to decay, you are my father: my mother and my sister are worms. For such a long time, I am disgusted, that I call the very decay itself, and the worms growing in its putridity, my parents: and through this, just as no one of mortals can exist without parents: so also I became, as if without decay, and I could not be without worms. They are thus in my flesh as if in their own nature: as if I myself were subsisting from them. When they are generated in me from the corruption of my flesh, I am not generated from them. Where he has shown that mortality was brought about by sin: to whom corruption belongs, and decay to corruption. But he called the Father the origin of the human race in Adam, who became corruptible due to corruption. And he called the mother human nature, tainted by corruption. And he called every descendant of Adam a sister, who is born from the corruption of mortality, like from the corruption of decay: as Baldad also said: Man is decay, and the son of man is a worm. Where is now my waiting, and who considers my patience? What he says, and who considers my patience? openly manifests himself strong in those torments: for which he almost complains that he could not reach the retribution of so much labor.

All my things will descend into the deepest depths of hell. Others have said, 'All my good things.' The good things say that they are descending to the underworld, which is my soul, or I myself am descending for them. Truly, we do not believe in justice, that such a great and noble man could have been frustrated by his holy works. But what he says: Will there at least be rest for me? That is, if I suffer the punishments of hell in this life, do you think there will be any rest for me in the places of punishment? But this is spoken by one burdened with miseries, rather than conquered by despair: for in other places he says to the Lord: I know that you protect me in hell: until your fury passes.

Chapter XVIII.

But in response to Bildad the Shuhite, he said: How long will you continue to speak such words? Understand first, and then let us speak. That is, what will be the end of this verbosity, as if it is

insincere: either only Job is accused of being verbose by Bildad, or as if he is compelled to speak by some unknown spirit.

Why have we been regarded as beasts and made unclean in your sight? This is said because it is believed that the holy Job looked down on them like dumb animals and considered them the lowest and most unworthy for conversation; and so, they appeared to be possessed by anger to the point of seeming to suffer madness.

Why do you waste my soul in your anger? Speaking against divine justice, stirred by the madness of rage, it is necessary that you bring death to your soul. Will the land be abandoned because of you, and the rocks be moved from their place? It is as if he were saying: Will the world not belong to its ruler because of you, so that if he finds any sinners, like yourself, he will not punish them. By the name of land and rocks, the whole multitude of peoples, the exalted and arrogant of the world, and the powerful can be understood metaphorically. The rocks can be understood as the souls of men, just as the land can be understood as human flesh. But even angels can be called rocks because of the loftiness of their nature and their eminent honor. Will not the light of the wicked be extinguished: and the flame of his fire not shine? He spoke of this extinguished light: when Job was deprived of all present happiness. And when he says: Nor will the flame of his fire shine: that is, it will not return to its former happiness. The light will be darkened in his tent, and the lamp which is above him will be extinguished. Not only, he says, will he lose present happiness, but also the light of God's remembrance, which was in the tent of his heart, will be darkened, so that God may not ascend to his memory, and deservedly the lamp of divine protection, which had been above him, will be extinguished. His steps of virtue will be hindered, and his plan will overthrow him. Like a proud man confident in his own strength, he will be caught in the snares of afflictions and troubles, from which he will not be able to escape. For he has sunk his feet into the net, and he walks in its snares. The name of the net and its snares signifies an unavoidable evil: which anyone wishing to strip off is hindered by their very effort, and is entangled so as to fall. The plant is held by that snare, and thirst is kindled against it. This snare itself is reasonably felt as the devil, who watches sinners to undermine their heel, and is also called thirst: because, just as someone burning in some good desires the death of a man, it thirsts. His trap is hidden in the land of his foot, and his snare is on the path. He hides it with the traps by which he is caught, either in himself or with a stumbling block, that is, the obligation of sin, and in the cruelty of his conduct, in which he thinks he is walking correctly, the snare of this deception is hidden. From all sides terrors will terrify him, and they will envelop his feet. Whether sorrows. Certainly the proud man will always be terrified by the fear of impending calamity. These fears can also be understood here not as affections of the heart, but rather as the very ministers of the devil. So they set about terrifying the holy Job in many ways, in order to make him yield to them.

Let his strength be weakened by hunger, and let starvation attack his ribs. The term 'hunger' can also refer to the devil himself: he suffers from this kind of hunger, which is never satisfied by the deaths of men. And he himself suffers from hunger, because he does not deserve to receive the word that proceeds from the mouth of God. And therefore, under the name of ribs, the protections of the chest are signified: with which he has constructed himself as if with a certain closure, so that the food of divine speech does not reach him. He also describes the punishment of the impious. May she devour the beauty of her skin, and may death consume her firstborn's arms. The beauty of her skin, that is, the adornments of virtue, and the arms, the strength of her kingdom, have been

destroyed by the devil, who is therefore called the firstborn of death, because through him death first entered the world, and he is the inventor of his own death. His confidence is torn from his tabernacle, and he treads upon him like a king of destruction. Thus, it is said that this destruction is the devil, who is king over all the sons of pride. But he could not trample upon the holy Job in order to bring him down.

They dwell in his tent, his companions who are not. The companions, allies, or sons, as mentioned above, are ministers of the devil: he who is said not to be in this place, and although he exists by the nature of his being, yet he is not, as I said, because he has become estranged from God through transgression.

Let sulfur be sprinkled in his tabernacle, so that he may smell the smoke of hell here. Its roots will dry up downwards: but its harvest will be destroyed upwards. The harvest can be understood as works, which, emerging outwardly and publicly from within, spring forth from the root of faith. Otherwise: its roots will dry up downwards, that is, the works that it has accomplished in this world will be found dead, resembling the dryness of the dead. But its harvest will be destroyed upwards; in the future it will least obtain the reward of its labor. May the memory of him perish from the earth. That is, may he accomplish nothing worthy of remembrance, and may his memory also perish from the earth of the living. And his name is not celebrated in the streets. In the streets sat kings, among whom he desires not to earn a reputation for justice. The virtues of the streets are understood: in them wisdom acts confidently and traverses the city of God, Jerusalem: in which the divine sacraments and mysteries have been spread according to the commandment of the Scriptures. Therefore, the old, the insane, and the children play vehemently in these streets.

He will be expelled from the light into darkness, and will be carried away from the city. From this temporary light, he will be sent into the eternal darkness of the underworld: or even from the portion of the saints' fate, to be driven back into the darkness of torment.

There will be no seed of his, nor offspring in his people. This means that he will leave behind a future unworthy of the memory of his people or his homeland; according to the words of the Psalmist: 'The generation of the upright will be blessed.' Therefore, he did not want to produce such a generation in his people, so that he could boast in this spiritual people and homeland. And there are no remains in his regions. It is clear that nothing was left for the holy Job. However, spiritually understood, the wicked will have no remnants of their generation in the future. On that day, the last ones will be amazed. That is, at the time of his damnation. And horror will first invade. That is, the lowest and the highest will be terrified: that is, powerful and great kings. Whether the last and the first, both men and angels: the holy ones as well as sinners can be understood without absurdity.

These are therefore the dwellings of the wicked, and this place is his who ignores God. He seems to pronounce the sentence of a cursing speaker, and says where such a proud one, namely, the ungodly, will dwell. But Job is not wicked, whom God calls righteous and innocent.

Chapter XIX.

But in response, Job said: How long will you torment my soul and crush me with your words? It is clear that he is worn out by the responses of his friends, and he is afflicted, tired, and destroyed.

You confuse me ten times, and you do not blush, oppressing me. Ten days, he mentions for the whole time. But just as in a large number in the book of Revelation the number of time is understood: so also in this same sum of numbers a smaller number is signified, so that we may know that the greater number is signified now, now the smaller, according to the diversity of places in the divine Scriptures, with this number remaining solid and perfect.

Indeed, even if I am ignorant, my ignorance will be with me. But you, on the other hand, rise up against me and accuse me of my own reproaches. You think that I, he says, am ignorant of God, just as you also say. Is it fitting for friends to insult the oppressed, from whom they expect more comforting in their troubles? This is not the work of faithful friends, but rather the mockery of those who ridicule. At least now understand: God has afflicted me with an unjust judgement and has encircled me with his whips. Behold, I cry out, enduring violence, and no one listens. I shout, and there is no one to judge. They said that he unjustly endures the hardships of torment: but they, speaking from their own deserved suffering, think that he has erred in this sense of theirs, and therefore later say to God: I have spoken foolishly and things beyond my knowledge.

It has surrounded my path, and I cannot pass through. I was proceeding straight and undefiled towards the glory of my merits. Therefore, this ignominy of suffering has surrounded and blocked me, so that I cannot attain that glory. And in my path I set darkness. That is, on the path: this is the corrected way, on which, as if through a narrow and difficult path, I was proceeding with a sure hope towards the just retributor, I found darkness in this misery and calamity. My glory has been stripped away from me and the crown has been taken from my head. The glory of my kingdom has been deprived of me: even the trust of faith has been taken away: which from the very summit of my mind, which is the head of rational nature, he has as it were removed the crown of honor.

I am destroyed on all sides, and I am perishing, and as if uprooted from a tree, my hope has been taken from me. I have been deprived of home, kingdom, family, children, friends, and the health of my body: thus, with all these things taken away, I see that I am perishing, whose very hope of life has been taken away like a tree.

He is angry with me, his fury has held me as his enemy. The anger of God in this context can be understood as the devil himself, who persecuted the blessed Job in various ways, that is, with blasphemies and torments of his flesh. At the same time, his robbers came and made a way for themselves through me. The wrath of God is the devil, and the robbers are his ministers: this is what he says, and they made a way for themselves through me: when they stripped him of either the possessions of the world or the health of the body. Hence it is beautifully said: And they have besieged my tent all around. My brothers have made themselves distant from me, and my acquaintances have retreated from me as strangers. My own close relatives have forsaken me, and those who knew me have forgotten me. The inhabitants of my house and my maidservants have treated me as a stranger, and I have become like a foreigner in their eyes. I called my servant, but he did not respond; I begged him with my own mouth. They have set traps for me outside; they have surrounded his tent in a circle; that is, they have placed torment upon his body. But they were not able to incline their soul towards sin. My wife was repulsed by my breath. She said that it was rotten inside, so much so that she couldn't stand the smell, not even my wife could endure it: where could it have come from that she had an abscess in her abdomen, that it held the entire chamber of her belly, and from there, speaking, she spat out the foul odor of the festering

wound. And I prayed for the sons of my womb. The fools also despised me. In the divine Scriptures, sons are also called descendants and those who are born in a longer lineage. Therefore, when she said sons of her womb, she looked within herself as if to a fountain and to the origin of her posterity: from there the streams of her family lineage flowed. She could also call them sons of her womb, whom she had formed as if by the seed of her wisdom, having within herself the form of grace by the grace of God, and the discipline of natural law in truth. And when I had departed from them, they were speaking ill of me. My former advisers despised me, and the one I loved the most turned away from me. This perhaps means that they wanted to imply that they had forgotten about me and had distanced themselves from their feelings and hearts towards me. My skin, with the flesh consumed, clung to my bones. The flesh of it had become so dry that no moisture remained in it, and because of this its skin had in a way adhered to its bones: doctors call this weakness marasmus. And only the lips around my teeth were left. For the devil, after consuming the flesh of holy Job, left his lips intact so that he would have a place in the torments in which he could easily blaspheme: as if blasphemy of the heart did not exist: for which Job himself, like for his other sins, offered a burnt offering to God on the seventh day for his children. But the devil reserved his tongue so that he could understand if Job, because of his simplicity of heart, uttered blasphemy on his lips. Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends: for the hand of the Lord has touched me. Therefore, he called the very wound that he suffered the hand of the Lord, which was made by the power of the Lord. Touching, for afflicting, is to be understood.

Why do you chase me like God, and satisfy yourselves with my flesh? God has judged me, to whom alone it is allowed to have control over everything in His work. Why do you presume to afflict the innocent like God? Shouldn't only He have the authority to do so? Or do you think that God needs your permission? Who will grant me, that my words be written? Who will give me, that they be engraved in a book with an iron pen, or on a lead plate, or carved in stone? Since solace could not be found in any man, he turns to God and prophesies the future resurrection in the spirit, where he will receive a reward for these evils, and he wishes that these words be inscribed on hard stones so that the prophecies may endure for ages to come. For I know that my Redeemer lives, and on the last day I will rise from the earth. And again, I will be clothed with my skin, and in my flesh I will see God. Therefore, the Church, which confesses the true Incarnation of the Only Begotten Son of God and firmly believes in the true resurrection of the dead, protects and defends itself with this shield, and it convinces and conquers its enemies. Where are those who say that we will have different bodies in the resurrection? Let them hear this man, praised by the mouth of God, saying: Whom I myself will see. I myself, Job, who lie in the dung, and am consumed by all kinds of wounds: I, I say, Job, now corrupted and dissolved by wounds, in this mortal flesh, shall see God in the future incorruptible resurrection, glorified; and in order to express the restoration of his own body, therefore he said: And my eyes shall see, and no other. This hope is stored in my bosom. All things have been accomplished in my bosom.

Why, therefore, do you now say: let us pursue him? Why do you act now, as if I were believing in something empty and without worth, as if I did not fear God: whether because I am a stranger to the divine religion, you want to pursue me and sting me with your sharpened words. And let us find the root of the word against him. You see, therefore, that you are not behaving faithfully with me as true friends, but you are devising deceitful snares from my words; since you desire to find an opportunity, like a certain root of reproof, in my very words.

Therefore flee from the face of the sword: for the avenger of iniquities is the sword. This is what he says: if you depart from my presence, you will be able to escape the sword of just judgment of God. For the sword is the tongue of the king, and not carnal, as Solomon says. And know that there will be judgment. By the judgment of the just judge of God, I will be able to judge the mockers.

Chapter XX.

But in response, Sophar the Naamathite said: Therefore my various thoughts succeed one another, and my mind is carried away in different directions. Therefore, he says, I am excited and troubled in thought: because you say that you endure these evils without cause from God the Judge, when one should not suspect anything evil from God.

I will listen to the doctrine by which you accuse me, and the spirit of understanding will answer me. I will indeed hear you reproaching and rebuking me, because perhaps I should not be reproached for being in pain. It is appropriate for me to respond to you about God, who is most just, because you could not punish me in such a way unless you were conscious of evil and guilty of many crimes.

I know this from the beginning, since when man was placed upon the earth: that the praise of the wicked is short-lived, and the joy of the hypocrite is like a moment. Now he has begun to hurl curses at the holy Job: he openly declares him wicked and a hypocrite, because he pretended to be righteous and has now become rebellious against God.

If his pride ascends to the heavens and his head touches the clouds. A clear and certain hyperbole, saying that the man is excessively arrogant and swollen.

Like a dungheap at the end it will be destroyed, and those who had seen it will say, 'Where is it?' To whom have you been compared in all things to a dungheap, and you yourself now see yourself rotting. And those who had once seen you reigning in glory now say with mocking voice: 'Where is that wisest of men, and mightiest of kings?'

Like a flying dream, it will not be found; it passes like a nocturnal vision. It is clear, as it says: it disappears like a rising dream. The eye that has seen him, will not see him: nor will his place behold him any longer. That is, the honor of the wicked cannot be restored. Her sons will be crushed by poverty. Whether they are her biological sons, or the works that are sometimes referred to by the name of sons, or those who have imitated him as a father, they will be reduced to nothing by God's judgement, which you can see has already been fulfilled in your sons, even in your carnal works. And his hand shall give him his pain. For by God's righteousness, he deserved to receive the evil of vengeance, for this is the work that God has done. His bones will be filled with the vices of his youth. This is said because from his youth, from which he began to commit more serious sins, he will persist in the same sins until old age, for which he will never want to repent. And therefore, it follows. And with him sleeping in the dust. That is, after the death of vices that are in the soul: either until death, which occurs through the dissolution of this body. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to understand old age in this place itself: in which old age and the hardness of aging are prematurely indicated. Or his bones will be filled with the vices of youth, etc. So, if there are any natural virtues of the soul in an impious person, they grow in him with his vices from his youth, and they are dissolved or flow away, so that nothing solid and powerful remains in them: because

now they are covered and concealed by the same vices, like flowing flesh; whereas they should rather restrain, contain, and govern vices like solid and firm bones, and therefore sleep in the dust of his flesh: because, by the vices resisting and overpowering, they will lose the strength of their good nature. For when evil was sweet in his mouth, he will hide it under his tongue. Sweet evils are impious, blasphemy, and other sins of the mouth. He will hide it under his tongue, saying: where is for him labor and pain, and he will defend and conceal, as Scripture says: Whoever covers his iniquity, will not succeed.

He will spare it and will not abandon it. That is, he caresses, nourishes, and feeds his evil, and, delighting in it, he never regrets to leave it. And he will hide it in his throat. It seems to me that he is always ready to blaspheme and does not think at least for a moment about what he is going to say: because he already has blasphemy ready, which he pours out with a curse from his heart. His bread in his belly will be turned into the gall of asps within him. This is to say, that the bread of this kind of man's entire life is the delight of sins, the sweetness of allurements, which will afterwards be bitter and deadly to him. What he said in his belly, he says this in his heart as well, that he may suffer bitter pains, keen and excessive, with conscience tormenting him for his iniquities. The wealth that he devoured he will vomit out, and God will extract it from his belly. The serpent's head will rise and the venomous tongue will strike him down. What he unjustly and violently seized and invaded, God in his justice has punished him for, and thus will be extorted from the wicked one what he unjustly took. But that angel who killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand appears to have been a good angel, for angels are reapers: the tares are to be burned with eternal fire.

Let us know that the beauty or delights of paradise, and its abundance, are also signified by these names: and these kings, who were not adversaries to the truth, are rightly understood to be those impulses of the river, which gladden the city, flowing from the source, or from the river of the Scriptures: or we rightly understand these same apostles as those impulses, going forth from the source of the Gospel to water the barren lands of the peoples: which impulses also we ought to understand as torrents, on account of the swiftly poured out doctrine of them, which divine doctrine is compared to honey on account of the sweetness of God's words, and to butter on account of the simple and innocent food of the same doctrine: which in the psalm it is said that the wicked shall not possess.

You shall read what He has made all things; yet it will not be consumed. It is a deception, because Gehenna is a certain everlasting incorruption, and eternal perseverance of torments.

According to the multitude of their inventions, so also will he suffer: because he hath broken in needy men's houses, he hath taken away, and hath not built up. According to that which the prophet saith to God: for thou wilt render to every man according to his works. And his stomach is not satisfied. I think this stomach is called a certain receptacle of the soul, where his thoughts, like hidden food, are contained, which he calls inexplicable. And when he has obtained what he desired, he will not be able to possess it. Just like you yourself, who have lost all your inheritance by the just judgment of God.

He did not leave any of his food, and therefore nothing will remain of his possessions. He incurs the mark of inhumanity because he did not offer refreshment to any stranger or guest from the abundance of his table. But Zophar is mistaken: because the holy Job says: 'If I eat my morsel alone.' None of his food will remain, because his possessions will not flourish. When he has been

satisfied, he will be tormented, he will be consumed by heat, and all pain will rush upon him. When of course he has been filled with riches and the abundance of all things, a sudden death will come upon him: confined by misfortune rushing in and enclosed, he will be tormented by the disasters of calamities. May his belly be filled, that he may release the fury of his anger upon him. We have understood a certain capacity, or ample bosom of the soul in the upper belly. Therefore, he says this, because he is already full of most wicked thoughts, and blasphemy accumulates up to the highest part of his mouth: whether we sensibly perceive the anger of his fury of the devil in his soul, through which the saints are tested. And let it rain upon his war. A war, due to its multitude, can be understood as opposing powers. Therefore, these powers wage war against God when they attack his saints. And what he says, 'Let it rain abundantly upon him,' he prays for the pouring out of calamity upon him: whether it be the impious person who wages war of blasphemy against God, he will receive his due.

He will flee from the iron weapons, and rush into the bronze bow. As if to say: When he thinks he can escape lesser misfortunes, he will fall into worse ones. Or in other words: If he flees from the allies and ministers of the devil, he will fall into the prince of darkness himself, and although they are rebels in malice, strong, and hard-hearted like iron weapons, he will nevertheless collide with the worse author of all evil, as if into a bronze bow: which I believe is named thus in this place because it does not cease to kill unsuspecting people in ambush and deception. Usually, arrows are thrown unexpectedly. And he will not be freed from the hand of the sword. This is what it means: because the devil will not escape eternal death. The drawn sword, and going forth from its sheath, and flashing in its bitterness. For we have said that the bow, with its name transferred, can be understood as the devil: who, while disobeying, transgresses boundaries, and in pride, lifted up, surpasses the limits of holy humility: as if he is drawn forth from the sheath of blessed habitation by the just judgment of God and expelled. Or if we come to know that the drawn sword, always ready to destroy those who flee, has been intended. He will be wounded by a bronze arrow. Bronze is long-lasting: the devil is compared to this metal because it never fails to destroy, nor is it consumed by any age, which also flashes, that is, it transforms itself into an angel of light.

They will come, and horrible things will come upon him. That is, his companions.

All darkness is hidden in his eyes. The darkness in this place is to be understood as sins, whether those which have been committed by the wicked, or those which are to be committed in his heart, and in his affection, and in his thoughts: which are therefore said to be hidden in the secret places of his mind, because he favors them, and takes great pleasure in them. The fire that is not kindled will consume him. We understand this fire, which does not live on certain materials and fuel in order to burn, not absurdly but as hell itself. It will not burn by external means, but as it is created, it will burn on its own, consuming everything that is thrown into it. Therefore, this fire will devour the wicked, rational as he is, in such a way that he will be swallowed and absorbed, and he will be tormented in eternal tortures.

He will be afflicted, abandoned in his own tent. Indeed, because of his impiety, the wicked will be forsaken by God, so that he may be tormented with everlasting punishments in the tent of his body. The heavens will reveal his iniquity, and the earth will rise up against him. Surely the angels and holy men will serve as witnesses, so that they may know that he is suffering punishment most justly. The seed of his house will be exposed. In the judgement of God, when the wicked are to be

condemned, not only all the thoughts of his heart, but also the origins of his deceptive thoughts, must be revealed to God and made clear with brighter light.

He will be cast out in the day of God's fury. On the day of judgment, he will be sent into outer darkness. The impious day could also have been for Job when he was struck with a plague and he ended his speech, saying: Is this a portion of the impious man from God? Here he suddenly shows that he said all of this to holy Job. But what follows: And the inheritance of his words is from the Lord. That is, the retribution of deeds: others have translated it thus, And the inheritance of his words is from the bishop, because just as the Lord is known for his dominion over all things, so the bishop is truly said to oversee all creation. For God, being unchangeable, is not roused to punishment by a disturbed or emotive mind, since, as he says to Moses, I am who I am, not only everlasting, but also eternally gentle. Then let us understand these things to be said about God anthropomorphically, not properly according to his unchangeable substance, but by transferring the names of a passible creature to an uncreated and unconditioned creature, rather as the creatress of all things.

Chapter XXI. But Job answered and said: Hear, I beseech you, my words, and do penance. Suffer me, that I may speak, and after my words, if it shall please you to deride. As for me, is my complaint to man? and why should I not be angry? Hearken ye then to my words, and give ear to my speech. Behold now, I have opened my mouth, let my tongue speak within my jaws: Is my debate against man: so rightfully I should not be sad? First to me that is a burden, and very troublesome, and horrible: because it is not with man, but with God that I have a reason to speak: to whom I presented my purified righteousness, that he would reward the work of this: Behold now like a guilty one of all crimes I am afflicted with miseries. Here he says he is sad, because he knows God does nothing unjustly.

Listen to me, and be amazed, and put your finger to your mouth. What is this secret, that the good and righteous God would work in such a way towards me: especially when I have his testimony of goodness towards me. And when I remember, I am terrified, and trembling shakes my flesh. For when I think of this affliction which I justly endure while living, and of God's judgment, who afflicts no one unjustly, I am reminded and greatly terrified. I know very well that no one suffers any evil unless God permits it. He does not inflict evil on anyone unless He has judged it to be most just to inflict. But these things have happened to Job so that it may become apparent outwardly to people what was already inwardly before God.

Therefore why do the wicked live, become old, and grow mighty in power? Their offspring are established in their presence, and their descendants before their eyes. Their houses are safe and without fear, and no rod of God is upon them. Their bull breeds without fail; their cow calves and does not miscarry. They send out their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They sing to the tambourine and the lyre and rejoice to the sound of the pipe. They lead their days in goodness: and in a moment they descend to hell. Those who said to God: depart from us, and we do not desire the knowledge of your ways. Who is almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit is it to us if we pray to him? And another said: Why does the life of the wicked prosper? And another said: Why do you not look upon those who do evil? Answer me, I pray: If I am wicked, and forgetful of good works according to righteousness, as you affirm, why do the wicked live and are raised up, and are strengthened and comforted by riches? Therefore, I implore you, I ask,

respond: Are you, who defend God against me, accusing him of injustice in this place, so that he may be an unjust avenger against me and merciful to those like me? For these, of which he speaks now, the end and destruction will be eternal death and the damnation of hell. But because their goods are not in their hands, let the counsel of the wicked be far from me. Because for this glory of theirs, and temporary bloom, they will be clothed with perpetual shame before the angels.

Whenever the lamp of the wicked is extinguished, and a flood comes upon them, and the pains of their fury divide them. They will be like chaff before the wind, and like ashes that the whirlwind scatters. But the light of the righteous is everlasting: for in this night of the world, the lamp of faith is not extinguished by any wind of temptation, and there it is prepared for the glory of eternal light. However, the light of the sinner is extinguished within a short time of life: for it passes away like a shadow. There will be, and it will come for the wicked, as Job says, a flood: that is, an abundance of torments. He divides the pains of his rage among them. Without a doubt, God divides the pains, he said, because he will repay each one with the punishment they deserve.

God will save the children from the pain of their father, and when he has repaid, then he will know. The devil reserves the punishment of hell, so that he and those whom he made his children by his example of evil may be punished equally: which, when God repays, their father the devil will then know, that is, then he will feel: when he will suffer eternal punishment with his children. His eyes will witness his own death. Or rather, his own murder, as others have said. For it is a double torment, to see the punishments you endure. And she will drink from the fury of the omnipotent. She herself is the golden cup of the Lord in the hand of Babylon. For what does it matter to him about his house after himself? And if the number of his months is halved. Concerning the same devil, it is said, about whom Solomon says: When the wicked comes into the depths of his evil and sins, he despises it in despair. For now he knows that he and his, who are of his household, and his kingdom, are condemned forever: because there is no will for him to perform repentance. Will anyone teach God knowledge, who judges the exalted? For he who has a just judgment of the exalted and sublime powers of the angels, how can he be taught by anyone, so that his judgment in these matters we have mentioned above may be criticized?

He dies strong and healthy, wealthy and happy: his organs are full of fat, and his bones are irrigated with marrow. Another, however, dies in the bitterness of his soul without any wealth, and yet they will sleep together in dust, and worms will cover them. Of the blessed in this world, and the unfortunate in this life, it is said to be a common condition: His organs, or rather his intestines, as others have said, are full of fat, and his bones are irrigated with marrow. But the other one dies in bitterness of soul without any wealth: and yet they sleep together in the dust, and worms cover them. Therefore, the meaning of this discourse is: that in this world the just and sinners live indifferently, but this difference will be changed in the future, as it happened to the rich man and Lazarus the poor man.

Certainly I know your thoughts and unjust opinions against me. Therefore, I define rightly, says he, what you perceive: that there is one condition in this world for both the sinner to die and the holy one. However, they should be separated afterwards, so that the righteous may be transformed into a reward, but the sinners may be dragged into punishment. But you, on the other hand, unjustly pass judgment on the innocent. And you say. Insulting me, and mocking me. Where is the house of the prince, and where are the dwellings of the wicked? Ask any traveler, and you will come to

understand the same. Therefore, because you think this of me, that the time of my condemnation has come, it is not so, as you believe: for this is a temporal punishment from God, not eternal damnation.

Because the wicked is kept for the day of destruction, and will be led to the day of wrath. And he must be led to the day of God's wrath, so that he may receive the sentence of eternal death. For all the saints are rightly called travelers, because, being unburdened and cheerful, they tread their earthly soil with a brave heart, hastening towards the blessed homeland, and complete the laborious journey of this world. Therefore, those who ascend to the foreign people, whether adorned or with the belt of faith, gird the loins of their mind against the dissolution of vices. Who will argue his ways before them, and who will repay him for what he has done? It seems to me that Job specifically spoke about the devil, although it can also be understood generally about all sinners. Who among men can argue against him because of his most polluted way, through which he made the whole world journey: or give him what the creature can deserve, unless it is the Lamb of God alone, who did not commit sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth.

He himself will be led to the tombs. To death indeed of torments; which he himself brought upon men in Adam, and he himself will be led down to the underworld, so that he may be perpetually punished there. And in the heap of the dead, it will watch. And although it must be led to be condemned to punishments, yet rejoicing in the death of men, with every urgency of cheerfulness, it will watch the same heap of the dead being destroyed: or certainly it will always live in death. The river of Cocytus was sweet. They say that Cocytus is the river of the underworld. However, in the divine Scriptures, we read of the same river as a torrent, a well, a furnace, eternal fire, a lake, a pool, and Gehenna. By the name of glaciers, I think are meant the very duties of the Tartarians themselves, and the ministers of infernal punishments bound in places of torment, and it has been said almost ironically, because they desire him and the inhabitants of the underworld, so that he may punish them and they may be satiated by his destruction. Certainly sweet was death: it acquired countless peoples for him in peace. And after him, he will draw all men. Those who imitate his example, whether he draws all men after him, according to the transgression of the human race in Adam. And before him countless (ones). What he deceived, and (he) sends (them) ahead to punishment to follow (them).

Therefore, how do you console me in vain, when your response has been shown to contradict the truth? In this verse, he concludes all argumentation of his dispute: he convicts his friends, who without cause argue against him about the aforementioned reasoning: when they doubt that the wicked and sinners are punished in this world, among whom they also condemn him; he convicts them that even though they may boast greatly in this age, they are being led to the judgement of damnation.

Chapter XXII.

But Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: Can mortal man be compared with God, even though he may have perfect knowledge? Therefore, these things are said in rebuke to Job: that he arrogantly claims to speak with the wisdom of his own heart.

What does it profit God if you are righteous, or what do you give Him if your life is blameless? No one with his righteousness and holiness has made God better, because He is the source and

origin of all goodness and does not need the goodness of anyone, as the prophet says: 'For I have no need of your good works.' Will the one fearing argue against you, and come with you to judgment? Is this the cause of the fear of God, that God should fear you? Perhaps you could become powerful someday, and being made equal to him, you could resist him? These things are said rather mockingly and with a mocking sense. And not because of your great wickedness and countless iniquities? He says, 'Not fearing this severe punishment accuses you, but because of all your evils, to which you willingly adhered. Therefore, because Job has the primary evil, that is, great wickedness, from which all the other evils depend, he adds and narrates them as if they were individual instances, thus speaking.'

You have indeed taken the pledge of your brothers without cause. This means that you have forcefully and in an enemy-like manner stolen other people's belongings, or unjustly extorted pledges, or by pretending to be just, have wrongly deprived others, and the crime is aggravated when it is said that you did not spare your own blood. And you stripped them of their clothes. What you have done to the clothes is evident here: among whom not even the naked person has been found immune from your plunder.

You did not give water to the tired person. It is obvious. And you have withheld bread from the hungry. It is serious to not give, but even more serious to take away. Therefore, it is a great sin to not show hospitality to those in need. However, we clearly know that Eliphaz has lied, as we read later about all the good that Job has done. By the strength of your arm, you possessed the land, and by your great power, you held onto it. However, it accused him as proud and a tyrant, who did not rule his people with justice and fairness in his kingdom, but rather, with cruel manners, he subjugated them with the burden of slavery, as if it were a virtue of his arm, and no one could live except as a subject to his most harsh rule.

You have dismissed widows as empty. You did not want to hear to come to the aid of those who were abandoned, afflicted with troubles and humiliated: you dismissed each one of them as empty, when she could not obtain what she was asking from you. And you broke the arms of orphans. If they had any strength to rely on, you took it away, and you crushed their souls with a despair of life, either by not defending them from evil men; you shattered the virtue of their hope, which they looked to you for, while you allowed them to be oppressed.

Therefore you are surrounded by snares, and sudden fear disturbs you. Eliphaz said this, that blessed Job himself was troubled by the fear of a guilty conscience, and with the same fear coming upon him suddenly, he completely lost the counsel of patience against adversity.

You thought that you would not see darkness, and that you would not be overwhelmed by the rushing waters. In such security, you acted as a powerful one, with the unjust acts, so that you did not believe that these evils of your own merits would come back to you. By these dark miseries indeed, and calamities, suddenly depressed like the rush of overflowing waters, so that with your heart obscured, you do not see what patience teaches to be right. In many ways in the divine Scriptures, darkness is called sins, ignorance, or tribulation, or even the obscurity of divine volumes is placed under the name of darkness. Do you think that God is higher than the heavens, and is exalted above the pinnacle of the stars? And you say, 'What does God know?' And he judges as if through darkness. Therefore, first Eliphaz accuses holy Job, because he asserts that God falls into ignorance, and there are many things in his creatures that he does not know. Then

he affirms that his judgment is uncertain and doubtful. And therefore he judges as if through darkness, that is, as if probable. His cloud covers him, so that he does not see; and he walks around the circuit of heaven.' These things therefore, as though from the senses, he imagines to be true of blessed Job, so as to not only accuse him of blasphemy, but also declare that he is ignorant of God and imprisoned by the place where he is. And surely, it is a great sacrilege to think this of God. Do you want to keep the path of the ages, which wicked men have trodden? To keep, he said in place of observe: this is, do you desire to follow their actions and attain a wasted life, those who perished in the flood, and in Sodom, and in the wilderness, or those who do not believe that God cares for human beings.

Those who were taken before their time. Like Dathan and Abiram: or those who perished by sudden death. And the river overturned their foundation. With the anger of God looming over them, like the force of a river, the stability of their present life was overturned: as if a river, with pressure coming upon it, their bodily foundation was demolished, so that the walls of their lives would collapse.

Those who said to God, 'Depart from us.' Therefore, they are condemned because of their apostasy. But Job is not like this, who says, 'Even if He kills me, I will hope in Him.' And they thought that the omnipotent one could do almost nothing, when he filled their houses with good things. Therefore, the impious did not fear that they would incur the vengeance of punishments due to their sin and the good things that God had bestowed upon them. Whose opinion is far from me. And he counts holy blasphemers among their number, whom he detests in the same way. The righteous shall see and be glad. Or, as others have said, they shall laugh: he speaks of the abjection of the unfaithful people. And the innocent will mock them. How can this not be said of his saints? When sinners see God's righteous judgment condemning the just: they will see and rejoice. For the justice of God is pleasing to them, just as they are pleasing to God. But Eliphaz, although he may have spoken correctly here, wrongly assumes that Job is equivalent to the wicked and sinners. Was not their pride and arrogance cut down? Indeed, their pride and arrogance were cut down by the aforementioned examples of punishment, and they were handed over to perpetual destruction. And did fire devour their remains? He also spoke of the remaining sins that will be punished on the day of judgment, for in this world, no punishment is sufficient for the most wicked sinners. Whether we understand the remains as the future generations of evil people, who are called their remains because they imitate their fathers, or whether they are seen in a positive light, according to the saying: 'For the thought of man shall confess to you, and the remains of thoughts shall keep a feast to you,' so that the thought of man leads to the confession of sins, and the remains are the eternal reward of this confession, through which, having been forgiven of their sins, they may rejoice in spiritual joy as on a feast day. The remnants and the last things can be understood, according to that saying, The remnants of the wicked will perish.

Therefore, acquiesce to him and have peace, and through this you will have the best fruits. The holy Job exhorts to consider himself and gives advice to the one who is not seeking, that through patience he may be converted to God. And so, after the war of the approaching horrible calamities, he could have the peace of safety.

Receive the law from his mouth, and place his words in your heart. That is to say, listen to what he has commanded, and keep it.

If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up. If you repent of your actions, you will be built up: that is, you will be fortified daily by divine protection. To those who are negligent in repenting, this excellent example should be proposed: for this exhortation is necessary in order for sinners to restore lost glory. And you will banish iniquity far from your tabernacle. If you wish to improve and correct yourself, God will credit to you that you banish far from yourself your own iniquity: when you yourself remove it from yourself. Whether the devil himself is called iniquity: that is, the one who takes you into his power, will be banished.

He will give for the earth a flint, and for the flint golden streams. This is what he says: that if the propitiation of God establishes him in His most firm commandments, he will not give his attention to earthly things and the pleasures of the flesh, but rather he will strive for the strength of virtues, through which he can attain the abundant riches of heaven. This is what Eliphaz metaphorically says to the holy Job: that if you are placed on the rock of good conscience, the sense of divine wisdom will flow to you like a golden stream. And the Almighty will be against your enemies. 'When you have done his will,' he says, 'you will have him as a defender.' And silver will be gathered for you. We said that gold should be understood as meaning, and silver as meaning the language of justification. Therefore, the commandments and judgments of God themselves are divine languages. So, when you turn back and dwell in constant meditation on these things, by discussing the various meanings, a manifold and copious abundance of language will be gathered for you.

Then you will abound in delights upon the Almighty. You will be filled with the aforementioned spiritual delights, and you will see Him with the grace of the Holy Spirit the desires of your heart, and you will feel them fulfilled in the joy of your mind. And you will lift up your face to God. You will raise your free forehead to pray to God: whether now not guilty, nor bent down with a bad conscience, you will raise your soul to God.

You will ask him, and he will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows. A sinner cannot hear you unless you have first prayed for your sins.

You decide on the thing, and it will come to you. Only obtain the thing that is just, holy, and honorable, which you have asked for from God. And in the paths, the light will shine. Your ways and actions will be good, and the knowledge of God will be a light to you, as well as His visitation and protection, so that the correct actions of your paths may be illuminated: lest by chance, through the error of ignorance, you stumble into dark mountains. For whoever humbles himself will be exalted, and whoever lowers his gaze, he himself will be saved. And the Lord in the Gospel said: Whoever humbles himself will be exalted. The innocent will be saved, and indeed cleanliness of one's hands will be saved. That is, by the grace of good works, or by splendor. The ancients said this: Rescue the innocent, and you will be saved by the purity of your hands: where retribution seems to sound, by saying, rescue the innocent: so that you may be saved by the innocence of your hands.

Chapter XXIII. But Job answered and said: Now my words also are in bitterness, and the hand of my scourge is more grievous than my mourning. Let us leave unbelieving friends, who justly determine my misery in this calamity, and add to my bitterness. I will turn myself wholly to God, and I will say to him with confidence for the following reasons: Who will grant me to know, and find him, and come to his throne? It is said that by understanding one can know God: one can also find

him by good works, and come to his throne, and by progressing in knowledge of the future and in the thought of judgment, one can approach even the contemplation of divine power itself, which the pure heart of the world will surely see. This heart, purified by numerous trials of character, is said to have been possessed by the holy Job.

I will present before him a judgment. 'I will present before the sight of my God the judgment of your justice,' he says, 'according to this: From him I will seek the fairness of his judgment.' However, before his final sentence is pronounced against me, I will bring forth many reproaches to him, because although I know his singular justice, I suffer as a righteous person the torments that should rather be given to the unjust and impious. Therefore, he says the following: And I will fill my mouth with reproaches: so that I may know what words he will answer me, and understand what he will say to me. That is, the complaints of just sorrow.

I do not want him to contend with me in great strength, nor crush me with the weight of his greatness. Let him argue fairness against me and my judgment will prevail. In his majestic greatness, let us understand awe, not something physical, for God is a spirit. I am certain, he says, that these miseries of affliction, when judged by him himself, it will be clear that I am enduring them without any merit of sin; therefore he says: My judgment will prevail.

If I go to the east, he does not appear; if to the west, I do not understand him; if to the left, what shall I do? I shall not apprehend him. If I turn to the right, I shall not see him. But he knows my way, and he will test me like gold passing through fire. While he enumerates the parts of the world, he says that he inhabits the whole everywhere; yet he confesses that he is completely invisible to himself, because his divinity does not subject itself to the gaze of creatures. He declared that he knew God's whole way of life, for he knew it very well.

I followed his footsteps: I kept his way, and did not stray from it. I did not depart from the commandments of his lips, and I did not hide the words of his mouth in my bosom. This is what he wanted to be kept, and I kept it. For he alone is, and no one can turn away his thought, and his soul has done whatever he has wanted. This is because his judgments are inscrutable, and his ways are unsearchable. And when he has fulfilled his will in me, there are many other similar things that are available to him. When he has already afflicted me with whatever tortures he wanted, he can still inflict on me as many more as he wishes, causing the insensible to tremble like the sensible. And therefore I am disturbed by his presence. Mind you, feeling and partly understanding. And considering him, I am troubled with fear. That is, I am filled with awe at the majesty of him, and shudder at it.

