Discourse to Hypatius 3

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S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan. Transcribed from the Palimpsest B.M. Add. 14623 by C. W. MITCHELL, M.A., volume 1 (1912). Third Discourse to Hypatius against the Teachings.

THE THIRD DISCOURSE AGAINST THE TEACHINGS

I. Marcion's teaching; the heavens of the stranger I DESIRE to utter one more refutation against the three of them (i.e., Marcion, Mani, and Bardaisan), that is against Marcion in the first place who (says) that a heaven is found also beneath the Stranger. Let us ask who bears up those heavens, and what is in them. For a power is necessary to bear them. Or can it be that the heavens of the Stranger are resting on the heavens of the Maker, so that he is the all-sustaining Maker, as indeed is the case? But if they say that the heavens of the Stranger hang by the power of the Stranger, we also will deal [P. 45.] frowardly with the froward, (and say) that he who is above the [Ps. xviii.26] heavens cannot support the heavens, but (only) if he were beneath them. But if he is the same person who is above the heavens and below them, it is clear that the place of his possessions is the same, and in the midst of it are collected those Souls whom ISU brought up hence. For a Supporter is required for those heavy Souls whom he brought up thence . . . [inasmuch as when his possessions are found enfolded within his bosom there is required for them another power which supports them.] For we cannot accept from them just as they do not accept from us [L. 26.] that there should be anything set up without a foundation.

The heavens of the Stranger and his boundaries. But know that if the Stranger has heavens which have been created from nothing, we must inquire by whom they werecreated. And if they are his in virtue of (their) 'essential being' there is a fortified boundary of 'essential being' beneath him, which he cannot cross. And just as he is not able to go forth from that Place which surrounds him so as to be something which does not exist in a Place, and has no Creator, so he is not able [P. 46.] to cross that boundary which is beneath him. Nor were the Souls able to go up hence to cross it. The relations of the Stranger and the Maker.

But if that boundary was capable of being crossed so that also the Stranger crossed it and came down to us, as they say, and the Souls also rent it asunder and ascended, as they falsely state, then (it follows that) a boundary which could be crossed would not be able to prevent the Maker from going up to the Domain of the Stranger. If, therefore, when he was

able to go up he was unwilling to trample down the boundary of his Companion, he is a God who is worthy of praise, since even those things which he (i.e., Marcion) has invented, redound (lit., cry out) to his praise. But if he had the will to go up, and the Stranger above [L. 39. allowed him, let them show us why. . . . And if the Good (Being) was guarding himself, he was verily afraid lest he (i.e., the Maker) should injure him. And how did he who was afraid in his own Domain, come to the Domain of the Maker to struggle with him? And if he guarded his freedom that there should be no Strife and [P. 47. Contention between him and his neighbour, let his Heralds be despised who make him quarrelsome and contentious. And if they say that the Maker did not perceive the Stranger, it is unlikely. For how did he not perceive him when he was his neighbour?

And if they say that he was far from him, infinitely far, if it was a mountain immeasurable and an endless path, and a vast extent without any limit, then how was that Stranger able to proceed and come down the immeasurable mountain, and (through) a dead region in which there was no living air, and (across) a bitter waste which nothing had ever crossed? And if they make the improbable statement that "the Stranger like a man of war was able to come," well if he came as a man of war--[though he did not come], (take the case of) those weak Souls whom he brought up hence, how were these sickly ones able to travel through all that region which God their Maker and Creator was not able to traverse, as they say?

Surely the Maker could reach the Domain of the Stranger. And if they say that these were able but their Maker was not, if they say anything they like, they must hear something they dislike, (namely), that if the Soul, which is all the creation of this Creator, was strong enough so that with the strength of the Stranger, it was able to cross and to go, and did not remain anywhere (?) on that immeasurable journey, how much more able [P. 48, l.13.] would the Creator be to go, not only up to the Domain of the Stranger, but even to explore the other regions inside of it, if there were any there! . . . [Thou mayest know that the system of statements which they make is impossible.] For (being) a Person who grows not old nor ever dies or grows weary, who has no need of a conveyance of any kind, and requires no food,--and in that Domain there were no walls to hinder him,--how was the Maker hindered from travelling to see what was above him, (to see) whether that Domain was empty or had something in it or not? But if he reached the heavens of the Stranger, even if he did not actually enter he must have struck them to see what they were or whose they were.