God softened my heart, and the Almighty troubled me. My heart was dissolved by excessive fear and dread, as we know from this place, not because it was softened from the hardness of unbelief to receive faith, since Job himself remained strong in faith toward God. Hence it follows: The Almighty troubled me; as mentioned above. For I did not perish on account of impending darkness, nor did darkness cover my face. She referred to the very miseries of her own calamity as darkness, which she wished to call like sudden ruins threatening, for as they pressed upon her, she said that she did not perish on account of despair: nor did the disbelief of my mind blind my face, or the denial of God.

Chapter XXIV.

From the Almighty, times are not hidden; but those who know him, are ignorant of his days. Indeed, those who feel and understand God are ignorant of the days of his eternity. In that eternity, neither times nor days, which are in temporal existence, are found, where one eternal day is. Or in other words: He knows everything that I now speak or suffer.

Others have moved boundaries, plundered flocks, and fed upon them. That is, they have moved flocks and consumed them. This is evident according to the letter. Now let us examine what it signifies according to the mystical understanding. By moving boundaries, that is, by overthrowing the decrees of the Church, it signifies that heretics, who by the novelty of perverse doctrine, exceed the boundaries set by the evangelical law and the apostles, and thus by deceitful persuasion plunder the flocks of the Lord, that is, the people who believe in Christ.

They drove away the donkey of the orphans and took the widow's cow as a pledge. They have disrupted the path of the poor and have oppressed the gentle people of the land. The orphans, indeed, are vulnerable, either infants in faith or those who do not have God the Father to defend them against their adversaries. The heretics forcefully and cunningly drive away their minds, like a strong and necessary beast, from carrying God within themselves through faith. They strip them of the virtue of their souls, called the name of an unclean animal, while taking it away from them, they lead them into perfidy under the guise of true religion. Widows are also those souls who have lost their husband, their God, and their Lord: from whom heretics, by way of a pledge of their perfidy, particularly confession, through which they are initiated by their false inventions, attempt to take away the purity of holy virtues and the useful works of the soul, and make themselves debtors to them. The poor, too, in this place are to be understood as those who are deprived of the testimony of faith. Others are rich in faith: the heretics have subverted the way of religion for these, by which they were able to return to God, with their errors. But let us consider those people gentle who do not have the ability to resist their enemies with steadfastness, and who, due to the weakness of their spirit, are easily led astray. Therefore, they are oppressed by many teachings of errors and various superstitious beliefs. However, those who mortify themselves with vices are on the good side: they are the poor, they are the apostles. The heretics try to remove them from this number: while they persuade some of the poor of the saints or deceive the gentle ones who cannot resist them but listen patiently out of simplicity, they strive to extinguish them.

Some, like wild donkeys, go out into the desert for their work, and they prepare bread for their children. They are violent, those who seize things publicly. They are pirates and robbers, those who go out from hiding to do their work, certainly not of God.

They do not harvest their own field, and they sell the vineyard of the one they have oppressed. The field, or vineyard, is a certain way of life for each individual, which is cultivated by each person, when the filth and certain shrubs of vices are cleansed, or even uprooted. Therefore, since the diligence of this cultivation is of little benefit, when every good of nature is not referred to faith: because the just person lives by faith: the aforementioned worshipers of idols, oppressing the hearts of the faithful, even though they live honestly, lead them into error as if by some kind of seduction: while by dispersing their crops, they violently snatch away their field or vineyard.

Men also undress, removing their clothing, while they are stripped of their possessions by the good works.

Those who do not have coverings in the cold are certainly stripped, for they do not have the clothing of God's charity, and therefore they suffer from cold in unfaithfulness: because they do not deserve to be clothed with the tunic of the fervent spirit.

Those rains wet the mountains. Therefore, he says to those who have been abandoned in their misery from their homes: since the caves and shades of the mountains will cover them, and how great is their necessity to dwell in the mountains themselves, he describes. Those rains wet the mountains, that is, they are cleansed by the abundant waters flowing from the mountains themselves. Those rains wet the mountains. They are not watered by the rains of the sky, but by the mountains that rise up against the knowledge of God, which is from heaven. And not having a covering, they embrace stones. Others have said more clearly: those who do not have a covering are covered with a stone. And not having a covering, they embrace stones. This means that without the garment of virtues, they delight in their sins and errors.

They committed violence by robbing the orphan children. It is understood what they did to those who had nothing, since they did not show mercy even to the poorest. They committed violence by robbing the orphan children. They also preyed upon those who possessed some knowledge of natural goodness but could not defend it; living with a fragile and childish mindset, they were deceived by wicked persuasions and subjected to force. And they have plundered the common poor. They have also treated the multitude of the people with contempt through their actions and ignorance, and the poor, if they had any justice or even natural innocence, they have deprived of the aforementioned goods while dragging themselves further into the evil of their own error.

They took the grain from those who were naked and walking without clothes. With the nakedness of faith, deprived of the protection of God, they also took away the garments of hope, charity, and other virtues, with which souls are adorned. They even took the grain, in which they had the divine knowledge concealed, so that the hungry, at some point when the veil is pulled back, could receive the naked truth itself as the bread of life.

Among their heaps are those who are thirsty from treading the winepresses. This is a great and most unjust evil, that while others labor and bear fruit, others rest and indulge in the wine of those who, having gathered their own vineyards, are thirsty. Among their heaps are those who are thirsty from treading the winepresses. Therefore, when the stalks are removed, containing within themselves the knowledge of the divine name, those who had them in full understanding would prepare solid food. But deceitful oppressors boast among their goods, resting as it were among heaps, and attribute it to themselves. If someone follows the natural virtues of the gentiles, from whom they establish in themselves a collection of works like seeds, they themselves, however, deceived, trample on the vintage of virtues and, having been squeezed out, thirst: because they did not find the cup of truth among those from whom they were led astray in error.

They cause men in the cities to groan. Not only, he says, do they plunder those who dwell without defenses and afflict them with the rule of harsh superstition: but also those who dwell in cities fortified by good morals of their minds, they destroy by the battering-rams of errors through warfare. And it is clear that this has happened to many philosophers: who, although they have been great and renowned for their self-control over their bodies, have still not been able to attain knowledge of the truth without groaning and great labor. And the soul of the wounded cried out, and God does not allow it to go unavenged. God does not allow the voice of those who implore

him to go unanswered, but instead gives vengeance for their errors: so that while the wounded of sins turn to the truth, falsehood, convicted, may be punished. For it punishes when it deprives of conversion those who were seduced. But what he says, 'The soul of the wounded,' let us understand as the collective voice of those who cry out to God. The tribulation of the destroyers reached the city's inhabitants with a groan. But those who are wounded are not only to be understood as those whose bodies are pierced by others, but also those whose souls are struck by excessive fear of the enemy, as if by a sword.

They themselves were rebels to the light, they did not know its ways: nor did they return to its paths. Demons, heretics, philosophers, and all the wicked are to be understood as those who strive against the doctrine of God, because the commandment of life is light, because in nature there is light, which is of itself: but darkness is the blindness of the heart. And therefore, if the blindness of the heart is darkness, rightly the external darkness is understood to be punishment. Just as the unjust are cast into the darkness of their sins, into the darkness of torments: so the divine judgement, both within and without, is consummated before the angels of God, and they are clothed with their own confusion. But we can understand that the wild donkeys who dwell in the desert represent the pagans who, in their error of gentility, are in the desert of true religion, because they are not contained by the yoke of a certain religion. Therefore, they go forth to their work. For they are said to go out, when they show their own emotions through false teachings to those whom they seduce. For in this way, with all cunning, they prey on wandering souls, lost to their own posterity, like the nourishment of deadly doctrine, they abandon obstinacy. In the morning, the murderer will rise first: he kills the needy and the poor. Again in the morning it is said, because the evil is committed publicly and in broad daylight, so that the perpetrators may be seen as glorying in their actions, and according to the example of the Sodomites, they do not conceal their sin but proclaim it. This could also have been said about unjust judges, who rise early for this purpose, in order to pervert the cause of the needy and the poor by being corrupted by bribes. Or differently: Therefore, here the murderer, rightly each heretic is considered, from their number who kill the souls of men with harmful and deadly thoughts. What he says, he rises early in the morning: that is, because when those who were recently initiated in faith have the morning, that is, as if the holy religion had a beginning: or they themselves have become morning ones, when they have become sons of light and of the day in the Lord; they hasten to offer the poison of their own treachery, in order to deceive them. Or in another way: Christ must be understood, for it is his resurrection that heresies began to exist in the Church. But during the night he will be like a thief. All the senses of heretics must be compared to night and darkness, because they do not have the light of truth. They are also adulterers, because they corrupt the pure words of God with adulterous interpretation. I think night is called so because transgressors of affairs seek a certain secret time, like the night, when they receive bribes for transgressed causes. The adulterer's eye watches the darkness, saying, 'No eye will see me,' and covers his face. Or as others have said: 'He has made a hiding place for his face.' That is, the eye of his heart has been blinded by forgetfulness, so that it does not rise to his memory, for God is the observer and knower of all evil thoughts and human deeds.

He destroys houses in darkness, just as they had planned for themselves during the day, and they are ignorant of the light. It is evident that they plan this robbery by their own thoughts during the day before they come to the darkness of their wicked deeds. He destroys houses in darkness, just

as they had planned for themselves during the day. Each heretic, standing in the depravity of doctrine, does not descend into the souls of the faithful with the sweet and gentle message of the Gospel, like a gentle rain and like dew in silence, but rather with harshness and with a sharp intention to wound, he destroys the homes of their souls. For heretics, like on a designated day, arranged for themselves to pierce all mortals with the dangerous spears of their teachings, when they had determined to create heresies while still in the Church, that is, on the day of truth.

If the dawn suddenly appears, they consider it the shadow of death, and thus they walk in darkness as if in light. Once justice for themselves and the light of honesty from elsewhere begin to appear, and the evil of their conscience is thrown upon them, they then consider themselves deserving of the punishment of death, because justice and holiness, as divine Scripture says, are abhorrent to the wicked. If the dawn suddenly appears, they consider it the shadow of death, and thus they walk in darkness as if in light. If anyone should arise as a disputant, who sets forth against them the light of manifest truth, they are convinced that they have incurred the shadow of death, and nevertheless they boast in the darkness of their folly, as in the light of wisdom. The devil may also be understood as a murderer, thief, and adulterer: because he became a murderer in order to deceive man, as the Lord says: He was a murderer from the beginning. He was also found to be a thief, who tries to steal what belongs to others, by arrogantly claiming divinity for himself through presumption of his own mind. He also lost that pure and chaste love of God when he sought adulterous endeavors against the love of his own God and Lord, of his own free will. Therefore, in the early morning, that is, around the very birth of the first man, he arose to deceive him through his woman, and killed him, devoid of counsel and poor, who, being less cautious due to lack of experience, fell for the deceit of deceitful persuasion. But he himself worked the night of sin: when he wanted to invade divinity like a thief, saying, 'I will set my throne above the stars of heaven and I will be like the Most High.' And from then on, with his companions whom he called the stars of heaven, he was called night and darkness, and the prince of darkness. And rightly so, for he had lost the light of the Lord. Now, being in the darkness of his sins, he covered his face with the hardness of his evil conscience, not intending to repent. And therefore, deprived of divine light, he strives and endeavors to commit those things that are worthy of darkness and gloom. While carrying out his works in the underworld, he will dig for himself dwelling places, along with his ministers, with whom he attempted to rise up against God, the creator. Therefore, his ministers, while still blessed in that eternal bliss, on that everlasting day which has no beginning or end, have engaged in this sacrilege of tyranny with their leader, and they thought that God, who is the true light, wise and intelligible, would leave this evil of their arrogance unpunished, so that he would not cast them out from that blessed and glorious abode. And I think he said this because they were ignorant of the light: they believed that God would never do this to them, which is why they became blinded in their minds and became eternal darkness. They were also called the powers of darkness, that is, sinful humans. And that is why they tremble when they hear the name of God, which we think is signified by the word 'dawn'. Therefore, the thought of the devil could only reach as far as speech, not action: for he did not reign there, and he was immediately cast down when he spoke aloud what he had thought, and he fell downward. From this, it was evident that he spoke to persuade the other angels with the devices of his own heart against God, and in this way, with many consenting, a kind of conspiracy would be formed against God, as if it appeared so. However, it must be held firmly that the duties of celestial warfare should never be carried out in silence, since we read that the angelic powers sing before the throne of the Lord with unwearied

voices to praise his glory. Nor would the Apostle have said in any way: 'If I speak with the tongues of men and angels,' if the languages of the angels were not such as of men, even though they are different from human languages. Therefore, there is a very great and essential difference between the diversity of languages among earthly beings and the divine ministries. The canon of the New Testament has thoroughly instructed us about the great matter, which contains the acts of the apostles.

He is like a light leaf on the surface of the water. Because they are not of the great Church, that is, the heavy and holy people, who are compared to the fruitful grains of the best wheat, and who are to be stored in the barn of eternal dwellings, like light chaff with no weight, which pertains to the burdening of virtues, he will float on the element of water: so that he may be carried away by a gentle breeze. Or in other words: These waters have the shape of people who love this world: because they are always inclined towards lower things, dragging much mud with them, which is deposited in the chaotic weight of the underworld.

Cursed be his portion in the land. For whoever is not in the land of the saints, which is the land of the living, will be cursed: whether his portion in the land is cursed, that is, in the mass of humanity. And let him not walk along the paths of the vineyards. That is, let his conversation be so cursed in this land, that he does not imitate the people of God or the holy souls, which are like fruitful vineyards, and let him not walk through them. For the teachers, like farmers, cultivate these vineyards with teachings like tools, so that they may harvest the wine of good works, which, in faith, that is, pressed in the winepress of the Church by the weight of tribulation, may be stored in the storerooms of celestial homes, burning with the most sweet scent and with the power of merits, through the grace of Christ.

Let the excessive heat pass away from the waters of the snow. Holy Job seems to me to speak of two hells, fire and cold, through which the devil, heretics, and wicked humans are transformed. Perhaps in that very hell such torments of sensation will be suffered by those who are tormented in it, that now they feel as if a burning fire, now an excessive intensity of cold, and a penal transformation, now cold to those who feel it, now heat, so that they estimate a passage from place to place. And so the Lord says in the Gospel: Cast him into outer darkness: there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Let this gnashing of teeth arise from the rigidity of cold. We can find a certain similarity in our bodies: in which, before the most burning fire of fevers, there precedes an intolerable rigidity in the typical movements, that is, the abundance of red, which is the hottest. And these two things, which are recognized as contraries, are said by physicians to be produced in man from the same bile material. And even to the depths goes his sin. The sin of the wicked and unjust is so great and so heavy, that it drags him down to hell like lead in the strongest water.

Let his mercy be forgotten. That is, he who is not only merciful, but is also called mercy itself: because the one who is merciful is greater than the act of showing mercy, and therefore the name is, as it were, a prototype that is greater than the act that is named. Therefore, whoever can be called merciful, truthful, and just among the saints - none of them can rightly be called mercy, truth, and justice. The sweetness of it is worms. In a figure of speech, that is, it is abundantly filled with worms. And in the Gospel: Their worm will not die. Therefore, such sweetness will be for the wicked and those who hate God.

Let it not be remembered. That is, it does not reach the mercy, which, we have learned from the Holy Scriptures, will happen to the devil and his heretics and impious. But let him be crushed as an unfruitful tree, according to that which is said: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire. Or let us understand by the wood, sin, which happened through wood: through which wood the devil added to the heap of his crimes, that he became rebellious against God, so as to cast man into death: wherefore he is now condemned to eternal destruction: on account of which the devil himself can be called an incurable and unfruitful tree: because he will never be healed by the remedy of repentance. But concerning the wood of life, that is the cross, or concerning Christ, it is said: According to the days of the wood, so shall be the days of my people. For he indeed cultivated the barren. That is, he nourished and fostered sterile souls, and unfruitful in virtues. And those who do not give birth. He also nourished their souls with the delights of their ascent, which, although they are able to give birth to good things from the womb of the heart, they were unwilling, as David says about such people: They did not want to understand, so that they could do good. And he did not do well by the widow. The widow, lacking the strength of a holy soul, who had had God as her husband, refused to be consoled with exhortation, so that she might act in such a way as to return to her former husband. The strong ones were brought down by their own strength. Others have said. And in anger he overthrew the weak: that is, he defeated and detracted the strong and virtuous men. And when it stands, it will not believe in its own life. God has given him a place for repentance, and he abuses it in pride: but his eyes are on its ways. And when it prospers, it does not even think, with a conscience biting, that it can perpetually enjoy the same happiness, since it is of such obstinate and hard mind, believing that it can stand in that lost life.

They are raised up for a little while, and do not endure, and they shall be humbled like all things, and they shall be taken away. 'For a little while' is said, in reference to the brevity of the present life, in which the wicked are exalted for a time. They shall be taken away like all things, that is, like those things which are of the opposing party, whether all temporal things are taken away at the end of the age. And just as the tops of ears of grain are crushed. For just as the tops of ears of grain, a clearly fragile thing, are crushed with such ease that they are reduced to nothing: so too these of whom I have spoken, like the finest dust, or like the down of ashes, will be ground down before the face of God, when they have been worn away by the insult of confusion. But if it is not so, who can accuse me of lying and present my words before God? For who among you can prove me wrong, that it will not happen as I said, and prove me false, when you assert that God will repay sinners in this life according to their merits, which you falsely cast upon me out of your contentious spirit.

Chapter XXV. But responding, Baldad the Shuhite said: Power and fear are with Him, who makes harmony in His heights. Is there any number of His troops? Replying to the blessed Job, Baldad said that in the future, judgment will be more in the hands of God. He does not exercise judgment now, but keeps it reserved for the future. However, He does bring about a perpetual harmony of peace in His heights, that is, among His angels or His holy people, by guarding them so that they do not incur the enmities of celestial offense through any lapse of sin. And over whom will his light not rise? For he illuminates every person who comes into this world. Can a man be justified before God, or can a world be brought forth from a woman? It is clear that in their lack of an answer, they repeat more frequently what they have said before.

Behold, even the moon does not shine, and the stars are not clean in its sight. Under the name of the moon, or the stars, we can understand angels and heavenly powers, who, in comparison to divine reverence, can be seen as unclean and dark: it is certain that, although created creatures by nature do not sin, they are capable of sin; as was evident in other angels of the same nature who sinned. But it must be believed that no angel has sinned after them, because they turned all their free will towards the love of God alone; and so they became unmoving, persevering in the truth, in which the aforementioned angel did not wish to stand with his own kind. Therefore, the will of the angels has become unchangeable through the love of God, which is in them by nature. Therefore, they alone have incorruptible honor and glory. It can also be said of these elements that they are called impure because they do not always shine or because they only illuminate bodies and not minds, like God, who is accustomed to doing both.

How much more is man decay, and the son of man worm? For if angels, he says, and even the bodies of the heavens are considered unclean in comparison to God, what do you think, should man be considered, since he himself is decay: and the son of man a worm, born from the same corruption as the worm?

Chapter XXVI.

But Job, responding, said: Whose helper are you? Are you helping the weak and sustaining the arm of one who is not strong? To whom have you given counsel? Perhaps to one who lacks wisdom, and you have shown your abundant prudence. Whom did you intend to teach? Was it not the one who made the spirit? Seeing injustice done to God, moved by righteous indignation, in the very beginning of his speech Job harshly rebukes Baldad the Shuhite with strong words, because he was speaking as if God were weak and in need of any arm strength. Therefore, be aware that the participation in the whole is lesser: a drop compared to a perennial spring; a hidden spark in ashes, compared to divine fire in which all things blaze; a lamp for the body, compared to the sun for justice; a clay jar for the potter, compared to the soul for God. Thus, pondering this, Job wonders why he dared to teach the one from whom he comes into existence.

Behold, the giants groan under the waters, and those who dwell with them. However, the divine Scripture also calls the proud, rebellious, and stubborn people giants. Likewise, the devil and his followers, due to their pride, are called giants. But when it says that the giants groan under the waters, it is as if it had said under the earth, that is, in the depths of the earth, where the underworld is said to be, from which they are also named the underworld. For the nature of water is such that it cannot exist without land. Behold, the giants groan beneath the waters. Surely these groans arise from their pains and the filth of the Tartarean dwelling.

Hell is naked before him, and there is no covering for destruction. This means that the knowledge of God cannot be hidden. And that destruction, which is not unreasonably perceived as the devil, cannot prevail to hide itself from his omnipotence.

He stretches out the north wind over the void, and hangs the earth upon nothing. This is to be understood thus: either that the earth was made out of nothing, or that there is nothing beneath the earth upon which it is supported, since it itself supports all things and is itself upheld by the boundless power of God, because all things are in him and all things are contained by him. Of this the Apostle says: Upholding all things by the word of his power. And because sometimes in the

Scriptures the north wind, by way of symbolism, signifies the devil, for Solomon says that the north wind is a harsh wind, but it is called by the name of the right hand. For indeed he is said to be the right hand, but he is the author of the entire work of the left. Therefore, he is expanded over the empty, that is, over the cold in faith and unbelieving, which is over the empty true religion and the empty. And in order to rule over them like a king, he is extended over them. Again, those same unbelievers, whom the holy Job called by the name of the earth: they are hung over the devil, who was made out of nothing by God, so that they may always be uncertain, and may imitate their head with its members, so that they may be hung over the empty and nothingness, as if they were the head, which has said nothing.

He binds the waters in his clouds, so they do not burst forth all together downwards. Through these clouds, the spacious waters of the air are gathered in the heights, just as in another place we read of God: He sifts the waters from his clouds. Therefore, they are said to be bound in this manner, because they are not poured out all at once upon the earth, as we read happened in the flood. But this is a spiritual understanding, that the holy teachers of the Church are interpreted as clouds, who carry the waters of the Gospel to be poured out to the people and are led by the Holy Spirit to govern them, so that the lands of the peoples may be irrigated and the fruits of virtues may multiply through spiritual operation from this heavenly rain. The waters flowing from the abundance above, God binds in his clouds: so that he may pour out as much doctrine as the capacity of each person's heart allows, like water, as much as the ability of the recipient permits: lest, if poured out all at once, they may hinder the hearts that are less able to receive a more abundant doctrine.

He who holds the countenance of his throne. He reserves the judgment of his own for the future. God, shining with the glory of truth, is said to hold the seat of his justice and piety in all his creatures, in order to obscure and hide the manifestation of his secret judgments, so that the Gospel of Christ may be veiled to those who perish. And He spread His cloud over it. According to what the Lord said to His disciples in the Gospel: To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven. In the protection of His divine custody, He also spread over it the good news of the Gospel, in the cloud of His defense, so that no adversary, however fierce, could prevail against it: of which the Apostle said: Our fathers were all under the cloud.

He surrounded the boundary with waters: until light and darkness cease. Under the name of waters according to association, which is from part to whole, the end of the world seemed to me to have been expressed, because the succession of night and day will pass away. Whether it be about the wicked people, or about the tribulations of the saints, which are often called by the name of waters in the Scriptures. Therefore, these waters have received a boundary from God, whether so that they may always be unjust and sinners, or so that the faithful God may not allow his holy ones to suffer tribulations beyond what they can endure. These things will therefore happen until prosperity, and the wickedness of the impious, which are signified by the names of light and darkness in this place, pass away. The columns of the heavens tremble and fear at His nod. Therefore, let us understand the stability that is solely permanent in the nature of angels, by the name of columns, because they are not only persevering immovably in holiness, but also splendid in the glory of eternal beatitude. For concerning the future immovability of humans, the Son of God says: 'To the one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.' But even the Church herself, which is the congregation of all the saints, is called a pillar and foundation of truth

for her eternal stability in the Lord. The holy angels can also be understood in this way: they are called pillars because of their love and affection, as they care for the salvation of humanity. They are concerned with piety and seem to be burdened with the weight of thoughts. And according to a figurative understanding, the term 'heaven' signifies the Church, in which the mysteries of the heavens are celebrated. Therefore, the apostles and others who are similar in grace are the pillars of this heaven, that is, the Church. They carry and endure diverse persecutions and dangers that come upon them. And sometimes the souls of humans are understood as the heavens. These souls, which we have called heavens by way of metaphor, are the pillars of their thoughts. For it is on these pillars that the soul is supported and governed, and in order that it may not sway or waver from the rust of sin, it is strengthened by the stability of counsel. Because this often happens to human frailty, that where there is less caution on the part of onlookers, the pillars, that is, good thoughts, are fixed on the other side. And for this reason they tremble and fear at the nod of the threatening God: the dreadful judgment of the one preaching. For these thoughts of the soul are not its own, as if they naturally belonged to it, which certainly exist in the existing nature, and they are the ministry of the existing nature, without which rational nature does not exist: because, as I said, they are not themselves per se, but they are the unseen movements of the existing nature. In his fortitude, the seas suddenly gathered. We read about this in the beginning of Genesis. And his prudence struck the proud. To whom is it doubtful that the devil is primarily proud here: who was first struck by God when He deposed him from that blessed and sublime seat of the heavens, of which the prophet says: You have brought low like a wounded proud one. Spiritually, rightly do we perceive these seas to be the Jewish people and the nations, over whom the true Solomon, the prophet David, declares that he will rule, saying: And he shall rule from sea to sea. For from the sea, that is, from the Jewish people, the Gospel of Christ began, because the law came forth from Zion and reached the sea of ■■■the Gentiles. Thus far, these seas of peoples, by the strength and power of the resurrection of Christ, by the ministry of the Apostles and Evangelists, and by the preaching of the others mentioned, suddenly gathered into one body of the Church, and are united in one bond of faith by the love of Christ. His Spirit adorned the heavens. We read in the beginning of Genesis, on the fourth day God placed the stars in the sky, or in the firmament. By the Holy Spirit, He also adorned the rational heavens: which we understand to be the apostles and the apostolic men: who in many places of the Scriptures follow the naming of the heavens, according to this of the prophet: His power covered the heavens, and his prudence struck the proud. Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God, struck the proud devil. Here the saints, distinguished by the Holy Spirit, are like heavenly stars with their gifts of grace.

And, with her helping hand, a twisted serpent was brought forth. Therefore, adorned with the word of God, they scatter like seeds among the people. From the fear of the Lord, they conceive the Spirit of salvation in the womb, and thus Jesus Christ, the hand and wisdom of the Father, is testified to stand with great power beside Saint Job, so that he may offer a kind of obedient service of his own piety to those who are giving birth to children of the coming age and console them in the midst of the pain of persecution: invisibly operating within them, he aids those in labor through his ministry. Because without Him, none of those good works, which we mentioned before in the name of the Son, will have any effect. Therefore, by the charity of His mercy, through this ministry being observed and His piety aiding, in order for souls to give birth to such offspring of holiness, they are brought forth by them and that serpent, in whom there is nothing straight, is expelled from their hearts.

Behold, these things have been said in part of His ways. These are the ways of the Lord, of which the Savior Himself says through Solomon, when He foretold His own birth: The Lord created me at the beginning of His ways, in His works. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was created by God the Father, from the Virgin Mary, to show and make known the ways of His commandments, from which the work of God, that is, humanity, had strayed. And when we barely hear a small drop of his speech. Let us understand the small drop to be the assumed man, who in the psalm is called Mount Hermon. And in Daniel, the carved stone, and a bundle of drops in the Song of Songs. Who will be able to behold the magnitude of that thunder? This is what it means: if the assumption of the form of a servant is contained in nearly ineffable mysteries, and to the comparison of the one assuming, the drop of God is very small: how much more will each person not be able to behold the magnitude of the thunder itself, that is, divinity itself, which is called by the name of thunder because when the fame of His name sounded from on high in Christ Jesus His Son on earth, and was made known to men by this terrible noise. However, none of them will be able to behold the full magnitude of His divinity with their understanding, that is, that, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Chapter XXVII.

Job also added, taking up his parable, and said: As God lives, who has taken away my judgment, and the Almighty, who has brought my soul to bitterness. While he allows the innocent to suffer the punishments of the wicked, he has also filled the bitterness of his soul with present misery. As God lives, who has taken away my judgment. According to the form of a servant that he assumed, the judgment of human will: and it was said in the person of the assumed man, the one praying said to the Father: My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. And therefore my judgment was pronounced, because it demonstrated the weakness of the human race in the truth of the assumed man. And the Almighty, who led my soul to bitterness. Bitter was the cup of death, for which our Savior came to drink: from the bitterness of that cup, he said to his disciples: My soul is sorrowful even unto death. However, the word is to be understood according to the Apostle, who says of God the Father: He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For he was not unwillingly handed over to death. In another place, the same Apostle says about the Savior: He gave himself for our sins.

Because as long as breath remains in me, and the breath of God is in my nostrils, my lips will not speak wickedness, nor will my tongue meditate deceit. Far be it from me to be your judge. This is also what is written about the Lord in Isaiah: Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for he has been esteemed. However, the adverb 'donec' in this context, according to the understanding we have explained regarding our Savior, we do not take it to mean, 'Until the breath of this life is in me,' that is, until I die, but rather we understand it to mean 'as long as' or 'for always and forever' in this passage. As the Lord himself says to the people through the prophet: I am, says the Lord, and until you grow old, I am. For even after the old age of humans, God will not cease to exist, but rather, he will remain perpetually with the same people as they grow old. But concerning what the Psalmist says: The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand. Until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. What then shall we say? Shall we say that after his enemies have been subjected, Christ will not sit at the right hand of God the Father? And where shall be that which the angel says: And his kingdom shall have no end? Therefore, in such places, as I said, it is to be understood as everlasting. Likewise, that which is said about Joseph and the

blessed evangelist Mary, He did not know her until she brought forth her son. For who is so blasphemous concerning the venerable virginity of the blessed Mary, that they would dare to think that she knew a man after giving birth to her Son, the Savior God? Therefore, according to the truth of the Catholic faith, let us always understand, as it was said above, forever. Therefore, Jesus the Lord says, because the breath of divinity is always in me, for according to what I am as a human, I am begotten and created in God: I have in me the spirit of my Father, substantially mine. Therefore, it follows as he says: Until I fail, I will not depart from my innocence. Therefore, because I did not acquire innocence through the industry of character, but I am just and innocent in the same way I was born.

I will persevere, I will not stray from my innocence. For even if I die in these torments, I will not stray from my innocence, which you falsely claim to have lost through blasphemy.

I will not abandon the justification that I have begun to hold. The Savior could have said this, as a man assumed into God, whose beginning is according to the flesh from the virgin Mary: but the sin of man neither had in being born, nor contracted by working: and therefore He alone truly says: For my heart does not condemn me in my whole life. Like the wicked, my enemy, and my adversary, like the unjust. In this place, all life, the present life, must be understood, at the time when he said this: as if he were saying: my whole conduct is now beyond reproach. For my heart does not condemn me in my whole life: that is, to those who give bad advice, as you also do, urging on blasphemy that I do not consent to: which my wife also urged me to do. For my heart does not rebuke me in all my life. Like an impious enemy and an adversary, like an unjust one. For he does not curse by vow, but predicts by prophesying, and speaks according to the merit of sinful men: predicting what each person remaining in sins will receive from him. Now let us return to that place: For what hope is there for a hypocrite if he greedily seizes and God does not deliver his soul? A hypocrite is understood to be false in friendship, or deceitful. How much desire, and almost a thirst for greed, do you suffer, he says, in my destruction, that you would drag me down to Tartarus with your prayers? Therefore, with this wicked desire: what hope of forgiveness will you have before God, if you do not submit to God's care to reform yourselves in this life. Will not God hear his cry, when distress comes upon him? In the time of his retribution, there will be no remedy for sinners: for the Lord will not listen to their prayers on the day of vengeance. Will he be able to delight in the Almighty and call upon God at all times? He will be able to delight in God and call upon him, who is well conscious of himself and presumes rightly, and who has shown himself in such a way as to deserve to be heard at any time.

I will teach you by the hand of God, who has all power and will not hide. Behold, you all know, and why do you speak in vain without cause? This is the portion of the wicked man with God, and the inheritance of the violent, which they receive from the Almighty. That which God has in his hand and power, and in his secret judgments, he says.

If his sons are multiplied, they will be in the sword, and his grandchildren will not be satisfied with bread. In his sons and grandsons, he marked all the remaining descendants of the evil generation. Sometimes in the Scriptures, not only by physical descendants, but also by similarity of character, they are called sons.

Those who remain from this shall be buried in destruction, and their widows shall not weep. This seems to indicate to me that through time to the highest poverty or misery, the offspring of the

impious man or generation must be brought forth, and their widows, overwhelmed by excessive imminent evil, will not be able to cry.

If he acts as if the earth were silver, and prepares clothing like clay. He says that this impious man has an insatiable desire and an unquenchable abyss.

Indeed, he prepares, but the just shall be clothed with them, and innocent silver shall be divided. And Solomon said: He that increaseth his riches by usury and interest, gathereth them for him that will be bountiful to the poor.

He built his house like a moth, and made a shelter like a watchman. With these words he says that the wicked man has labored in vain: because, either quickly passing things, or moths destroying, his state of house is compared. Otherwise: If he has amassed silver like dirt, and prepared clothing like clay: he will indeed prepare, but the just man will be clothed in them, and innocent silver will be divided. He built his house like a moth, and made a shelter like a watchman. So, this impious one, whom we previously said is the devil, in the transgression of Adam made precious and illustrious men like earth and vile clay, from whom he also took away virtues and the good things of nature like garments, and their gold, by which the riches of the mind are signified. For these men had been made beautiful and composed to the image and likeness of their Creator by means of these riches, and by taking them away from them, he reduced them to the utmost poverty and ignominy. Therefore, in these things, men are compared, in Adam, as I said, deceived by the devil, which seem more vile in the creature of the world. But the just Lord, and our God, by taking away the spoils of captives from the devil: also freeing the captives themselves, whom the enemy had prepared for destruction, he exhibited to himself a holy Church from them: cleansing it by the bath of water in the word, and making it without spot, and wrinkle: that is, pure from sin, and simple in the confession of faith, he clothed it with precious clothing. Silver is also understood to represent clear and distinct things in this world: the innocent Lamb of God, and the spotless one who separates and sends believers to blessed and eternal life and glory, and unbelievers to destruction. Whether it is silver with its bright and shining secular eloquence, taken away from the world through Christ: so that the eloquence of believers, adorned with shining and pure speech, may be clothed in his Gospel; for just as the souls of men are clothed in the garments of virtues, so also the senses are, in a certain way, clothed in words when they are expressed in the preaching of the evangelists. He built his house like a moth, and like a watchman he made a tent. As the moth consumes and destroys its dwelling, so the devil builds the house of his lost people to its destruction: he prepared for himself a temporary and gradually loosening habitation, to possess eternal punishments. This, therefore, is that wicked hypocrite who greedily seizes. In not turning back, there will be no hope of forgiveness, since even upon these things, with a certain savage greed, he seizes men unto destruction. Why is he called a hypocrite? Because he transforms himself into an angel of light, whose cry for mercy the Lord will not hear, when he is confined within the narrow bounds of punishment. In God, he will not have any pleasure in good conscience, nor will he be able to boast in his confession, as he will be struck by the divine sentence of God's sword, like the countless sons. Nephews also, in whom those are understood who are led astray by them whom the devil himself had previously deceived: nephews, I say, will not be satisfied with the bread of the vision of God, since they will certainly suffer hunger and want. Because all the saints who contemplate God are to be refreshed and fed by Him: which now the angels are satisfied with. Likewise, we can understand the remaining progeny of the devil, which, like the devil

himself, and his sons and nephews, will be buried in destruction along with the whole body of their people. Those widows also, that is, souls that the devil had enfeebled with their own vices and the enticements of pleasures, and had rendered effeminate, so that they would lose all strength and manliness, they will bewail with no correction and satisfaction, so that at least they may someday repent to God, whom they had lost as a husband, by sticking to vices as if to adulterers. When the rich man falls asleep, he will take nothing with him: he will open his eyes, and find nothing. In Holy Scripture, the rich man is understood in many ways. He is rich in earthly possessions: but if he trusts in his riches, he will fall. So when this rich man dies in his sleep, he will take nothing of his possessions with him: because he came into the world naked at birth, and he will return naked to the earth when he dies. In the resurrection, he will open his eyes, and find no merit in good works. The Jewish people, because of the innumerable divine benefits: the prophecies and promises of the prophets, as well as the frequent discourse of God himself, are said to be wealthy. Hence the Lord said to the Jews in the Gospel: Woe to you who are rich. The proud, not possessing the poverty of spirit, are also called rich. Philosophers, having eloquence and worldly knowledge, are also called rich. But when they are raised on the day of resurrection, they will find no remedy for their salvation. Every heretic can also be called rich, since he assumes that he has many, indeed all, of the rewards of the Holy Church: the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Spirit, even the pledge of the Lord's body, and the inheritance with the holy angels of the heavenly kingdom. Therefore, all of these, whether they suffer the scandal of the cross or, through the presumption of their heart, walk in error, have abandoned the path of truth. Whether because they have obscured understanding, the free will of their own choice persists in unbelief. Or because they have become abominable, exalting their heart after the dream of death, in the resurrection they will open their eyes and find nothing.

He will seize him like the lack of water: a storm will overwhelm him at night. The sudden poverty mentioned refers to wealthy people, as if water is about to come, who, in their misery and unexpected distress, which is called a storm, will be suddenly overwhelmed at night, that is, suddenly, while they are unaware: according to the saying of the Apostle: When they say 'peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them. The burning wind will carry him away and will remove him, and like a whirlwind he will be snatched away from his place. By name the winds have spoken a sentence, that like dust each of them shall be thrown from the face of the earth. And this wind is said to be a burning divine sentence, because it leads or compels to the burning of Gehenna.

He will send upon him, and will not spare. The wind is certainly the sentence of God, or God himself through the sentence of his justice, will send upon him punishments: that is, he will receive the reward of his deeds. For he will not spare, when he will render to him according to his works.

Fleeing, he will flee from his hand. And, he says, he will not be held by the hand of God in order to be saved, from which, like in the manner of flight, he will fall in a swift descent into ruin. But what he says, fleeing he will flee, or as others have said, he will flee in flight: it signifies the sinner perishing forever, because he can never be called back to life, and there will be no place for repentance.

He will stretch out his hand against him and hiss at him, gazing at his place. Others have said, he will mourn over him with his hands and drag him from his place. By certain gestures of human

bodies, he describes the displeasure of an angry God and the wrath of a rich sinner, saying: where he now, as if hissing, indicates how terrible a place of punishment is reserved for him. Judas Iscariot went to such a place.

Chapter XXVIII.

He has the beginnings of veins of silver, and there is a place of gold, in which it is melted. Iron is taken out of the earth, and stone, when heated, is turned into bronze. It seems to me that under the names of these metals, by riddle and parable, he describes the manners of men and the virtues of their souls, not observing the order of the prophets, as is usual. But he wished, according to the authority of the Scriptures, that the word and meaning of the mind should indicate silver and gold. Let us say this, discussing these matters: Silver has its own sources, and there is a place where gold is formed. The veins of silver: that is, the beginning of speech arises from the senses of the soul; but the golden sense is fashioned by judgment of reason and wisdom, and in order to be the best, it is formed by the testing examination of divine fire. But fortitude, which is called by the name of iron, is the one by which we remove the earth, that is, the wickedness of our flesh, from within us: let us resist it, fighting against it, and against the law of the Spirit that is turning against us, by the strength of our soul and virtue. The hardness of a stone also represents the hardness of the heart, which, when dissolved by the heat and fervor of faith, becomes soft: so that it can first receive the words of the writer. Then, like brass that is tuneful, progressing by the merit of holiness, it will attain the solidity of faith for the offering of praises and thanks to God.

Time has set in darkness, and it envisions the end of the universe itself. In divine Scriptures, sinful humans, demons, and ignorance and troubles, or sins, are called darkness according to their manner and places.