The Stranger and his Domain. How the Stranger may be both inside and outside of his Domain.

And when the Stranger went forth from his Domain to come hither, it is clear that he vacated his Domain. For anything which is limited, and in the midst of a place, when it goes forth from its place, the whole of it goes forth and no part of it remains in its place. But if half of it goes forth and half [P. 49, l.11. remains, or some portion of it, these things prove concerning its nature that it is divisible. And if again they wish to change their ground, and say a thing which cannot be, (namely), that when he went forth to come from his Domain, his Domain was not deprived of him at all, because he is a Fullness which [P. 49, l.15. does not lack, and

a Greatness which is not lessened, then how was his Domain full of him, and the Domain which was in the middle full of him--a place infinite and unlimited? And, moreover, the Domain of the Maker would be full of him (i.e., of the Stranger), and this creation would be full of him ; even unto Sheol beneath would his extent reach. If before he went out he was the sole occupant (lit., fullness) of that Domain wherein he dwelt, and after he went out that Domain was likewise full[P. 50. of him as before, it is clear that he is something which was found to belong to that Domain, and was (nevertheless) outside. It is necessary that we should inquire whence this addition arose ;

or perhaps some veil was upon his face as upon the face of the Sun; and when that veil was drawn aside he extended his rays unto us. And when he gathered himself in and confined himself to his Domain he filled the whole of the Domain in which he dwelt from of old. And it is necessary that we should inquire from whence are those causes which arose in front of him, and impeded the Light; and here his nature is found to fill all (space), and our place is not found to be foreign to his rays, just as also the vault of creation is not foreign to the rays of the Sun, even if by means of other veils it is concealed from us.

If Marcionites use the Light of the Sun to illustrate the omnipresence of the Stranger, they dishonour him.

But the Sun is one thing and its effulgence is another thing. For the Sun has substance and a circumference, too, and the eye sets bounds to the Sun, but its effulgence has no limit and substance. For the eye cannot set bounds to it. And by this proof it is discovered that the child is greater than its parent, since the parent is limited and the child that springs from the parent unlimited. But it (i.e., the effulgence) is not really greater; it really is less than it, in that it has not substance like it (i.e., the Sun). But because also the Sun is fire we learn to know it (i.e., the Sun) from this lower fire; for thus also a flame of fire has a substance, [P. 61, l.28. but the Light of the fire has no substance. And bodies come and go in the midst of its Light and are not injured, but bodies cannot approach very near to the substance (of the flame). And just as there are flowers or blossoms or one of the roots which have sweet-smelling fruits and one small place is able to accommodate them because they are substances, but their scent is diffused outside of them because it has no localised substance ; and we [P. 52.

do not say that the scent of spices is more than the spices, or the perfumes of ointments more than the ointments, for they themselves are sold for a price, but the scent of fragrant herbs is freely given to all who come near them ; and (just as) the censer cannot fill the house, but its smoke is greater than the house, for it is even diffused outside of it, (so) if they have made, therefore, their God like a perfume, which is dissipated and like a flame which is scattered, though they wish to honour him, they reduce him to inferiority, for they make him (to be) without an independent substantial Existence.

II. Bardaisan's teaching; what supports his Entities in Space? Again, let the party of Bardaisan be asked concerning those Entities which he speaks of, what supports these things

of his also, seeing that they are placed in a deserted and empty Space in which there is no breath of air supporting all, especially inasmuch as he mentions that there are both light and heavy Entities there? For Light is lighter than Wind and Wind than Fire, just as also Fire is lighter than Water. But light and heavy things cannot exist unitedly in one enclosure without the force of another [P. 53.] (supporting them). How could the Entities ever be mingled?