We can metaphorically understand this stone as the devil in this place: who, because of his errors with which he had involved the whole world, is called the stone of darkness. Although he is strong and powerful by the nature with which he was created by God, he, trusting in his own strength and not in the Lord and his creator God, has lost the light of wisdom, turned into foolishness and darkness, and therefore could be called the stone of darkness: according to that, The fool walks in darkness. Just as the stone of darkness is called the devil, so is the shadow of death spoken of. For those who think they are defending and protecting themselves from him are actually being handed over to the eternal fires of hell, just like the devil himself. The rushing river divides those who are wandering, whom the foot of the needy man has forgotten, and the impassable. This is what it says: impassable, that is, wandering, and those whom the foot of the needy man has forgotten, the rushing river will separate from the wandering people, because their footsteps have been forgotten. Whether the present conversation is meant to signify the name of the needy man's foot. He says 'forgotten' because the preceding needy one did not implore God for this kind of thing, although almsgiving implores God, that is, the good work that a man has done speaks to God in a certain manifestation of himself. Therefore, Saint Job says that those who live without the true way of religion and who have not shown mercy to the poor, who are Christ's brothers, will be separated by a torrent of fire and will be divided from the company of the saints. Whether here the poor one is properly understood to be our Savior, who became poor and destitute for us even though He was rich. Also pay attention to the symbolism in his foot, whether it represents the incarnation of the human being or the entry into the world. Where the prophet says: 'You have

come to the salvation of your people.' Therefore, those who did not receive the dispensation of their salvation in the Gospel have been forgotten, those who did not want to believe due to the hardness of their own will. And therefore they were called unworthy, because they did not receive Christ, who is the way. The land from which bread arose, in its place, has been overturned by fire. It connects diverse and obscure things, so that the lower things do not cling to the higher things. Therefore, it seems to me that it describes the land of the Sodomites in this place, praising its abundance and beauty with admiration. The land from which bread arose, in its place, has been overturned by fire. This land can also be understood as Judea, in which the bread of God's law was born to the peoples through the teaching of the prophets, but its understanding of the carnal law through the love of God and faith in Christ has been overturned, and it has been established in the right paths and spiritual senses, so that it no longer follows the literal interpretation. The place of the sapphire is its stones and its soil gold. By metaphor, it is said that in Sodom everything was most abundant and excellent, which can even be compared to gold and precious stones. The place of the sapphire is its stones. Thus says the Lord through the prophet: Behold, I will lay your stones in order, and I will lay your foundation with sapphires, and so on. For with the splendor of precious stones, that is, of all those who believe in Christ through God the Father, Judea was then adorned when the people of the Gentiles were joined to it by the faith of Christ. The place of the sapphire, its stones, and its soil, and the place of its gold. Precious stones and gold are said to be found not in the best land, but in remote and barren places. Therefore, according to this mode, Judea, sterile in faith and unfruitful in virtues, had in itself these precious stones: that is, the patriarchs and prophets, and the whole multitude of saints. The place of the sapphire, its stones, and its soil. He called the holy soil of the Church glebe, and its saints for the fertility of good works, which he also wanted to name glebes due to divisions of grace: by which they were rightly considered as gold, in whose hidden veins the senses of great value and worth are born as if seeds of souls. The bird unknowingly ignored the path. The multitude of inhabitants had created many exits in the same region, and perhaps it said this because due to the abundance of people, the birds did not have the opportunity to observe paths or to respond or advance there. And the eye of the vulture did not see it. Because it was planted with such dense fruit trees and closely growing trees, that birds flying above could not devour it. The bird ignored the path: and the eye of the vulture did not see it. We can call the bird and the vulture, the devil himself with his own, who could not know the path of spiritual understanding in the Law and the prophets: that is, what was secretly foretold in Judea. Nor were they able to perceive any trace of knowledge, the hidden mysteries of future dispensation. Of which the Apostle said: We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, which is hidden: which none of the princes of this world knew. The way of knowledge the bird did not know: neither did the eye of the vulture perceive it. These two peoples can be understood here without absurdity, that is, the Jews and the Gentiles. Therefore, carnal Judea, not having faith in Christ, but rather living by the works of the law, did not know the same Christ as the way or path by which one returns to the homeland, which it ignorantly disbelieved: because of its pride, by which it thought it could be justified by the works of the law. The bird has been called light and flighty: and in the very works of the law it is unsteady. But the vulture-like people seems to be similar for this reason: because it was running through the errors of dead men, and was feeding on dead things. These people, therefore, were not able at all to completely understand Christ, covered by the letter of the law, and the land promised through Christ, with the shady meanings of obscurity. The bird did not know the path: nor did the eye of the vulture see it. Under these names,

let us understand the enemies of the Church, who, having their understanding darkened by darkness, did not know the path of His calling, by which, walking towards God, He returns through faith. And those who, being carried away by various errors of dead men, are to be considered as flying. The sons of merchants did not tread upon it. He says this because the land of Sodom was so filled with all kinds of goods that it needed no imports from any other country. The sons of merchants did not tread upon it. The aforementioned merchants or traders are meant. For traders are evil and proud, which also pertains to the devil himself, who invented extreme pride as a sin. And the trader is called such because of the multitude of sins, which he sought either for himself or to destroy man. Therefore, those who cherish this promise of land, which is reserved for the meek and humble at heart, will not be able to trample on it, nor will they have the permission to pass through it as temporary residents. Similarly, Judea, where the bread of teaching was provided by the prophets and priests, was in its own place, not God's: that is, it was in a place of their own pleasure, where they were consumed by desires and allurements, and it was overthrown by the fire of their vices, as the Prophet says: 'All who commit adultery are like an oven whose heart is heated'; and in the Psalm it is said of it: 'Burned with fire, and destroyed by the hand of its own work, it is completely uprooted and excavated.' Although this fire can also be understood in terms of the punishment of sins, as the Apostle says: 'The land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed; in the end it will be burned.' Concerning this fire of wrath, David says: 'Fire consumes their young men.' The sons of tradesmen have not trampled on it. The sons of tradesmen, the disciples of the apostles, and the apostolic men, refer to those who preached the Gospel to the Gentiles. So the Jews, namely the unbelieving land, were not trampled upon in order to proclaim the Gospel to them. Concerning whom it is said in the Acts of the Apostles: It was necessary for you to speak the word of God first, but since you judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. Thus it happened to those who were preaching the word, that the mountain Christ was transplanted into the sea of the nations. Therefore, in the psalm, it says: And the mountains shall be carried into the heart of the sea: that is, either the prophecies of the prophets or the oracles of the evangelists shall be carried over to the peoples of the believing nations. The sons of merchants did not trample upon her. These merchants or traders are wicked and unworthy of praise, who accumulate sins upon sins as if they were riches for themselves. Of them, the Apocalypse says: 'All things bright and fat have perished from you.' Therefore, merchants involved in the riches of sin will not trample upon the Church, that is, they will not dwell in it, because the Lord will possess it as holy and immaculate. The lion did not pass through that narrow passage. Because of the large number of people living in Sodom, the animals were unable to pass through the middle of that region. The lion did not pass through it either. The lion can be understood as the dominion of the devil, or the pride of the Jews. And when it says, 'did not pass through,' it means that it did not depart from Judea, but remained there in the same infidel pride. It can also be understood differently, as referring to the Church. Indeed, in that place of their necessary redemption, where they stand by faith, the glory of their virtues is destroyed by fire. That very fire, of which the Lord Himself says: 'I have come to cast fire upon the earth.' In this manner, therefore, is the Church, that is, the land of the saints, consumed by the desire of the love of God, so that it may not be possessed by carnal concupiscence. In this manner, therefore, is it consumed, that while living in the land of their flesh, the vices of the flesh may die in it, as the Apostle says: 'For those who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh with its vices and desires.' And the lion did not pass through it, as others have said. Here the lion is not

absurdly understood as the devil, who could not cross through the land of the holy Church, because he could not overcome it with severe persecutions.

He stretched out his hand to the rock. It seems to me that the holy Job has presented another enigma, and because of its solidity and strength, it can be understood as Christ according to man, whom he assumed, the rock that is also called stone, by prophets and apostles. Therefore, God the Father stretched out his hand to the rock, that is, his Son, through whom he created all things. He also calls him right hand and arm, and sends him to receive man, as the Apostle said: God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. And for this reason, we understand that the extension of the hand of God the Father and His Son signifies their coming to us, and through Him as follows:

He overturns mountains from their roots. We rightly understand these, through a metaphor, to be demons or proud people: because he openly triumphed over principalities and powers in himself.

He cut through the rocky streams. Indeed, to the hardened hearts of the nations, bound by excessive unfaithfulness, he bestowed the abundance of his grace and, like flowing streams of water, he granted a rich supply of teachings. This very distribution is understood to have been divided, as it is recalled, as the Apostle says: To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge. Others have said: He broke through the river banks: to offer that spiritual doctrine of the Law and the prophets, of which Isaiah says: 'All you who are thirsty, come to the water,' which flowed within the limits of one nation, as if within certain narrow channels, also closed off by the precepts of the Mosaic law, as if by certain river banks. With such obstacles destroyed, it poured out over all the earth, abounding in the Gospel as if from a riverbed. We can also call this earth the Church. As the prophet says, 'The earth will be split by rivers.' We know that it is split and torn apart in this way when it offers itself capable of receiving the word of God. The powerful force of these same rivers works through the opening up of the earth's capacity, which is achieved through the obedience of a rational earth. And his eyes saw every precious thing. Therefore, after the rivers of God's grace were brought forth, God saw how immense and innumerable were the benefits of His mercy. And when He saw, He said that because before His sight the fulfilment or effect of His will had appeared in His Church.

He also searched the depths of the rivers and brought hidden things to light. Therefore, we believe that these rivers are not to be seen as mere books of the old Scripture, but rather in their great depths were the sacraments of the Church, which God the Father, in the time of the Savior, searched out and revealed, bringing to fulfillment all that was foretold. Perhaps by the name of the rivers, the multitude of peoples is sometimes understood, as the prophet Nahum says: The gates of the rivers are opened. By the depths of the rivers, let us understand the hidden recesses of human conscience, which God is the scrutineer and judge of, who, on the day of judgment, will bring to light all the secrets of the heart and render to each according to their works. But where is wisdom found, and what is the place of understanding? By asking this, he wanted to indicate something difficult and scarcely found. In fact, it cannot be found or possessed by man, unless God demonstrates it. Job himself declared this in the following words: 'And he said to man: Behold, the fear of the Lord itself is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.' Man does not know its worth. By saying this, he indicated that the wisdom of the fear of God is invaluable. And the sweet life is not found on earth. Therefore, no one has this wisdom of the fear of God unless they have crucified their flesh with vices and desires, unless they have lived like the

apostle Paul and all the saints, in tribulations, persecutions, distress, and pressures. And for this reason, those are said to live sweetly, who are not held by the yoke of discipline, and rush headlong and unrestrained into the ruin of vices. The abyss says, 'I am not in me,' and the sea speaks, 'I am not with me.' Let us understand this abyss in this place as hell, as the apostle says: 'Who descends into the abyss?' And let us understand this sea as the world, as we have learned from the Psalmist: 'This great and spacious sea.' Therefore, hell and this world testify that they do not possess the wisdom of the fear of God. Places are said to speak for those who are in the places, either of the world or of the underworld. Here he speaks of those who are possessed by the worldly allurements of carnal conversation: this expression is called prosopopoeia, where the person speaking assumes the role of speaking when they cannot, and what it contains stands for what is contained. Indeed, this world contains both heaven and hell: but man is also contained. Therefore, this wisdom is not possessed by the sea of this world, except by the Church alone, which is called an island in the Scriptures because of the raging waves of enemies, just as a little ship is called by analogy in the Gospel. No gold or purple is given for it, nor is silver exchanged for it. This is said because no matter how precious something may be, it cannot be compared to this wisdom. Whether because gold and silver are understood in Scripture to have a symbolic meaning, this is what is being said: no one could perceive or speak of this wisdom based on its merit. The color of the dye from India, as well as the most precious sardonyx stone or sapphire, will not compare to this divine wisdom. Among various precious things, this wisdom is preferred. It should be understood, however, that these precious metals are mostly found in the southern regions. And because in India all idol worshipers are represented, where, as I mentioned, precious colors are either born or made, I think this can be understood because in nations where there is no fear of the true God, there is a fake and earthly religion which is composed under the pretext of the name of God in the falsehood of errors, with different and diverse colors of speech, like a painting, and it shines like a precious stone, or its deity shines with a name, and India and also Ethiopia symbolize darkness or the darkness of sins, which are especially found in idol worship.

Gold or glass will not be compared to it, nor will vessels of gold be exchanged for it. Gold and glass, and even vessels of gold, are understood to be precious and clear: they shine in this world with the name of dignity and the glory of riches. These, certainly, lacking the fear of true religion, will be considered worthless: because they cannot, as it were, approach the exchange of singular wisdom for the sake of their glory. The lofty and eminent things will not be mentioned in comparison to it. Even if they are lofty and exceedingly eminent, whatever excellence exists in creatures, such as angelic powers, all the smallest things, indeed rather unworthy of mention, will be in comparison to it, which made every rational creature please God and be joined to him in holy love. And therefore, this kind of wisdom is preferred to those eminent and lofty things, because without it, they are nothing before God, just like the devil himself who, having lost the fear of divine reverence, lost himself.

Wisdom is drawn from hidden things. Therefore, it cannot be obtained from anywhere else except from above, or from the innermost affections of the heart. It is drawn by the gift of the Holy Spirit, as the prophet says: I opened my mouth and drew in the spirit, so that man may taste God and fear Him, and understand how to turn away from evil. Will not the topaz from Ethiopia be matched to him, nor the purest dyes be composed? In various ways, and with various names, Job, the holy man, says that the fear of the Lord cannot be compared to them in any way.

Therefore, where does wisdom come from, and what is the place of understanding? The questioner asks and says: every creature, or rather, most of all, ignores this wisdom.

It is hidden from the eyes of all living beings: even the birds of the sky are hidden. It must be understood by the world of living beings, of whom he said above, when speaking of this wisdom, that it is not found on the land of those who live pleasantly. But what he said, that this wisdom is hidden from the birds of the sky, should be understood as referring to the proud and the light, or those who have a lofty understanding, which pertains to the swelling of arrogance, or the evil spirits who, according to the parable of the Gospel, devour the seeds of the Lord thrown along the path. So he says that good comes from the fear of God.

Destruction and death said, we have heard with our ears his reputation. Both names can be said of the devil, or he can be called death, so that his followers are called destruction. Therefore, they said that they heard the reputation of the fear of God; for they cannot deny that they have not heard it, since they have perceived it ingrained in the good of their nature; but through the evil of disobedience, they did not want to possess it.

God understands His way, and He knows its place. For certain, God knows that this wisdom hastens to a place of absolute rest and perpetual peace: where through this very wisdom of His fear, He takes delight in resting His words upon the quiet and humble, and the trembling. Or, God understands His way, which has been spread throughout all lands by the preaching of the Gospel. Hence, it follows about God, saying: For he himself observes the boundaries of the world and looks upon all things that are under the sky. For who doubts that God knows even those things which are to come? But in this case God rather foresaw, as the Apostle afterward declares: When the fullness of time came, God sent His Son. In this manner, by His coming to visit us, He observed the boundaries of the world. In these, I say, our times, into which the boundaries of the ages have come.

He made the weight of the winds, and he measured the waters. When he set a law for the rains, and a path for the roaring storms. It is evident that every creature is held in his hand and the power of his might. In another way: The Church received the very graces of the Holy Spirit, as it were, in its beginning through the apostles: when there was a sound from heaven like that of a violent wind approaching. The winds, or spirits, which the Scripture mentions, are those which God, by bestowing them from the secrets of heavenly mysteries, is about to bring forth for men, according to the prophet who says: Who brings forth winds from his treasures. Sometimes these varieties of graces are considered as the name of the Holy Spirit, who gives these thanks, according to the saying of the Apostle: The spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets: who, on account of the operation and effect of their divine sanctification, are said to have weight, so that, relying on each one's strength, they could offer milk to others and solid food to others, where they would say or to whom they would say. Then the prophet says: I will give you the early and late rain: this is, the new and old Testament.

Then he saw her, and narrated, and prepared, and investigated, and said to the man. That is, in his Church, God foresaw this future wisdom before, that the whole world would have fear of it.

Behold the fear of the Lord, it is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding. There are two fears: one, that no one offends God; the other, if someone offends Him. The former is holy and

praiseworthy, the latter does not have charity but punishment. Therefore, concerning this praiseworthy fear, the Psalmist says: The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring forever. The evangelist John talks about the other fear in his Epistle, saying: There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. Whoever has fear certainly has punishment, because they do not have the reward of love.

Chapter XXIX. Job also added, taking up his parable, and said: According to the higher rule, we also draw a line of understanding here, so that when it is not appropriate to refer what follows to the Savior, we may attempt to twist the meaning of the exposition in terms of the composition of its members. And rightly this can be done, so that what the Lord himself, the head of his Church, cannot receive in himself, may be felt from his body, which is the Church. Who will grant me to be like the months of old, like the days when God watched over me? Therefore, the holy Job wishes and desires to be freed from that sorrow and torment, and to return to that glory of former happiness in which he once lived, with the Lord's blessing. When his lamp shone above my head. In many ways in divine Scriptures it is called a lamp. However, here Job could have said it for temporal glory, which he had received from God, and which he possessed in power and riches. And I walked towards its light in the darkness. Among sins, surely, and those things which I did not know, as if I were walking amidst the rough and obscure aspects of this life, towards the light of virtues, or its consolation. As I was in the days of my youth, and when God was secretly in my tabernacle. His secret, his mind wanted to say, because there the noisy crowd of vices did not make much noise. When the Almighty was with me, and my children were around me. When Job had God in his tabernacle, the virtues were said to stand before him like children, and they are called masculine because of their strength to resist vices. Job the blessed was surrounded by such ministers. When I washed my feet with butter. The word 'feet' in divine Scriptures is often understood as a certain mode of human behavior. I washed, he said, my actions from every stain of sin, and I conducted myself with innocence and simplicity. And the rock poured for me streams of oil. Concerning this meaning, Moses said: 'They sucked honey from the rock and oil from the hardest rock; it tasted according to the pleasure of those who wished.' And when that rock prefigured Christ according to the Apostle, Job, however, wanted to abundantly demonstrate with that oil the gifts of the Holy Spirit poured out upon himself. Therefore, this is the living and true oil, which is the Holy Spirit, consubstantial with the Father and the Son. Therefore, holy Job abounded with this oil, with which he was also filled with the richness of charity. When I was going to the city gate, I set up a chair for myself in the square. It is clear that the Jewish judges were sitting in the gates to judge the people. The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the aged rose up and stood. The princes ceased to speak and placed their finger upon their mouths. The leaders restrained their voices and their tongues clung to their throats. With these verses, he demonstrated the reverence of the pious and the holy fear which not only every age but also all authorities rightly gave to him. The ear that heard blessed me, and the eye that saw testified to me, because I had delivered the poor that cried out, and the fatherless who had no helper. Her present conversation, as well as reputation, was so holy, as she said. The blessing of those about to perish came upon me, and I comforted the heart of the widow. The orphan, the poor, and the widow represent every kind of humble and afflicted person, of whom the holy Job did not ignore or despise any.

I am clothed with justice, and it has clothed me like a garment, and with my judgment as a diadem. Justice, right judgment, mercy, these were the garments of her soul.

I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame. His affection of pity and mercy is shown in these words, whether I provided the light of truth in the darkness of ignorance, and correctly showed the way to the one limping on the paths of the Lord.

I was the father of the poor, and I diligently investigated the cause which I did not know. By undertaking the affairs and causes of the poor against the powerful, I became their defender and judge. And therefore, in order that they may not be oppressed by any opposing party, he used to say that I should expose their frauds and investigate them.

I crushed the unjust wheels, and I took away its prey with my teeth. Here he describes it as a rapacious beast and an unjust violent man: from whose mouth he forcibly took the substance of the poor.

I used to say: 'I will die in my nest, and like a palm tree I will multiply my days.' His nest is to be understood as his outer man, which had been composed of the hay of his flesh by God and bound together. For all flesh is hay. Therefore, in this nest, he always said that he would die under the testimony, while not living according to the vices of the world and its desires. And for this reason, in the resurrection, he will have multiple and eternal days, like a palm tree. My root is open beside the waters, and the dew will delay in my harvest. My hope, and the faith which are from this expectation of mine, are open to divine words, by the consolation of which, lest the vigor of my mind wither in unbelief, it is poured in. My glory will always be renewed, and my bow will be restored in my hand. Those who listened to me waited for my judgment, and they silently awaited my counsel. My glory and the rest can be understood as the fruits of a growing good conscience and always new progress in virtues. But in the bow I believe the strength of one who resists and opposes is signified, one who prepares in the hands of holy work against every obvious and hostile onslaught of vices. As David says in the psalm: And you have made my arms like a bronze bow, and have given me the strength to accomplish my good works without exhaustion.

They dared not add to my words, and my speech flowed over them. Because the authority of wisdom had already been widely spread: no one presumed to add anything to his words, as if rejecting them, rather his speech flowed over them: that is, the inner sense penetrated their innermost being, so that, having been infused into their hearts, they were returned as perfected and excellent disciples by such a master.

They waited for me like rain, and opened their mouths as if to a late shower. The name of rain signifies the abundant knowledge of their own science, and they praise their listeners for eagerly awaiting him to speak when he was debating.

If ever I laughed at them, they did not believe it. They said that I was esteemed with so great reverence and honor by the things I had spoken earlier, which could not be reconciled with the indulgence and forgiveness that were more in line with my character. And therefore I myself was driven by a desire for piety, so that the emotions of love and affection would make progress because of my admiration for them. And the light of my face did not fall to the ground. The grace of reverence, which shone in his face, was not considered insignificant by those mentioned. For they did not think that anything was done in vain by his commands, and therefore they regarded

whatever they contemplated in the serenity of his face as great and extraordinary in itself.

If I had wanted to go to them, I would have sat first. And while I was sitting, like a king surrounded by his army, I was nevertheless a consoler of the mourners. He demonstrates his own dignity and holy humbleness in these words, by which he went to his inferiors as if to friends and equals, and presented himself in the power of the kingdom to the wretched and mournful.

Chapter XXX.

But now, the younger ones ridicule me at times. It is evident.

I did not think it worthy to place among the dogs of my flock those whom their fathers were not even deemed worthy to be compared to dogs. The strength of their hands was considered worthless to me, and their very lives were deemed unworthy. Destitute and barren of food. That is, despised for the shamefulness of their lowliness.

They were gnawing in solitude, wretched with calamity and misery. And they were eating herbs and the bark of trees, and the root of juniper was their food. Those who seized these things from the valleys, when they found each one, ran to them with a shout. Because of misery and greed, they even attacked those things that were outside of food, whether of men or beasts, as if they were feasts and delicacies, sucking moist valleys because of extreme poverty.

They lived in the deserts of rivers, and in the caves of the earth, or on the sand. They delighted in such places. They also, as he says, dwelled in barren and waterless places, or in ditches, like sudden openings in the earth: which are watered by the rains of the mountains. And they considered it a pleasure to be under the shade of brambles. If they were covered with leaves of the cheapest plants in their heat.

Sons of fools and ignoble people, they do not obey in the land. Now I have become a verse in their song, and I have become a proverb to them. They abhor me and flee far from me, and they are not afraid to spit on my face. They are obscure and completely unworthy of remembrance. For he opened his quiver, and afflicted me, and put a bridle in my mouth. I consider the quiver to be a multitude of blows, or the devil himself, or his power, should be understood in this place. Just as Job says, God opened it, while the devil exercised his power around him, and afflicted him with the arrows of torment. Moreover, he also put a bridle of silence in his mouth so that he would not speak. To the right of the rising sun, my misfortunes immediately arose. That is, at the very moment of happiness, which is considered most severe, they emerged, either by divine permission or imposed by divine power. For He Himself is the rising sun from on high, He Himself is the right hand and power of the Most High. My feet stumbled and were crushed, as if by the waves of their paths. That is, my misfortunes, constantly repeating and afflicting me, have overturned all the right paths of my conduct like waves.

They have scattered my paths, they laid wait for me, and prevailed, and there was no one to help. That is, my paths, by which I was advancing on the way of justice with daily progress, have been disturbed by my enemies, unexpectedly causing harm to me, as if bursting forth from ambush, with my closest ones denying me the assistance of solace. As if a wall had been broken and a door opened, they rushed upon me and threw themselves into my miseries. With such a swift assault, he said, those predicted evils rushed upon me that no resisting obstacle could prevent them from

overwhelming me from above.

I am reduced to nothing. It has taken away my desire like the wind, and my salvation has passed like a cloud. As a result, I waited for your rewards for the keeping of your commandments, together with salvation, but you snatched them away with the force of the wind, and with the speed of a passing cloud, you allowed them to be carried away. But then within myself my soul withers away, and the days of affliction possess me. It withers away, that is, it dissolves from the strength of its intention. At night my soul is pierced with pains, and those who devour me do not sleep. It is evident that worms were eating his flesh, keeping the nights sleepless. In the midst of their multitude, my garment is being consumed, and they have girded me with the tunic as if with a noose. A multitude of crawling worms, always in motion, and running through the various openings of my wounds, has also worn away my clothing, while it does not cease to creep through me. It torments and tortures me incessantly, devouring without end, as if it were one continuous wound encompassing me from every side.

I have been compared to mud, and likened to ashes and dust. He claims to have been brought to the extreme of worthlessness, who would putrefy and stink with wounds and pus, just like mud, and dry up the corruption of his flesh with the filth of dust.

I cry out to you, and you do not hear me: I stand, and you do not look at me. In the cry there is the intention of the one praying to God. Indeed, in that he claims to stand, he said that he has an unwavering perseverance towards God. He freely speaks of his confidence in his righteousness before God: this is what the holy Job says.

You have changed towards me into cruelty, and you oppose me with the hardness of your hands. You have lifted me up and, like setting me against the wind, you have cast me down violently. It says that God, who is kind and merciful, is hard and cruel in prospering times when his hand endures hardness and heavy punishments and torments.

I know that you will hand me over to death, where the house is established for every living thing. After the sin of our parent, he said, the house of the underworld is established, that is, death itself, not created by its condition. Therefore, you also wanted me, as a son of sinful Adam, to go there according to a just sentence.

However, not for their destruction. He prophesies the reconciliation of the world to come in Christ, saying that men will not be brought to eternal destruction, but will be called back from the underworld at some point.

You stretch out your hand: and if they fall, you yourself will save them. If after redemption, by which we are saved through faith in Christ, human beings fall again through sin, you will save them yourself, lifting them up with the hand of your mercy through repentance.

Once I wept over him who was afflicted, and my soul had compassion on the poor. I expected good things, and evil came to me; I awaited light, and darkness broke forth. It happened that instead of the expectation of good things, with which I consoled the miserable, I now endured all evils, and instead of the light of prosperity, I encountered the darkness of torments. My insides have boiled without any rest: the days of affliction have overtaken me. When he says that the days of affliction have overtaken him, I think he wants to indicate the time of judgment: he seems to

have said it because he believed that it had not yet come to him; where he also indicates the great pain of hell when he compares his punishments to theirs.

I was walking sadly, rising without rage, and shouting in the crowd. Sad and affected by sorrow, because I did not know the deserved punishment, and without the anger of madness, I was rising with the strength of my soul: because God had taught me patience, so that I could bear it calmly, shouting and begging for public satisfaction.

I was a brother of dragons, and a companion of ostriches. Afflicted with the torment of punishments, I tempered my pains with hissing: as dragons are said to do when they are captured by elephants. As the prophet says: I will make a wailing like dragons: which they do as I said, when they are killed by elephants. And a companion of ostriches: I have become foolish and senseless, like the ostrich, the most foolish bird, so that they think that I have labored in vain because of the pain. My skin has blackened upon me, and my bones have burned from the heat. And this was part of her cruel punishment, that I, placed in filth, would suffer the scorching rays of the sun on my bare bones for a long time. My harp has turned to mourning, and my organ to the voice of those who weep. With these things, he says that the joy of his happy days and prosperity has been turned into mourning. The exposition relates to the person of Christ. Who can grant me to be like the previous months, etc. In the assumption of the man Jesus Christ, that is, Adam the second, or the last: it is the voice of Adam the first created recalling what he lost, and to what good he may regain. For he had lost, through the evil of disobedience, the good of immortality and the delights of paradise: he desires for this to be restored to himself through Jesus Christ our Lord. By taking upon himself the Son of God becoming the son of man, he also took upon himself the prayers of the human race. When his lamp shone above my head, and by its light I walked in darkness. It signified the glory of divine grace, by the name of the lamp which had flourished in paradise. As I was in the days of my youth, when God was secretly in my tabernacle. By the term 'youth' we can understand the beginning of Adam, or even happiness itself: where, before sin, with youthful vigor, continually flourishing without any defect of age, it is said to have been as in the days of youth. When he was omnipotent with me, and my children were around me. The children of Adam, the virtues of the soul are to be understood. But we do not absurdly consider the children of Christ to be angels who ministered to him in the days of his flesh, or the apostles, or all the saints. When they were washing my feet with butter, and the rock was pouring streams of oil for me. Therefore, the feet of the Savior, the preachers of truth, who proclaim the Gospel to the whole world, they are to be understood: Therefore, Jesus Christ, our Job, washed and wiped away these feet of his with milk or butter, when he made them sincere and pure from the pressures of tribulations, teaching them through his spirit, a life of simple innocence. In this way, the feet of the announcer of peace will be cleansed. So that they would not be contaminated with the clay of carnal wisdom: 'The rock,' he says, 'poured streams of oil for me.' Therefore, the rock, that is, the Church, founded upon Christ, the strongest rock, pours forth the grace of the Holy Spirit, like streams of oil: which was declared on Pentecost, in the house of Cornelius, and in those twelve, or in the whole Church, and is declared even today. When I was approaching the gate of the city, they placed a chair for me in the street. Like a king, and as the Lord of the first city of his Church, Christ proceeded to his gate; that is, at the time of his beginnings, when he was preparing for his entrance, he said to everyone: Come to me all you who labor and are burdened. The elevated chair, however, is to be understood as the knowledge of Christ: and the street of the city, either

because he publicly preached or according to the sense of the Psalmist: Your command is exceedingly broad. Which is not only extended into a triple exposition, but also into a discussion. The young men saw me and hid, and the old men stood up. John writes to them saying, I write to you, young men, because you are strong and have overcome the evil one. They, through faith in the Lord, see the Savior in spirit and hide in the earth of their bodies: restraining and suppressing vices by fighting within themselves: mortifying themselves from sins and worldly desires: hence the prophet says, Ascend you into the earth. But the elderly sons, consummated and perfect, who are daily lifted up in mind to heaven and stand in the Lord, with an unshakable faith of life. The leaders ceased to speak, and placed their finger on their mouth: the chiefs restrained their voice, and their tongue clung to their throat. In my coming, he says, the prophecy of all my saints was concluded and sealed, which was prefigured in the silence of Zachariah. Indeed, the prophecy was closed in the mystery of the announcers, but it was revealed in the mysteries of the sacraments. The leaders and chiefs of that people of the Jews were kings, priests, and prophets. Whether princes and leaders, powerful and eloquent individuals of this world can be understood, who, due to the deception of seduction, held positions of power among the people. They were silenced at the coming of Christ. The ear listening blessed me. The people of the nations, to whom my Gospel was announced through preaching, received it. They, giving praise for their redemption, blessed me by giving thanks. And the eye that sees, gave testimony to me. Indeed, the people of the Jews, to whom I was foretold by my prophets, were giving testimony to me in the presence of my coming.

I have provided assistance to the poor who cried out, and to the orphan who had no helper. These poor and orphaned individuals should be understood as the people of the saints: those who, due to the humility of their spirit, are called poor. And they are called orphaned because their father is temporarily absent, and he says: I will not leave you orphans. The blessing of the boy, or as others have said, the doomed boy, came upon me, and I comforted the widow's heart. A faithful and holy orphan: the boy, because of his reciprocal innocence, was named thus. Yet he was also called the lost one, because he was purchased by the blood of the Lord.

I am clothed with justice and it has covered me like a diadem with my judgment. Therefore, the Lord says, this is the robe of my mercy, it has clothed me like a garment. And with my judgment like a diadem. This, I say, is the garment in which the righteousness of the Father is revealed through the Gospel: in the Church, it says it is surrounded. Its clothing had the appearance of his garment on the mountain of transfiguration.

I was an eye to the blind and a foot to the lame. I am a light, he says, to the sinner walking in the darkness of his vices, and I became steps to the one stumbling on the paths of my teachings. Hence he himself says: I am the way.

I was the father of the poor, that is, of those with humble hearts. And when I did not know the cause, I diligently investigated. Therefore, I carefully searched for the cause of sins, desiring to grant the mercy of my compassion, so that I may search for the root of wounds in order to heal them: so that, as I interrogated the sinner, confessing their faults, I may free them from all sins and offenses. Or differently: Our Lord Jesus Christ did not know the causes of sin, which the Jews sought from Him.

I crushed the teeth of the wicked, and took away his prey. We rightly consider this wicked devil, whose teeth and molars are for destroying cruel and fierce movements of the mind. About such teeth, he says, the human race, like a captured prey, was taken away, liberating it from the certain destruction of death. All the teeth of the wicked are the devil's. It can also be understood as any heretic, in whose teeth clear doctrine is felt. But in the mountains, remote and secret and abominable mysteries lie hidden. And like a palm tree I shall multiply his days. Therefore, after the humility of the Church, which the Lord indicated earlier in the nest, He wanted to show the glory of its height in the palm tree: whose rough root seems to be in the earth, from which it is also called a nest: but with beautiful foliage under the sky, when it is glorified by the resurrection, it will obtain the height of the palm tree, that is, it will achieve the merits of its virtues, which are signified by the palm. Or this nest can be understood as the Jewish people. Therefore, in this nest, he was willing to suffer and die for us, as he said to the Jews: 'I will die, and in their minds I will be crucified:' where, in accordance with human nature, I was born and lived among the Gentiles, where the palm of my victory and the banner of the cross were erected, I will multiply days, saying to them: 'Behold, I am with you all days until the end of the world.' My root is open beside the waters, and dew will delay in my harvest. So it will be in the nations, a root, that is, the faith by which I desired to please; that all the holy ones in the past pleased: that the people, that is, the nations, may believe in me, to whom certainly in eternal retribution, the dew of grace and gift will flow abundantly from me as the giver. Whether the root of my charity and love, which is fixed in the hearts of those who love me, is open in them to the waters of my words. My glory will always be renewed. Here we can understand glory as follows: Glory belongs to the Father, the Son, to whom the Father says: Arise, my glory, arise. But the glory of the Church is different, justified by grace. And my bow shall be restored in my hand. We can understand this bow as the virtue by which he fights for his Church until the end of the world.

Those who were listening to me were waiting for my sentence, and they were silent, attentive to my advice. Every day Christ proclaims through the stewards of his word, and those who obey him wait for the sentence of his definition. And they were silent, attentive to my advice. By this word of silence, the obedience of the saints is signified, who are slow to speak but quick to act: or, because in the very inquiry of the law, the saints are said to be attentive.

They dared not add anything to my words. They establish the established statutes and decrees of the Church, which is the foundation of truth. However, heretics and schismatics, with the presumption of their pride, which they excel in, attempt to impose their own invented and superfluous dogmas above the words of the Lord, as if they were the fullness of doctrine. And my speech dropped upon them. Gradually, indeed, the words of my teaching, my diligence, penetrated the hearts of the diligent: in which the progress of souls is to be understood daily in virtues. Where, like a small drop of beginnings, one arrives at a life full of perfection, as if to the rain of the heart, saturating its land with abundance.

They were waiting for me like rain, and their mouths were open as if for a late rain shower. All the holy ancient ones awaited the Savior coming in the flesh, and now all together they unquestionably await His coming for judgment: for His late rain, that is, the Gospel, opens the thirsty mouths of their hearts now, for, as Ecclesiastes says, the last words are better than the beginning of His discourse.

If ever I laughed at them, they did not believe. That is, the Jews will not believe in my joyful piety for future blessedness and the promised joys of eternity. And sinners, due to the guilt of their conscience, will scarcely believe in my mercy and that salvation can be given to them, desponding due to the magnitude of their crimes. But when I turn to those who are converting to me, I will bestow more than they can hope for. And the light of my face did not fall upon the earth. Grace, he said, of my presence, by which I became known to the whole world, I illuminate the hearts of the faithful, for I am the light of the world, and whatever I have promised to those who keep my covenant, it will not be in vain: but it will be fulfilled entirely in the time of retribution.

If I had wanted to go to them, I would have sat first. And when I was sitting as if a king with the army surrounding, I was still a consoler of mourners. Thus it must be understood, the one who dwells among his saints, great and exalted, who are often called angels, and of whom according to another edition it says: I was like a king girded with strength, yet I did not despise those who were pricked and crushed in heart. But now the young ones mock me in my time. We read in the Gospel how he was scoffed at and mocked.

I did not consider their fathers worthy enough to be placed with the dogs of my flock. I hold those dogs in high regard who, by keeping watch, defend the Lord's flock from spiritual beasts. Concerning them, the prophet says: 'Mute dogs, unable to bark.' I have also not placed the fathers of the Jews, who are indeed priests and rulers, with the holy guardians of my sheep, since their dignity has been taken away from them due to the malice of their infidelity. I have rejected them, so that they may not perform the priesthood for me. He also says in the Gospel: The kingdom of God will be taken from you, and so on. Where he already begins to take away the bread of the children and give it to the dogs, as it is said to him in the Gospel under the image of the Church: For even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table. The power of the hands of which I speak was worthless to me. This power of the hands was that of the Jews, who served the commands of their elders and the observances. In the time of the Lord's passion, this place can be understood in such a way that the power of the aforementioned works extended to the death of the Savior. Or it can be understood thus: when they thought that his life had ended on the cross, the power of their wicked attempts was reduced to nothing by the triumph of his resurrection from the dead. And they themselves were considered unworthy of life, barren in poverty and hunger. In the disgraceful poverty of their vices and crimes, and in the hunger of the words of God, they became barren and beggars, so unworthy of the present life, as the prophet said to God: Scatter them in your power. Therefore, now they are among the nations like captives, leading a degenerate life.

They were gnawing in solitude, worn out by misfortune and misery, and they were eating herbs, and the bark of trees, and the root of junipers was their food. Often where God does not dwell, that is, is not worshipped, it is called solitude or desert: in which according to the Apocalypse, a woman, that is, corruption, is said to sit. For to gnaw or to nibble, teeth are necessary, since articulated speech is produced by teeth and the plectrum of the tongue, therefore by these words, the doctrine of the foretellers is signified, who, by eating and gnawing peoples like herbs and the roots of unfruitful trees, cast them into multiple errors, as it were into their own body. For they think that they are nourishing themselves if they have taken away everything vital from the men whom Scripture usually calls trees. Nevertheless, they are nourished by the roots of the juniper trees, namely by the trees that live for a long time and in whose wood fire lasts much longer than in others. These are the woods that are called arceuthina. Under the name of these trees, we can

understand all the great ones among the Jewish people, whose leaders, by stealing from them the preaching of the past law, nibble away at the innermost parts, the good of God's grace.

Those who were rushing from the valleys, when they found each individual thing, ran to them with a shout. They were indeed stealing herbs from the valleys, as some other translators have said, and bark from trees. For the ones we understood through the likeness of riddles to be herbs, bark, and roots of trees, they could not find in high and similar places: but in valleys, that is, lowly places, and in lower and depressed ones, where the carnal people of the Jews were symbolized: whose understanding dwells in the sense of the western letter, as it were in lower things. Hence their leaders are plundered, while the blind lead the blind.

They lived in the deserts of the rivers, and in the caves of the earth; or on sand, which they enjoyed, and considered it a pleasure to be under bushes. They not only lived in the aforementioned deserts, where there was no cultivation, but also in the caves of the earth, and on sand, which I think should be understood in a carnal sense, where nothing rich is mixed with spiritual perception, by which it could produce the abundance of fertility, through faith, children of holiness, with grace as the mother. And for this reason, they are said to dwell in the caves of the earth, clinging to earthly senses. Concerning whom the Apostle, weeping, says: Enemies of the Cross of Christ. Likewise: Sinners are like torrents, who flow through the wilderness of knowledge in this sea of the world; therefore, they dwell in the caves of their senses, and they take pleasure in their duties to sin. They are the windows of the house, through which death enters. Whether the cave of the serpent is our chest, when we hide poisonous plans and deadly actions in it. Likewise, those who live on a sandy surface are like them, who do not cultivate their land with diligent attention to the words of God, so that, having received the fertility of abundance, they may bear the fruits of holiness.

Those who rejoiced in such things and considered them as delights under the bushes. Amidst these evils that have been mentioned above, they live exulting in joy, as if seeking virtues.

Sons of foolish and ignoble parents, who do not know how to behave on earth. In this way, the prophet had already prophesied about their fathers: A wicked and perverse generation, a foolish and ignorant people, estranged from the land of the living.

Now I am a verse in their song, and I have become a proverb. That is, in their first speech, and in their mouth I am, and I am assumed in their enjoyment of mockery.

They loathe me and flee from me, and they are not ashamed to spit on my face. But they do not hesitate to spit on the face of the Lord and Savior, as his passion clearly demonstrates to us in the Gospel. For he opened his own quiver, and afflicted me. This quiver can be understood as the devil. And since we believe that the Savior assumed true human nature, it is not absurd to believe that he also wanted to experience the pains of the body in his passion, according to the words of the prophet: He himself bore our infirmities and took on the sufferings for us. And he put a bridle in my mouth. He demonstrated patience in the face of insults: as the Son himself says to the Father in the psalm: For you are my patience, Lord. And in the Gospel, when Jesus was questioned, he did not respond. On the right hand of the east, my calamities immediately arose. That is, by the will of the Father, at whose right hand the Son sits. Or this may be said, that the insult suffered by the assumed man also reached the Son of God in that part in which he is impassible, according to the

Apostle saying: For if they had known, they would never have crucified the God of majesty. For he himself is the right hand of the Father, the hand and arm, through whom all things are governed: and the disciples were more at his right hand, whom they deserted at the time of his passion. Of whom he says: I looked on my right hand, and there was no one who knew me. My feet have tripped me up and overwhelmed me. They have scattered my paths like waves on their own tracks. They have laid a trap for me and prevailed, and there was no one to help me. They have broken down the wall, opened the gate, and turned against me in my misery. The feet are a symbol of human nature, which they have crucified, or certainly the duty of preaching the Gospel. In the waves, it shows the bitter feelings of the Jews towards the preachers of the Gospel, and their restlessness.