For the light (thing) must dwell above just as the heavy (thing) dwells beneath all. Therefore, Fire cannot exist in the same rank in which Light exists, nor can Water, which is heavy, be in the rank of Fire, or of Wind, because there is no force to support them. . . . Water puts an end to Fire, which is opposite it. For [L. 29. heaviness and weight cannot exist in one rank just as they cannot [L. 39.] . . . by the same weight . . . things which are light and heavy in the midst of Water or in Air. These things convince concerning themselves how (far) the heavy approach the light. And if these which are heavier by measure than their companions, do greatly flee towards the depths, how much more distant from those things [P. 54. which are beneath, without weight and without measure, will the Darkness be which exists more heavily than all! For lo, all its heaviness, too, is beneath all ... [how did the Darkness] go up from them because its heaviness. . . . But if it is able to exist [L. 16. and be quiet, let them tell us what thing it was which came upon its heaviness (?) . . . for it is unable to be raised by itself. . . . [Ll. 12, 22. But if they say that it crossed its boundary and when it crossed [L. 34.

it, it crossed it in an upward direction, then (let me ask), which is easier--for a heavy thing to go upwards, which is not natural, or to be sent downwards according to its nature? For so [L. 46.] . . . [owing to some cause or other] to cross its boundary and make an Assault upwards. Above all [the proper nature of its [P. 55. (i.e., of the Darkness) heaviness, demands that it] should be continually sent beneath. And because from of old and from eternity everything was actually going down and down the Fire would not be able [to find its way down through the great distance to the Darkness beneath or to reach] the Depths which are immeasurable.

If a Primal Wind stirred up the Entities, who caused this Wind? Was it God? 2 But let us inquire as to this Fire, what was the cause that stirred it up also to cross the Boundary which it had never crossed before? They say that the Wind beat upon it and stirred it up. Let us come to the succession of causes and let us ask also concerning the Wind,--what stirred it up too? And if the causes are multiplied, what, then, was that which was the Cause of all the causes? If it be not known, there is a great error, but if it be known, there is a right question in reply to which a true argument should be offered. For if it was God, then He is the cause of all confusion, He who disturbed things in their state of order and [Cf. p. lxxiii. 1. 15.] mingled things that were pure and introduced Strife and Contention among Natures that were at peace ; then He Who, they say, [P. 56.] is the real cause of all beauty turns out to be the cause of all ugliness.

But whoever stirred up that Evil which was asleep, and gave power to what was powerless and found out a method and arranged the Cause to make the Evil cross the Boundary, a

thing that had never crossed its Boundary, that misdeed of his teaches us what name we should give him, with what eye we should look upon him, and with what amazement we should wonder at him! Why would the Upper Being do so? But if the same Upper Being stirred the Element of the Wind in a manner contrary to its nature, then that Upper Being must have crept and come down from his natural height; and what Cause, then, stirred him up, too, that he should hurl Contention [Cf. p. lxxiii. l. 15.] and Strife among the Entities and Natures which were in a peaceful state, and, if they know not, whence did this cause spring?

For as regards these other things which they say concerning the Entities, whence did they learn that they are as they say? If the spirit of revelation made (it) known to them, it ought to [P. 57.] have revealed to them (something) concerning the Cause on which all the causes depended. Bardaisan's revelation was not accredited by Signs nor is it Scriptural. But one must wonder at this Wind that it was not revealed to Moses, the chief of the Prophets, who divided the sea and went through its midst, nor again to Simon, the chief of the Apostles, was it revealed, he who went down and walked upon the waters, and moved lightly upon the waves of the sea! But it was revealed to this Bardaisan who was unable to prevent the dew which dropped upon his bed! But let them give us the signs and wonders which he did, that by means of the open signs the secrets which he taught may be believed. But if the Prophets and Apostles [L. 22.] who did many signs and wonders did not say one of the things which Bardaisan by himself denied, and if Bardaisan, who denied many things which are foreign to the teaching of the Prophets and Apostles, did not do any of the signs which they did, is it not clear and evident to any one who wishes to see clearly that there is a great gulf between his Error and their true Knowledge?

What supported the Entities in Space? Let us ask [what force it is which supported] all those creatures which Bardaisan preached and the Firmament (?) and the Earth and those whom he calls PANPHLGOS (?) and all that earth (?) which is beneath everything and above the Darkness--who supports all these? Or how does the Darkness, which is beneath [P. 58, l.10.] everything, support everything so as to be the foundation of all? But if they say that everything is placed on nothing, let Bardaisan who said how can it be explained that something comes from nothing, (let him) repeat the thing which went forth from his mouth (and ask) how can something be supported by nothing? For how can a thing which does not exist support a thing which does exist? But if he says that it would be easy for God to hang everything on nothing, he confesses, though unwillingly, that it would not be difficult for God to create everything out of nothing. For if he was unable to create something from nothing, neither would he be able to set something on nothing . . . [and [P. 59.] Bardaisan cannot say that the Will of God supported everything]. For (how) was that Will which they say is light [and unable to [L.7] make anything from nothing able even to support it?] And, [L. 13.] therefore, as it was necessary for the Will to have something out of which to create creatures ([so it needed something] on which to place its creatures.

God is the cause of the Entities. [And if creatures are made from Entities] which are not dependent on something which supports them, [are not these Entities dependent] upon something which is not dependent? And if they say that there is a myriad of ... each supporting one another . . . [they are not wise in what] they say ; [for let us [L. 33.] ask about that last supporter] of them all, who bears it up? Until of necessity one great and perfect One is found Who is perfect in every respect, Who is identical with His own Domain and exists by His own power, and from nothing makes everything. For if He lacks any one of these things, then He is not perfect, and, therefore, [P. 60]. He is in some sort an imperfect God who requires three things--that is, something from which to create created things, and a Pillar which upholds His creatures and a Domain in which His Divinity may dwell. But if the Will of God is supporting by its power the creatures which come from the Entities, it is clear that also that Will of God was supporting the Entities from the first and the same confused them. And if it was not supporting the Entities, then it does not support anything that comes from them. And if the Entities were dependent on it (i.e. the Divine Will) and existing by His power, they were not even Entities, especially as the Darkness also is found to exist likewise by the power of the Good One.

III. Mani's Teaching; he placed the Light World in contact with the Darkness, and thereby introduced great difficulties. How did the attractiveness of Light reach the Senses of Darkness?

And, therefore, on these grounds we have opposed Mani also with a true refutation. For he, too, calls God the Earth of Light, which (Earth) is not perfect, but if it is a deficient thing, the very word deficiency is enough to refute its claim to perfection. For its one side proclaims concerning the whole if it, that if on its side which is near the Darkness, it is limited by the Darkness, and if it is (so) by nature, its nature is very deficient and imperfect, inasmuch as that which limits it on one side is not a thing which is fair but the Darkness. Now, in the case of a thing which is limited by the Evil, inquire no further as to its weakness; [P. 61, l.13. for it is enough that the Evil limited it. And how, O Mani, shall we call that thing the perfect Good which is limited by the Darkness, or perfect Light that which is bounded by the Darkness? For it (i.e., the Darkness) confined and limited its inferiority (i.e., the inferiority of the Light), and did not suffer it to fill all (Space), in addition to the fact that it (i.e., the Darkness) waxed bold like a strong one to trample down its Domain and to enter its Boundaries, and to plunder its Possessions. But they say that it (i.e., the Darkness) came as one in need ; but if it was in need, know that this (i.e., the Light) also is weak, and if the former plunders the latter is plundered.