They have also scattered my journeys. By the prophecies of my prophets, I promised them my presence in the flesh, and in the visions of revelations I often came to them. Surely, their unbelief and their wickedness have scattered my journeys. Even his feet can be understood as his preachers or apostles. And there was no one to help, for even the disciples, abandoning him, fled. Like a broken wall and an open gate, they rushed upon me, and they fell into my misfortunes, that is, through my death they fell into their own ruin, so that like the most cruel and ferocious enemies, having broken through the fortifications of cities and broken into houses, they all leaped upon my death at once. But the miseries are the sufferings, the scourges, the mockery, the insults, the blows, the spitting, the slaps, the thorns, and the ignominy of the cross.

I am reduced to nothing. The Jews, despising him, considered him as nothing.

You have taken away my desire like the wind, and my salvation has passed like a cloud. The present life can be understood as this wind, which is often called winds or spirits. Therefore, speaking from the perspective of the old man assumed in God, the man Jesus Christ says these things. However, the desire of the old man was not to lose this temporary life, which the Lord himself, close to his suffering, demonstrates by saying to the Father, 'Let this cup pass from me.' Truly, he says, not what I want, but what you want. But now my soul is dried up within me, and the days of affliction possess me. The days of its affliction are the days of its passion. Hence the Savior says in the Gospel, 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death.' At night, my whole being is pierced with sorrows, and those who consume me do not sleep. At night, because captured in the evening, you write throughout the night and you are heard by princes under the questioning examination. Or the night of sadness and passion, says the Lord to the apostles, who, on account of their love and my strength of charity, are called bones: they are pierced with the stings of pain and the pricks of fear, even to the damage of denial. That is, the power of their spirit has been penetrated by the wavering of faith, so that they may waver for a time of temptation in the solidity of charity. But those indeed, who seem to pursue me even to death, do not sleep: that is, they persist with all the vigilance of their minds, in order to reach me and devour me. In the midst of their multitude, my garment was consumed. As the Jews gathered together, my flesh was afflicted with insults, nails, cross, and death. And as if a hood of a tunic they encircled me. From all sides they surrounded me like stranglers, seeking to choke me in death, just as a mouth to a head, with strong nooses, they encircled me with false testimonies, and within my suffering and cross, they enclosed me like within a tunic.

I have been compared to mud, and likened to ashes and dust. Through the willingly embraced death, I have been compared to the lowly and the sinners, and to those condemned by God's judgment in Adam, although I am not a sinner myself, nor was I born in such a way that I was like all sinners.

I cry out to you, but you do not hear me; I stand, but you do not look at me. Likewise, in the twenty-first psalm, on the cross he cried out to the Father: My God, and the rest. And I will cry out all day, but you will not hear me, and so on. These words are spoken from the perspective of the Crucified: just like the others, which I have already mentioned above. I will cry out, he says, all day to you: that is, in the prosperous things of this life, that they may not be changed; you do not hear, in the words of sins. I will cry out and in the night, that is, in the troubles of this life, I will cry out so that they may prosper, and likewise you will not hear. And this is not enough for my foolishness, but rather that I may understand what you want me to cry out: not with words of sins from the desire for temporal life, but with words of conversion to you for eternal life.

You have changed to be cruel to me, and you oppose me with the hardness of your hand. While the Father did not spare his only Son, but handed him over for all of us: what seemed to be cruelty was actually an expression of divine mercy.

You raised me up and set me like a strong wind, You struck me powerfully. What happened, You lifted me on the cross, and to the unbelieving Jews, You cast me away.

I know that you will hand me over to death: where the home is established for every living being. Because before the resurrection of the Lord, even the righteous are believed to have been in the parts of hell.

Nevertheless, you do not lay your hand on them for their destruction, and if they fall, you yourself will save them. In this, indeed, you will hand me over to death, so that debts may not be consumed through punishment, for those who are sentenced to eternal death by divine judgment. But rather, let them be saved by my death. And as for what he says: If they fall, you yourself will save them: after the grace of baptism, he promises the remedy of salvation to those who have sinned through repentance.

Once I wept over him who was afflicted. But the Savior wept for Jerusalem for two reasons. One is that, weeping for the converted, he prayed to the Father. The other is that, grieving for the unbelievers, he wept, foreseeing as God the destruction of them due to the hardness of their unbelief. And my soul had compassion for the poor. In the Scriptures, the holy souls are called poor, not having the spirit of pride or the sins of this world as their riches. On the other hand, all sinners are called poor: because they are swollen with the spirit of pride and are in need of holiness. As it is sung in the psalm: Sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death: being bound in beggary and iron. God, who is rich in mercy, endured sadness out of the affection of mercy for lamenting such poor people.

I was expecting good things, and bad things came to me. So I was waiting patiently, hoping to rejoice in their good conversion and perceive improvement in their behavior. But they, despising the riches of my goodness and patience, stored up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath and revelation of my righteous judgment. Therefore, these bad things of theirs are about to come into my sight, so that I may repay each one according to their deeds.

I await the light, and darkness has broken forth. I await the light of faith and holy works in them, and the darkness of their unbelief and vices has prevailed. My insides boiled without any rest. Whether it be that, touched by pain, his inner spirit boiled with unease and anxiety over their destruction; or whether it be that, with the Word made flesh and dwelling in the name of Jesus our Savior, his insides, that is, the movements of his soul, burned incessantly with divine fire. The days of affliction came upon me. The days of affliction will be days of judgement: in which I will judge the aforementioned nation. But yet now, and at this time, they have surpassed me with their excessive wrongdoings, so that I may render to them according to my just judgement: as happened later during the suffering, when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Romans.

Lamenting, I walked: rising up without madness, I cried out in the darkness. It was without any anger or rage: because He had come to forgive and pardon their sins, not to punish. The evangelist also says: Jesus stood and cried out: Let him who thirsts come to me, and drink.

I was a brother of dragons, and a companion of ostriches. In the Gospel, the Lord often refers to the Jews as serpents and vipers, saying: 'You brood of vipers.' And the prophet says: 'They have broken the eggs of asps, when he saw the multiplication of evil generations.' Also: 'The fury of dragons is their wine, and the rage of asps is incurable.' But he called himself their brother because he was born of their kin according to the flesh, of whom he says in the psalm: 'I have become a brother to my brothers, and a stranger to the sons of my mother.' And because according to the present life, in which he was mortal while he was here, he associated himself with them, he called himself a companion of ostriches, that is, he lived with his own people among fools and idiots; just as the Lord Himself says in the Gospel: Fools and blind. My skin has been darkened upon me. In my skin, his own flesh, that is, his own Jewish nation, from whom the Savior assumed flesh, must be understood as having spoken the whole thing. But what he says upon me, my skin has been darkened, it is as if he were saying, because of me, that is, in my person, on account of hatred, persecution, and the wickedness of blasphemy, even the crimes of outrageous sin, the flesh of my race has become foul and black, like an Ethiopian not losing the color of darkness, and he is unfortunate because he contracted this darkness of night and shadow not on the surface of his body, but in his heart. Where the Lord says through the prophet: 'I have made your mother like the night.' And my bones burned with passion. The bones of the body of the Church, whose head is Christ, are indeed holy, but the apostles in particular should be understood: by the strength and power of their holiness, all the weaker members of the Church are sustained. Therefore, the most abundant fat of their charity was kindled in the excessive heat of persecution in the passion of the Savior. Concerning these, the Lord himself says in the psalm: And my bones burned like kindling. In another psalm it says: As water I have been poured out, and all my bones have been scattered; just as the evangelist says: And when they had left Jesus, the disciples fled. But again, through the confession of his name, they were abundantly enriched with his charity, so that afterwards no matter how fervent the onslaught of persecutions, the faith of Christ in them and the goodness of charity would not wither. My lyre has turned into mourning, and my organ into the sound of those weeping. In the lyre and organ, joy and exultation are understood. This is demonstrated by Christ when he delights in the salvation of believers, as he himself says in the Gospel, where he presents the parable of the hundred sheep, of which he says one has perished, and when it is found, he says: Amen I say to you, he will rejoice more over it than over the other ninety-nine. And when the apostles reported to the Lord that many healings

had been done through them in His name, the evangelist says: In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit. Therefore, these are the names of musicians that symbolize the joy of the heart, which turned into sadness over the hardening of the unbelievers: as the same evangelist says: And he was saddened by the hardness of their hearts. But the things that follow to the end of the parable, which we have explained earlier according to the virtue of the holy Job, we have confessed that we are unable to discuss them in a mystical sense. But if someone can reasonably adapt those allegorical interpretations, I will admit to giving my assent.

Chapter XXXI.

I made a pact with my eyes, that I would not even think about a virgin. For what portion would God have in me from above, and what inheritance would the Almighty have from on high? Is there not destruction for the wicked, and alienation for those who work injustice? Does he not consider my ways, and count all my steps? From now on, he declares his righteousness, and particularly his mercies and virtues, which he enumerates up to the number fifteen, like a perfect man who, arranging in his heart, by certain degrees of progress, has reached the house of God by ascending. I, he said, mentally determined and resolved, that nothing shameful and obscene would ever report to me from within, which I would turn over in my mind with the pleasure of desire in wicked thoughts. He had, I believe, on occasion sensed his own flesh with pleasure, and had been tickled by the allurements of delights, and for that reason he had girded himself with the virtue of self-restraint, fearing the eye of God, since He is the scrutiner of the heart, and knows all the ways of human behavior, and all the steps of mortal actions.

If I have walked in vanity, and my foot has hastened to deceit, let me be weighed in a just balance, and let God know my simplicity. Holy Job, confident in the justice of God, desires to make himself known to men. For God does not ignore anything, so as to know it through examination; but God knows, as blessed Job said, in order to make others know, according to this: The Lord God tests you, so that he may know whether you love him: that is, so that he may make others know.

If I turned my steps from the way, and if my heart has followed my eyes, and if a stain cleaved to my hands: Then let me sow, and let another eat, and let my offspring be rooted out. I have not transgressed any of God's commandments, for my heart did not consent to my eyes coveting lustful images, before I had made a covenant with them, lest they should secretly transmit anything shameful. Hence, no stain of sin could adhere to the works of my hands, which he confirms with a certain oath of execration.

If my heart has been deceived by a woman, and if I have plotted against the door of my friend, let another man's wife be my mistress, and let others bend over her. For this is a great evil and injustice: it is a fire that devours unto destruction, and uproots all offspring. According to the good of nature, as it is written in Tobit: Do not do to others what you would not want done to yourself. Therefore, it is said, this is a shameful thing and a great injustice: to think or do these dreadful and detestable things is a fire that stimulates lust, devouring all the good of virtues and consuming all the progress in sacred matters that should be present in a person.

If I had despised undergoing judgment with my slave and my maid, when they were arguing against me. Or as others have said, at my house. For what shall I do when God riseth to judge, and when he shall inquire, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb, also

make him? and did not one and the same form me in the womb?

If I denied what they wanted, I made the poor wait and the widow's eyes wait. It is clear.

If I eat my bread alone, and the orphan does not eat from it, because pity grew with me from my infancy, and came out of my mother's womb with me. It is clear.

If I have despised the poor when they were passing by, and have not clothed the naked, and if I have not blessed the loins of him that was my servant, and the fleece of my sheep, And if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, even when I saw myself superior in the gate: Let my shoulder fall from its joint, and my arm with its bones be broken.

If I have lifted up my hand against the orphan, even when I saw myself superior at the gate, may my shoulder blade fall from its socket and may my arm be broken with its bones. For I have always feared God as if he were waves swelling over me, and I have not been able to bear his weight. In my shoulder there is work: in my arm, the perseverance of virtue; and the energy of good works can be received. Unless it is so, all my labors will be found void before God, he says.

If I thought gold was my strength, and I said, 'My confidence.' If I rejoiced in my many riches, and because my hand found many things. A true man of philosophy, held back by no fault, as now a most courageous despicer of greed and arrogance, he also testifies to having considered gold as nothing.

If I saw the sun shining brightly, like the moon rising clearly, and my heart rejoiced in secret, and I kissed my hand with my mouth, which is the greatest iniquity, and a denial against the Most High God. Such virtues and so great a reputation are of no use: no matter how wise, great, and illustrious one may be in committing them, if they are held captive by the folly of errors. Not only, he says, in the worship of any idols, but also, I have not been delighted by the beauty and appearance of these great lights, nor have I kissed my hand as if worshiping them in their veneration: nor have I worshipped a creature instead of the Creator, which the holy Apostle detests in his Epistle to the Romans.

If I rejoiced at the downfall of those who hated me, I exulted because evil had found him. For I did not give in to sin out of a desire to curse his soul. When it is a great thing, if someone does not seek revenge on their enemies, when they have the power to do so, how much more diligently is it before God to seek their ruin, and not take delight in it in one's heart!

If the men of my dwelling did not say, who will give from his flesh for us to be satisfied? The stranger did not stay outside, my door was open to the traveler. Because of his hospitality and virtue, by which he pleased God like the other saints, he had incurred the hatred of the slaves.

If I hide my sin like a man and keep my wickedness hidden in my bosom, it seems to me that this passage speaks of sins committed only in thought: because it did not even want to conceal itself, since it revealed the deepest secrets of its heart to men, claiming that it had not been a consenting participant in any iniquitous sin.

If I trembled at excessive crowds, and the contempt of those nearby frightened me, and I did not keep silent, nor did I leave the door. This place belongs to those who look down on him, who, after placing him among the miseries of calamities, incessantly inflict insults upon him; against whom he

set a guard at his mouth, arguing with them. Who will grant me an audience, so that the Almighty may hear my desire, and write a book himself who judges, so that I may carry it on my shoulder, and encircle it as a crown for myself? At each of my steps, I will pronounce it, and offer it as if to a prince. The holy Job, demonstrating the book to the others, carries it on his shoulder, in a place visible to all; because he is crowned with the glory of the book, as a reward for his labor, and declares, by recounting before God, the increments of his virtues or progress at each of his steps.

If my land cries out against me, and its furrows weep with it. If I eat its fruits without money, and afflict the souls of its farmers: let thistles grow for me instead of wheat, and thorns instead of barley. The land, the flesh of man, is rightly felt. Blessed Job says that it was not his adversary, necessarily: because he had made it obedient to him regarding the ornaments of virtues. He also calls it metaphorical furrows, which are called furrows by him, whether for cultivating good morals or for containing the water of the Word of God, infused into his divine land: according to the saying of the Psalmist: saturating its furrows, multiply its generations. But blessed Job, it seems to me, spoke of these farmers in his holy thoughts, who diligently cultivated the land of their own. The soul of one of these farmers is thus referred to him, so that we may observe their unity of purpose. This is not notable or blameworthy in the manners of the saints, when they praise themselves. For they are not held by the vice of boasting, seeking human glory in their own praises: but they do this with the intention of truth, living simply and sincerely before God.

Chapter XXXII. But these three men were silent, for they considered themselves righteous. As Job's adversaries withdrew, after many mysteries of his prophecy, he too concludes his discourse. Regarding the statement, 'But these three men were silent, for they considered themselves righteous,' the historian of this story explains, based on the understanding of those who responded, that they considered themselves righteous, not by their own judgment. When he recounted or wrote down the things that he commended to the memory of later generations in praise of such a great man, he did so in his own style. And Heliu, the son of Barachiel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was angry and indignant. From the offspring and generation of Huz and Buz, the sons of Nachor and Melchae, the sister of Sara, the wife of Abraham, Job and Heliu were born. From Huz, Job was born, and from Buz, this is Heliu: hence he is called a Buzite, who was, as is written here, the son of Barachiel. Therefore, they say that this Heliu, the most learned of the Scriptures, is the same as Balaam the soothsayer, whom Balach, the king of the Moabites, had hired to curse Israel, as is reported in the Book of Numbers. And this Scripture states that Heliu was of the family of Ram, and we understand that this Ram is Abraham: from whose family and lineage Heliu was born. From here, undoubtedly the posterity of his brother Nahor will be the kindred of Abraham: where the one who writes this book, whom the Hebrews believe to be Moses, wanted to demonstrate the nobility of his birth by the names of the generation of Eli. But in this book, when he is called Ram, as if his name is divided or split, he is referred to as the holy Abraham: in the same way, in various places in the Scripture of God, his divine grace is named according to his growth. Therefore, when he is called Ram, let him be considered lofty: but when he is called Abraham, let him be the father lofty in virtues. When his faith is considered, Abraham is called the father of many nations. Therefore, it appears that Elijah, according to the goodness of nature, seems to have been a righteous man who also had the spirit of prophecy. But I think not in the same way, or with the same grace, as the holy prophets. Hence, the Lord himself spoke to the holy Job about him: Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? It is said

that the prophetic sense is narrated in improper and disorderly words: where the Lord does not condemn what Eli speaks, but rather what is said too hastily, He reproves this. Concerning this, I say, Eli, and his like, and at the beginning of this book we said, that they used the mystery of prophecy even those who deviated from the true religion, because God also gave them His word, so that they might pronounce future mysteries to men: where the faith and admiration of the Gentiles especially depends, so that those who do not believe in our prophets may at least believe in their own divine and seers. Therefore, we have said that this Heliu, who is Balaam, symbolizes the nations opposed to Christ, just as the friends of the blessed Job symbolize heretics. And when he says, 'The words of Job are ended,' we can understand that he is saying the divine words are firmly established and cannot be invalidated, leading those who faithfully believe to the eternal promise. But those who dare to criticize the righteous man and his eternal presumption of invented doctrines will eventually fall into eternal silence. But it is not surprising that Heliu is called by two names: this is familiar in divine Scripture, as Solomon was also called Idida, and Jethro, and Raguel, and Peter was called Simon. Hence this variation of names often presents a considerable obscurity to readers. But he was angry with Job because he justified himself before God. And he was also angry with his friends because they could not provide a reasonable answer, but only condemned Job. Therefore, Elihu waited for Job to speak, because they were the elders who spoke. But when he saw that the three could not answer, he became very angry. And Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, answered and said. It seems to me that the things we read here happened before those that are recounted in Numbers about this same Elihu or Balaam. Therefore, this Elihu, who Job and his friends say they were waiting to speak, shows that he did what he did out of respect and honor by deferring to his elders. Now, these are the words of Elihu himself, speaking as follows:

I am younger in age, but you are older: therefore, with lowered head, I feared to express my opinion to you. For I hoped that a longer life would speak, and the multitude of years would teach wisdom. But, as I see, there is a spirit in people, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives understanding. The wise are not always old: nor do the aged always understand judgment. He says that this seems more to himself, because people are moved by the spirit, to whom the Almighty God has given the inspiration of his wisdom, and he speaks this indirectly, as if this good of wisdom had been granted to himself alone. It should be noted that here Elihu, through four speeches, as the text of the reading shows, is following himself; through each of which, he attempts to retract the previous responses more learnedly, or to refute each part harshly that was said by the holy Job in front of him. After a lengthy preface, in his first speech, holy Job spoke these words, saying: 'I am blameless and without sin, and there is no iniquity in me. Because he found complaints against me, he deemed me his enemy. He put my feet in the stocks and watched all my paths. In his second speech, Job put these words, saying: 'I am righteous, yet God perverts my justice.' In judging me, it is a lie; my arrow is violent without any sin. The third speech says this, Heliu saying to Job. He said, 'You don't like what is right, that is, God said, so what does it profit you if I sin?' But the fourth speech of Heliu contains that he intends to prove God just by his actions, which he vehemently and persistently pursues throughout the end of this fourth speech of his prophecy, without ceasing.

Therefore, I will speak; listen to me, I will also show you my wisdom. For I have waited for your words; I have heard your understanding, while you disputed with your words. For your knowledge

has become clear to me. This is said ironically by him, there is no doubt, and therefore because he had earlier mockingly called the wisdom of Job's friends, he now openly says it. And while I thought you would say something, I considered. But, as I can see, there is no one who can argue against Job and respond to his words. Lest perhaps you say, 'We have found wisdom, God has rejected him, not man.' He has not spoken to me, and I will not answer him according to your words. They were astonished, and they no longer responded; they removed speech from themselves. 'Job has not argued against me,' he said, 'but neither do I, as you do, approach him with the curses of the victors and with reproaches.'

Since, therefore, I have waited and they have not spoken; they have stood still and have not answered any further, I will also answer and show my knowledge. Therefore, I, too, will try to respond to the best of my abilities, as Elihu said, and I will show you mine, and likewise it seems sufficient to say that Job speaks out of the pride of vanity, as he adds: For I am full of words, and the spirit within me compels me. My belly is like unvented wine, bursting new wineskins. I will speak and find relief; I will open my lips and respond. By anagoge, he spoke of his own belly, or womb, calling it his own memory, in that he had collected almost all the words of Job and his friends, disputing for a long time, like food gathered within the capacity of his memory.

I will not accept the person of a man, nor will I equate God to a man. For I do not know how long I will endure, and thus my creator will take me away shortly. This is the judgment of my just judgment, he says, that I will not spare a man by speaking the truth: nor will I do injustice to God by claiming that he has done something unjust.

Chapter XXXIII. Listen, therefore, Job, to my words, and hear all my speeches. Behold, I have opened my mouth; my tongue shall speak in my throat. My words shall be sincere from my heart, and my lips shall utter a pure sentiment. It is so detestable to the Lord when Elihu says of him, who is this? For it was unworthy and absurd that a great man, pleasing to God, even if he had erred as a man in some way, should be rebuked by him who was far from true religion. But if perhaps someone is moved, because Elias predicted many things about the times of the Savior, which we accept as prophecy: let whoever is moved by this know that those things which were predicted by the Spirit of God are to be accepted and believed by us. But those things which are spoken by him out of pride of heart, are to be rejected, since they are his own, as the devil spoke, and not from God. The Spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. He has spoken to establish his authority, for when he speaks, he cannot help but speak what is right and true, being created by the Spirit of God and animated by the breath of the Almighty. This is where we must understand the God of the Trinity. For in God, he is called Father; in the Almighty, he is called Son; and in the Spirit, he is called Holy Spirit. The God of the Trinity created all things, but when he created man, he wanted to show himself through the different names with a particular and special significance of his works. As the lawgiver says: And God created man, he created him in the image of God, male and female he created them. Moreover, God made man from the clay of the earth. And He breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul. In this act of making, breathing, and even blessing, without any distinction or discord of will, we should perceive the Trinity at work. For it matters not whether one understands the word 'created', 'breathed', or 'blessed' as something different; according to the unity of nature, there is only one will and one common action.

If you are able, answer me, and confront my face. Behold, God made us both, and I too was formed from the same clay. However, let not my miracle frighten you, and let not my eloquence be burdensome to you. He who is about to speak demands a response, in order to strike fear with a certain flattery and feigned consolation, by which Job, troubled, would easily yield to his excessive verbosity. So you said in my ears, and I heard the sound of your words: I am innocent and without sin, and there is no injustice in me. Therefore, as Elihu said to Job: This is the reason why you are not justified, that is, you should have accused yourself, not praised yourself: not say: I am innocent, without sin and without blemish: nor is there any injustice in me. This, I say, is the reason why you are not justified, because justification is acquired through humility. But the praise of exaltation deserves condemnation. Indeed, a just man, aware of his holy works, could courageously speak the truth to God: however, he could not speak as a sacrilegious person the false accusations that Elihu made against him. In the end, what Job says he said, saying:

Because he found complaints against me, therefore he considered me an enemy to himself. He has put my feet in the stocks; he has kept watch over all my paths. This is therefore the reason for which you are not justified. We do not read that Job said these things, which certainly, from his understanding, he composed here in his own words, as if they were spoken by the holy Job. Therefore, we should rather know that he does not say these words correctly, than believe that the same holy Job said them.

I will answer you, because God is greater than man. You argue against Him, because He did not respond to all your words. God speaks once and does not repeat the same thing a second time. Through a dream in the night vision, when deep sleep falls upon men and they are asleep in bed, then He opens the ears of men and instructs them with discipline, turning man away from his deeds and delivering him from pride, preserving his soul from corruption and his life from the sword. From the very beginning of the world, God has always spoken to men, and He still speaks, but when God is said to speak frequently, it indicates either His manifold law or the diversity of His prophets and commandments. But when it is signified that He speaks only once, it demonstrates His established and defined opinion. For God speaking is understood as being integral to His nature. God speaks once, and He does not repeat Himself again, that is, God does not change unless the change of our lives requires it. In this passage, Heliu carefully explains certain degrees of corrections, and he says that divine instruction or discipline happens around man, and in night visions: also in bed. Hence he says: It causes man to waste away until he reaches the end of this life. And when someone holy has intervened for him, as Isaiah did for King Hezekiah, let his former health be restored. And he says in the following that these things should operate three times around man, that is, clearly, probably, and in a confirming manner, either because of the perfection of the number three, or because of the truth of three witnesses. By this kind, it also signifies the patience of God and his mercy, which punishes and convicts the wrongdoer not immediately, but in parts and in turns, where neither the judgment of truth, nor useless forgiveness, nor the imputation of injustice is attributed to him.

He is also reproached with pain in bed, and causes all his bones to wither away. Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and the food of his soul is no longer desired. His flesh will waste away, and the bones that were covered will be laid bare. His soul will approach corruption, and his life will be deadly. If there is an angel speaking on his behalf, one out of a thousand, to declare the uprightness of a man: he will have mercy on him, and will say: Deliver him, that he may not go

down to corruption. I have found the means by which he may be appeased. Or, as others have said: His soul has reached even to death, and all that he possesses decays. When, by these means, a man has been corrected and consumed, and has approached death and the ministers of Hell, if there is anyone among the saints who is worthy to bear the name of the holy angel: he, for such a one who is thus rebuked by God for his sins, may obtain forgiveness, if, however, he is able to find at least one good work of his, of the many good works which he ought to have done, which he may offer to God as a pleasing sacrifice on his behalf. He will hear, he says, and command, so that the aforementioned does not descend into the correction of infernal tortures because there has been a certain great man, whose prayers God cannot help but hear. And each angel from heaven assisting before the face of God can intercede for any sinner placed in the scourges of punishments: for it is their duty appointed by God, especially to provide help for different men or nations for their defense or protection. About whom the Apostle says: Are they not all administrators of the Spirit sent into ministry for the sake of those who will inherit salvation? Moreover, we have examples from current events, of which we now speak, in the Lord's Scriptures, where we read that men were taken in dreams, such as the most proud king Nebuchadnezzar, and Laban, who plotted the death of his brother Jacob, and King Abimelech, who attempted to defile the house of holy Abraham, and the wife of Pilate, who said to him about our Lord Jesus Christ: Have nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered many things in a dream because of him. And the magi, warned in a dream in the Gospel, depart by another way. Faithful men are also instructed by God in dreams, like Jacob the patriarch, and we read that others were made infirm because of sins, from which we learn about the paralytic, to whom the Lord said: Your sins are forgiven you. We also read that the saints were sick, like Trophimus and Epaphroditus: whom we must believe were examined by such chastisement as just ones, not as sinners beaten by the whip of weakness. Sequitur: His flesh has been consumed by sufferings: let him return to the days of his youth. He has received, he says, evils for his merits, and the measure of punishments and penalties: let these scourges of chastisement suffice for him, by which he was called back to amendment: now let him return to the indulgence of divine mercy, that is, let him be again healthy and unharmed.

He will pray to God, and He will be propitiated by Him, and he will see His face with joy, and He will give his righteousness to man. This is done in the heart in the presence of God's good conscience. He will see the face of God, feeling His propitious countenance, and will give Him fitting satisfaction of justice.

He will look at people and say: I have sinned, and I have truly transgressed, and I did not receive what I deserved. It is a great thing, and very pleasing to God, that a man does not hesitate to confess his errors, especially if he understands that he is being chastised for them, and thus humbles himself, declaring that whatever punishment he has endured is too little for his merits.

He freed his soul so that it would not continue into destruction, but would see the light while living. Behold, God works all these things three times through each one, in order to recall their souls from corruption and to enlighten them with the light of the living. That is, he would recognize the light of knowledge of God and his immense benefits.

Wait, Job, and listen to me, and be silent while I speak. But if you have something to say, respond to me. Speak, for I want to see you justified. But if you have nothing to say, listen to me: be silent,

and I will teach you wisdom. Just as Elihu convinced holy Job in this way, he said to him: Listen to me, that is, be obedient to the one teaching you, and give consent. But what he says, to be silent: he commands the eloquent one, and as if one less educated or impatient, to be silent.

Chapter XXXIV.

Therefore, pronouncing these words, Elihu also spoke. It is said that he is proclaiming Heliu's advice, and he encourages his friends who are present to listen.

Listen, wise ones, to my words, and you learned ones, heed me. For the ear tests words, and the throat tastes food. Therefore, just as the taste of a dish is discerned from the flavors, so too, says Elihu:

Let us pass judgment among ourselves and see what is better. That is, let us discuss first before we condemn a man.

Because Job said: I am just. He did not say these words, but while he made known the virtues of his righteousness, he undoubtedly showed himself to be just, whom the Lord had already declared to be just. What is said here: And God subverts my judgment. In judging me, it is a lie, and my arrow is violent without any sin. Similarly, we do not read this ourselves, but we hold it written: God lives, who took away my judgment. However, to subvert judgment regards the injustice of the judge; but to take away judgment, that is, to postpone for a time, pertains to the discretion of a just judge. And he has multiplied my wounds even without cause. Therefore, in this place, with Elihu asserting that here is the meaning, when Job said this, he deceived by my judgment, he did not judge rightly and truly, and therefore he is acting towards me with falsehood. However, what Job spoke, he should be believed to have said it more rashly and presumptuously about the righteousness of God. Therefore, rightly and deservedly God says to him: Surely he who accuses God must answer him, in which surely words he reproaches God. This echoes that blessed Job did not speak something rightly, but as one who knew very well that he had many good things in him, from which it had also pleased him, he admits that those excessive words were compelled to be spoken by him in the greatest distress of pain. Who is the man like Job, who drinks contempt like water, who walks with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men? Whose belly is filled with the abundance of water and the poison of this passion. For he has said: 'A man will not please God, even if he runs with him.' It is a false claim to say that the holy Job spoke enviously of him, because we do not believe that the blessed Job was so foolishly wise, nor do we remember him saying this anywhere.

Therefore, wise men, listen to me: may impiety be far from God, and injustice from the Almighty. For He will repay man according to his work, and restore to each one according to his ways. Truly, God will not condemn in vain, nor will the Almighty overturn judgment. Like the impious words spoken against holy Job, and brought forth among the listeners to incite jealousy against Job, as if he spoke wickedly. Who has appointed another over the earth, or who has set over the world the one whom he has made? That is, has he appointed another ruler who would differ from the justice of the creator? Therefore, as powerful as the creator is, so pious is the ruler, because he recognizes and loves his own work.

If he directs his heart to him, his spirit and breath will be drawn to him. All flesh will fail together, and man will return to ashes. That is, of the world: for if he wished to contemplate all the things

that happen in it daily according to the rule of his justice, it will fail and perish; but instead, he governs and sustains with piety. For if he were to observe iniquity, who could endure it? He spoke of the spirit as the soul that gives life to man, and of the breath as the present life itself, which is supplied to our bodies by breathing in this air. Therefore, Samuel says that God draws Himself when He takes away the life that He had given to humans by creating them. These passages can be seen as figurative through the spirit of prophecy, so that they are now fulfilled in Christ, when through the incarnation, the Father sent His Son, through whom He made all things, into this world from His own heart, so that He might draw His spirit and breath to Himself, that is, to take away from Him, through the humility of the cross, the spirit, that is, the pride of the world's spirit, as well as the swelling of His boasting in His words. Likewise, when a person would be brought low by suppressed swelling, and returning to himself, would recognize that he is earth and ashes, in accordance with moral understanding, we understand that saying from the psalm: And you shall take away their spirit, and they shall fail, and shall return to their earth.

If you have understanding, listen to what is said and give heed to the voice of my eloquence. Can someone who does not love judgment be healed? And why do you condemn someone who is just so severely? Whoever says to the king, apostate: whoever calls the leaders wicked. It is clear, he says, that someone who does not love to judge justly and rightly: neither can he heal the soul from vices, nor correct anyone: and how are you the healer of our sicknesses, if you presume to point out our iniquities? Who does not show partiality to the persons of princes, nor know the tyrannical, while strategizing against the poor. For they are all the work of his hands. According to the mystical understanding, these princes of the Jews, scribes and Pharisees, and priests can be understood: whom he condemns in the Gospel. But we should not deny that the same people of the Jews were the tyrant, who today disputes against the assembly of the holy Church, rejecting the poor in spirit, contrite in heart: which he did not cease to do even in the time of the apostles, when he fought and caused riots against them through all the cities. Therefore, as the Lord will not acknowledge those who are unbelievers and wicked, to whom He will also declare: 'I never knew you: depart from me, all you workers of iniquity.' It follows, with Elisha saying about those of whom he spoke before:

They will die suddenly, even in the middle of the night. According to the sense of the Apostle, who said this about the children of darkness. For when they shall say peace and security, then sudden destruction shall come upon them. I think that the middle of the night is so called because they will die spiritually, being placed in the depths of the blindness of their hearts. The people will be stirred up, and they will pass through and take away the violent without hand. For his eyes behold the ways of men: and he considereth all their steps. According to the Psalmist: When he shall see, he saith, the just taking vengeance on the wicked, namely, fearing the example of sinful men, he shall wash his hands in the blood of the sinner. In this manner, therefore, the people will be stirred up, by the disturbance which we read about in the earth being disturbed: as the prophet says to God: Thou hast moved the earth, and hast troubled it: heal the breaches thereof, for it has been moved. For thus, like good travelers, they will pass into the future age, where there will be no place for the impious: otherwise the violent will have no aid, by which he can be defended or rescued from those dragging him to the punishment of death.

There is no darkness, and there is no shadow of death, that those who work iniquity may be hidden. Or as others have said at the end of this verse, that those who commit iniquity may hide.

Both of these have the same meaning according to the Psalmist, who says: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? For indeed, it is not within man's power to come before God in judgment. That is to say, if he has the power to come, he also has the power not to come.

He will crush many, and countless, and he will cause others to stand in their place. Just as with the priest Heli and Samuel, Saul and David, the people of the Jews and the nations. For God knows their works, and therefore He will bring darkness upon them, and they shall be crushed. He has struck them down like the wicked in the presence of onlookers. Under these words, Eli could also have meant that the Jews, due to their unfaithfulness, were to be blinded in the night of infidelity, so that they may be crushed and humbled, as the prophet and Apostle said: God has given them the spirit of compunction.

Those who have deliberately distanced themselves from Him, and have refused to understand all His ways, in order to create a cry of the needy to reach Him, and to hear the voice of the poor. For all sinners and evildoers act against the inherent good of nature: as the Apostle says, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God. But where did they know God except by inspiration and judgment of the mind? Therefore, where did they hold their glory before God in contempt? Where did they deliberately turn away from it, against their own conscience, and reject the knowledge and understanding of all the ways of God's commandments that are inherent in their hearts? And they acted so impiously and unjustly towards other people that the cry of the oppressed and poor reached God. Whether God struck the impious and unbelieving Jews in the place of those who see, that is, in the Mosaic law: where the prophets, who are called seers, dwell. Therefore, in this hope of the law and in the composition of the promises, as if in a certain place of those who see, they were justly struck by God, to the extent that the prayer of him who, being rich, became poor for us, ascended to God: Scatter them in your power. Whether they are all alive, those who live in Christ by faith: for in this hope, they contemplate with their minds the future blessedness. In this place, therefore, where they are seemingly standing in faith, some under the name of this faith have the appearance of piety, but they deny its power. These very ones, who are understood to be heretics, are standing in a bad place before God and are struck by God, by the apostles and doctors of the churches, that is, by the poor of Christ who resist against them and cry out to God. For when peace is granted by Him, who is there to condemn? The prophet said to the people: Pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, so that his peace may be your peace. Whether it is the peace of the Church, and He Himself grants tranquility, when there are no battles of persecutions against her, or when disputes and scandals of heretics cease. Moreover, He Himself grants silence of peace against the wars of vices: when they have been conquered and as fierce enemies have been overcome, peace becomes the highest virtue in man. Quod autem ait: From where he has hidden his face, who is there to contemplate him? And above the nations, and above all men. This is, unless he himself deigned to reveal himself to man: who is there who can behold him with his own strength, or by investigating approach his majesty?

He who makes man a hypocrite because of the sins of the people. This was clearly seen in King Saul, and as the Lord said: I will remove from Jerusalem the judge, the prophet, the wise man, and the counselor: and I will give boys as their princes, and the effeminate shall rule over them. And Nebuchadnezzar, by the just judgment of God, received many kingdoms and numerous nations. It is also possible to understand this man as the devil, who, having lost his angelic dignity, assumed

the name of man: of whom the Lord said in the Gospel: An enemy has done this. But he is called a hypocrite and a dissembler, because he transforms himself into an angel of light: when in fact he is the author of darkness, that is, the inventor of all crimes and sins.

Therefore, since I have spoken to God, I will not hinder you. As if in a court, He allows him to speak, so that if there is anything he needs to say, he does not remain silent.

If I have erred, teach me. If I have spoken iniquity, I will not add any more. That is, I will not speak. Does God desire it from you, because it displeased you? For you began to speak, and not I. But if you know anything better, speak. You said that God would be unjust: because he would demand from you injustice and unrighteousness in life, and would require unjust correction, to which it would be necessary for you to speak unjustly against him, and for this reason, God displeased you when his justice, by which he punished you innocent, you do not want to be true justice.

Let intelligent men speak to me, and let a wise man hear me. Elihu, despising holy Job, turned to those who were standing nearby and, pronouncing definitively about blessed Job, said to them: But Job has spoken foolishly, and his words do not show wisdom. It is evident. My father. Because man was created and fashioned by him. Let Job be tested, says Elihu: let what is accustomed to be referred to as a test of learning not be examined.

Let Job be tested. That is, let it be made manifest: let it be proven to all and let it be known what kind of a man Job is: let Job be tested before you, I say. To the end. Do not stop from the man of wickedness. That is, let the scourge of this whip be constantly in him: nor do you cease to inflict punishment on those who practice wickedness. Who adds blasphemy over his sins. That is, on top of being a sinner, he adds to the heap of sins, so that he bursts forth into the crime of blasphemy, for which he endures these torments.

Let us bind ourselves in the meantime among ourselves and then appeal to God in our conversations. Let us be condemned among ourselves in the meantime, so that it may not be considered unjust to us: it will be without our fault if he tries to appeal to God afterwards.

Chapter XXXV.

Therefore, Elihu spoke these words again: Does your thinking seem fair to you, that you would say, 'I am more righteous than God'? For you have spoken: 'It does not please you what is right, or what advantage is it to you if I sin?' It is possible that Elihu, when he spoke harshly to God, may have described something here, and he wanted to express the meaning of his words enviously, as if it were the sense of that.

Therefore, I will respond to your arguments and to your friends with you. Because they were unable to respond to him reasonably.

Look up to the sky and gaze upon it, and contemplate the heavens, which are higher than you. That is, to whom do you presume to equate yourself? This is what Helius said, who believed that God is contained in physical places: that God the Lord resides only in the highest and loftiest places. So if you sin, what harm will you do to Him? And if your iniquities are multiplied, what will you do against Him? It seems to me that what you have said is true, for when you sin, no harm is done to God. And if He wishes to avenge Himself for the multitude of your sins, will you be able to resist Him?

Furthermore, if you act justly, what will you give, or what will you receive from your hand? Here David says, 'I have no need of my goods.' Your wickedness will harm the man who is similar to you, and your righteousness will help the son of man. That is to say, your wickedness can harm a man if he imitates your evil deeds: just as your righteousness will help the son of man if he imitates your ways when you walk rightly.

Because of the multitude of slanderers, they will cry out and lament because of the violence of tyrants. In this context of their dispute, Elihu compares holy Job to such people, and judges them similar, as they slander tyrants and name wicked men, by whose slanders and power, man and the son of man groan under oppression. And now, spiritually, we understand this man and son of man to be the holy people, who, because of the unity of the whole body of the Church, are called one man, as the Apostle says, and are called the son of man according to the Psalmist, saying: Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, and upon the son of man whom you have confirmed for yourself. This can also be said of invisible enemies: those who dominate minds through hidden attacks of vices; therefore, the faithful, lamenting in prayer to God, say: Deliver me from my enemies, my God. And he did not speak. When they were afflicting the aforementioned ones, whom they had subjugated to themselves through unjust domination, with God's permission, so that they, placed under such pressure of necessities, would wail and cry out to God, they did not pay attention, nor did they turn their minds to heaven, to understand that these things displeased their creator God. He did not, I say, say such things within himself, this multitude of unjust ones or demons. Where is the God who made me? who gave songs in the night. This is what Elihu said. So when God allows the righteous and upright to be troubled by the above mentioned things, he nevertheless grants them consolation in the night of tribulations. For the night itself is understood to be tribulation, according to the saying of the Psalmist: You have tried my heart and visited me in the night; just as prosperity is sometimes called day, because one who is in prosperity is illuminated by a certain happiness. Where it says in the psalm: The sun shall not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. Elihu says that the righteous receive such great patience from God that even in the night of tribulation they are delighted by spiritual hymns and songs. Therefore, singing is primarily connected to the exultation of the heart. Thus, this exultation of future joy is born in the hearts of those who sing, and they do it in the manner of travelers, because they, like travelers and pilgrims, pass through this world in order to reach their destined place without labor. They console and uplift their weariness of the journey with song. And according to mystical understanding, let us understand night, a certain secret and distant silence of divine discourse, which in other ages, as the Apostle says, was not revealed to the sons of men. Let us say that this night is divided into four watches, from the beginning of the world until Christ our Lord, so that this first watch of the night is Adam himself, the first father of men, through whose condition the human soul may stay awake, believing in God the creator of all things. The second watch should be at the time of Noah, when the flood of the world happened, so that people stay awake, lest they perish. The third watch should be in the times of holy Abraham, through whom the world may know how to live by faith and please God. The fourth watch should be around the times of the prophets, who were closer to the dawn and the light of the approaching day, and who with eyes of faith anticipated the day of Christ, almost choosing it as their own night. Therefore, in this night, at various times, the aforementioned things about Christ were predicted with joy and delight, either through prophecies or through signs. And also, in comparison to the future revelation of the children of God, when they will perceive the glory of that eternal day and possess

happiness in reality: this present life is night, whose fruits are hidden for the future, and therefore it is still night, because you do not yet see what you hope for. So on this night of expectation, hymns and songs of Scripture were spoken to us, until the night of faith was dispelled and we may reach the day of eternal dwelling.

He who teaches us about the beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky instructs us. He instructs us in common knowledge, and in more subtle matters: he teaches us not only through the gifts of nature, but also through the gifts of grace. According to the figurative sense, the beasts are often understood to be carnal men, who are devoted to gluttony, to the belly, and to luxury. Others, however, are compared to birds, either because of the lightness of their manners, or because of the pride by which they swell up as if to be elevated in a high place. Where the Apostle says: Do not be haughty. And the Lord in the Gospel: For what is exalted among men is an abomination before God. For in Greek, the word for proud is **περηφάνης**, which means appearing above, indicating an elevated and swollen mind.

There they will cry out and not be heard, because of the pride of the wicked. As he said, there they will cry out, perhaps he wanted to signify the place of punishment, where sinners are not to be heard, because of the pride of the wicked; or as others have said, from the injustices of the wicked, because the wicked do not cease to inflict injuries on the righteous.

Therefore, God will not hear in vain, and the Almighty will consider the causes of individuals. It is said that God does not hear persistent sinners in their evils, because they cry out to Him without cause, those who do not deserve to be heard.

Even when you have spoken, He does not take notice: wait for Him. Job, when you see that God does not immediately give sinners what they deserve, do not be broken in spirit, so as to burst forth into blasphemy and say that God is unjust or unfair. Rather, you must judge with Him, that is, agree with His judgments, and not presumptuously leap against Him with your own judgment to His injury.

Now, indeed, he does not unleash his fury, nor does he avenge the crime greatly. Therefore, since he has appointed a day on which to judge the world, during this time he does not universally exercise the vengeance of his justice. And he speaks all of this in reproof of the holy Job, whom, as if guilty of crimes, in this evil of punishments, by the sentence of God, he partially condemns. Hence, he writes that there remains much for him to receive afterwards.

Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain, and without knowledge multiplies words. According to this holy conviction, Job thinks he is Elihu, and concludes with a certain reasoning of words.

Chapter XXXVI.

Also adding to this, Elihu spoke these words: Bear with me a little longer and I will show you. For I still have something to speak for God. That is, for the righteousness and cause of God.

I will repeat my knowledge from the beginning, and I will prove my operator is just. Truly, without a lie in my words, and with perfect knowledge, it will be proven to you. And in this fourth discourse of his, he continues with a profound and abundant speech about the singular justice of the Lord: where he seems to say many hidden secrets and far remote mysteries in obscure sacraments.

God does not reject the powerful, since you yourself are powerful; but He does not save the wicked. This is the immensity of His justice and the goodwill of His nature, that He does not envy anyone, because no one, however powerful they may be, can equal Him. And He gives judgment to the poor. According to the most just measure of justice. However, sacred Scripture is accustomed to calling poor men holy and innocent.

He will not take his eyes off the just. This is what he says, and blessed David: The eyes of the Lord are upon the just, etc. And he establishes kings on the throne forever, and they are raised up there. These kings can be understood not only as the rulers of this world, but also as the rulers and leaders of the Church. And figuratively, kings can also refer to the human intellects that rule over the bodies correctly, as it is said in the psalm. And now, you kings, understand; be instructed, you who judge the earth. In this way, these kings are raised up by God to sit with the princes. And if they are in chains and bound with the ropes of poverty, their works and crimes will be revealed, because they were violent. Therefore, they will be bound in strong chains, namely the judgment of God, and tied with the ropes of poverty; that is, lacking the help of divine aid, they will be constrained by temporal punishments like fetters, rendered destitute of all good things according to the quality of their merits.

He will also open their ears to discipline and correction, so that they turn away from iniquity. 'God will open the ear of the heart,' he says, 'to obey him through punishments and secret inspirations.'

If they hear and observe, they will fulfill their days in good, and their years in glory. This is what Solomon says: The memory of the just with praises. But if they do not listen, they will pass through the sword and be consumed in folly. That is, if they have despised listening to God, who teaches knowledge to man, they will pass through the sword, that is, through this mortality from this world, so that in folly, that is, in those places where fools will be assigned, they will be consumed by eternal torments.

Simulators and clever ones provoke the wrath of God, and they will not cry out when they are bound. The holy Job himself seems to openly strike out at Elihu, as if he were acting cleverly and wickedly: he also simulated being an outstanding man. And when he was bound with the chains of this affliction, he least cared to cry out to God and invoke him, so that he would be released from the bonds of punishment, which he surely did out of either despair or contempt. The same can also be understood of other sinners, who, when they have fallen into the depths of evil, despise it; and of the Jews and heretics, who, cloaking themselves with the veil of a false teaching, persist in their perfidiousness with a stubborn and hardened heart. Their souls will perish in the storm, and their lives among the effeminate. We know that vices and wickedness have nothing in them that is calm, manly, and virtuous, but rather everything is turbulent, indulgent, and fragile. Therefore, it is necessary that they continually disturb the soul with their allurements, not allowing the person to grasp the haven of virtues, and the person becomes, in these storms, as Solomon says, like a soul lying in the heart of the sea, and like a sailor in a great storm. Or else, the coming of a storm and the judgment of God is as he says, 'Around him is a mighty tempest.'

He shall deliver the poor from his distress. By the poor, we understand our Savior, who became poor for us, who in the days of his flesh offered prayers and supplications to the Father, that he might save the poor from death, the humble people of God with a humble spirit. He will also deliver any righteous person from the distress of afflictions, as we read in the divine Scriptures in various

ways. And he will reveal his ear in tribulation. That is, let each one of them be strong in tribulation, with the divine visitation strengthening, when man is allowed by God to be troubled, he will perceive consolation in the ear of the Lord, by hearing it there.

Therefore, it will save you from the wide mouth to the widest part, and not having a foundation underneath. In this place, the dwelling places of the underworld are described by Heliu, which, with their immense capacity, do not have a foundation. However, we read in the prophets about the foundations of these, where Lucifer, who rose in the morning, was cast down, as well as the multitudes of kings and countless populations of nations. The underworld is called a narrow mouth because it is spacious to receive, but narrow to release, since it keeps the dead within itself and does not allow them to exit to life. David also said to God: Deliver me from those who hate me, and from the depths of the waters. Let not the waterstorm drown me, nor let the deep swallow me up; nor let the pit close its mouth upon me. Therefore, let us know that according to the faith of the Scriptures, the places of infernal prisons are established among the boundless waters of the abyss: from those abode of the underworld, no man has been freed by his own merit, except by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And not only, says Heliu, will you be freed from the narrow confines of Tartarus, but you will also walk freely in the widest forest of refreshment, as if in spacious fields. But the rest of your table will be full of fatness. It signified the delightfulness of paradise and pleasure, by calling it rest. But it wished to demonstrate the immense abundance of a blessed life, which would be full of fertility and fatness, and filled with the delights of that happy place, whose holy land the meek will possess according to the promise of the Lord. Your case has been judged as that of an impious person, and you shall receive judgment. By the judgment of God, you have been found guilty as an impious person and a debtor of punishments, and therefore, according to the merit of your case, you have received the severest judgment. And where it is said, 'you shall receive judgment,' others have said, because of the impiety of the gifts they received, where under the plural form of expression, Job seems to strike Elihu with his words.

Therefore, do not let anger overcome you, so that you oppress someone; nor let a multitude of gifts sway you. Learned from Eli is a man with the virtue of patience and integrity, the strongest. The best judge is one who is not held captive by these two vices, anger and greed, which in this place the holy man Eli reproaches.

Put aside your greatness without affliction, and strengthen all the strong in strength. That is, neither oppress the small nor the great with your unjust rule, nor let pride-based arrogance overpower all movements of strength. Do not prolong the night so that people rise up for you. It is enough to have lived in this blindness until now. Now strive to come to the light of prudence and justice: whether it is the darkness that you have woven for yourself with various sins, so that you walk in it as if in continuous and perpetual darkness: I beg you, he says, do not prolong it further, and do not delight in extending the sins by adding sins like a rope: therefore, put an end to such sins with the light of this correction: for by prolonging it, your life will become irredeemable, and prayers from the people will rise up to God for all your evil deeds: those whom you have most unjustly oppressed, who have called out against you and laid their own miseries inflicted by you before the judgment seat of divine justice.

Beware of turning to wickedness: for you have begun to follow it after your misfortune. Do not, says Elihu, turn to despair, I beg you, and be cautious of the wickedness of blasphemy, but hurry

to return to God. For I see that after your terrible affliction, you desire to follow this impious destruction to your own ruin, and you are sending your will and thought to the adversary, weakened by cowardice.

Behold God, high in his strength, and none is like him among the lawmakers. If anyone can be like him in power and virtue, they can also be found alike in justice and wisdom, and in the multiplication of laws, and in his judgments. And therefore, he says, know that no one can be unjustly condemned by God, who alone is both strong and wise. Who can scrutinize his ways? Who indeed, unless impious, arrogant, or sacrilegious, would presume to scrutinize the ways of divine works? This is not allowed; and yet, no matter how great the intention of the mind, they will not be able to find them. But who dares say to him: You have worked iniquity? Who, therefore, is so rash, and unjust and unrighteous, that he dares to speak this? All these things are said against Job in bitterness.

Remember that you are unaware of his work, about which men have sung. Either all of his general work, or certainly his specific work. For above all great and marvelous are his works, it is the mystery of the dispensation of Christ, which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man. Others have said: Remember, for his works are great, which men have praised. He speaks of all the works of God, which holy men have rightly praised in honor of divine worship.

All men see him, each one looks from afar. By the goodness of nature, the knowledge of the creator is in the hearts of men; and although someone may be so small and cold as to strive to be alienated from his creator God, there is no one who hides himself from his warmth. And therefore, every mortal, though from afar, feels and understands, in a completely different way indeed, not as a body or as any created spirit, but in another much more ineffable way, in which God is to be seen by the eye of the mind. Where in the very gaze of the understanding heart, man sees that above him there is that divine name which he strives to contemplate.

Behold the great God surpassing our knowledge. The number of His years is immeasurable. He surpasses our knowledge with the magnitude of His wisdom and the loftiness of His judgments.

He takes away the drops of rain, and pours out showers like torrents. Therefore, let us understand this rain as the law of Moses, which comes from heaven like rain to the people of the Jews. And it is called rain because of the multitude of commandments, as Moses himself says about the same people of the Jews, saying: Let my speech be waited for like rain. Therefore, God took away the drops of this rain from that people, as in the incarnation or passion, or in the resurrection of Christ, which the Jews, with blinded hearts, refused to believe, which are indeed small legal commandments, in order to transfer them to the faith of the Gospel, as the Apostle says: For he is finishing and curtailing the word in iniquity, and so on. And from these drops, and from small drops, with the thundering Gospel, the showers of Christ's preaching were poured out upon the earth. And these showers are said to be like whirlpools: which certainly, when they descend abundantly onto the earth, contain the depth and darkness of the mysteries, which were spoken in the Law and the Prophets through figures and similitudes, in the revelation of the Lord's coming, the obscurity of themselves and the depth of the mysteries, as if closed signs, were found. Indeed, we know that the grace of the Holy Spirit has been poured out abundantly, as the Apostle says, through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, which he poured out on us

generously through Jesus Christ.

Those that flow from the clouds, which cover everything from above. We know that clouds are often called saints in the Scriptures, as it is also clear in a certain place, when the Lord says: 'And I will command the clouds, that they rain not upon it: that is, the vineyard, which is the sinful nation of the Jews: so that the rains of salvation may not be poured forth by their words.' Therefore, from these clouds, namely the apostles and the apostolic men, the preachers of truth, rain those showers, that have in themselves a likeness to torrents, because of the opacity of heavenly mysteries: where fittingly it is said in the Psalms: 'Dark water in the clouds of the air.' Therefore, these clouds, I say, through which rains flow into the earth's streams, cover everything from above. For they contain within them the waters of the Gospel, so that living waters flow from their womb, from the higher mysteries, as if by a certain pretext and the obscuring of the waters, they create an obstacle for the fleshly and earthly things.

If he should wish to spread out the clouds as his tent, and to flash forth his lightning with his own light, he will also cover the hinges of the sea from above. For he stretches out the aforementioned clouds so that their sound goes out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world: just as he spoke afterwards to his disciples, that is, his clouds, saying; And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth: through which indeed his clouds shone forth with the lightning of preaching, and the fame of the name of Christ shone forth from heaven like light. The sea, too, has occupied the hinges of this world: or by hinges of the world we can understand the princes and heads of various nations: by whose errors and wicked persuasions of doctrines the world was turned in the place of superstition of demons as if on a hinge. For through these things, God judges the peoples and gives food to many mortals. For by these aforementioned sacraments, God, in His mercy, decrees to show compassion to all peoples and give nourishment of His word, or rather, of His mysteries, to all mortals, as He himself says: I am the living bread which came down from heaven. In his hands he hides the light, and commands it to come forth again. By the power of his righteous judgment, he hides the light of his knowledge from sinners who do evil, and commands it to come to the illumination of the mind; if anyone faithfully seeks God as his helper.

He informs his friend about his possession, and that he can come to it. God, through the light of his revelation, teaches and instructs his faithful friend in his heart. He also enlightens him, telling him that the light, or rather, the grace of enlightenment and the possession of divine promises, is his, and that he can daily progress towards it by making progress in his heart.

Chapter XXXVII. At this, my heart trembled. Or so my heart was astonished, as others have said. And he was moved from his place. With these divine mysteries, and with the light of the knowledge of God being revealed, which is shown only to the friends and faithful of God: my heart, he said, is troubled, and I am carried away with zeal for the ignorance of the sacraments.

He will hear the sound of his voice with terror, and the sound coming from his mouth. Just as God wants, listen to what he says; for his voice terrifies with the great mysteries of the sacraments: and the sound of his mouth, or as others have said, the noise, listen in the same way. Therefore, this is the sound of God's jaws, which perhaps is called sound, not simply speech, so that disobedience would strike the deaf, and unbelief with a hardened heart would be moved by a clearer voice to fear, and shake them all to fear the Lord.

He surveys all the heavens himself, and his light is above the ends of the earth. What wonder is this of the omnipotence of God, who is everywhere in heaven, and on earth, in the sea, and in the depths. But let us consider according to an allegorical understanding, what is meant by saying of God, 'He surveys all the heavens.' Holy men are accustomed to be called heavens in divine Scripture, on account of their heavenly manner of life, concerning whom it is said: 'Your conversation is in heaven.' Therefore, the Lord, considering beneath the heavens, either by investigating the secrets within them or by governing and sustaining the weakness of their bodies, which they have subjected to the rule of the mind by the virtue of the cross, strengthens and supports against the battles of carnal passions. In this sense, the Prophet, shaken by fear, says: And beneath me my composure was disturbed. Likewise, the boundaries or limits of the earth itself are holy, imposing an end to earthly passions and desires, because they are not in the midst of Babylon, nor are they surrounded by the vices of this world, as the Apostle Peter says. Therefore, Christ, having suffered in the flesh, left us an example, since he suffered in the flesh, he ceased to be from sins, so that he may now live not according to human desires, but according to the will of God, which remains in the flesh for a time: that is, living for a time, dwelling in the boundaries of the flesh as sins cease. In the borders placed, the queen of Sheba, who carried the image of the Church, deserved to hear the wisdom of the true Solomon. Therefore, God illuminates such boundaries with the light of His grace and knowledge.

After him, there will be a roaring sound. Or as others have said, a loud roar.

He will thunder with the greatness of His voice, and His voice will not be discovered when it is heard. When God comes to the memory of men, placing them at the ends of the earth, immediately, in the midst of their weakness of mortality, groaning, they will roar to Him, just as the prophet says: I roared from the groaning of my heart; and then this roar will make a sound in the fervor of prayer, crying out to God, who is reached in heaven. Therefore, the Lord will thunder to them with the voice of His commandments, so that they may fear His face. Recognize the sound of thunder as a sign that God, before their desire, is unsearchable and boundless.

God will thunder marvelously in His voice, who has done great and inscrutable things. Others have said: God will thunder. God operates marvelously, when this thunder of His name, by which the knowledge of His fame spreads throughout the whole world, makes the ears of the soul resound. Who commands the snow to come down upon the earth, and the winter rain, and the showers of his strength. We have said before that the whiteness of snow can signify the grace which is given to the faithful through the gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism, and we have brought forward many examples of testimonies from the Scriptures, among which is that passage from the Psalms: They shall be made white as snow in Selmon, which is in the shadow. Therefore, he says that the heavenly one, that is, God coming from heaven, will also judge and separate kings: whether they should be made white in the shadow. It seems to me that this signifies to me that the regeneration of the most ancient people in Christ should be accomplished by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this grace, signified by the name of snow, descends from the command of divinity to the earth, that is, it comes to men through Jesus Christ, through whom our oldness is renovated for the better. Against this grace of Christ, he wanted to indicate future tribulations of persecutions in winter rains, and because of the heavy pressures of winter rains, he said: which, however, the rain of the strength of the Holy Spirit would overcome, because it was said to them: For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father, who speaks in you.

He marks in the hand of all men, so that individuals may know their own work. In the hand, that is, in the power of free will, according to the image and likeness of God, by which man is created and made by God: he has this wisdom impressed as a certain sign of divine operation, so that each person may know their own actions according to the judgment of free will, or as others have said, may know their own weakness, that is, that fragile vessels like themselves may be broken by sudden death. The beast enters its lair and will dwell in its cave. This beast, we correctly understand, is the inventor of evils, the devil, who is therefore called a singular beast because its malice surpasses the malice of all workers of injustice. Therefore, this reasonable beast enters its lair, namely the human heart: when by the permission of God's judgment, it receives the power to rule over humans, and it establishes for itself a dwelling in the cave it has made. Whether it be a cavern or even a hiding-place of the devil, all sinners are to be understood: namely, those hard of faith or of stone, whom he possesses through their own vices and allurements, and in whose hearts and crimes he finds rest. From within, a storm will come forth, and from the north, cold. It does not seem to me that he spoke about the wounds, qualities, or even the secret movements of this world, but just as we said that the hearts of humans are caves or hiding places of demons, let us understand these inner things with their secret and hidden plans: hence it is believed that storms of persecution come to this world in order to crush sinners, just as it happened to the Egyptians, upon whom came a release through evil angels. And at the same time, the saints are greatly troubled by excessive tribulations, as one of them says: 'We are burdened beyond measure, so that we even grow weary of life.' The cold of this unfaithfulness is also inflicted, so that those who depart from the charity of God and the warmth of faith fall into the chill of denial. All of these things are inflicted by demons through their ministry, and the decrees of rulers, and the powers of unbelievers. But Arcturus, because it is situated on the left side of the world, signifies the opposing part: from its region, a cold north wind blows against the south. When God blows, the frost forms, and once again the waters flow abundantly. What he said here about the waters freezing when God blows, that is, becoming icy and solidifying, in the psalm it says the opposite: His spirit will blow and the waters will flow, that is, they will melt and flow away. But whether here when God blows, or in the psalm, his spirit blows, by the command of God, or his spirit will command, we can understand. And what he said here, the frost forms, in the previous verse of the psalm it says: He sends forth his ice like morsels. But we know that during the winter season, when God's breath, that is, command, blows with excessive cold, the waters thicken and even freeze, and then, when the time of the air is warmer, they thaw. According to mystical understanding, in past generations, the human race, leaving God due to its own merit, was congealed like ice by the breath of God's mouth and by the sentence flowing from His justice, while being removed from divine fire, and, with the immensity of its coldness, is bound by the lack of true knowledge of God. Now indeed, through the grace of our Lord and Savior, as the apostle Peter says: God, despising the times of ignorance, is again melted by the fire of God's love, from that cold oblivion and hardness that had hardened like the frost of long time, so that the waters of the peoples may flow and return to God. The cloud desires grain. This is the grain, about which the Lord spoke in the Gospel through a parable, saying: Gather the weeds into bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn. Therefore, this living grain desires to hear the doctors of the Church, who, like clouds, carry the waters of the Gospel. Just as those who were from this divine grain, dwelling in Antioch of Pisidia, would ask Paul and Barnabas to speak the word of God to them, which the apostles did, persuading them to remain in the grace of God. Cornelius also said

to Peter: Now therefore we all come before you, to hear all the things that have been commanded to you by the Lord. And Moses said: Let my speech be received as the rain, and let my words descend as the dew. Therefore the Apostle says: I planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase. This cloud can also be understood as the Lord Himself, that is, the assumed man into God, as the prophet foretold, saying: Behold, the Lord comes in a light cloud into Egypt. Through whom divine grace and heavenly doctrine were being foretold to be poured out upon the world. And beautifully, it is said that a light cloud: either because the Savior himself, the Lamb of God, did not commit sin, or because the Virgin Mary, the Mother of the Lord, burdened not by the seed of a man, is called a light cloud. And the clouds scatter their light. They illuminate everything in whatever direction the will of the guiding ruler leads them, over the whole face of the earth. They send out the light of the Gospel's preaching: spreading the light of the Gospel upon the hearts of believers. Other interpreters have said: And it turns itself around in circles, to carry out all that it has commanded. Therefore these are the things that it commanded, and it gave its commands to its other clouds, saying: Go into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature. Therefore, as if by the wind of the Spirit of God, by which as clouds they were driven, they were forbidden to go to Bithynia, and it was commanded for them to cross from Judea to Rome, and thus, as the narrative contains, they traveled around the whole world, surveying it.

Whether in one tribe, or in his own land, or in whatever place he has commanded them to be found, this is what the Lord himself says in the Gospel: You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Where it is especially to be noted that he says: In whatever place he has commanded them to be found, where by the grace of Christ and his mercy, he has shown mercy to those called back to faith.

Listen to these things, Job, stand and consider the wonders of God. Elihu urges that Job, in order to fulfill the sacraments in Christ and the Church, should diligently apply the ear of his heart and, being placed in the mirror of his mind, where he is also taught to stand in vigilant contemplation, should consider the future mysteries of the miracles of God, which he will accomplish through rational clouds. Do you know when God commanded the clouds to show their light? This is a reference to the future actions of the prophets. Therefore, God commands the rain of the Gospel to demonstrate the light of his clouds, that is, the holy works of his teachers through the infusion of faith: and this mercy from heaven works to enlighten mankind. Do you know the great paths of the clouds and the perfect sciences? Here, when he says perfect sciences, he evidently shows that he is speaking about rational clouds, and the ways of preachers, and the paths of subtle senses. Tell me, please, if you were able to know what paths in the clouds are great and perfect sciences? By saying this, he was referring to the apostolic clouds, one of which, a very swift cloud, said to the Savior: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And because it was suspended from the earth and was close to heaven, the Lord replied to it: Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father. But another apostle, like a cloud full of the waters of perfect knowledge, pours forth an abundant rain from the thundering of the Gospel, saying: 'In the beginning was the Word,' etc. With this most powerful thunder echoing everywhere, to shake the whole earth with the tremor of religious faith. Another, rising in Judea through repeated nativities, grew like a small cloud, and when the Spirit blew, he was enlarged so that he scattered the rains of the mysteries of perfect knowledge, kept secret from the ages, even to Illyricum, and watered other regions of the whole world with abundant outpourings. And hence it came to pass that some of them were called sons

of thunder, while another was called son of the water-bearer. Are not your clothes warm when the south wind has blown over the land? Others have said, that your cloak is warm. This indeed is true, because the south wind is warm, and when it blows, the clothing of men, or bodies, which are the clothing of souls, become warm. But because the clouds, the holy men, compelled us to understand the truth of prophecy, we understand more clearly the warm wind blowing from the south, signifying a fervent faith, or the grace of the Holy Spirit burning and illuminating us. Or we understand our Lord himself, of whom we read: God will come from the south, with the rational earth blowing over, the virtues of the soul, which are the inner clothing of man, ignite, and therefore they are called clothing, for they make the soul beautiful and adorned. And for this reason the Apostle encourages, saying: Brothers, clothe yourselves as chosen ones of God, and beloved ones, with the bowels of mercy, kindness, humility, modesty, patience, etc. And therefore, these things, like others, are said by the spirit of prophecy through Heliu.

You perhaps with him have fashioned the heavens, which are most solid, as if they were cast in bronze. These words are spoken by Elihu to insult Job through irony. Thus, these words should be understood as the first front of the intellect. Now, according to the spirit of prophecy, let us pursue the mystical meaning so that we may understand the holy Scriptures about the heavens, which were given to humans, and the perpetuity of which he wanted to demonstrate from the solidity of the air. But someone says: how will the divine Scriptures be eternal if the world, as God declares, is to have a definite end? For indeed it is true that the parchments of the books, along with their actual letters, will pass away; but because the Lord adds, 'But My words will never pass away,' undoubtedly what He promises with the same breath, will be eternal. 'These heavens,' says Elijah, 'in which is a hidden plan of divinity, you perhaps, with God, fashioned as if having a similar wisdom: which God eternal predetermined before the constitution of the world, will sometime emerge in the bodies of letters, which already existed eternally in Him, not now existing, but visible only by the light of His own foreknowledge.' And we rightly understand the heavens, holy angels, who are called heavens because of their dwelling in the heavens, and they are like bronze solidified with eternity. Concerning them, the Psalmist says with a unique name: Heaven of heavens to the Lord. According to the figurative interpretation of heavens, all the saints are called heavens because of their heavenly way of life and their proclamation of heavenly commandments. As for Elihu, if he had the spirit of prophecy, according to the aforementioned interpretation, he could have known through the contemplation of his mind that these things were to be revealed in Christ, and in other ways, he seems to have understood the calling of the heavens, although this itself should not have been said in mockery of the holy Job.

Show us, what should we say to him. For we are indeed enveloped in darkness. It is an insulting word, and a reproaching one, show us, when he says that word, but they remain in the darkness of ignorance compared to knowledge. For just as holy Job asks to learn from whom he criticizes and reproves in his words. Show, he says, o Job, if you think you know anything more, and better, because we are held back by the great darkness and ignorance. It is certain, therefore, that Elihu, mocking Job and deriding him, speaks these words. Who will tell him what I am saying? Even if a person has spoken, he will be devoured. I have indeed said to you, O Job, that you should show me what I could say: but who has dared to speak these very things about God? Certainly, if anyone has spoken, because it is not at all beneficial for him, he will be devoured for this very sin of presumption and irreverence, as Elihu says here. Thus we read in the Psalms: Their judges

were devoured beside the rock: where it is understood that the judges of the people of Israel in the wilderness were devoured and engulfed by the sin of distrust, because they did not believe that rivers of water could be brought out by the divine power of the promised rock. But now they cannot see the light. Suddenly the air is gathered into clouds, and the passing wind will drive them away. They are so blinded by this kind of misfortune that they become like the air when it thickens into clouds, and thus in the just judgment of God they will be carried away like winds in a strong wind, like the wicked whom the wind casts down from the face of the earth. Others have said: But not everyone can see the light that shines in the clouds, and the spirit passes and drives them away. He spoke something mysterious here, which now no longer shines the illumination of the Gospel to everyone. Indeed, it does not shine to those whose minds God has blinded, so that they do not see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of the invisible Father. Therefore, this spirit of righteous judgment from God will drive them away from the assembly of the blessed, so that they do not see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ.

Gold will come from the North Wind, and a fearsome praise from God. I heard someone say that during the summer, when the sun rises in the North, the dawn shines more brightly, so that the sun itself appears golden in color: and from this it seems that Heliu speaks of gold coming, that is, a fiery wheel of the sun rising in the world, and above this is a glorious star, a fearsome praise to God for humanity. But we understand the saints as the gold, who, according to the spiritual sense, are redeemed by the devil from the North Wind, by the blood of the Lord. In this manner, therefore, the assembly of saints comes before God with trembling, praising Him and with a certain fear, believing with incredulity that they could be freed from the most grave enemy. Moreover, every day they are tested by examinations, like gold refined by the flames of temptations, they are brought out from the furnace of this world. Others have said, 'From the north comes a cloud of golden color, in it is the great glory and honor of the Almighty. We cannot find the likeness of His power.' For in this manner, the holy men, who are the clouds of God, are tested by the cold of the north wind, so that He may make them precious and shining with the fire of charity. And therefore, the great glory of the Lord and the honor of the Almighty is. No other similar virtue of His is found, who hopes for such great goods from contrary things.

We cannot find him worthy. He is great in strength, judgment, and justice, and cannot be described. Therefore, men will fear him, and all who consider themselves wise will not dare to contemplate him. For, as he is great and powerful in strength, so he is true in judgment and justice, and cannot be described. That is why, from his creature, who is so weak and frail, he cannot be found: because of this, great and wise men will not presume to investigate the incomprehensible, nor will they strive to contemplate the invisible. However, all of this is said as a reproach to holy Job, who claimed to be afflicted by God without any merit of wrongdoing. Others have said, 'If he judges justly, do you not think he will hear him?' Therefore, both men and wise men will fear him. They say this because God judges justly, with no partiality. All wise and foolish people, considering themselves, will fear him, knowing that he is the avenger of injustices according to the measure of his justice. He will indeed hear those who patiently endure injustices.

Chapter XXXVIII. But responding, the Lord Job from the whirlwind said. With terrible and reproachful speech, Job is to be rebuked, he received a response from the Lord, for what is said about the whirlwind belongs to the terror of rebuke, which was, as I said, to be rebuked by the Lord. For Job had said that he, being just, was unjustly chastised by the Lord: therefore the Lord

said from the whirlwind. Who is this person entangling sentences with unskilled words? With these words, Elihu is removed, along with his confused and mixed-up disputes against Job, where the words of God seem to be understood. And if you, oh Job, by speaking such things against me, have committed any sins: who is this person who dares to rebuke you, especially when he is not fit to reprove you, who should rebuke you as a superior? Therefore, with Elihu and his unskilled words removed from the midst, the Lord turns to Job and says to him, to prepare to hear his rebuke, saying in this way:

Gird up your loins like a man: I will ask you, and you will answer me. Therefore, anyone who is about to speak with God is first commanded to gird up his loins with chastity. The people, too, about to hear the law and celebrate the Passover in the desert, are commanded to gird up the loins of their minds, so that the wandering currents of carnal thoughts do not impede the steps of holy conversation, or we do not wrap garments around our physical loins. Therefore, by saying this: Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if you have understanding. God could not answer this; He speaks to him in this manner. So you, Job, who unjustly accuse me of working against a small creature: where were you when I governed the world, which I made out of nothing? And when I rule over every creature with justice and moderation, would I do something unjust to you? Here God veils these mystical and very obscure things under the names of animals and birds, and covers the sacraments of the Church. Therefore God, according to the mystical understanding, established the apostles as the main foundations of the holy Church in predestination, as the apostle said: Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Or, as others have said, 'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?', that is, when I established the Church gathered from the human race on earth and strengthened it through the power of faith. Who has set its measurements, if you know, or who has stretched a line upon it? God describes his power and might, and the condition of the world, over which line he has stretched the measure of his good and righteous work. Alternatively: The measurements of the Church go from sunrise to sunset: in which, the measures can still be understood as the equality and fullness of the Trinity, to which the Church is referred to by the prophet: 'Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left; and your offspring will possess the nations and will inhabit the desolate cities.' Therefore, by means of these measures, the whole world of the true faith stretches out, so that there may be one lip for all who believe in Christ: these are the mysteries that were established before the ages, for indeed Job, while he was not yet, could not know them. Whether we rightly understand the measures of the Church, the diversities of graces, which the Apostle called divisions of the Spirit, when he spoke of diverse graces, he said: But all these things one and the same Spirit works, dividing to each one as He desires. He says: But to each one of us, grace has been given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Through these, therefore, the intention of contemplation is grace, like a straight line of believers in God, as it is said in the Acts of the Apostles: They had one heart and soul turned toward God. On what are the foundations of that solid? How could a rational and wise creature, before it existed, know the work of the Creator, when even now it can hardly sense any of His works? Otherwise, on what are the foundations of the Church on earth solidly established, if not on Christ the rock, who is the beginning of its foundations? But the foundations of the Church are the holy ones, who are powerful and strong, by whom it is sustained and governed. Others have said: Upon what are its circles fixed, so that we may understand the weight of the world's stability according to the sense

in which the Psalmist speaks of it, saying: For he hath established the world, which shall not be moved. For the figure of a circle is more beautiful than other figures. For a circle is congruent and equal to itself on all sides; and the whole moves solidly through itself, and has an infinite appearance, appearing to the eye as endless, because it continually reverts to itself without any end, and is led in an inexplicable manner. Therefore, it seems to me that this signifies a person who opposes nothing and does not attack in any way, such as those who will be in the future blessed age: for then the flesh will not lust against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Although some holy ones in this age have also sensed the blessedness of this peace in part: not indeed feeling no discord within themselves, both internally and externally, but overcoming the hostile army of vices with stronger virtues, like Elkanah, the father of the holy Samuel, who was called a man alone. Thus, therefore, the whole will be in itself, suitable for itself, and immovably in that glory and without end. Therefore, these circles, shaped by the bond of the love of God, are affixed to the wood of the cross, and each one of them says: For I trust, neither death, nor life, etc. But who has laid its cornerstone? This cornerstone is Christ, who was placed by God the Father in the foundation of the earth of the Lord's: he is not only foundational, but also angular, in which two peoples, namely the Jews and the Gentiles, are contained. Of whom the Psalmist also says: The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. And the Apostle says: By this highest angular stone, Christ Jesus, in whom every structure fitted together grows into a holy temple. Therefore, the Father sent him into the world, that he might be laid as a foundation. When the morning stars praised me together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Therefore, a precious stone was laid as the foundation of Zion, which is the second man from heaven, and the morning stars praised me together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. The stars and the sons of God are understood to be the angels, who rejoiced at the birth of the Savior. As the angel said to the shepherds: Behold, I bring you good news of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Evangelist: And suddenly there was a multitude with the angel, and so on. Therefore, the angels are called morning stars because they were the first among rational creatures to be made on the day that is Christ, and they are the sons of God: they are not the sons of darkness, like those who have fallen from their number, who have become not only the sons of darkness but also the rulers of darkness, that is, the rulers of sinful men. Then with a loud voice, as mentioned above, all my angels praised me. Just as in the little sheep, we rejoice in the salvation of the human race, praising God. Likewise, we rightly understand the morning stars to be all the children of the Church who are reborn to Christ through baptism, as the Apostle says in his letter to the Church: You are all children through faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, because of the morning vigil in which the Lord rose, they are called morning stars, or because of the new light of grace that begins for them, they are also called neophytes. Who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth as coming out of the womb? When the waters covered the whole earth in the condition of the world, and darkness was upon the face of the abyss, then according to the faith of the book of Genesis, God commanded on the third day, that all the waters should be gathered together into one place. He also set a boundary and limit for them, so that they would not go beyond their borders to cover the earth again. The womb from which the sea came forth can figuratively be understood as the underlying earth, so that we may believe that water was created by God from it and in it. For God created the two great parts of the world, heaven and earth, out of nothing, and formed the lower parts of them from shapeless matter. He also established the other distinct or formed creatures, among which we believe the waters were made,

although we do not read of their creation written at the beginning of Genesis. But the creation of almost all the others is recorded in the books of the Lord's Day. And even about the sea itself, holy David said, when speaking of the blessed man: His hope is in the Lord his God, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. Therefore, this process of the sea, seems to me to be the outpouring of waters, which emanated from the hidden boundaries of the earth's veins, and covered the entire surface of the earth. We read that this was more clearly evident in the flood, where it is said: 'And all the fountains of the great deep burst forth.' Therefore, I believe the womb of the sea is called the bosom of the earth, so that we may know that the sea was born from it. But someone says: 'I say that the mass of waters is congenital with the sky and the earth, and created at the same time.' Finally, concerning the waters and the earth, God made them, or rather brought forth the other creatures. If therefore this confirms that opinion, that the waters were created out of nothing, because from them have arisen diverse animals at the command of God, then what shall we say about the sky, which is a more excellent part of the world, from which we do not read that anything has been brought forth as from formless matter? In this also, pertaining to its greater beauty, God made, arranged, and ordered the stars and the diverse spheres of the heavenly bodies. And according to this assertion, the elements of the sea and land will be better than the sky, whose most beautiful adornment we admire: because it surpasses all other creatures. When I put a cloud as its garment, and wrapped it in darkness like the swaddling clothes of infancy. When, he said, the sea is so great in width, length, and depth: yet by the strength of my power I made it like a small element, weaving it as a garment with a cloud and darkness; indeed, I covered it with humble and insignificant things, which are likened to the swaddling clothes of infancy. And because we said that the sea, as it were, proceeds from the womb, preserving the translation of its name, he said that the sea was begotten as a small thing, wrapped in darkness like swaddling clothes, or as others have said, wrapped in a cloud.