And, in order that they may be refuted in all points, if the two frontiers of Good and Evil were thus contiguous, all that side which bordered on the unclean became unclean and defiled, and infected, and corrupted by the contact of the Darkness. And if they say that that side which bordered on the Darkness was not injured by the contact of the [P. 62. Darkness, then that side which could not be injured is more excellent than those Souls which were injured by the contact of the Darkness, for it (i.e., the Darkness) is said to have acquired power over the

inferior, since this inferior was all injured. But although it (i.e., the side) has contact with the corrupt Darkness from everlasting to everlasting, the injurious contact could not injure it. And if the Enemy was unable to get dominion over it, and the Foe to tread it down and the Marauder to ascend and cross it, then why was it necessary for the Good One to takethe pure Souls who belonged to him, and to 'hurl' them beyond his own victorious Frontier into the jaws of the Darkness? For it has been said that the Darkness could not even cross that mighty Frontier. But if it was a defenceless Frontier, one which could be overcome, and laid low, and trodden down and crossed, then its weakness could also be injured by the contact of the Darkness.

And if the Darkness had been able to get dominion over it, if it had wished to destroy it, lo, it would have destroyed [P. 63. it by degrees, and made an Assault. And if it desired to rob it, behold it would have approached it stealthily by degrees, and moved onwards. And if (it had wished) to feel a Passion for it and to enjoy it, lo, what gave it Pleasure was at its side . . . if [L. 13. what gave it Pleasure was in close contact on its side from everlasting to everlasting; and if it carried its will into action, the Darkness had no need to make an Assault and enter the midst of the Earth of Light, because the same Pleasantness was diffused throughout the whole of it (i.e., the Earth). For the Light is one in its nature, and wherever a man has pleasure in it, it is the same. Look, therefore, at the fabricated system of deceit, for in all this the Pleasantness of the Light is in contact with the Darkness, as they say. If it is after the fashion of a park, the one side which bordered on the Sons of the Darkness was entirely akin to the Darkness--for it is with them.

And if the Fragrance of that pleasant thing is sent forth into their nostrils, and if that Light is diffused upon their eyes, and if the Melodies of that sweet Player are poured into their ears, how since all this was present with him, did he smell and perceive as from a far mountain that "there was something pleasant [P. 64, l.12. there"? And if from the centre of the Earth (of Light) or from the inner sides he received the smell of the Pleasantness of Light, this, too, is against them. For how did it come about that the sweet smell and effulgence burst forth and entered even there? And how did this beautiful Fragrance ever smite the Darkness?

If Darkness has foreknowledge it is more excellent than the Light.

For if the Darkness had foreknowledge, and by means of that he knew that there would be something pleasant (in the realm of Light) then is that Entity (of the Darkness) greater and more excellent than this Good, in that it has this foreknowledge. But lo, the Souls who are from this (Entity) are to-day existing in Ignorance and Error. [How can the Souls escape from this Darkness? And if he had great foreknowledge, when do the Souls who have strayed expect to be 'refined,' seeing that 'he who leads them astray' is so great? For by his knowledge he made them to be without knowledge. But, above all, they cannot go forth hence, because, howsoever that Good (Being) may contrive to form ways and means for their departure [P. 65, l. 9. hence, that Evil One knows beforehand all the movements and secrets which are planned there against him ; and that Good (Being) cannot even conceal

his secret thoughts from him. And if he cannot conceal from him the thoughts in his own heart and in his own Domain, how does he expect to release from under the hand of this mighty One the Souls who are subject to his authority, [Cf. p. lxxii. l. 3. especially, too, if they are stored up in the midst of him and 'swallowed,' as they say?

And if, when they were not swallowed, he contrived to swallow them, now that he has swallowed them, who is there that can bring them forth from his midst? '(This is a thought) which even Mani himself may have muttered from the midst of the Darkness when he was swallowed. And in his muttering whose help would be invoke? (Would he invoke) Him who even in his own Domain is guarding himself from that which he fears? For he is afraid to come because he knows that if he comes he is swallowed; but they are ashamed to say that he [P. 66. can be swallowed. And how can they conceal it? For behold those Souls which were swallowed up (so as to be removed) from him make them ashamed. And if they were not swallowed, again they are all the more ashamed in this point, (namely): Why did that Nature which cannot be swallowed not contend (? with the Darkness and swallow all of it?