I enclosed it with my boundaries, and I set a boundary marker and gates, and I said: 'You shall come this far and no further, and here shall your proud waves be stopped.' These boundaries are divine words, which, understood as fixed boundaries, are immovable in meaning, and this very thing is what follows, with God saying: 'I set a boundary marker and gates.' In another way, who has shut the sea behind doors? Scripture often refers to this world as the sea, as even the holy David says: 'This great sea, with its wide expanse.' Item: Those who go down to the sea in ships. And Habakkuk: You have sent your horses into the sea. And Isaiah: He has killed the sea monster that is in the sea. Therefore, this sea is enclosed by the divine commands, like certain boundaries of sacred discourse, so that from the womb of his heart, where he conceived cares and worldly allurements as if from a seed, he would no longer burst forth into action as if giving birth, and pour himself out into various deeds to be perpetrated; and thus, when the prophet saw the world believing in God, possessing this good in himself, he rejoiced and said to God: You have established the sea by your power. I declare the world faithful to the people of the holy Church: who is called the sea in particular, and dwells in this world. And this is the world of the faithful, of which the Lord says: For God so loved this world, that he gave his one and only Son for it. There is also the world of the unbelievers, of which likewise the Lord says to his disciples: If the world hates you: know that it hated me first, etc. Thus we say that two worlds of people dwell in this physical and animal world, which can also be called two seas, taking a metaphorical name from this sea of waters, because it is both a good or bad home, and an excellent or terrible city. The people who are tossed by the fluctuating sea are called true sailors, who in this life are tossed by restless and

uncertain motion. When I would put on the cloud as its clothing, and would wrap it in darkness as if with the swaddling clothes of infancy. Let us receive the cloud that covers all things, the Holy Spirit infused and poured out upon all creatures, of whom it is said: The Spirit of the Lord was borne above the waters. But darkness is anything empty beyond the world: where there is lightness, that is, a retreat can be understood. But morally, according to the authority of Scripture, clouds are the announcers of truth. Therefore, with these consoling and instructive words, by dripping from above, the Lord said that He has protected the world of the faithful from the heat of temptations and has provided it with the shadow of the promise of eternal blessedness, that is, the garment of the ministers of the Gospel, to be spread over the sea of peoples so that the unbeliever may not be scorched by the blazing heat. Moreover, the sea of peoples situated within the perfect preaching of the Gospel is covered, due to the infantile behavior of certain individuals, with milk-like teaching, like cheaper clothing, because they are unable to behold the more sacred mysteries, which are shrouded in a darkness of understanding. I have encircled it with my boundaries, and I have set a barrier and doors. You will come here, and you will not proceed further, and here you will break your swelling waves. At the boundary, God said, I have gathered and closed off the predicted sea within the confession of one faith, and to confine it, I have placed the strongest barrier of charity against it, and I have blocked the mouths of unbelief, so that no matter the violence of storms and persecutions, it may be compelled to go beyond the fixed limits of obedience. It will never surpass the boundaries of my charity, to which I have said: Thus far you shall come, and you shall proceed no further, and here you shall break your swelling waves. That is, if by chance the waves of evil thoughts toss you within the sea of your heart, and a strong wind of pressures attempts to completely shake you, causing you to be driven into a dry and barren state, as if pushed into sterile sand. Do not pass by these defenses of my faith and love: and thus it will happen that the threatening winds, when they crash against the strongest rock, will be dissolved. Did you command the dawn to know its place and show the early light its place? The Lord said this to Job, that He Himself arranges the returning cycles of His hidden and secret things to their appointed places each day; and for this reason, Job is accused, who claimed that God, as the maker and governor of all things, had operated without any sense of fairness; and as if saying this, He said to him: You, who consider yourself very wise, and as if you had fashioned yourself to be equal to My light, and believe that you can argue about My judgments: if the elements of the stars fulfill the command of their Creator, perhaps they continue their course by your disposing of their mystery, even though all these things were created before you existed in Adam through Me. Otherwise: This dawn is our Savior, who is also called the sun of justice. He illuminates the Church, namely the rational world, with the warmth of faith and the splendor of his grace. So, Job, what did you command this dawn to arise from heaven, shining on those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death? Just as, Job, after your beginning you could not command the eternal dawn, so that the world, established in the darkness of errors, would shine: likewise, after his death, you could not show the place of his resurrection and glory in the right hand of his Father, whom I called back to me after he willingly accepted death. As the Lord Jesus himself said in the Gospel: So if you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before. And did you shake the furthest ends of the earth, and cast out the wicked from it? This earth can be understood as the Church: of which the Lord said above, from which in the furthest ends of the earth, that is, in the last age, sinners will be cast out; so the Lord Himself says: Behold, I will command, and will shake the house of Israel among all the nations, as grain is shaken in a sieve. Therefore, God, who according to the

prophet measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and weighed the heavens with a span, and with three fingers weighed the earth, He Himself, holding the edges of the earth with both hands, shakes it here and there like a sieve, or casts it out as a garment, that He may cast out the wicked like chaff and tares from the wheat of the righteous. Therefore, all these things demonstrate not only the strength, but also the justice of the one who works, and from this it is that the Lord speaks to the holy Job with a rebuke: why he said that an extremely severe punishment was inflicted on the innocent. According to the moral sense of the understanding of this passage, as I understand it, it is easier to interpret the outcome as the nature of the earth, because man is called from the earth, and the lives of the saints are extreme, because they live without carnal pleasures, even though they are in the flesh. And therefore at the ends of the earth they are said to be going to earthly actions, not living in the midst as in the whole body. Therefore, these extreme points or boundaries of the earth are in the hand of the Lord, as the prophet says: 'For all the ends of the earth are in His hands.' This is what the Lord claims to hold and shake, so that they may tremble before His presence, as the prophet says of Him: 'He looks upon the earth and makes it tremble.' And thus He shakes off the wicked from their land, whom we certainly understand to have detestable customs of vices. Therefore, the Lord executes the impious ones of this world from his holy ones, when he establishes them as innocent who have been cleansed by him. Concerning such impious and sinful people, the prophet said: In the morning, that is, in the knowledge of the science of God, with faith in me as the rising light, I would destroy all the sinners of the earth, to scatter them from the city of the Lord: every holy soul, certainly all those who work iniquity. Whether God will hold the world at the end, like a guilty one for his judgment, at the time when the extremities of the earth also tremble with the fear of conscience, where we can understand even the smallest things in the outermost parts of the earth, who also must be driven out from the gentle ones by the just judgment of God, as the proud and impious ones from the earth. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

It will be restored as a clay seal, and it will stand like a garment. This seal is understood as the soul of man, which was made in the image of God. In it is expressed the likeness of the goodness of God and the glory of all virtues. Therefore, this seal of the image of God and likeness, which was worn away and blurred by the sin of Adam, will be restored again through Christ by a repeated impression. This seal is now renewed by faith and the grace of baptism, and will be engraved on the mind with a better life. But in the resurrection, everything will be completely restored, when just as the clay of the human body will be repaired in incorruption, so also the soul, together with it, will be clothed with the garment of immortality, as if with a robe of glory. So that just as glory itself and the incorruption of immortality, that is, Christ, remains forever, so also the one who has put on that clothing may remain gloriously without end. Speaking of this garment in relation to the clay of his flesh, the Apostle says: This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. However, this should be examined more carefully, because in the Scriptures, clothing is sometimes said to have a different meaning. Therefore, clothing is sometimes said to be our very own body, in which the soul is like clothed: as the prophet says to the sinful soul: Your iniquity shall cover your clothing. Likewise, the virtues of the soul are also seen as clothing, by which the same soul is composed and adorned. Of these, the prophet says to the righteous one who performs acts of mercy: Then your morning light shall break forth, and your clothing shall quickly arise: And since these clothing are living and rational, they will not be made for you, but will arise in you. And sometimes sins are called clothing, as the prophet Zacharias

says: And Jesus was clothed with dirty clothes. The angel said to those standing in front of him, saying: Take away the dirty clothes from him: he said to him: Behold, I have taken away your wickedness. Above, we have said that clothing is the glory of immortality, with the light of which man is to be clothed eternally, never fading. Other interpreters have said this: And you, taking clay from the earth, formed man, and you placed him famous on the earth: that is, preeminent over all creatures. While the Lord speaks these things to Job, he is strongly rebuked. However, according to mystical understanding, shaded by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, a man, is figuratively portrayed from the earth of the virgin Mary. Therefore, this man is assumed from the clay of human flesh. We should understand that the term 'clay' here is not used to denote worthlessness, but rather the very material from which Christ was taken: just as Adam in the beginning, who was formed from the slime of the earth. And just as he came into being through one from the bosom of the earth, so also he, being formed in the womb of his mother, came into being through one who created him. And thus he is famous over all the earth: so that from the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the Lord may be praised. Their light shall be taken away by the wicked, and the exalted arm shall be broken. The light of the wicked is the glory and happiness of this world, which will pass away with the passing world, as Solomon also says: The light of the wicked shall be extinguished, and their strength and power, which are called by the name of the arm, shall be immediately crushed. Have you entered into the depths of the sea, and walked in the farthest depths of the abyss? God, who governs and directs all things by his providence, signifies in these places with abundant and elaborate speech. Hence he says to Job: 'If you can be everywhere and know all that has been created, and if you were able to penetrate into the hidden depths of the earth and also the deeps of the sea, and if you have wandered through its farthest and outermost depths.' Therefore, these words are spoken to reprimand Job. Whereas others have said: 'Have you entered the source of the sea? The beginning and origin, from which the sea itself, as if from a womb, flows forth from the Ocean sea,' it seems to be saying that we know that this happens through the constant course and ebb of the Ocean, and they report and affirm this, that the immense outpouring of the Ocean sea happens in one moment of time through the rivers of all regions and provinces. However, we ourselves know that it comes in the alternating successions of all days and nights, coming for twenty-four hours, and with the passing of a quarter of an equinoctial hour, coming back more slowly without interruption, whether by day or night, for five equinoctial hours in ebb tide, with great heat and violent force, either only in hidden places or also returning in the reversed courses of great rivers to higher areas, and flowing out with a slightly gentler current for seven hours of the same measure, and emptying into only that which had been filled for five hours. Thus, it can be seen as incredible that in the same sea, like a certain fountain, so many waters bubble up, from the depth and sufficient abyss of which, at a certain time, those waters sink down to the surface, and again, returning, fall into the same deepest gulfs: they rush away headlong, and, by a perpetual law established by God, bubble up from the very depths and again flow down to the lowest depths, and perhaps God said to the holy Job: Have you entered the fountain of the sea? Since only God knows what He has created. Furthermore, I believe that according to mystical understanding, God said this because at the end of the world He would descend to the underworld for the redemption of mankind, where He said He walked in the power of the descender: Because it was impossible for Him to be held in the bonds of hell as if guilty of sin. For He alone was made as a man. At present, indeed, without assistance, but still free among the dead. But Jonas the prophet, who in a special way prefigured the Savior, clearly demonstrates in his prayer, which he

poured forth in the belly of the fish, what the underworld in the depths of the earth is. He speaks of being encompassed by the abyss of water and in many other places in Scripture, it speaks of the nature of the underworld. We can also understand this passage morally, in that, since we know that the sea is figuratively referred to as the world, its depths are above all the wicked and sinners, who, as much as they love it, are nevertheless immersed in its darkest depths so as not to see at all the light of the Gospel and the glory of Christ. But the very depths of the abyss are the dwelling place of all the impious and sacrilegious, who, descending into deeper darkness of sin, are engulfed by the excessive flood of lasciviousness, like a multitude of waters. To these, our Lord, not despising anyone and desiring to save all, deigned to come so that he might enlighten their hearts blinded by unfaithfulness through his grace, and they, having become light in the Lord, might become his temple, so that he might walk and dwell in them, and be their God. Are the gates of death open to you, and have you seen the doors of darkness? There is no creature, however powerful and strong, that can resist the majesty of God. And because they naturally perceive the Creator, they yield to His divine power, against which they cannot oppose. Hence, the ancient interpreters said: Are the gates of death open to you? They understood that such gates, which are surely feared, are not insensible and inanimate, but rather they are those unclean spirits, our enemies, the opposing powers, through which the human race found entrance to death. They themselves are dark gates, the minds of which are full of maliciousness and envy's darkness, God alone can see. Therefore, since these we speak of have become darkness by departing from the true light, they are called the powers of darkness, that is, the leaders of sinful people, and for this reason they are also called dark gates, because through their deception, a man has entered into death by the darkness of sin. Therefore, when it was said, 'You saw dark gates,' other interpreters have translated the place itself more clearly, saying: Either the gatekeepers of hell feared you: this place does not need explanation, but rather what was previously said obscurely, it now declares most openly. Certainly, in the passion and death of the Lord, these things that are said are clearer than light, who opened the gates of hell and freed the souls of the saints from there, unraveled the laws of Tartarus, going out from the underworld, made the sentence of death meaningless by rising, led confidently the trembling principalities and powers, who were the gatekeepers and the gates, openly triumphing in himself. According to the true understanding of tropes, the gates of death are our senses, which are then closed by virtues, because they are obtained by vices, and through them the death of sin enters the citadel of the mind. These dark gates are called so because they open the way to the darkness of sins or even punishments. Therefore, these gates, or these doors, are opened to men for salvation, when they have conquered vices as their enemies and turned them into flight, and have opened them with the virtues of holiness, so that they may hear with exhortation the words of the prophet saying: Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will enter into them and praise the Lord. For a holy person enters into possession of the testimony of sanctity and the jewels of virtues, preserving them with affection and rejoicing, because through the sharing of the common treasure, their hearts become one and their souls become one with God. And thus they are placed together in this world as if in the examination of a furnace: as though from one mouth they bless God at all times, and his praise is always on their lips. Have you considered the breadth of the earth? Tell me, if you know, all things. Who among men can know the extent of its greatness, except He alone who created all things? Concerning whom the prophet says: He measured the waters with his hand, and the heaven with his palm, and enclosed the whole earth with his fist. Likewise elsewhere: Have you, Job, foreseen the breadth of

the earth, that is, the future Church, which I have enlarged throughout the whole world, as the Gospel grows everywhere. Therefore, tell me if you were able to understand this, or if you were ever able to comprehend it. Whether the breadth of my wisdom, which I attribute to the earth, my home, that is, the Church: could you, with the eye of your mind ablaze, look into the future by yourself? This wisdom expanded the heart of Solomon, like the sand on the shore of the sea, and gave him great prudence, which is sung upon his departure, and confidently acts within its own breadth. This same wisdom commands that the various senses and the rich debates be written down threefold in the heart of man. Therefore, these words can be understood as spoken from the perspective of the Father, who is the Son, with divine wisdom. In which way light dwells, and what place darkness is, so that you may lead each to their boundaries, and understand the paths of its house. In the way of a holy person's conversation, light of virtues dwells: but darkness, that is, the place of vices, is the sinful person, or that place of which it is said: Go, you cursed, into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Therefore, Job, you know how to discern the merit of each, and according to justice, to lead each of these to the predetermined boundaries of retribution, you were able to understand the thoughts of their hearts, as if you were understanding the paths of their homes. There is a way, or rather a path, by which light of faith and knowledge dwells: the light of faith and knowledge dwells in the heart of the believer, or rather the light on earth, Christ in the Church. But the place of darkness, that is, ignorance and unbelief, is the heart of the foolish and unbelieving. And therefore, good and evil people, according to their merit, travel through various paths and, led by the just and good Lord, arrive at the home of eternal communion. Did you know then that you were going to be born, and did you know the number of your days? Who among men knows before he exists, that he is going to be, and knows the years of his life? Likewise, when Adam sinned and became a son of death, when were you able to know or understand that you were going to be born from the womb of Mother Church through the spirit and grace of baptism, and that you would be restored in the final resurrection for eternity, and how could you know the number of your days, which are without end, except through yourself? Have you entered the storehouses of snow or seen the storehouses of hail, which I have reserved for times of trouble, for the day of battle and war? By these words, God wanted to demonstrate His power, which He also has in the hidden and invisible things of His creation. He said to Job: Have you entered the storehouses of snow or seen the storehouses of hail? For there are not certain places in some vast and spacious part of the world where a mass and heap of countless snows are stored within, so that they may rightly be called storehouses from which these gathered species may be produced when God desires. Rather, it is so, as the Lord Himself says in another place: And the appearance of the field is with Me. For whatever He desires to do, His will immediately proceeds to action. And therefore these treasures named, are not placed in any immense and spacious location, but in his will and disposition: as it says in another place: And the beauty of the field is with me: in whom there is nothing imperfect, because there is no difference between his thinking and his doing, but immediately it is done, as he desires. In this hidden disposition of his divine heart, where these treasures of things were when they did not yet exist physically, Job is asked if he can enter. For no one can approach or know that secret of divine majesty, except the Son who is in the bosom of the Father, of one nature and substance. Therefore, these things are prepared by God for the time of the enemy, battle, and war. In many ways and through various other countless judgments, God punishes and corrects the human race, just as He devastated the Egyptians with thunderbolts and hail. And generally, He visits the punishment of mankind with

other things. He humiliates the enemy with fierce attacks, devastates with earthquakes and chasms, destroys with whirlwinds, overwhelms with ruins, and drowns with shipwrecks. He also afflicts them with countless other plagues, whether with slow infirmities or with acute illnesses and corrupted air. We read in Deuteronomy that he prepares the proper punishments of tribulations for his enemies who resist and rebel, so that he may inflict on them the just penalties according to his righteousness. Likewise, we sometimes experience snow to our advantage, and other times to our disadvantage, and therefore under the name of snow we may understand in this place a collection of opposing powers, which have departed far from the love of God, that is, they have forsaken God dwelling in heaven, so that they may be cast down to the earth by the just judgment of God. However, this snow and hail, as if forgotten by their own nature, hardened into a certain firmness, as if certain secret machinations of thoughts, God desired to name treasures, as the prophet Ezekiel says about their leader: In the multitude of your merchandise, your innards are filled with iniquity. Therefore, the Lord alone is the knower and searcher of all these thoughts. He says that He has prepared these treasures, which are named snow and hail by riddles, for the time of the enemy, the day of battle and war. And since they would never turn to God with a foolish heart, by divine arrangement they became teachers of punishments, so that they may correct others by the judgment of God with the scourges of correction, and punish others according to the just sentence of God, and establish others who are afflicted by harsh tribulations as more illustrious. Just as it clearly appeared in the case of the holy Job, it was also demonstrated in the Egyptians likewise, to whom dreadful plagues were inflicted by evil angels, against their will fighting against God. Item, did you enter the treasures of snow, and so on. Could the Lord have spoken about his coming in the flesh in these words, by which he, the eternal fire and fire of heaven, and the divine fire through which all rational creatures are kindled, deigned to descend to the earth, which is like a snowy region and the cold of this world, hardened by the excessive cold of unbelief, he exclaimed and said: I have come to send fire upon the earth. Therefore, it declares that it has entered the treasures of such human hearts, namely the coldest in forgetting their God, so that, the coldness of infidelity being expelled, they would burn with love for Him and say: My heart is on fire within me, and in my meditation a fire is kindled. So that, coming to the fire of understanding through the progress of faith from the coldness of foolishness, they would say: Was not our heart burning within us when Jesus opened the Scriptures to us, with our hearts enlightened and the fountain of charity ignited? And so, entering the world and visiting it, he looks at the hearts of mortals, which are also called treasures by the Lord himself in the Gospel, as it says: 'A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things.' Therefore, God prepared these things we have mentioned, the enemy of strife and warfare, dying for us in due time: he triumphed over the grave and most troublesome enemy, the devil, in hell, and rising from the dead, he conquered his adversaries of faith in Judea. By what path is light scattered, and heat divided on the earth? Who can truly know the way of the sun, how it moves in an ordained course in the right hemisphere of the sky, spreading light over the lands, or how heat is divided in turn by the seasons or by the regions of the world, so that it may burn more intensely elsewhere at the same time, while being felt with moderate warmth in another place. Also, by what path is light scattered, and heat divided on the earth. The preaching of the Gospel is the way by which the light of faith is spread upon the hearts of believers. And it is spread beautifully, because by the dryness of the minds of unbelievers, they are sprinkled with the abundance of divine grace, and thus the heat of the Holy Spirit is divided upon the earth of the faithful. Thus, I say, it is divided, when grace is given to each

person according to the measure of the gift of our Lord Jesus Christ. Or it is divided in this way, when the announcement of Christ is the scent of life unto life for some, but the scent of death unto death for others. Thus, therefore, the very goodness of the Gospel is divided, in that it bestows life on some, death on others, and operates through the crime of unbelief. Likewise, the way of holy conduct and the light of the fear of God are spread over all the earthly members of a man's body, so that the darkness of sins and the heat of temptations may flee from him and be tempered by the help of God's grace, lest, with the rising heat of the sun, it may boil over on himself. And thus, therefore, the heat is divided when not the whole weight of tribulations is imposed simultaneously on them, as the Apostle says: For God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted, etc. And Solomon said: A wise son escapes the heat, but a wicked son is ruined by the wind in the harvest. Who sent the most violent rain, and the path of resounding thunder, so that it rained upon the earth without man in the desert, where no mortal dwells, to fill the impassable and desolate place, and bring forth green herbs? This most violent rain is the Gospel of the Savior, which sent forth its message to the earth, so that His word would swiftly run: this, I say, is the rain in the mountains of Jerusalem, rising from the depths of the earth to the heights. Since the law will come forth from Zion, says the Prophet, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and being lifted up from the holy apostolic clouds, like flowing water, it runs abundantly with the breath of the Holy Spirit blowing upon it, making a path for itself in various signs and virtues of faith among the nations, with the terror of the name of God and the thunder of miracles going before it. Others have said that it has prepared a river for all peoples. And, I say, it has prepared a river for the Church, so that it may be inundated with copious and powerful rain of the Holy Spirit, as it was shown in the very beginning of the nascent Church upon the holy apostles and others. But what is said in praise of the evangelical rain, that it rained upon an uninhabitable earth, which did not have man: it will not be surprising if, as it sounds, it is understood to mean so much; but in the desert, that is, among the nations, it poured out the abundant teaching of the Lord's preaching. In the desert, I say, where no one had dwelt, that is, because no prophets had been sent by God to the nations, in order to fill the impassable and desolate places, and to produce the green herbs of the Gospel. The rain of God's charity filled the land of the Church, which had been deserted by God, and it nourished it with the fatness of abundance so that it produced and brought forth green herbs from the seeds of the sown, according to their kind, as it says in the psalm: 'And it shall flourish out of the city like the grass of the earth, and it shall multiply its fruits according to the parable of the Lord, some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, some a hundredfold, and it shall hear with consolation the one encouraging it: Rejoice, O barren one, who does not bear; break forth and cry out, O one who is not in labor, for the children of the desolate one are more than those of the one who has a husband.' Who is the father of rain, or who gave birth to the drops of dew? Who is the author and creator of this rain, and of this Sunday shower, if not God? He has separated this voluntary rain for his inheritance, as the Father says to the Son: Son, ask of me and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession. God himself has given birth to the drops of dew: hence the prophet says to God: For the dew that comes from you is their health. Therefore, in the river, He demonstrated the most abundant flow and generosity of divine grace. But in the dew, He showed the same grace gradually infiltrating the depths and penetrating the depths of the soul. Others have said, who produced the clumps of dew. Therefore, it will not be absurd for each of the saints to understand these clumps, which are in the field of the Church: of whom the Apostle says, You are God's field. Therefore, these clumps are born through baptism in

Christ, as the Apostle says, Created in Christ Jesus for good works. From this heavenly dew, they were saturated, and became rich fruits in the holy ones, and fruitful. From whose womb did the ice come forth? By the name of the womb, it seems to me that it signifies the secret of the heart. For we should not understand that the ice came forth from the mouth of God in a literal sense, but rather from that secret and inscrutable judgment of his mind, a just and strict sentence was passed. Therefore, he said that the ice came forth, meaning that the judgment went forth, by which certain people are struck with the punishment of hardness, and their hearts are bound with a very hard and unbreakable ice, and are restrained by a very cold freeze, so that they do not feel the warmth of divine love. Of the apostate angels, it can truly be said, and especially it must be understood of the Jews, to whom the waters of heavenly eloquence are frozen, so that they may flow forth in abundance with the grace of the fruits of the nations: of whose calling it was said in the earlier verse, and of whom: He turned the wilderness into pools of water, and dry land into flowing springs. And he caused the hungry to live there, that is, those hungry for righteousness: And they sowed fields, and planted vineyards, and they yielded a harvest of birth, and he blessed them, and they multiplied greatly. Therefore, whoever with a spiritual mind now contemplates the Church, which is everywhere present, sees its land, which was once deserted by God, now abounding with all these spiritual riches. Thus, the Church has received these predicted drops of dew flowing from heaven, and according to the Book of Judges, which we read about in the time of the leader Gideon, the dew of one lamb and a small nation has been poured out on the entire land that believes in Christ, who is the dew, by the grace of blessing. And that mystery, which the Psalmist foretold, has been fulfilled, saying: As the dew of Hermon. Hermoneutics, which means anathema, signifies by its height the people of the Jews. Therefore, its dew, namely grace and blessing, descends upon Mount Zion. For Zion is a lofty mountain, rich in virtues and sublime Church. In it is established the lookout of future contemplation of the believers. Hence, the very appearance of virtues is interpreted as Zion. And so that we may know the proper name of this dew, the Psalmist says: For indeed there, namely on Mount Zion, the Lord commanded blessing and life forever. And it follows with the Lord saying: And who brought forth the frost from heaven? Therefore, in this manner, the sentence of hardening strikes the sacrilegious, because it is rightly said that evil is begotten by them from God, as we read about Pharaoh and the Jews, whom we see hardened due to their unbelief and excessive obstinacy of heart. It follows from this, with the Lord saying: In similitudinem lapidis aquae durantur. Nomine aquarum, secundum Scripturarum auctoritatem, populi intelliguntur: sicut Joannes apostolus ait: Aquae autem populi sunt; et David ad Dominum: Libera me, inquit, de aquis multis, de manu filiorum alienorum. De his ergo mihi dicere videtur, qui nimio oblivionis Dei frigore obriguerunt, et instar lapidum, solidi et nimium duri effecti sunt. Deinde ait: And the surface of the abyss is bound up. In the abyss, I understand the deepest obscurity of the mind, which is so covered by the dullness of excessive unbelief and is bound up with a certain frozen impiety, so that it becomes like a rock, in such a way that with such a mind, there is no access to breathe towards God, according to what the Apostle, taking up a prophetic testimony about the Jews, spoke, saying: God has given them a spirit of compunction, eyes that do not see, and ears that do not hear until this present day. In Psalm 147, which speaks of frost, ice, and crystal, according to this interpretation, which we read the Lord to have declared, the prophet speaks mystically. We can understand these passages simply: who has given birth to frost from heaven? Referring to the icy places of the mountains and the heights of the lofty ones, and through the immense air, places closer to the heavens, or rather more proximate. Therefore,

according to this custom of the Scriptures, the Lord himself says in the Gospel, the birds of the sky. Now, setting aside the literal meaning, we ought to understand and believe those things which are preached sacredly by God. Will you be able to join the sparkling Pleiades, or can you disperse the orbit of Arcturus? Now he speaks to Job about the order of the heavens and the movement of the stars. He calls the Pleiades the stars that are joined together, as if they are shown to be seven. And so the Greeks, because there were many of them together, gave them the name from the very multitude: πλεηθυσ or πλεθος, for multitude is said, and from that it is derived that they are called Pleiades. Therefore, the Lord says to Job: Can you, by your power, make these stars joined together and be together? Moreover, I have made the circuit of the North, also known as the circuit of Arcturus, which constantly returns upon itself, revolving in a continuous loop to encompass the entire world. Can you perhaps dissipate it? We read about the stars of the sky, the constellations, and other places in Scripture, such as in the book of Joshua and Judges: 'The boundary of the Amorites was from the ascent of the scorpion stone and the higher places.' Therefore, let us interpret the words of the Lord according to mystical understanding: let us interpret the sky as the Church, which the Lord above referred to as the earth, but there it is named 'earth' because of its origin. But now, elevated through Christ into glory, heaven is rightly understood. In this heaven, the star clusters of the Pleiades and the North, contain within themselves one sacred interpretation. For the number seven itself, the sevenfold Spirit, demonstrates thanks and virtues in itself, which shine forth in this firmament of heaven. Therefore, these stars are called by the prophet the seven eyes of the Lord, whose thanks and virtues the prophet Isaiah enumerates, when he prophesies about the birth of the Savior, saying: And the spirit of God shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and understanding: the spirit of counsel, and fortitude: the spirit of knowledge, and piety: he has been filled with the spirit of the fear of God. Just as no one can connect the spiritual stars of inseparable light, so it is entirely possible for these stars of grace, as they circle around my Church, to be separated from an unbreakable connection. And as for what others have said, or what you have understood about the bond of the Pleiades: it raises the mind of the beholder to a spiritual understanding, so that they may strive to inquire about something allegorical. Do you bring forth the Morning Star in its time, and make the Evening Star rise above the sons of the Earth? The star that we call the Morning Star, which is brighter than the other stars, as even the doctors of the Church have declared, is said to be one of those five stars that they call planets, because it has a different course from the other stars, and a much swifter one, and thus the planets, that is, the wandering or errant ones, are called so because they have not a fixed, but a changeable course. Therefore, it is believed that Lucifer will appear on earth after two years in the East. And another star, which is called Vesper, because it appears in the evening of the day at its own time: God said to Job, 'Do you make this star rise over the sons of the earth?' So, if you understand the power of the one who governs everything, and recognize justice working in you. Many think that this star is called Hesper. That is why Italy is named Hesperia, because it first appears there at its own time. Spiritually, the words are of the Father speaking about His Son, our Savior, saying: 'Will you bring forth Lucifer in his appointed time, and make the Evening Star rise over the sons of the Earth? Where the coming of the Lord in the flesh is signified, and his resurrection from the dead is foreshadowed, with the fullness of time approaching.' And He said: 'God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.' In this appointed time, He was brought forth by God the Father to visit the Earth, who is therefore called Lucifer, because coming from the higher realms, as if after two years, after the law and the prophets, He was born, and He

showed us the light of faith and timely knowledge, being placed over us in darkness and the shadow of death. But indeed, the same Son of Man is called Vesper, who perished on the cross during the time of his passion. About whom the prophet said to the believing people: The Lord, whose name is, will make a journey for him who ascends above the West. Certainly, at the time of the setting, when he said to the Father: Into your hands I commend my spirit, he placed darkness, and it became in the hearts of the unbelieving Jews. Therefore, God the Father raised up this great shepherd of the sheep. I say, this Vesper, because he offered the evening sacrifice in the evening of the ages, he made the Son of Man rise above the sons of the earth: I wish they were not flesh and earth the food of the serpent, nor the sons of the night and darkness, but the sons of Lucifer, the sons of God. Do you know the order of the heavens, and can you set its plan on the earth? If anyone can know the number of all the stars, he can also investigate the order of their arrangement. Therefore, no one truly knows these things except the one who created them. However, in a spiritual sense, it can be understood as follows: Job, do you, as one who knows the future, already know in what order the Church shines in the heavens, how diverse and manifold the graces of my spirit shine like stars, whether in glory or in the order of merits, so that the saints will shine like radiant stars in the resurrection? Others translate this passage as follows: That all things which are under heaven are made in the same way. When they say this, they mean that by the movement of time or the stars, things constantly repeat and cycle. However, it should be understood spiritually that the dispensation of reconciliation through Christ, the human race will continually grow until the end of the age, reaching the knowledge of all nations. This is because the saints daily progress in virtue and strive to reach the summit of moral excellence, and thus they are placed under the rule of the Church's authority. Will you lift up your voice in the clouds, and will the rush of waters cover you? At first hearing, this is to be understood thus: Do you have such power that at your command and nod, rains immediately pour down from the sky and cover the earth? But with a higher understanding, when he says, 'I lift up my voice,' the Lord declares that when I call out to human beings, 'Come to me, all who labor and are burdened,' and with a feeling of compassion, I touch the secret thoughts of their minds, where there is, as it were, the cloudiness of sin and a greatly obscured forgetfulness of my name, so that, surrounded by countless peoples who obey my voice, I may cover them as with rushing waters, and may clothe myself in them as with a garment, in order to dwell in them, as the prophet says, 'I have put on a wedding garment like a bride.' Others have said: You will call the cloud with your voice, and it will obey you in the trembling of the mighty waters. The trembling of the mighty waters is a fearful command of the divine will, which God commands every holy person to observe by obeying, so that they may be saved through obedience. Job, could you do something similar? Will you send forth lightnings, and they will go, and say to you, Here we are? In these sermons of God, it must be believed that his power is present, whatever he may desire, to whom even all things insensible are as if sensible; as the prophet says: The earth quaked before the face of the Lord, before the face of the God of Jacob. And the lightnings are called to return because they are sent by God to illuminate the world through the preaching of the Gospel, to whom the Lord says: You are the light of the world. And again: I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you may be for salvation to the end of the earth. And when the ends of the world return with the fruits of their labors, they will come with joy and say: You have entrusted me with five talents, behold I have gained another five. Whether they are divine inspirations, like lightning, by which the hearts of the saints are illuminated, so that, being inflamed with love for the charity of Christ, they may burn. But these

lightning bolts of divine illumination shall return to God, who had sent them forth to incite our desire for Him, when, through that same divine visitation, we, with a burning and fervent soul, produce the work of His illumination. Who has placed wisdom in the depths of man, or who has given understanding to the rooster? It is clear that when man was made in the image and likeness of God, he received the wisdom of reason, so that he could excel over other animals, which lack reason and prudence. As for the good things that God has given to man, I refer the reader to those who have written extensively about the goodness of nature and its virtues. God has also given such senses to the rooster, that after measuring the time of night, as if mindful of the approaching light, it announces the returning dawn to the world by crowing. But according to spiritual understanding, it must be understood in this way: that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. The Father has placed Him in the innermost being of man. For this is what the wisdom of God, who is His Son, says when Peter confessed Him as the Son of the living God, saying: 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And the Apostle says: 'But when it pleased Him, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me.' But I believe that each of the saints, who receive faith, understanding, and the steadfastness of virtue in the night and darkness of this world, cry out to God, so that He may inspire the enduring day and remove the shadows of present life, saying with urgency and frequent clamor of their prayers: Send forth your light and your truth. This we can also understand about the prophets, who eagerly announced the coming of the day and the sun. In this place, the interpretation is much different from others, who have said this: Who gave women the knowledge of weaving, and the understanding of different patterns? If women alone have received the knowledge of different patterns and the wisdom of weaving from God, about whom it is said: But the learned women gave, whom they knew in the work of the tabernacle: of whom the Lord in this place, as if specifically, says: Who gave women the knowledge of weaving, and the understanding of different patterns? In the book of Exodus, Bezalel and Oholiab, the priests, wove the garments of the tabernacle with various and intricate work. We know, therefore, that there are holy souls who have received the understanding of the spirit even now in history for the purpose of accomplishing this work: to whom, as it is written, God has given wisdom and understanding, and whatever skill can be invented, he has given in their hearts. Thus they were filled with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and knowledge and every kind of teaching for devising and creating every work, because that tabernacle of the law represented the image of the holy Church. Let us speak about this variety of characters or merits, like the true garment of those who serve Solomon, which the Queen of Sheba praised when admiring his wisdom, his house, his food, his dwellings, the order of his servants, their clothes, and ministers, and the continual holocausts offered in the house of the Lord. She said that this variety of offices is woven throughout the different Churches in the whole world, where some are married, others continent, and others virgins. Some adorn themselves with almsgiving, others by giving away all their possessions. Some through the cross and the mortification of worldly desires, others through knowledge of the Scriptures and the manifold graces of the Holy Spirit, they adorn the body of Christ with diverse colors, and make for themselves garments of eternal glory and immortality. They also weave together with perfect understanding the faith of the Trinity, like a threefold cord that is not easily broken. These spiritual women, that is, either holy souls or the Church established in different regions, accomplish such works. Who will explain the order of the heavens, and who will lull the heavens to sleep? It is certain, because no one will be able to explain the

order of the heavens or the course of the stars either by speech or by thought. But what does he mean by 'Who will lull the heavens to sleep?' In many places in the Scriptures, the elements are praised as declaring the glory of God, because in their arrangement and beauty, God is proclaimed by either humans or angels. That is, who, while engaged in the praises of Him, will cause them to live, that is, to rest? Therefore, in this honor, which is paid by the congregation of the Church, who else will give rest and refreshment but He Himself for eternity? Indeed, sleep is sometimes understood as rest in the Scriptures, as the prophet Isaiah says, Righteousness has slept in it: that is, in Jerusalem the equity of justice has rested, but now there are murderers. And a certain holy person, upon whom the light of the Lord's face had shone, said in the psalm, 'In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.' Also, in another place, he says, 'If you sleep among the midst of the clergy, that is, if you rest among the portions of the two Testaments.' And who will make the harmony of heaven sleep? Let us understand the holy angels, who are called heaven for the sake of its dwelling by the prophet in this manner, 'The heaven of heavens belongs to the Lord.' Therefore, who will make the harmony of this heaven to sleep, says the Lord, that is, who will be the one who can stop them from ceaselessly singing praises to me, saying holy, holy, holy Lord, so that they can rest and be as if asleep? Who will explain the order of the heavens? And the saints of heaven are frequently called by the name of heaven, concerning whom the prophet prophesies according to mystical understanding, saying: The heavens declare the glory of God. Therefore, who will be able to explain the reason for their faith, the donations they have according to the grace of God, which are different? When dust was being formed on the earth, and clumps of soil were being formed? The dust that the Lord speaks of signifies the unfaithfulness of the nations: surely dry and loose, it is mixed into the apostolic Church foundation, so that through faith and the bonds, or the connections of charity, the union in Christ's covenant of unity and peace may grow and progress like solid ground into an increase of God. Hence the fields of the Lord, transformed into fruitful ones, are bound together in one body, the bond of charity in the Church. Moreover, the Scriptures are rightly called the heavens, because they are attributed to men from above, either because they contain heavenly mysteries in themselves. Therefore, who will be able to investigate with the mind or express with speech the meaning of these heavens, that is, the Scriptures, that have been veiled and profound with the obscurities of mysteries? Or who will order their prophecies to cease? The ancient interpreters have said this: Who has inclined the organs of heaven to the earth? That is, who is it that the singing of the heavenly host inclines to knowledge of the God worthy of praise, so that, by imitating his praise, human beings may deserve to be companions of the angels. Will you capture the prey of the lioness and fill the souls of her cubs? Of the things that it enumerates throughout the entire text of this discourse, there are six quadrupeds and four birds. And in this complete number of the decalogue, it can be seen that God wanted to understand every creature, which is governed by him as its author, through it. However, the tenth number is perfect because by iterating through it, every number is multiplied to infinity. Therefore, according to the surface of the letter, it says this: I, who arrange everything with just dispensation, seem unjust in regard to you alone, O Job. According to the spiritual understanding, the lion or even the lioness is to be understood as the devil, who is also named such in many places in the Scriptures because of his savagery and strength. Therefore, the Lord says about him that he can harm no one unless he receives power from God. Therefore, by his just judgment, they are handed over to him, because he does not have the power to rule at all unless God himself allows it. Will you take the prey of the lioness, that

is, as I will allow it to be taken. But I think that in this place they are called cubs, because she had named the lioness, whom she had nourished with the milk of her malice or wickedness to be destroyed by humans. The souls of these most wicked spirits are refreshed by the deaths of these, and concerning them it is said in the psalm; The lion cubs roar, that they may seize and seek food from God. Therefore, it is said that God gives food to these lions and dragons: when they receive those whom they desire into their power. When do they lie in wait in their dens (in the woods, others say) and in caves? The dens or caves are the hearts of wicked people: in these hiding places they sit, or lie in wait, to kill the innocent. Who provides food for the raven, when its young cry out to God as they wander about, searching for food? I believe that this raven represents the adversary, just as its young do, so that, just as we understood the lioness and her cubs to symbolize the devil and his army of the damned, we should understand this raven and its young in the same way. Therefore, when it is said that they wander about, it is indicated by this word that they suffer from a kind of hunger that drives them to seek the destruction of mankind as their food, and so they seem to strive with all their might until they achieve the fulfillment of their desires, just as we heard the Holy Spirit say through Solomon: 'Let the ravens peck out the eyes of a mocking father and the scornful mouth of an aging mother, and let the young eagles devour him.' We can feel this way, like a crow, that is, the devil, and all his associates have had us as fathers at one time, when we were assimilated to their errors and vices, and from this we were even called by the name of chicks. But leaving them, as the bride is taught to do, let her do: we are the bride, to whom it is said: Listen, daughter, and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people, and your father's house, and now calling upon the Lord, it can happen that we are called by our former name: as the prophet says, when he speaks of God: He gives food to their animals, and to the chicks of the crows calling upon Him. And I think that for this reason we are considered by our former name, so that we may know what we were, and what we now are through the grace of Christ. And from this very understanding of the great good, let us give even more thanks to God, saying with the Apostle: Thanks be to God the Father, who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has transferred us to the kingdom of his Son's glory. However, it is the custom of holy Scripture to frequently mention the names of past sins in the saints, as the blessed prophet Isaiah says of God: The beasts of the field shall bless me; and the Apostle Matthew is said to be a tax collector. Let us examine this passage, if we can interpret it in a positive way, so that we understand that raven and Christ. For just as according to the custom of the Scriptures, we call the mountain our Lord, and likewise we also call the devil: we also call a rock and a stone, and even a tree and a sword: so perhaps we can also call a raven. For even the Church, the bride, among other praises of Christ, says in the Song of Songs: His hair is like the cedars, black like a raven: but when we apply the name raven to the devil, we say that he is black with crimes and gloomy, and dwells in the darkness of wickedness. When we say that the Savior is truly signified by the name, we feel that he is most obscure in the mysteries of the Scriptures. And when we know that the devil is named in the Scriptures as a serpent, who would dare to believe of the Lord in this way, unless he himself had expressed in his own words a resemblance to the serpent, saying: Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; and he admonished his disciples to be such, saying: Be wise as serpents. And the serpent, that is, the accursed devil, is from God, because he deceived Eve by his craftiness; and Christ is called accursed, because cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree. For by assuming the curse of man, that is, death which had come by the decree of God, he hung on a tree and that is why Christ was

made accursed for us. These examples have been presented to strengthen the sense previously stated; let us now look at the following. Now, therefore, the Father prepares food for Christ, who is figuratively called a raven, when he gathers believers from the nations to him, just as the prophet said about the same Father, 'He who raised up the righteous one from the East, called him to follow. He will give nations before him, and he will obtain kings. Therefore, with these called to faith, the Lord Christ is refreshed like food with the joy of exultation. This people, that is, the disciples, and all believers cry out to God in prayer, asking for substantial bread daily, and they do this while wandering, because they are strangers and guests on the earth, where they have not established a firm and stable dwelling, but they say with the Apostle, 'We are unstable.' Therefore they certainly have the food of the Scriptures: by the consolation of which they are nourished, but the food of hope and faith is not sustenance for something that properly endures. And for this reason they are said to wander in this world: until they reach a certain immobility of the future age. For it also pertains to this spiritual understanding that these ravens are said to be nourished by dew, as the philologists have reported to have investigated.

Chapter XXXIX. Do you know the time of the birthplace in the rocks, or have you observed pregnant deer? They themselves are ibexes, which the Greeks call tragelaphos, with the mixed name of bircus and cervus, because it is necessary for these animals to have something similar to themselves, and I think one of them is called a female ibex in the Song of Songs, which sometimes, according to the law, were sacrificed along with a roe deer. And they are often mentioned together in the Song of Songs, and called clean, because they had horns, chewed the cud, and divided the hoof. Of this ibex and other animals of the same kind, such as crows, as it is said in the Law: And all birds of the crow family you shall not eat. Therefore, these animals are mainly nourished on rocks and in the caves of cliffs. You know the ibex's breeding time, says the Lord to Job, or have you observed when deer give birth? There are other things in the Scriptures that are more obscure and far removed from human knowledge, about which the Lord himself seems to have spoken in this book, than those which he is now speaking to Job: for what labor is it to know the times of the deer's breeding and the ibex's giving birth? But how can the time of these birthing animals be completely unknown to human knowledge, especially when these very animals live almost in the midst of people? Therefore, lest this talk of the Lord be regarded as cheap by some and perhaps considered superfluous by them, what He said should be pondered more deeply, so that we may say that in these animals, the apostles and apostolic men are foreshadowed, and all preachers of the truth: those who, through the strength of faith and patience, like in rocks through the Spirit that fills them, bring forth the perfectly formed word of the Gospel within themselves, or give birth amidst the pains of persecutions. In the rock she was giving birth, and he who said: For in Christ through the Gospel I have begotten you. Therefore, I established this future time, and the souls of those foretold, like deer, which conceive out of fear of me, so that they may bring forth the breath of salvation upon the earth. Perhaps you, like one fulfilling the duties of a midwife, diligently observed, giving them a voice and wisdom from the womb of their mind, a word of preaching perhaps a little less firm or complete, like a newborn being poured out into this light. Have you numbered the months of their conception and known the time of their delivery? The living and powerful word of God, penetrating even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, progresses in this spiritual conception of certain growths, as if operating through the months of time in the depths of hearts, as it first appeared to the apostles themselves in the beginning of their preaching. They seemed small and insignificant at first, but as

the Spirit strengthened them, the word manifested in them, until they reached the measure of full grace. They published, like those giving birth, a complete and perfect and full account of divine promises, to different Churches. Therefore, the conception and birth times, which happen in this spiritual womb of the heart in this way, from which even you, Job, the Lord says, could understand? And their times are determined by the counsel of my predestination in the Gospel. So, where it is said, and you knew their time of birth: others have said, and you have loosened their pains. Painful are the afflictions and tribulations that are inflicted on the preachers, from which pains they are then released when they are invited to rest from the body. Whether they are released from the pains of persecutions when, placed in hope, they look upon the promise of eternal reward in exchange for present evils.

They bend down to give birth to the fetus, and they emit cries. By giving the milk of doctrine to the unbelieving and weak, as the Apostle says: I have given you milk to drink, not solid food. They are humbled and descend from that lofty wisdom to the lower ranks of preachers, in a way becoming like a little child, and to those who are without the law, as if he himself were without the law. And while they try to form and bring forth these people in Christ, they emit cries, as they are burdened by the enemies of Christ beyond measure and beyond their own strength, to the point that they are even disgusted with living. Of whom the Apostle also says: And now weeping I say, the enemies of the cross of Christ. Whether they emit such a roar from the affection of this love, as the same Apostle says: I have great sadness and continual pain in my heart. He also says: I have written to you with many tears, through much tribulation and anguish of heart. Grieving with these loving feelings, he says: My little children, whom I am in labor again until Christ is formed in you. He says in the Acts of the Apostles, where he addresses the entire gathered brotherhood: 'Be vigilant, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease to admonish each one of you with tears. And again he says: 'You yourselves know how I have been with you all the time, serving the Lord with all humility and tears.' Therefore, these things were said so that we may know that tribulation, distress, tears, and continuous heartache pertain to groans and cries of the saints. Otherwise, they bend towards the fetus, and give birth, and emit cries: when the preachers of the truth begin to preach the word of faith with clear speech, they are immediately bent over by their adversaries, that is, they are humiliated by the restraints of prison and by beatings; but because the word of God is not bound in chains: nevertheless, there they give birth to that same word to the people, by which they themselves are born in Christ: As the holy Apostle says, as we have said, to the regenerated: In Christ Jesus through the Gospel I have begotten you: Afterwards, to God, they emit cries of supplication in prayers, either praying to God for their persecutors, or imploring the assistance of divine grace for the perseverance of the faithful. Otherwise, they emit roars because anyone who adds knowledge adds sorrow: the saints groan, pondering on the dangers of this life and how far they are from the virtues they require. Their sons are separated from them and they go to pasture: they go out and do not return to them. In the apostolic childbirth, the sons whom the holy ones have begotten in Christ are separated from their former errors and even from their carnal works: in which they now blush, so that they no longer live for themselves, but for Christ, who died for them and rose again. They go to pasture: that is, they make progress through a deeper knowledge and understanding, being daily excited by their conduct, saying, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,' and the rest that follows in the same psalm; thus, I say, the holy sons of those proclaiming peace advance, as I have already said, that is, they grow and make progress. To this pasture of the Lord, and to this nourishment of holy souls, and to such spiritual

delights, they go forth certainly from infancy, daily advancing in morals, progressing by merit in virtues to a perfect man. And they do not return to those things. They do not return, so that it is necessary to teach them again what are the elements of the beginnings of God's words. They do not return to those things which are behind, but they reach out to those things which are before. They do not turn back, like some whom the Apostle says: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you: but rather they ascend the steps of the virtues, walking from virtue to virtue. These kinds of children cannot hear, like the Galatians, the voice of the reproaching Apostle: I would wish to be present with you, and to change my voice. Therefore, this talk of God, under the figure of goats and ibexes, describes the apostles, as I have already said, and the apostolic men, and all the teachers of the Church, through whose teaching the Church generates spiritual children for itself. And each soul that conceives the word of God gives birth to the children of good works, which nevertheless resembles a deer and a goat, so that it may dwell in the mountains and be nourished on rocks, and be swift and eager to run the way of the Lord. It also raises serpents from its own land and lives for a long time, hearing the prophet: 'The years of your life will be increased.' Such are the deer on the lofty mountains, which the voice of the Lord perfects, and whose feet he will lead to completion. Who released the wild donkey, and who loosed its bonds? We have shown that the figure of the Church is represented by the deer and the ibex above. Now, however, we believe that by the name of the wild donkey, the people of the Jews can be understood, whom God dismissed because of their unbelief, as it says: And he let them go according to the desires of their hearts. We believe that God testifies in many other places in Scripture that this will happen. We understand that the bonds of each are the legal precepts. Therefore, the same rebellious and stubborn people, the prophet rebukes and reproaches, saying: 'O wanton cow of Israel, you have broken the yoke, you have burst the chains.' So the Lord declared that he left this rebellious and unclean people, like a wild donkey, so that they would be freed from the yoke of his rule, because they always resisted obedience and were released from the chains of the devil's commands, and as the Apostle says, they became servants of sin, they would be set free to righteousness. For the Lord himself said about the Jews in the psalm: 'Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles,' where the very Trinity of God seems to have said this. For just as in Genesis God spoke in the plural when creating man, saying, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,' so here He spoke, saying, 'Let us break their bonds and cast away their yoke from us.' The book of Acts clearly declares that this passage refers to when the apostles raised their voices to God and said, 'O Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?' The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ. Therefore, because of this crime that was committed against Christ, the Son of God, the Father spoke, who had predicted this in His spirit, saying: Let us break their chains and cast away their yoke from us. A great and abominable sin was committed, by which they crucified the Savior, so that the chains of God's commandments would rightly be broken by them, and thus the yoke of the law would be cast away. But as for the yoke and the chains being called theirs, when they belonged to God rather than the Jews, to whom He had given the law and commandments of the commandments: this is what must be sought most of all, that it was said in this way because the Jews, understanding the law in a carnal manner, thought they could fulfill it through works as if it were their own, as the Apostle says: But Israel, following the law of righteousness, did not attain to the

law of righteousness. Why? Because it was not by faith, but by works. And consequently he concludes about the same things, saying: For being ignorant of God's justice and seeking to establish their own, they are not subject to God's justice. But what he says, desiring to establish their own justice, he does not say because the law is established by them, but because they had established their own in the law which is from God, when they believed that they were able to fulfill the same law by their own strength, and therefore according to this sense, the bonds of the Jews are said to be broken and their yoke cast away by God. To whom he gave a house in the wilderness. I made the just to dwell in the wilderness, deprived, as it were, of the protection of my defense, as I also afterwards spoke by the mouth of the prophet, saying: Let their habitation become desolate, and let there be none to dwell in their tents. Therefore that people became solitary, and they were made desolate, because they had transgressed the law, the prophets had not confirmed them, and they had violated the priesthood and the covenant of grace, and were destitute of divine benefits and the protection of grace. And his dwellings were in the land of salt. So that she could live without any hope of God's promise, she was said to have received a barren land of salt: where, apart from the bitterness with which she provoked God to anger, she had nothing. For thus does the prophet elsewhere speak about God: You have turned rivers into a desert, and the expanse of water into a thirsty land. A fertile land into a land of salt due to the wickedness of those who dwell in it.

He despises the multitude of the city, he does not hear the cry of the tax collector. This church is the city, which consists of a multitude of countless peoples, of which the Lord says: A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Therefore, anyone who despises and rejects this Jewish multitude also despises and rejects the cry of anyone who proclaims the word of God and demands obedience to the faith, and does not hear it, that is, he refuses to obey. Because of this, their hearts have become hardened, and they have closed their eyes so that they do not see with their eyes, and their ears do not hear, and they do not understand with their hearts.

He looks around at the mountains of his pasture, and seeks out everything that is green. He goes around the mountains, the proud teachers, namely the scribes and the Pharisees of his law, as if looking up to them and giving them honor by going around them with flattery. Without a doubt, he does not depart from them, in whom is the doctrine of men, in whom also are the mountains where they boast of having the pastures of the fleshly law. He seeks out everything that is green, which surely belongs to the delights of the flesh and the delicate Sabbaths, and which, like the green surface of the law's histories, have no fruit of figures. Does the rhinoceros want to serve you, or will it delay at your manger? Or, as others have said: Does the unicorn want to serve you? From different translations, we note that the rhinoceros is the same as the unicorn, and it is understood in Latin as a unicorn, or having a horn on its nose. Therefore, such creatures exist in the solitude of the East, and they are sometimes seen or captured by humans. This unicorn, therefore, represents the image of a pagan people; its pride is also symbolized in its horn, just as the prophet says to some sinners and the proud: I said to the wicked, 'Do not act wickedly'; and to the evildoers, 'Do not lift up your horn.' Do not lift up your horn on high; do not speak with a stiff neck. In many other places in the Scriptures, the term 'horn' is used to refer to pride, although it can also be used in a positive sense, as in the phrase 'He will exalt the horn of his anointed.' For even the Lord Christ himself, because of his singular authority, is sometimes called a unicorn. We also read that horns and kingdoms are called unicorn, as it is contained in the Book of Daniel and in the

Apocalypse. Here the unicorn, which through worldly wisdom was raised in pride to the heights, will it be brought down and subjected to you, says the Lord to Job, so that, being faithful in holiness and righteousness, serving in obedience, it may submit its neck and become gentle and humble, and hasten to the Lord's manger, and be nourished by the divine and human words, and be satisfied with sacred food. Whether it is to be subjected, so that it may dwell in the cloister of my Church, which will be a stable for travelers and a safe haven for those renouncing this world: where it may grow fat on the nourishment of spiritual food, instructions, and heavenly discourses, and be filled with that which will be preached by the prophet afterwards: The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib. Indeed, in the mentioned unicorn, just as in the prophet through the donkey, the unclean and uncircumcised people of all nations are signified. Will you bind the rhinoceros to your plow, or will it break the clods of the valleys behind you? We must understand that this place itself is called the charity of Christ, which is preeminent among all virtues, of which the Apostle says, 'Being bound together in charity.' The chains of which were predicted long ago by the prophet, saying to God, 'The labor of Egypt and the commerce of Ethiopia, and the men of Sabah, shall pass over to you, and they shall be yours, and they shall walk after you: bound with fetters they shall go forth.' And David, describing how believers are overcome by the bonds of the love of God through the ministers of the word of God, speaks as follows: To bind their kings with fetters of iron. He intended to demonstrate the power of Christ's love through the names of these bonds, which also, strong and mighty in iron chains, binds them to the love of the Lord. Therefore, this rhinoceros, that is, the once uncircumcised people, bound by the foreskin of carnal pleasures and unbelief, is bound by this strongest bond of Christ's love, so that no creature can separate him from Christ: he forms clods of valleys in his body, namely the hardness of sins, and he cultivates the Lord's land in his body, according to the Apostle, who says: You are not your own. And so here especially is the land of the Lord, in which the purification of all sins, like the thorns and thistles, is first made. Then, with the plow of the cross and the iron of the Lord's passion, the hardness of the heart is crushed, and the clods of the valleys are broken. By the name of valleys, I think that men humbled by sins and cast down into the depths are signified, as we have in the psalm: He sets his steps in his heart, in the valley of tears. Therefore, Isaiah, when about to prophesy with reprimand, put this title before the sinner of his prophecy, saying: The burden of the valley of vision. Therefore, the unicorn breaks the clods of such valleys, when it consumes the earth with a humble body and prepares it for receiving the seeds of heavenly precepts and yielding fruits; when it chastises its body with the Apostle and brings it into servitude; when it strives to remove all dullness of a stubborn heart and hard stupidity from itself, which, however, the Lord says it will never be able to accomplish unless it has obediently followed its ruler and governor. Where the Lord said to Job: or will he break the clods of the valleys for thee, which we have in the Psalm: My soul hath cleaved unto thee. And the prophet says of this: After thee they shall walk, he saith, bound with fetters: where I see such feet worthy of admiration, which the more bound they are, the more swiftly they go forth without stumbling. Will you have confidence in his great strength, and will you abandon your labors to him? Will you believe in him, that he will give you a harvest and gather your grain? For I, the Lord, know the strength of his love, patience, and endurance, and therefore I have entrusted to him all the labors of my mission, which he will understand through his belief in me. For his sake, I endured slaps, beatings, and spit, and I worked for him, flying to the heavens as an example of labor and virtue. I have left him with those things in which I believed and entrusted to him, with the help of my grace, that he may produce a multiplied seed and bring

forth thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold fruit in the field of my Church, and gather your grain, just as many doctors did after the apostles. The feather of the ostrich is similar to the feathers of the heron and the hawk. There are said to be three species of herons, one of them is said to be white in color, another is said to be variously colored like a crane, and the third is said to be black. They say that the third species is not only swift and fierce in pursuit of prey, but also extremely impatient in mating, to the extent that blood boils in its eyes during the act of copulation. The heron is named in Psalm 103: 'The house of the heron is their leader, when the Lord speaks of the figurative use of trees.' In Deuteronomy and Leviticus, Moses prohibits the consumption of unclean birds as food, and this is similarly stated. There are also several forms or species of birds of prey. Among these most rapacious birds, living by hunting and prey, the ostrich is compared, as others have said: 'The ostrich with the wings of a heron and an eagle.' Therefore, by a spiritual understanding and divine senses, we rightly understand the ostrich to represent the Church, which has been cleansed and made pure in Christ through the washing of regeneration and the Word. Just as the ostrich has wings similar to birds that feed on flesh and blood. But these (birds) move with the rowing of their wings in this air as if in the sea, in order to capture prey from other birds. Hence, under this image, our spiritual enemies are understood. However, the ostrich uses its feathers in a far different way: because it extends them like the oars of a vessel, living by faith and the appearance of two testaments. This bird, the Lord says to Job: When he abandoned his eggs on the ground, did you perhaps warm them in the dust? By eggs, or rather sons, as it is said in the following, we should understand a new creature generated and born in Christ, and the bright offspring of the holy Church. But we should know that these eggs are those who are nourished by the daily teaching, like a certain fetus of the mother Church, so that eventually, progressing from the frugality and imperfection of the beginnings, they may become, as if formed and shaped with distinct joints of limbs, a vessel of virtues, when they have been made light in the Lord from the darkness of vices, advancing daily towards the maturity of age and character. Let them listen to the prophet himself saying this: Days shall be fashioned, and no one in them, that is, no vice shall have dominion over them, by which they may be vanquished. But let us understand the sons to be now, as usual, stronger, composed of faith and virtues, and formed by the growth of virtues, as if already having nothing of all the weakness of unformed life. Therefore, as the Lord says, they are left on earth by the Church when they endure persecution from the impious and the earthly wise. For the Church is said to abandon them when it does not resist those who oppose it, whom the Lord makes strongest with the fervor of faith and the patience of hardening, as in that fire that he sent to the earth and in the dust of their fragile flesh.

He forgets that his foot might trample them, or that a beast of the field might crush them. The Church forgets its own children, while it does not prohibit their being oppressed by the burden of hardships brought upon them by adversaries. In this place, I think there is a difference of tribulations because of what he said, his foot might trample, and what he said, and the beasts of the field might crush. And let this be the crushing of beasts, when openly fierce, savage, and like beasts in the cruelty of their manners. Those who confess Christ afflict themselves even unto the atrocity of death. But the foot of trampling is such a tribulation, when the holy ones are humiliated everywhere by reproaches and excessive contempt of the wicked, as if crushed by a certain trampling.

It endures for its children as if they were not its own: it labored in vain, with no compelling fear. In the midst of the tribulations of its children, the Church appears harsh and unfeeling, since it does not lament and mourn the hardships and death of its offspring. In the likeness of this, the holy mother of the Maccabees rejoiced over the tortures of her children: for she saw in spirit, just as here the holy mother Church contemplates daily through faith, how much glory the present punishments will bring forth for eternity, through the profession of the accepted truth. And therefore, because of what follows, he labored in vain, with no compelling fear, he marks the Church, which prepares her sons for temptation and the troubles of this world, hoping certainly from God for the glory of her temporary evils, and the eternal happiness of incorruption for her sons. Otherwise, even if he had grieved for his consecrated sons, he would have grieved in vain, because he did not have any reasons to fear, since he did not lose them, but acquired them. For God has deprived her of wisdom and has not given her understanding. The wisdom and understanding of this worldly Church are deprived of God; for the Apostle also instructs that this must be done, saying: 'Whoever wants to become wise, let him become foolish, so that he may become wise: for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.' When the time comes, he raises himself on high wings, derides the horse and its rider. When a more troubling and excessively bitter affliction of the persecutor comes upon him, there is a greater heartfelt appeal to God by the one being afflicted, who is roused and raised up in a most vigilant intention to pray fervently to the Most High, and who, supported as it were by the wings of faith and hope, borne up by the help of divine grace, and sustained by such wings, his steps indeed become swifter and more agile. Thus, he derides his pursuing enemies, that is, the horse and its rider, which are the devil and the man who serves as the enemy's agent, who sits on his horse, that is, in the heart of the persecutor, in order to carry out persecutions against the Church. Will you give strength to the horse, or will you clothe his neck with neighing? This horse can be understood as the opposing power, who is pale, as it is written in the Apocalypse, whom death and Hades follow. And he is said to be red, sprinkled with the blood of men, as it is mentioned in the Prophet Zachariah. Therefore, while it is allowed to be given to him by God, it is said to be strength, and his neck is clothed with neighing, so that through God's patience and goodness, he may store up wrath for himself on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. And therefore, it is signified in his neck, the ringing of pride, by which he swells up against God and speaks blasphemy. Will you rouse him up as it were locusts? For more than locusts, our adversary is said to be roused up, when he is said to go from his places to divide the regions, and to lay waste, just as the psalmist says of God: He spoke, and the locust came. But I think that this rousing up is an instance of the work being accomplished. Hence it is said to Pharaoh: For this very purpose have I raised you up, that I may show my power in you, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. The glory of his nostrils is terror. Or as others have said: The glory of his breast is audacity. To turn the enemy into flight from his adversary, the soldier of Christ, he also terrifies with his very breath: this is the smell of death, this is the furious spirit panting for the death of man, he looks back, who turns again to sin, or yields to tribulation, as the Lord has taught in the Gospel through a parable. The hoof digs into the earth. Or, as others have said: digging in the field thrives, that is, carnal men, and tramples and crushes the earthly wise, and once he has humiliated them and subjected them to him, he makes them broken by that brokenness, such as it is, and the unhappiness in the ways of wicked men. In this kind of breadth of vices, like thriving in the field, he digs to undermine the foundations of virtues from men, so that they may fall into ruin with their

solidity taken away.

He rejoices boldly. He is proud of the audacity of presumption, as long as he fights destructively against men.

He advances to meet them armed. The Apostle explains diligently what are the weapons of the saints against spiritual wickedness. Therefore, being clothed with these weapons, he is said to advance to meet them when, attempting to storm the fortress of the mind, he hurls battering rams against the wall of virtues and, daringly venturing to tempt the Lord, he comes to meet Him in the desert, and confronts the apostles preaching Christ in each city, when he stirs up commotions of sedition among the people, as we also read in the Acts of the Apostles. Wherefore also to some Paul saith: A great and evident door is opened unto me, but there are many adversaries. And in many other places he does not keep silence concerning this assault of adversaries, whom the devil sent forth.

He despises fear and does not yield to the sword. That the devil is driven away at the command and invocation of God is evident; but if we consider his insolence and most wicked and shamelessly impudent will, he is not frightened, he does not blush even if he has been terrified and put to flight by the sword of God, and he returns again, and does not depart unrebuted. The bow will sound, the spear will shake, and the shield. Why does the enemy have a bow? So that the Jews, Gentiles, and heretics who sit in it may shoot straight arrows of death, namely the deadly doctrines of errors, into the darkness towards those with a righteous heart. It has a spear with which it pierces sinners with crimes and other vices, sharper devices, a spear, traps for sins and deadly ones. It has a shield with which, filled with malice, it covers the chest of all its soldiers, so that they may not be pierced by the arrows of God's words; it repels them, frustrates them, and hurls them aside. Transformed into an angel of light, with a certain terrifying splendor, the spear and shield vibrate, and the corrupt teachings of the heretics are shattered by the thunderous words of falsehood; and because of its constant tension and use, it is said to vibrate pleasingly. The devil, fervent and raging, sucks in the earth. The devil is fervent with vices, an enemy of the saints, and burning with the fire of all crimes, and raging against man with the fury of envy, in order to now suck in sinners with his enticements, and transfer the devoured ones into the body of his lost congregation, with which body the prophet said that he would perhaps be swallowed up, if the Lord were not in it: thus he says: If the Lord were not with us, perhaps the living would have swallowed us up. So here our adversary himself is, to whom God spoke, saying: You shall eat the earth all the days of your life. And for this reason he and his associates, as enemies of the Lord, will lick the earth. And he does not consider the sound of the trumpet to be a noise. That is, he rejects the hearing of the reprimand of the prophets and apostles, to whom it is said: 'Lift up your voice like a trumpet.' But rather, raging, he says like the true Pharaoh: 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, and so on.' In these places of which we have spoken, others have translated: 'For he rejoices over the bow itself and over the sword, spear, javelin, and he overturns the earth with trembling and anger. He does not believe until the trumpet has sounded.' Where I think the same sense is contained, according to what we have explained. In battle, with sword and other weapons of the enemy, all his inventions must be understood, which delight in killing a man with these methods, as if with weapons. When he hears the trumpet, he says, 'Oh! From afar, he smells war, the exhortation of leaders, and the howling of the army. 'When he hears', he says, 'our adversary has heard the trumpet of God', that is, each teacher of the Church urging his fellow soldiers to

stand strong in battle, according to the imperial and divine command, against their adversary. With a stunned and astonished mind, and with ears astounded, he says, 'Oh!' as if he were saying, 'What do I hear?' Does anyone have the audacity to think about preparing for war against me at least? Where then is it said, 'Woe! Others said Hooray, because according to the context, it can be understood, whether for good or for evil,' and in the Psalter: 'Let them be confounded and ashamed, who say to me, Hooray, hooray.' Therefore, in this place with a mocking spirit and a mocking face, 'hooray' is said. For the enemy is subtle and very watchful, and too clever, who has the whole earth for losing care when he senses any beginnings or certain signs in a person, how to resist him and his vices, like a well-fed animal, he tries to anticipate those opposing him: so that they do not take up the weapons of holiness against the devil: so that they do not become worthy of veneration when the eternal King arrives. But the howling, or rather the sound, as others have said, of the army of the true emperor, that is when they encourage each other with one spirit, one charity, and one faith, and with united forces of the fear of the Lord, so that, until iniquity passes away, they are persevering in battle: because the love of their king, infused in them by the Holy Spirit, who is given to them, makes them concerned for one another as members. Will you raise him up like locusts? Whom I caused to leap from place to place, and in the present, I inflamed from the pleasure of the world to the desire of the future age, so that he was awakened from the body of unbelief, like the sun when warmth comes. But we know that these changes are not of physical places, for they are the affections of souls. The glory of his nostrils is terror. He terrifies sinners, hating what they are, and saying to them about God: Unless you repent, he will brandish his sword, and so on. The glory of his nostrils is that the spirit of God is in his nostrils, which even the holy Job said: The spirit of God is in my nostrils. The Church is perfumed with this ointment, by the spirit of God indeed, as the Apostle John writes: And you have an anointing from the Holy One. Therefore, in this place we are discussing, the human's inner sense was passionate about the good: in which sense, according to the will's decision, some scent of death leads to death, and some scent of life leads to life, since the world has been filled with the poured-out myrrh of faith on Christ, that is, from the holy Church: all the people of the faithful, anointed with the same sacred chrism. Therefore, the very ointment, which was kept in the narrowness of an alabaster vessel before the knowledge of the Savior, was called pistice, so that we may know the peoples of the believers consecrated by the chrism, as He said. Therefore, the inner senses are permeated by the glory of this scent, as if by the terror of generation. The hoof digs into the ground. It leaps boldly and proceeds to meet the armed. Whatever it has in itself primarily for the perseverance of substance, it certainly divides and moves the earth for the sake of the good of virtue. For it does not allow it to only walk uncultivated, but it strives for the field to become fruitful and abundant. Therefore, it boldly rejoices before God, so that he may hear about itself, just as it is said about others: But they will come in rejoicing, carrying their sheaves. And also, listen, good servant, because you have been faithful in few things, I will set you over many. He goes forth to meet them armed, before the arrows of vices or the persecutions overwhelm him from spiritual enemies, standing in the battle line of virtues, he anticipates the attacking enemies, lest he be wounded by any blow of desire or even of distrust. For thus he goes forth to meet the enemies armed with the weapons of vices, and he withstands their attack. According to this sense, Saint David says: I will pursue my enemies, and will apprehend them, etc.

He despises fear, nor does he yield to the sword. However many threats he may make with great terror, so that they desire to instill fear in their enemies, let him speak: The Lord is my light and my

salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defender of my life: of whom shall I be afraid, when my adversaries approach me with ill intent, to devour my flesh? Therefore, since I hope in the salvation of the light of God: If enemies set up camp against me, my heart shall not fear. And if the battle rises against me, I will not yield with the sword, with which I willingly desire to undergo death for Christ. The quiver will sound the super ipsum, the spear and shield will vibrate. Above the exterior and corporeal man, as the prophet says: And beneath me my dullness is disturbed: we believe the soul is like a castle, where each of the saints, as it were, has the arrows of God's eloquence within his inner self, which he brings forth to guard against, or which he brings forth through frequent correction, like piercing weapons, to strike surely with their blows those who deserve to be wounded unto salvation. Super ipsum, inquam, eloquiorum Dei resonat pharetra, quod tamen in commotione sit ambulantis. Ubi intelligitur, quod is recte psallat et corripiat delinquentes, cujus in anteriora quotidie profectus est sanctitatis, sic enim apostolus magnus, et potens equus Domini ait: Unum autem quidem quae retro sunt obliviscens, ad ea vero quae in ante sunt extendens. Sive ut brevius et manifestius dicam: Pharetra haec, locus est cordis, in quo sermonum Dei sagittae conditae sunt, et repositae. And notably, the Lord says about it, that is, the horse, to sound this quiver, which is above its outward man, the quiver of its heart filled with divine words, it reigns, as the warrior of the Lord, and strong in battle, it proclaims the word with great power. Above this horse, however, the spear and shield are wielded. The spear is the watchful virtue of the soul, or steadfastness, which rebukes sinners, or mortifies vices in itself to be pierced. The shield, indeed, is the shield of faith, in which all the fiery darts of the wicked one can be extinguished. And these, due to the constant use of warfare, are said to be wielded, which are certainly prepared in exercise. For concerning such gleaming weapons it is said thus: Your darts shall go into the light, into the splendor of the brightness of your years.

He fervently and eagerly drinks in the earth. Burning with faith in the spirit, and raging like the Savior, who, when he spiritually raises the dead in vices, rages in the spirit. Thus here, I say, he rages against his enemies, whether vices or even open persecutors: and thus he drinks in his own earth, as he transforms it from a carnal way of life to a spiritual one. So, raging and becoming very angry with himself, he drinks it in, as I said, so that he may transmit it into the desire of his own spirit, where that hidden man of the heart is in incorruptibility, the peace and modesty of the spirit, which is rich in the sight of God. And he does not think that the sound of the trumpet is a clang. He is endowed with such great courage that he fears no terror of his adversaries, since he is prepared for every sound of his provoking enemies. When he hears the trumpet sound, he says, 'Well done.' From afar he smells war, the encouragement of leaders, and the cry of the army. And when he hears the Gospel being proclaimed with a loud voice, he rejoices and exults, because 'Well done' signifies this. When he hears the examples of the most courageous men who undertake to teach the Scriptures on the Lord's Day, and also the unanimous voice of the whole congregation of the Church, which is called the army of God, he says, 'Well done' and he hears the joy with the encouragement of leaders, and even the cry of the army. But this howl was signified in this place when warriors standing in battle, about to fight, encourage each other. But someone says: How is it possible that the same thing can be understood in a good or bad way through a figure, as we have done here, by saying that this horse is said through allegory, and that it can feel both good and bad? To this I respond, where a noun is placed in Scriptures without an epistasis, as for example, only a mountain, and it is not added that it is called Mount Zion, or a corrupted mountain, I do not think it is unreasonable that the interpretation of the same thing is free in both directions.

But where, with an epitasis, as a lion from the tribe of Judah, or certainly, sits in ambush like a lion: there either Christ is understood without any delay, or the devil is our adversary. And if you please, let us give an example, where in the Gospel the Lord says to His disciples about a tree: If you indeed have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this tree, 'Uproot and transplant into the sea,' and it will obey you. Where some understood that the faith of believers uproots the enemy and removes it from the Church, the land of Judea and confession, and transfers it to the sea of peoples, that is, to the impious men; and those evil spirits in the Gospel can signify this very thing, who were precipitated into the sea with unclean men and sinners, indicated by the name of swine. But when they wanted to signify the same tree as the Lord, they interpreted it in this way: that by the preaching of the apostles, who received the grace of Christ and the power of faith, Christ the Lord, as it were, would be uprooted from that Jewish people in which he was held as the root of the race, and would be transplanted into the sea of the Gentiles, just as the Lord himself spoke to the Jews, saying: The kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and will be given to a nation producing its fruits. Does the hawk gain strength through your wisdom, spreading its wings toward the south? It follows that we should understand this hawk in a good way, namely as holy, who has received wisdom through conversion, so that it may cease to prey and seize, and may also cease to live on the flesh of worldly desires. And whoever has cast off the old man's clothes in baptism, being renewed, is like the youth of the eagle, especially when having the promise of present and future life, which is signified in its wings, it turns towards the south, where the warmth of faith is, and where it has come to know Christ: as the prophet had foretold, saying: God will come from the south, and the Holy One from the shady and dark mountain. For we know that Bethlehem, the city of the Lord, is located for those who look to the south, that is, in the south. And according to the tropics of understanding, the groom invites this warm wind so that the spices of grace may fervently boil, saying: Arise, north wind, and come, south wind, blow upon my garden, and let its fragrances flow. Therefore, when it is said, spreading its wings to the south, others have said that with outstretched feathers, it remains motionless and gazes towards the south. Therefore, he speaks of the intention of perseverance of the one who, living by the warmth of faith and guided by the two Testaments, contemplates the splendor of eternal blessedness. Will the eagle be lifted up according to your command? Sometimes the eagle is spoken of in a favorable way, and in reference to God Himself, as Moses says: As the eagle protects its nest and trusts in its young, as we mentioned above. But here the opposing power of the eagle is said to be from God, which, by God's permission, is lifted up in pride and has great power, as the prophet says: And it will be like an eagle over the house of God. The prophets in many places of their Scriptures also mark him as the most proud, that is, the devil: and this is why he is called great by them, because he is lifted up swelling over the mountains of the north and sets his throne above the stars of heaven, desiring to equal the Most High. And in difficult places he will place his nest. In every great and lofty place of this world, he establishes a dwelling for himself, so that in them he may, as a stern lord and a fierce and powerful king, abide. In rocks it remains. In the highest places, namely the harsh ones, it remains and dwells in malice for the strong. And he dwells among the rugged rocks. The rugged rocks are understood as blasphemers, who have hearts that are excessively hard and untamed, and who depend on the weight of their sins, leaning towards their own ruin. And on inaccessible cliffs. Truly, the cliffs are tall and men stretched out high, with excessive pride in their own hearts; no one should approach their pride, which is like a special evil to themselves, above all others.

Hence, he considers food. Especially those whom we have described as excessively proud, whom we call heretics, or Jews, or the wise of the world, that is, philosophers; he also captures the lost ones, when their errors trap them in his snare, according to the prophet who says the same about the devil: His food is chosen. And from afar his eyes look out. God called the mind of our adversary, keen and ever watchful, the eyes, in order to investigate the strength of the holy ones fighting, for by a subtle intention the mind perceives from afar. By this, he also foresees with shrewd suspicion the future exercises of evil. It is not the spaces of places that are to be understood, but rather the beginnings of human disposition to live rightly. This, I say, from afar, observes a subtle spirit, which is certainly from the very beginnings, and has a too mobile insight into every evil, so that there, before the attempts of man are at least strengthened in something, it suppresses and extinguishes the budding good things, and makes the destroyed man reek of sin. Her chicks lick its blood, and wherever there is a corpse, they immediately appear. Her chicks are her children, her companions, who in their conspiracy against God have plotted wickedness with her in tyranny. Therefore, fueled by the poison of envy, they thirstily lick the blood of human beings. And when it says, wherever there is a corpse, they immediately appear, others have said, and wherever there is a corpse, they are immediately found: whether this is said of the author of evil or of its minions, wherever it is present, sin is immediately born, which festers in the soul just as a wound does in the body. And the Lord added, and spoke to Job: Does he who contends with God, easily find rest? Surely he who argues with God should answer Him. The entire dispute that is woven throughout the earlier part of this book is explained here by the Lord, when He says: Does he who contends with God. Hence it appears that he spoke against God with a certain audacity of presumption stemming from confidence in his own good conscience, but he did not blaspheme God, as some might think. And if she said anything more harshly, looking to the same thing, to which God is just: looking to the tenor of God's justice, she spoke not to blaspheme God, from whom she requires him according to his just judgment, as if she restrains him and says that he should spare or declare him unjust. Therefore, she feels that he judges himself unjustly, considering him around himself, even though she knows him to be just. Therefore, having received reasoning from God, in these words that she spoke, that certainly he himself would govern and rule over all that he had created, from whom also absolutely nothing unjust would be done, she was silent, convicted as is clearly demonstrated here. But she is admonished and compelled by the Lord, so that because she contends against him and tries to argue with him, she herself should respond to the questions. And the writer of this book said: But Job, in answering the Lord, said: What can I reply, having spoken lightly? And blessed Job, recognizing that he spoke lightly and not thoroughly, said that he is unable to fully respond to God. This is why he desires to restrain himself in silence, as he says:

I will put my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, which I wish I had not said, and I will not add any more. Because he has spoken one thing and another, by which he could harm. Those things, I believe, to be, as I have previously understood, which he said as follows: My soul has chosen hanging, and my bones death: and if he scourges, let him kill once, and let him not laugh at the punishments of the innocent.

Chapter XL.

And the Lord answered Job, out of the whirlwind said. That is, either out of the force of rebuke, or out of the disturbed air and dark clouds.

Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you and you shall answer me. As others have said: by no means, but gird up your loins like a man, and so on; which means: I do not want you to be silent, says God, as you have arranged, but rather speak, and answer me what I ask you. However, since God is a spirit, and he speaks to men, many divine letters indicate to us the manner in which he speaks, such as when the Father speaks to the Son from the cloud, and to Moses in the flame of fire, and to Ezekiel sitting with the elders of Israel, it becomes the word of the Lord, and only he heard what the Lord said. Will you make my judgment void and condemn me, so that you may be justified? In this passage, the Lord reveals the meaning of the words spoken by the holy Job that were written above. For with reproach, he rebukes Job because he wanted to justify himself against the accusations and insinuations made against him, by calling his own suffering, which he claims to have unjustly endured, justice rather than injustice. And if you have an arm like God, and you thunder with a similar voice, surround yourself with beauty, and raise yourself up on high, and be glorious, and dress in splendid garments. Scatter the proud in your fury, and confound them, and humble all the arrogant. Look upon all the proud, and confound them, and crush the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together, and sink their faces into the pit: and I will confess that your right hand is able to save you. Behold Behemoth, whom I made with you; he eats grass like an ox. This is to say: Can you subdue and scatter these very demons, against whose tribulations you are besieged and crushed? Even if you were to contend against God, if you had the strength that God has, and if the voice of your authority were to resound terrifyingly in this world; if you were also adorned with the splendor of eternity and elevated in glory and sublimity, and fortified with all the virtues of holiness as if with beautiful garments, nevertheless, with your just judgment, you would scatter all the proud ones just as with a fit of anger and drive them to their proper place, that is, the prison of the underworld; and you would crush them and hide them away in the dust, separated from the light of the saints, or, as others have said, you would cast them underground. Moreover, you would sink their faces, that is, their souls with their understanding, as if the light of the eyes, into the pit of hell, that is, something as impossible as for a man to have these things, so foolish is it for you to speak against God as if on equal footing, from whom you ought to humbly hope for mercy, so that by his right hand, that is, his power, you may be saved from those whom I mentioned: the proud, the arrogant, and the impious. Behold this very thing, you know, the strong devil, and your most powerful enemy, whom I named Behemoth, the name of a ferocious beast, to you like an ox, a gentle animal indeed, I will make it eat hay, not flesh like a lion. Because when flesh is eaten, it is not done without the death of the living. But it is not so with you, as I have already said, by the command of my authority, I have commanded it in this way, saying: Behold, it is in your hand to live, preserve its life. Indeed, the great doctors of the Church, who came into contact with Hebrew letters, have interpreted it in Latin in various ways. Therefore, the enemy devil, along with all his satellites, is described here as being expelled by God. Because of the plurality of his name, the ancients interpreted it thus: But behold, the beasts that I have made with you, eat hay like cattle, that is, and this was done by the power of my right hand, so that they might receive into their power to devour your substance and faculties, which are compared to precious treasures of your mind. And so, the cheap and fleeting things, which are symbolized by the name of hay, were taken away from you: not the great and grand things, that is, the ornaments of the soul, which the ruin of blasphemy would strip you of, the kind of sin by which the whole man is devoured by the devil. Thus, this is what God says about it. His strength is in his loins, and his power is in the navel of his belly. In the loins and navels, pleasure

of the belly, or rather lust of the flesh, is understood, which was inserted into the genital members after the fall of the first man, so that those members, contrary to the natural law, may be stimulated by the incentives of lust even when a man does not want it: and thus the followers of pleasures, serving the devil with their own vices, become partakers of his strength and are made his members, of which he himself is the head.

He tightens his tail like a cedar tree. By this it seems to me that he will never turn back to God in his last moments, which are represented by his tail, because he will never repent of his proud and wicked tyranny. But being exalted like a cedar tree, he will be shattered and broken by the voice of the Lord, who judges justly. He is constricted like a very hard wood, indicating the hardness of his heart, so that he does not understand and becomes foolish; and he is blinded so that he does not see until the end. When he tucks in his tail, it is understood: The Prophet speaks deceptively: the tail is a lie according to the authority of the holy prophets. Therefore, Behemoth binds these as enemies, as his partners and ministers, in the unity of a conspiracy, about whom the ancient interpreters have said, he raises his tail like a cypress, indicating their elevated state of mind, calling this tree, which extends upwards with its tall peak from a single trunk. The nerves of his testicles are entangled. In these nerves, there seem to be certain strong and alluring bonds of pleasures with which carnal men are ensnared, as the prophet blames them for their vices, saying among other things: But turning to obligations, where I believe that simply almost an insatiable pleasure in human limbs is signified by the prophet, to which our flesh would give in, unless it were helped by the grace of God, as the Apostle says. His bones are like hollow pipes of bronze, and his cartilage is like plates of iron. These names of his body parts indicate that the devil and his followers are hard, rigid, stubborn, and inflexible. In his bones and cartilage, both internally and externally, in thought and action, his perfect wickedness is revealed. As for the statement that his cartilage is like plates of iron, some have said, 'His spine is made of molten iron,' to indicate that the devil will never humble himself to God through repentance.

He is the beginning of the ways of God. He who made him will apply his sword. In this place, it seems to me that the sense is that among all creatures, he was the first created by God for walking in God's ways and observing the commands of the Lord through obedience to His precepts, and therefore it is said that he is the beginning of the ways of the Lord. For in the prophet Ezekiel in the chapter of the igniters of stones, it is reported that he was the first of all the angels, and the crown in the hand of the Lord. Or it can be said, that in his eternal being God always remaining, as if going out into the making of creatures, is seen, and these are his ways, so that the invisible things may appear from visible ones. Or each creature is a way of God, through which knowledge of God is attained, while known by him. Or those ways of God are such, when to each reasonable creature, God as if coming to it makes himself known. Therefore, here Behemoth is called the beginning of God's ways, because being made first, he received knowledge of his God by whom he was created. But the Lord Christ, created at the beginning of God's ways, is referred to as having come to reconcile the world through his own blood, and to walk in the way of the Father's commandments as his works, which he demonstrated at the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel. And when the Lord says: He who made him will apply his sword, that is, he who made Behemoth will apply his sword to him, that is, the evil by which he himself destroyed others he will be punished with, just as the Holy Spirit spoke about his similar ones in the psalm: Sinners have unsheathed their sword, and their sword shall enter their own heart. However, it should be noted

that there is a change of persons in this passage. For earlier, the Lord said that he had made Behemoth himself, and now he says that another created him, saying: He is the beginning of the ways of God, who made all things. This can be explained in the following way: the Father made everything in the Son, as the Prophet says to God: You have made all things in wisdom. Others have said: He is the beginning of the creation of the Lord's design: that is, he is mocked by his angels, that is, the saints. Therefore, they are deceived by these things, when by the grace of the Holy Spirit and the merit of holiness, they are subjected to them, and by invoking the name of Christ they escape from possessed bodies. Certainly by those who, according to Isaiah, have cast off all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy, are born as infants in Christ, of whom he prophesied with the power of the grace of Christ against their adversary the devil in the spirit of providence, saying: And the infant will delight from his mother's breast on the holes of the asp, and in the den of the king, who has been weaned, he will stretch forth his hand. And the Lord, while speaking of his whole body, said to those whom he had made innocent and little ones, saying: Behold, I have given you the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and nothing shall harm you.