The Evil One had or had not foreknowledge. Behold, two alternatives are set before them; let them choose one, whichever they wish, that they may be put to confusion in it. But if in both directions they are put to confusion, this is not due to us, but to their wise Teacher, who concocted for them a Teaching which is put to confusion in every respect. But if they say that he had no foreknowledge, [then let them hear my former questions about the contact of the Darkness with the Light]. [Cf. p. lviii. f.] If Darkness had foreledge, he showed restraint. Did the Virgin of the Light tempt him?

If the Evil One has foreknowledge from the first, how is it that he sometimes (? perceived as if he sometimes knew? And if when he knew he did not feel desire ; the question is one which resolves itself into two alternatives, (namely), if he verily made an Assault with his eyes (open?), it is a thing [P. 67. repugnant to his nature ; but if, though he felt desire, he did not make an Assault he remained by reason of his self-restraint for a long time in a state of desire perforce. But these Souls who are from the Good (Being) are put to shame by his self-restraint, since they are found to be fornicators, and they run corruptly into all evils. And who caused that false ascetic to offend? Can it have been that Virgin of the Light about whom they say that she manifested her beauty to the Archons, so that they were ravished to run after her? But it is not possible for pure mouths to speak as they do about the things after this ; so that we will not commit them to writing, but we will take refuge in such discourse as it is possible to use (and argue), that if that Virgin of Light appeared to him and made him offend by her purity, her folly is seen in this. And in what respect was the beauty or pleasantness or fragrance of the Virgin of Light different from that of that Luminous Earth?

So that if there is a question of Passion, behold, [P. 68. as a harlot, she embraces the fornicator. For the borders of both Domains embrace one another after the manner of bodies. And, because from eternity and from everlasting they were touching one another, perhaps, also, that Evil one became weary of the perpetual contact. But if a comparison such as

that which they employ (lit., bring) is applicable to the matter, (namely), that one loves and another is loved, the experience of debauchees refutes them, (namely), that, although they love, there comes a time when they are sated and weary of that thing which they love.

How did Darkness discover this Light? And if our questions do not please them, neither does it please us that they should speak all this blasphemy against the Truth. If, therefore, they wish to hear many things, in a single [L. 33.] word . . . that is to say, when they confess that they are in an evil case. And, therefore, silence is our part, and they will [P. 69.] have profit. But if . . . And if they do not wish to come to that which overthrows them (?), let them show how at one time the Darkness had a Passion for the Light, though they were from everlasting hidden in one another. If this Fragrance was diffused recently, first we must inquire what was the cause which made it spread, and what was the power which stirred it up, and why all this was. (?) And it is clear that that is the cause of the trouble and war. But if the Darkness acquired Thought which . . . , and a Mind which he had not (formerly) and Knowledge which he had not, lo again [we refute them by asking how Mind could be acquired by a Nature which did not contain it. It could only come from an outside source-- from a region above the Darkness].

The explanations of Bardaisan, Marcion and Mani as to the original cause of the Disturbance. [L. 40.] For Bardaisan had already (?) (i.e., before Mani) said, 'There arose a cause by chance, and the Wind was impelled against the Fire.' Marcion said [concerning the . . .] "that he saw a certain picture." (?) For we will not utter these other things which are after it(?) ; even though their mouths were fit to utter something which was not permissible. For (let us ask) whence sprang the cause, O Marcion, which first [made him aware of] that which was beneath him? And if the Good . . . which was above it did not perceive HULE seeing that it was under him, how did he perceive it anew, [P. 70, l.11.] or how did HULE(?) recently (ascend to regions) which are not natural for it? And Mani said, concerning the Darkness . . . [that its Sons began to rage and ascend to see what was above them outside the Darkness or that it acquired Thought].