These mountains produce herbs. All the animals of the field play there. These mountains are located in the northern region, where the proud devil says, 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.' We rightly understand these mountains as representing the proud and excessively haughty people who imitate the swelling of his heart. Therefore, dwelling in them, he feeds on the temporary delight, which is called the pleasure of herbs, and he takes pleasure in the harmful pleasure of the green and thriving evil that is in them, in which all the animals of the field also play. These beasts are allies and ministers of the devil, about whom the prophet says, praying to God: Do not deliver the soul of one who confesses to you to the beasts. But this world is indeed a field, according to the authority of the Lord, as He says in the Gospel: But this world is a field. Therefore, in such mountains, which bear the herbs of luxury, not fruitful trees, these beasts, namely the opposing powers, lacking the firmness of virtues, play with the flow of lust and the vice, and in all their mountains, they boast in crimes and abominable offenses. Others have spoken about this place: They climbed up a steep mountain: they made joy to the quadrupeds in the underworld. I think the steep mountain signifies the peak of diabolical pride, to which they raised themselves too high, so that they fell from it to the depths of the underworld. Therefore, they made joy, meaning, they provided consolation to those who, in agreement with his pride, were expelled from heaven and assigned to the underworld, or to those sinners who, because of him, fell into the deep abyss of hell, under whose persona the prophetic speech thus addresses the prince of demons himself: And you were wounded just like us, and you were made similar to us. Your pride has been brought down to the underworld, your corpse has fallen: it has brought joy to the animals, as it is said, that is, to sinners, who, prone or inclined to the earth, cannot look up at the sky.

He sleeps in the shadow in a hidden place of the pen, in humid places. That shadows of bodies exist, no one doubts: but the shadow in divine Scriptures sometimes signifies rest and refreshment, sometimes punishment. Hence it is said, the shadow of death. Sometimes shadows are referred to as sins, which are as close to the body as a shadow is to the body and death. Therefore, the devil dwells in sins and rests in the secret thoughts or even loins: hence the term humid places is used. Whether in secret, that is, in the hidden things of God, which God does not require and does not appear to visit as unworthy: concerning which hidden things the prophet says

to God: Their belly is filled with your hidden things. Therefore, sins are hidden like darkness from the light of truth. Or, as we have already said, if the devil dwells in a remote place of the heart, the empty heart is open to fearlessness of God and indulgence, and to all the temptations of vices. For this shadow, ignorant of the sun, signifies the secrets of the reed and the pen. Others have said: Under all kinds of trees it sleeps, next to the rush, the pen, and the reed. He speaks of all kinds of trees, which, however, are all unproductive, not having the marrow of the love of God, nor the fruit of good works. The shadows protect his shadow. His sins are above all the sins of the wicked, and his impious acts are prominent, which he defends and conceals through a certain protection of his malice. Others have said this: large trees are overshadowed by him: where it seems to me that he said this in the sense that although the evil spirits or men who serve the devil may be proud, the devil surpasses them in the magnitude of his sins, because he is the inventor of a more wicked crime than the imitator of sin.

Willows of the stream shall surround him. Or branches and shoots, as others have said. This mortal world, because of its swift mutability, is called by the name of a stream: just as the prophet says, when he prophesies about the passion of the Lord: He shall drink from the stream on the way. For it was by that dispensation in which he deigned to come to us that he drank from the cup of death on the cross, of which he said to the Father: If it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Therefore, the people of this world, who are like leaves with the senses of sin and the bitterness of unfaithfulness, are lying about the fruits of good works, and the devil surrounds them, even joining them in partnership.

Behold, he will swallow up the river, and not be astonished; he trusts that the Jordan will flow into his mouth. In many places of the Scriptures, we know that the name of a river signifies the human race, of which even the adversary himself says: 'The river is mine, and I made it myself.' Therefore, to this river, namely, the human race in its lowest and most inferior parts, like a flowing river, he insinuates desires of lust, pleasure, and the love of the present world, so that he can absorb it and swallow it up as though in the depths; for thus the human race will be carried headlong into the aforementioned vices, so that it can be easily devoured by the enemy. And when he says: He has confidence that the Jordan may flow into his mouth; the Jordan river contains the sacrament of baptism; while in Him the Lord Christ is baptized, our baptism is consecrated. According to the mystical understanding, the mountains and hills, rams, and lambs of the sheep rejoice in the presence of God Jacob, who, by believing, supplanted his elder brother who was incredulous. Concerning the land of this Jordan, that is, the Church, the prophet speaks in the person of the believer, saying that the Lord remembers. Starting from the little hill of Christ, who became small because of his passion, he was made lower than the angels, obeying the Father even unto death. Therefore, this Behemoth, swollen with excessive presumption, carries himself with confidence, so that he may drink the aforementioned Jordan, which clearly symbolizes the sacraments of the Church, with his mouth, and, eager to devour, swallow it in his stomach. That is, he also seeks those whom the blood of Christ redeemed through the water of regeneration, which the Jordan symbolically represents, from his power and cruel rule, in order to make them his own again, either by hidden persuasion or open assault. In his eyes he will capture him like a hook. These words of the Father are about the Son according to that conversation, which we mentioned earlier, where the Father speaks about him, when he was talking about the devil: He is the beginning of the ways of God. Therefore, Behemoth, a man clothed in the flesh of a man assuming

a divine nature, will capture him in his eyes, says the Father about the Son, that he will capture the devil. In his eyes, he says, that is, in the very light of understanding, where the sight of wisdom and rational nature is. There, I say, being captivated by divine wisdom, while through his cunning and craftiness he does not see whose flesh death is about to devour. Therefore, the devil is captivated in this manner. And in his nostrils he will pierce holes. That is, our Lord Christ will crush and drive away the raging cruelty and panting for the destruction of the saints; but I think that the saints, because of the wood of the cross, should reasonably be understood here; and thus our Lord humbles and breaks the enemy, and repels every attack of the raging envy, while he strikes him back through the same saints with the wood of his cross. Are you able to extract Leviathan from the hook? He changed the appearance of the enigmas, so that the devil whom he had previously called Behemoth by a different name, now calls him Leviathan; but there he describes him as a beast that inhabits the land; here, however, he names him as one who dwells in the waters of the sea. Hence others have called Leviathan a dragon. Therefore it can be seen that the dreadful creature called Leviathan is a certain kind of dragon, to which the devil's malice and power are suitably joined. But Behemoth is called that because many are called with him. For Behemoth is said to sound like many in Latin. Hence it can be understood with associates and ministers, and rightly so, as if it is said of those who are not from God. However, some people say that Leviathan is interpreted as an addition. Because, therefore, it did not stand in truth, and exceeding the measure of presumption, it adds to itself pride, as if it exceeds the good of nature into the swelling and disease of elation. Therefore, the addition is called: a term made from the crime, it covered the condition of good nature, which God, being good, had created. And the prophet Isaiah prophesies about it, saying: On that day, whether during the time of Christ's passion or at the coming of his judgement: On that day, therefore, the Lord will brandish his sharp, great, and mighty sword against the sea monster Leviathan, against the twisting sea monster Leviathan, and he will kill the dragon that is in the sea. This is the same thing that another prophet says to God: You have broken the sea with your power. You crushed the head of the dragons upon the waters. This very same devil is described as a head with its members, and his body, and scales are recounted as being joined together by an unbreakable bond. Therefore, the Lord said to Job, this Leviathan, a typical dragon, should not rule over the waters of the nations, perhaps you can extract him from the sea of the peoples, whom I have purposed to extract and dry up by the hook of my power, as was said above, through the faith of believers. According to this interpretation, that which the Lord also says in the Gospel is true: 'When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace.' In the first coming of Christ, this was accomplished through the grace of his redemption, so that they would be delivered from the company of the devil and the dominion of the people. But in his second coming, all power of the devil is to be taken away, since the sea, that is, the world, will no longer exist, and the race of his accomplices will perish from the earth. When the crime of that person is sought, and is not found, as long as the Lord reigns forever and ever, and the inventors of death and of resurrection are swallowed up in victory. But what God says in this book, that He will draw out Leviathan with a hook, He speaks through another prophet, saying: I will spread My net over you with a multitude of people, and I will draw you into My snare. The hook and the net are considered to be the Savior Himself, the Son of God clothed in flesh. And the net can be called the preaching of the Gospel, which is spread from the rising of the sun to its setting, over a wide expanse, as the prophet also says: Great is the Lord, and so on. And he continues, extending the joy of the whole earth. This web of Christ's preaching is firmly established, solidly

strengthened by the figures of the Old Testament, by the images of signs, and by many such testimonies of Scripture, as if tied together by knots. Many great monsters and powerful dragons of this impious world have attempted to tear it apart and break it, but they have not been able to, because God has laid a firm foundation that cannot be uprooted. For if God is for us, who can be against us? Therefore, according to this interpretation, the same meaning is recognized in a hook and a fishing net. So when the Lord said to Job, Can you extract Leviathan with a hook? he said to him: And will you bind his tongue with a rope? Just as a rope is woven from multiple strands, forming a bond that can be used to bind things together, so too does the devil, from the multitude of his sins, weave for himself the bonds of sacrilege, like a rope made of blasphemies, and bind his tongue, causing his mouth to be stopped up and silenced as he speaks iniquity. And in the Proverbs of Solomon, it is written about similar things: Each person is bound by the chains of their own sins. And hence it is that the Lord in the Gospel says that the lazy and useless servant, with his hands and feet bound, is to be sent into the outer darkness, that is, into the bonds of his own sins, which he has committed, according to divine judgment, he is sent bound into punishment; which the Lord Himself demonstrated most clearly in a certain place, when He made a whip out of cords and drove them out of the temple. Will you put a ring in his nostrils or pierce his jaw with a hook? Will he beg you for mercy or speak kindly to you? Will he make a covenant with you so that you can take him as your servant forever? Can you play with him like a bird or keep him on a leash for your girls? Will traders bargain for him or divide him up among the merchants? Can you fill his hide with harpoons or his head with fishing spears? Lay your hand on him; you will remember the battle and never do it again! Any hope of subduing him is false; the mere sight of him is overpowering. No one is fierce enough to rouse him. Who then is able to stand against me? Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me. Will he multiply prayers to you, or speak soft things to you? Or as others have said: Will he speak gently to you? The mind of man, proud of itself, is subject only to God, whom it knows to be its creator, and it submits itself to him alone whom its own conscience fears. Will you strike a deal with him and accept him as your eternal servant? Although he is rebellious and excessively proud, he is ultimately compelled by the good of his own nature, which does not perish as a testimony of his just condemnation, so that he may at least acknowledge that he is a wicked servant of his creator, the Lord. This is the covenant or testament that he is commanded to enter into with God. Therefore, the Lord himself says: And you shall accept him as your eternal servant. For this is done not by any will of the soul, but by the command of divine power, and therefore it is called eternal by God, because he will never receive the adoption of the sons of God, nor that first place of angelic dignity. Do you mock him as if he were an old man, or will you bind him with your handmaids? To such an extent, says the Lord, the strength of this dragon will be humiliated and completely worthless; so that it may be mocked and assigned to the holy angels, as has already been said. But that he is mocked as if he were a bird, let it be considered as a small and insignificant thing compared to the power of God, he wanted to show by the name of bird; and that he is said to be bound with handmaids, that is what the Lord himself said in the Gospel to his disciples: Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will harm you. And so, they are bound and deceived by the holy souls of God, who are the servants of Christ; while they themselves and their companions are commanded by them, and are compelled to leave the bodies possessed by him: and to each one throughout the world, captivity is taken captive every day, just as it is also said in the Apocalypse,

that he is bound for a thousand years, which is understood from one part to the whole, according to the Apostle who says: Little children, it is the last hour; from the time of the coming of the Lord in our flesh. Therefore he was bound: lest he seduce those to be saved by the grace and redemption of Christ. Others said: You shall bind him as a little bird, so that he may be held by the command of my empire, and he shall be handed over as one bound by power. This is the child of whom Isaiah says: The child will send out his hand from the breast and touch the hole of asps; this child, though he is a one hundred year old boy, will die through the grace of Christ, that is, he will depart from this world to God as holy and innocent. Therefore we must receive this infant, each and every one of the saints, who, born as a child of God from the font, that is, from the womb of the mother Church, suckle the Lord's commandments as milk from her breasts.

Friends meet him, merchants divide him. These friends and merchants, they should be understood as holy, even all the preachers of truth: to whom Christ the Son of God says: You are my friends. Likewise, he speaks about the same people in a parable: The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking a good pearl, and so on. They have set before the world the kingdom of God and the reward of eternal life as a most precious pearl for sale, so that each person may sell whatever they have, namely the pleasures of this present life, and exchange and buy it with these goods. Therefore, from the aforementioned friends and merchants, the body of this dragon is cut and divided, while through them a great multitude of its lost ones is separated for the faith of Christ. For many of its powerful ones and those strong in wickedness are separated from its fellowship, like members of its body being severed, as even the prophet Habakkuk says to the Lord: You have cut off the heads of the mighty in astonishment, and of whom he says again to the Lord: You have sent death upon the heads of the enemies, the death of vices indeed, so that they no longer live for themselves but for him who died and rose again for them. These are the heads of the enemies of God, that is, the princes of wicked peoples, they themselves are the kings and nobles of this spiritual dragon, who are said to be bound by the aforementioned friends and negotiators according to the translation of names and the figure of another trope: just as the prophet David says, 'To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron.' Therefore, these kings and nobles themselves are dragons and members of that dragon, of whom the prophet says to God, 'You have shattered the heads of the dragons upon the waters.' Will you fill the bags with his skin, and the fish net with his head? All those who with the consent of malice and through imitation adhere to the devil, are rightly said to be his skins. Therefore, I believe they are called skins because they are connected to him in an inseparable bond, and can never or certainly hardly be separated from him. Therefore, the Lord says that the bags are to be filled with them.

You will place your hand upon him. Remember the war; and do not add to speak anymore. Thus it seems to me that he said: After defeating your adversary through me, you will place your hand upon him, so that you may mock him as well. Or you will place your hand upon him, as if he had said, if you consider yourself to be of his power and virtue, you will place your hand upon him, that is, if you can make him tremble and fear by the strength of your power, just as he must do to me alone: but since you cannot do this in any way, that this great dragon, powerful in wickedness, may be subject to you; remember in this tribulation of your torments against which fierce and cruel enemy you have had a war: it suffices for you that I have spoken harsh words against you, when I wanted you to know that you would not have been able to overcome and conquer this most mighty

enemy of yours, unless you had been ordered by the command of my empire, and nevertheless, your soul would be guarded by me. Therefore, you were given into his power so that he would not afflict you more than your strength would allow.

Behold, his hope will deceive him, and before the eyes of all it will be cast down. When he is cast into hell, the eternal fire, in the presence of the holy angels and the innumerable multitude of blessed men, his hope, which he thought would make him strong, will be frustrated by a terrible and just judgment, and his futile and empty thoughts will be brought to nothing.

Chapter XLI.

Not as if God cruelly awakens him. For who can resist my face, and who has given to me that I should repay him? All things under heaven are mine. Therefore, God does not awaken this enemy as if cruel, who desires to punish him: or destroy him by the arrangement of any of the saints: whose radiant nature rather competes with eternal goodness: but God is said to awaken Leviathan in this way, so that he may manifest to others what kind of creature he is, whom he allows to insult for a longer time, as if Pharaoh, with long impunity. For with this most just judgment of his, God allows two things to happen: either for the exercise and testing of the saints, or for the punishment of the wicked. For who can resist my face? When it seems that I have said this, let every creature yield and tremble before the mere sight of the majesty of God. Who gave something to me so that I should repay him? Everything under heaven is mine. For, he says, I have not received authority from anyone, which perhaps at some point I did not have: so that I may give thanks to him as if for this favor, or render something in return to him. According to this meaning, the Apostle also speaks: 'Or who has given to him and it will be repaid to him?' Wherein these words, God's presence is always shown.

I will not spare him with powerful words and composed entreaties. Perhaps we can understand this about the devil, about whose words he is speaking here: even though he is rebellious against God and obstinate, he still feels fear towards his creator, and though he may be forgetful of his condition, he pretends to implore his Lord as a worthless servant, at least when compelled. Who will reveal the face of his garment? Here, Job says that the face of the devil is veiled in this garment, because he transforms himself into an angel of light. But the face is revealed by the Lord, when the arts of his wickedness are uncovered. And who will enter into the midst of his mouth? This is the mouth of the devil, unceasing blasphemy can be understood, which must be blocked and stopped by God, when the word of the Lord has pierced it. Whether someone will enter into the midst of his mouth? it can be understood as the mouth of the devil, hell: to which the Savior descended, in order to free the people devoured by the devil. And therefore, because it was to happen in time, he said: Who will enter into the midst of his mouth? Who will open the gates of his face? The Lord says that he will reveal the hidden and greatly secret strength of the hypocrisy of the devil. He openly manifested this in his passion and on the cross, when he triumphed with little confidence when he was led by his princes and powers, as the Son of God.

I fear the circle of his teeth. He calls this voracious and insatiable enemy, who, like a ravenous beast, consumes everything with his teeth, and therefore I fear and tremble at the circle of his teeth, because they are ready to devour. The body of the devil, and all his companions and unclean spirits, must be understood as being so joined together by such agreement and conspiracy that they are united to him by an indissoluble connection. They are also called by the

allegorical term 'scales', because they are so closely compacted and adhere to one another, that they have no opening through which to breathe towards God, so that, through their connection with them, they may by no means be relaxed into the health of repentance. But the fact that wicked demons, the impious ministers of the devil, are compared to shields, the Lord signifies by their name, because they are exceedingly stubborn and obstinately rebellious, and their solid and everlasting resistance against God is like the pounding of battering rams. The devil is likened to an old edition of the emerald stone, which is rough in nature and smooths other things by rubbing against them, but itself does not cease to be rough, and crushes everything, yet does not feel any diminution of itself. His sneeze is like the splendor of fire, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn. Or as others have said: In his sneeze, the sun shines forth, and his eyes are like the appearance of Lucifer. His sneeze expels the filth of the brain and purifies the vices conceived within. Therefore, the devil, who is entirely filthy and foul, appears in this light, transforming himself into an angel of wickedness, operating and pouring out his filth for the destruction of humanity with pleasure. And from envy, that is, from the source of all evils, he stirs up and produces his poisons. But the eyes of the devil are false prophets, of whom the holy Isaiah says, when he spoke to the sinful people, saying about God: Shut your eyes: they speak by his instigation, what seems to be close to the light of truth. Just as eyelids are bright in the morning, even though they possess no light from God. For even if they seem to display the beginning of light in themselves, which arises from the leaven of hypocrisy, they still cover the darkness of lies with the appearance of truth. From his mouth, flames come forth like ignited torches. Just as the mouth of the Lord spoke, so too all the wicked and sacrilegious, and blasphemers, are rightly called the mouth of the devil, from which ignited torches, or, as others have said, burning torches come forth, that is, fire and the cause of punishment are suggested: and in the Apocalypse, where the ministers of the devil are described under the likeness of horses, it is said of them: Fire and smoke, and sulfur came forth from their mouth: not indeed that fire and smoke, and sulfur come forth visibly from their mouth, but the words of the blasphemer are fire and smoke, and sulfur, as the Lord says to him through the prophet: I will bring forth fire from your midst that will consume you.

Smoke comes out of his nostrils. That is, pride.

Like heated and boiling pots. Because the vapor either generates itself or is generated by obedient causes of eternal fire. The spirit of pride is demonstrated in the panting of the nostrils, in which it delights in exhaling the swelling of its soul, but it is said to be humiliated and repressed by the Lord from above: Will you put a ring in its nostrils and pierce its jaw with a hook? His breath makes coals burn. This is his smoke from the embers and from his exhale, so that he supplies himself with eternal fire and smoke to inhale. For the Lord also says to his similar ones: Walk in the light of your fire, and in the flames that you have kindled for yourselves. And fire will come out of his mouth. Or as others have said: Truly fire is gathered from his mouth: there the same meaning, that is, the punishments of blasphemies gathered from the mouth of the devil, come out. In his neck, that is, his pride, his strength will dwell, and poverty will precede his face. The swelling of the neck, that is, the arrogance of the devil, is called. It is said to each one through the prophet: Your neck is an iron sinew: in which the principal evil of sin resides. Therefore, with this pride of strength, and by the words of the prophet, it is spoken, saying, I will make strength for myself, whom the Lord rebukes for this and says to him: In your wisdom, you have made strength for yourself. And again he said to him: In your negotiations, you have multiplied your strength. And also: Your heart has

been lifted up in your strength. But what he said: His face will be preceded by poverty, this means that when the devil approaches, all the strength of life and soul is immediately drained, and substance is consumed. The members of his flesh adhere to one another. They are the members of the devil, whom he previously mentioned as being of scales and bulletproof shields. But they are called the members of his flesh because they are devoted to carnal and sinful acts and cling to him as the author of evil.

He will send thunderbolts against him, and they will not be carried to another place. The order of the speaking God seems obscured in this place, where when he speaks of the devil, he suddenly changes the person, saying: He will send thunderbolts against him, and they will not be carried to another place. It is to be believed that these thunderbolts are sent by God against the devil, according to that sense where it is said: The Lord reigns from the Lord. Which we understand to be said here: God has done what God has spoken. However, the dragon devil is struck by God when he is rebuked by the fiery words of God from the holy clouds, which are certainly thunderbolts, sent and directed to a specific place, not in vain, and the devil will not be able to boast of being unpunished by them. Their heart shall be hardened as a stone, and shall be compressed as the anvil of a blacksmith. Or, as others have said, it stands like an unwearied anvil. The heart of the devil is hard and unyielding, like the dullness and rigidity of a stone. It is compressed, or stands like an anvil, which is not moved. For an anvil is struck, but it does not move, while the blow rebounds and it remains immobile: such is the devil. For he is beaten by the reproaches of the faithful, struck by the words of the prophets, defeated by the victory of the martyrs, but he remains rigid, hard, untamed, devoted to eternal punishments. When he has been lifted up, the angels will be afraid, and the terrified will be purified. This can be understood as said about the times of the first age. How great the evil of pride is, the holy angels were able to know even then, when the presumptuous one of tyranny was thrown down from the citadel of heaven: when also for that reason, by merit of the truth in which he had not stood, they stood: and in this they are to be believed to have become blessed, so that they became most certain that the falling away of any sin should never be feared by themselves. Therefore, what has been said, namely that with the devil removed, the angels will fear and, terrified, will be cleansed, should not be understood in such a way that, in order to avoid the sin of pride, they will become more amendable, terrified by the example of such a great damnation, since it is certainly clear that they will not be blessed at all if they have to be more careful not to sin. For avoiding sin or resisting sin pertains to the penal miseries of this world, not to the glory of the future age. But I think that those men should understand, who have arrived at the fellowship of angels, that they will be cleansed, as it were new angels, when the devil has been condemned, being terrified by seeing what kind of enemy and what kind of punishments of dreadful damnation they have escaped. However, they will be cleansed, that is, they will be made purer for God, with the perception of such great consolation of divine blessing around them. Also, what has been said, being terrified, or what has been written, they will fear, does not deviate from the meaning, so that the reasonable creature may marvel at every form of blessing and judgement of its Creator, not with penal, but with honorable fear. And indeed, what greater purification or cleansing can there be before God for a human, as for an angelic being, than to always offer every good thing of its most certain security and eternal glory to the praise of its creator with both exultation (for to whom it is offered is holy) and trembling (for to whom it is offered is God)? When he is apprehended with a sword, he will not be able to stand, neither with a spear, nor with a breastplate. But others have more plainly

translated, saying: If spears meet him, they will do nothing to him: that is, he will not be able to be corrected by any metals of terrors and threats. However, with a spear and breastplate, those who are clad in the armor of justice, armed with the right hand of holy works, endeavor to resist. But they will not be able to punish or conquer him, because he is so strong and wicked that he despises those who oppose him, and does not desire to be turned back. Therefore, whatever strength of spirit there is in the holy ones, is called by the name of iron. Whatever virtues there are also, are considered with the splendor or enduring nature of bronze. For it will regard iron as if it were chaff, and wood as rotten bronze. Such is the extent to which pride cloaks itself in virtue, that it considers all these weapons taken up against it as nothing, and instead works for itself deeds similar to piles of chaff and unfruitful wood, and old and decaying things that must be consumed by an unquenchable fire. The man will not be fleeing from the archer. Although he may have a quiver full of his heart's reproaches, like piercing arrows, yet he, being hard and excessively iron-like, cannot be penetrated by them. And therefore, not feeling the wounds of compunction, he is not driven away by this archer. However, others have said: He is not wounded by the air arrow. The incorruptible word of God is compared to a bronze arrow, which the devil could never be wounded by for repentance: according to the hardness of his heart, he treasures up for himself wrath on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

They were turned into stones for the slingshot. The slingshot can be understood as any of the saints who are upheld by the hand of the Lord. Through these saints, therefore, the impious one forcefully hurls his harsh, strong, and rough words like stones, so that when struck by them, he may give honor to God. But because he is possessed by singular malice, he turns these very words into straw, so that while considering them worthless, they become like straw to him, which ignites the smoking balls of Tartarean fire. What others have said in the same sense: Consider stones thrown by a sling as hay.

He will consider it like straw, but a divine word, namely heavy, will crush and break the immense hardness of his impiety, so that he may be weakened by the persecution of the saints, and he will consider it like straw; for when he is overwhelmed by malice, he will not feel the weight of the blows from above, because his heart has become like stone and like an unyielding anvil, which, although excessively pounded, is never broken. And he will deride the trembling spear. Or, as others have said, the trembling speech. He will not only not fear, but also deride the strong emission of any holy person, by the strength of their spirit and their virtue, whether it be the same speech or the same throw. God speaks about all this in various ways and examples about the devil, in order to show to human beings how much evil it is, how powerful it is, and how utterly irredeemable it is.

Under this same are the rays of the sun, and he will spread for himself gold like clay. The sun of justice is Christ, God, in whose wings is healing. Therefore, these rays, that is, the saints who are the children of his light, are held captive and subject to this prince of darkness in the fall of Adam's sin, while he already makes his own those redeemed through Christ from their capital offenses, like captives and slaves, and subjects and subdues them to himself. And even those angels whom the devil drew with him can be understood as these the rays of the sun of whom it is said in the Apocalypse: And he drew with him the third part of the stars to the earth. They are the rays of the sun who, by departing from God, the true light, became darkness, and the princes of darkness. Therefore, those who are under him are considered to be ruled by and subjects of the Devil. And

gold, according to the meaning we mentioned earlier, represents the rays of the sun, because under the name of gold, both precious and evil things are understood: he tramples them underfoot like mud, making them subject to sins, dirty and worthless. They are said to reside in those secret places and hidden corners of the earth where gold is found. And for this reason, in a spiritual sense, I believe this metaphor is preserved, because this red dragon, from the gold of the good things which he had cast aside, will make his bedding, which represents all the spiritual riches of this world, that is, the holiness of good people, justice, and other virtues, as if he has them under him, when he will have transformed them into a vast mass of sins while they sleep in faith.

It will cause to boil like a pot of the deep sea, and it will set to simmer like when ointments boil. This sea, according to allegorical understanding, we have learned to be dark and obscure, and excessively blind with foolishness, which the devil ignites with carnal desires, so that it boils with a love for earthly things. But if we understand the ointments in a positive sense, so that we interpret them as the fervent thanks of the saints in this place, on the contrary, the devil, the inhabitant of this sea, acts in such a way that just as men burn with desire for this present life, like certain flames of kindling, he may kindle them to love this world, similar to how they fervently burn with the love of spiritual graces in the Holy Spirit. Others have said that the abyss causes boiling, just as a bronze vessel estimates the heat as a crime, and the abyss of Tartarus as a captive. In this place, I think that God has spoken in this way about the devil: because he is called the abyss by name in this world, so the devil may have defined himself, so that he may not come into memory at all, and may have been erased from divine memory. The impious meaning of this is recalled in the ninth prophecy, saying: For he has said in his heart, He will not inquire. Likewise, for he said in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth His face; He will never see it. And also hell, the abyss, in which the sinners of this world shall be held captive: he, as if cast down and held captive under the most harsh dominion, kept them bound with infernal chains. Therefore, rejoicing and exulting, the devil thought that he would possess all the creatures of his God, the whole world, as a king and Lord forever, not knowing that he would be forever ruled by the Lord God, and throughout all the ages: with the wicked nations destroyed from his earth, the orphaned and the lowly judged and protected so that no man, that is, the devil himself, may exalt himself upon the earth.

Afterwards, the path will shine for him. Then, repenting, he will seek to return to God, when there is no time for repentance. And I think he will call this path of his conversion, which will shine with a hardened heart and a blind late repentance: when it will be of no benefit to him after it is accepted.

He will consider the abyss as if it were aging. Or, as others have said, as a walking place. By the term abyss, we have spoken of this world above, which the devil considers as aging and old, certainly persisting in sins and not knowing that it will be freed from old sins by the coming of the Lord.

There is no power on earth that can be compared to him. No creature has such power, or such malice, and therefore in either case no one can be compared to him.

He became such that he feared nothing. By his own will of free choice, he became elated into pride, that is, he became so depraved by his own malice that he feared nothing, not even the Lord God his creator. He indeed fears as an evil servant and transgressor; but he does not have the fear of God's love within himself.

He sees everything that is exalted. He rises up into the exalted, he says, and into the highest, that is, he is elevated to the apex of his immeasurable pride, so as to place his mouth in heaven, saying: I will set my throne in heaven, and I will be like the Most High.

He is the king over all the children of pride. That is, the head and leader of all the proud ones, whom angels imitating, impious men and transgressors, became his children of pride.

Chapter XLII. But Job answered the Lord, saying: I know that you can do all things. That is, you humble the devil as you wish and when you wish. And no thought is hidden from you. Who can hide from the examiner of the heart and kidneys? From these words, it is clear that righteous Job accuses his own thoughts, confessing to God in repentance that he had given himself the greatest credit for his own sins, and that he had tried to accuse God, as it were, of being unjust. Who is that who conceals counsel without knowledge? That is, no one can hide counsel from your conscience. Already in the following, he demonstrates his error most clearly, and confesses his ignorance, through which, being ignorant, he has exceeded in speaking to God, saying this:

Therefore, I have spoken foolishly and have exceeded my knowledge. Listen, and I will speak: I will question you, and you shall answer me. Now, having set aside foolishness and rejected the presumption of folly, corrected by the knowledge of divine reproach for the purpose of correction, and purified by the examination of present chastisement, he still dares to question God, saying: Listen. He shows the mercy of divine indignation, and it seems that he speaks this because God has worked that punishment upon him in a far different way than he previously judged, and therefore, he desires to be taught by God and demands to be shown this very thing to himself. Therefore Job, accepting, as is to be believed from his words, the divine oracle of visitation, said to God:

I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you. After the testing of temptation, having come closer to divine knowledge, he says that he now sees God, whom he said he heard before when he was being examined. However, to hear or see God, who is invisible and incomprehensible, is not of these eyes or ears, but rather of the mind and heart. Therefore, blessed are the pure in heart, for they see God.

Therefore, I rebuke myself and repent in ashes and dust. But after the Lord spoke these words to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite: My anger is kindled against you and your two friends, because you have not spoken rightly before me, like my servant Job. Therefore, take seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job will pray for you. I will take his appearance, so that foolishness may not be imputed to you. For you have not spoken rightly before me, as my servant Job has. Therefore Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite departed and did as the Lord had spoken to them. The place which others have spoken of; Therefore I despise myself and repent, and I esteem myself as dust and ashes. And here it is evident that his friends have not spoken rightly about the injury to holy Job. As the Lord accuses them, it is shown that he himself says to them that their sin of reproach cannot be forgiven unless the blessed Job prays for them and offers a burnt offering of propitiation. Here we understand that it is not beneficial for anyone to exult and criticize in God's punishment and the hardships of tribulations. For it is said that when Job was offering a sacrifice for them, the Lord gladly turned his face to listen. And the Lord added double. In the following, the sense of his doubling is diligently explained by the writer of this book. But

brothers and sisters, who had gathered to the blessed Job after the plague of his punishment, all thoughts, and the families of his kind, must be understood. Also, all his acquaintances and friends, who had known his royal power and unique wisdom before, came to him and ate with him in the feast of his honor: in which he showed that the filth of all impurities had been washed away from him. But in the movement of the head, we know that the indicated joy of those who came together for him: and those who, out of kindness, gave each sheep and each gold earring as a gift, as if to a poor person who had absolutely nothing. In this consolation, although small and doubling of previous goods, it can be observed that a great multitude gathered to him: and although he received little from each, he suddenly became the master of such great riches. The author of this book could have said this by anticipation, so that after that temptation, after one hundred and forty years of his life, with the blessing of the Lord, he possessed doubled riches: but we do not read that the number of his sons was doubled. Therefore, I believe that when those things that were completely lost were restored to her twofold, her twenty sons were also given back to her in exchange for ten. For those same ten first ones who were crushed by the collapse of the falling house are not considered to be extinguished before God. Therefore, for the strengthening of our faith, we must understand that she received from God as many sons as she had lost, just as her entire possessions were restored to her twofold by the Lord. And as a most faithful servant of God, she should have no doubt that those whom she had sent to God did not perish. Thus, when throughout this entire book of Job we have perceived the figure of the Savior, by the grace of Him who deigned to bestow it upon us, we have explained it, and in certain places, we have understood his friends to represent heretics, just as we have also discussed that Job himself had the image of the Gentiles. But because through Christ there is reconciliation for the impious and the erring: for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved: therefore, now that the Gentiles have been extinguished and abolished, the heretics are sent to Christ by God the Father, so that through whom they were previously saved, they may be reconciled to God again by the same mediator. In the Holocaust of Seven Bulls and Rams, the satisfaction of prayers and alms, the complete cleansing of pride and anger, and the perfect demonstration of repentance through labor and innocence is shown. However, what he says: And the Lord accepted the face of Job, and the Lord also turned to the repentance of Job, when he prayed for his friends; this is what the Apostle says: Christ Jesus, who is at the right hand of God: who also intercedes for us, according to the apostle John, he is our advocate, and propitiation with the Father. Thus, the face of the Savior is received by the Father, both when he himself hears, and is heard. And the Lord added double to all that had been Job's. Therefore, those things were added to Christ the Lord and our God, when a multitude of nations was added to the people of Israel through faith, and it will be added to the kingdom. But his brothers and all his sisters came to him, and all those who knew him from before, and they ate bread with him in his house. And they were astonished by him. Whether brothers and sisters generally from all nations we can understand: because he took on the flesh of the human race, through which he deigned to make all others his brothers. Concerning them, he says to the Father: I will proclaim your name to my brothers, and in the midst of the Church I will praise you. And in the Gospel he says: Whoever does the will of God, this one is my brother, and sister, and mother. And all who knew him before came to him: and so it must be understood about them, because all the saints and prophets knew him before, who certainly saw him in spirit: whom they also announced would come in the flesh, just as the Lord himself says: Many prophets and righteous people desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and

did not hear it. Those who saw him in the Spirit desired to see his coming in the flesh, just as the holy Abraham, about whom the Lord says: Abraham desired to see my day: and he saw it, and rejoiced. Therefore, these aforementioned saints came because they had the same spirit of faith, they prophesied as righteous ones living by faith, foreseeing the sacrament of the future incarnation of Christ in the spirit. They came to the same faith in Christ through the same repentance, that is, from faith to faith, to be one under Christ the head, and they themselves constituted in the body of the Church. where, now with Christ glorified by the resurrection, and the dishonor of his passion restored to its former honor, all those who come to him in faith eat the bread of his sacraments in his house, the Church. But when they are said to eat the bread with him, it is because he himself said: Behold, I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world. Either because he is the consecrator of the same mysteries, in which we receive both himself blessing and consecrating: for he himself said: I am the living bread which came down from heaven. And the word of the Scriptures is the bread of Christ, by which in the Church, the house of the Savior, they are fed, and by their exhortation they are refreshed, once poor in faith, who in this world, being estranged from God, suffered hunger for the divine word, and all who had previously known him came to him, that is, those who had known him on earth, merited to come to him in heaven. And Scripture says that they moved over his head, rejoicing because they had become participants in the spiritual and sacred banquet of Christ: as the Lord says in the psalm: I will fulfill my vows before those who fear him: the poor will eat and be satisfied, and those who seek him will praise the Lord. And they comforted him in all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him. Our Savior is greatly comforted, who believes with joy in the passion that he undertook for the redemption of the world, and faithfully contemplates it with the eyes of faith; for he himself is filled with such consolation, that when he saw the crowd of believers, he rejoiced in the Spirit, as we learn from the holy evangelist's writing. And we say that God the Father brought upon his Son the evil of suffering and death, as the Apostle said: 'He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all.' Great is the consolation that we receive, because He will give us His blessings, who has taken on our sufferings. And each person gave him one sheep, and one golden coin. Each person who comes to Christ in faith offers him their innocence and obedience of mind. For the Apostle also teaches that sinners become holy and live in this way, saying: I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God. Therefore, those who come to Christ become the Lord's sheep, holy sheep, those reasoning creatures, born again in Christ through obedience to God's commandments, innocent and simple workers and faithful. But the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning. And he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand female donkeys. The beginnings of the Christ of God, and of our Lord, signify the beginnings of the Law of Moses. But his latter days are shown to be the Gospel. Therefore, the Preacher says: The latter things of his speech are better than its beginning. Therefore, the mysteries of the Gospel revealed in Christ are better than the significations and figures of the Law: the better sacrifices are the contrite hearts, than the burnt offerings of animals. The manifestation of truth in the Gospel is better than the shadow of allegories in the Old Testament. And thus the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning, so that grace would abound in both peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles: whom this Scripture wanted to call by the names of various animals, according to the qualities of their character. But I remember saying at the beginning of this work that the same animals contain this meaning in their names. But I think the number of

these animals was doubled, for the sake of both peoples, either because of the more abundant grace of the Gospel, as we have already said, about which the Apostle says: Our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient as ministers of the new testament, not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life. And he had seven sons and three daughters. The fact that he had seven sons and three daughters indicates the number seven, which is symbolic of Law, Prophecy, and Grace, as I mentioned at the beginning of this. Their father, when dying, made them coheirs of their brothers, that is, he incorporates their souls, through the spirit of grace, into the testament of the divine Scriptures, making them indeed participants in his promises. The names of these daughters also contain a great mystery within themselves. And he called the name of the first Day, and the name of the second Casia, and the name of the third Horn of Antimony. But beautiful women were not found, like the daughters of Job in all the land. And their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. And Job lived after these afflictions one hundred and forty years, and he saw his sons, and the sons of his sons, even to the fourth generation: and he died, an old man, and full of days. Therefore, this is the law of God, which enlightens the night of human ignorance in order to bring knowledge of the truth. Casia is the gift of holy anointing. The horn of antimony is most fittingly joined to the forces of the Church and the riches of spiritual things, which are the treasure of the Church. But the horn belongs to the royal emblem and the dignity of the Church, as the prophet says: He exalted the horn of his Christ. Therefore, the holy Job clearly had the figure of the Savior, and in that he became needy and poor from being very rich, so that we might be enriched. The devil exercised his power over his whole body, but he accomplished nothing, as the Lord himself said: The prince of this world is coming, and he will find nothing in me. Just as the blessed Job, after the loss of his faithless sons, was enriched with new sons, so too the Savior, after the rejection of his faithless children, was enriched among the nations. Therefore, in many ways, the holy Job prefigured the passion and patience of our Lord, in the number of his sons and daughters, in the names of his children, in the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit, and in the fulfillment of the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel in our Savior. In which the spirit of wisdom and understanding rested: the spirit of counsel and power: the spirit of knowledge and piety: filled him the spirit of the fear of God, which is to be understood, full of days.

Finally relieved of the burden of a long explanation, as if breathing after a heavy burden has been set aside, I direct the conclusion of my discourse to you, most blessed Father Vecter, asking that if you find anything worthy in this work through probable truth, you also marvel at the abundant gifts of our Lord regarding my insignificance: I beg you not to flatter me with friendly favor or defend me with benevolent excuse. For I do not want the eminence of your judgment to fall from the sublimity of its own worthiness: rather, make my work praiseworthy as you correct its unpolished parts, and chastise its completed amendments.

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