They are all different. Mani takes any explanation that suits him regardless of consistency. And see how like the perverse crabs are to one another, each one of whom takes a devious course and goes forth, not to come to the Scriptures, but to turn aside from the Scriptures! And, perhaps, Satan, their father, took a somewhat devious course, because he is a native in Error--that is because they are foreigners from foreigners, who do not blaspheme at all. For let the circumcised foreigners prove that each of them is a drop of poison 'of the troubled sea.' Whenever, therefore, it suits Mani, he brings their two sides into [P. 71.] contact, like Sun and Shade, which cannot be mingled together. And, again, when he is forced he destroys the first and mixes them together--the Good and the Evil--like water with water. And that he may not be refuted (by the argument) that if they had been near together, how did the Darkness recently desire the Light, as if it had suddenly met it, he constructed the theory 'that sometimes HULE acquired Thought.' And in seeking to avoid refutation, he came to such a point that he rightly suffered confusion. And because he was compelled he named

two Roots ; and because again he was plainly exposed he produced many Natures from the midst of two Natures. But a tongue which is in the power of Falsehood is turned by it as it (i.e., Falsehood) finds convenient.

How did the Darkness love the Light? For with regard to Light which is the opponent and the abolisher of Darkness whenever it suits them, they say that it (i.e., the Darkness) had a Passion for it (i.e., the Light). And how does opposite love opposite, that is to say, how does the injured one love its injurer? or how does the eater have affection for that which is eaten, as the wolf for the lamb? Or will they, therefore, suppose the Light to be injured [P. 72.] like the lamb? And (then) it had good reason to desire the Darkness (which is) like a wolf! But if they suppose that the Darkness is injured like the lamb, how does that which is injured have a Passion for its injurer? They attribute to Darkness that it desires, like the wolf, and that it is injured like a lamb; and when these two things are laid at the door of the Darkness, has not the true (opinion) perished from them (i.e., the Manichaeans), that is, have they not perished from the Truth? For those proofs and comparisons which they adduce are also confused like them (i.e., the Manichaeans).

The Domains of Good and Evil illustrated from the natural places of Fish and Moles. But if there are two Domains, and Good and Evil who dwell in them, (now) I portray these from things external and with simple illustrations in order that they may be easy for their hearers. For let us suppose that there is a great and clear and pure river, and fine fish in it, and that there is a bad and filthy and foul sepulchre, and moles in it. Then let us set the moles which dwell in the Darkness as the likeness of the Sons of Darkness, and let us place the fine fish as a fine (?) type of the Sons of the Light and let us suppose that their Domains are bounded this by that, the water by [P. 73, l. 8.] sepulchral vaults, and the dry land by wet ground . . . if those fishes [do not] long to go up to the dry land and to soil themselves in mud and in the burrows of moles ; is it not, therefore, incontestably clear that just as moles dislike going down to the water, so fishes disdain to go up to the dry land? And they are made to be neighbours to one another ; and in proportion as their boundaries approach one another, so much the further are their (natural) wills removed from one another ; so that there is none of them which desires his neighbour's domain.

If, therefore, these things which are not Entities, and are not (derived) from Entities, and were not made from good and evil Natures--since if thou kill a mole and cast it to the fishes, the fishes will devour it--and if, therefore, these things which are near to one another in a certain sense are thus far strangers as regards their abodes and . . . in their nature, and do not dare to cross their borders, how much more would it be right that Good and Evil should exist in their Nature and Domains, seeing that they are real Entities and really strangers to one another, and the reality of their Enmity [P. 74.] is never lessened! For if it was lessened, that is due to Freedom and not to Essential-nature, (it is due) to Will and not to Nature; how, therefore, did the Darkness . . . to cross to the Domain of its opposite, and why?--seeing that when a mole goes it goes into its own (proper place), and when it ceases (?) (it goes forth) and smells that it may reach the edge of the water and (then) returns again to go into

its own (proper place). And so, also, a fish, to which are assigned its depths comes into its own (proper place), and when it ceases (?) it returns to its depths

Here are correct demonstrations which refute those who have introduced confused Teaching . . . For it is found that [L. 33.] fishes and moles which come from Nature [stay in their own natural places] . . . [Moles akin to the Darkness are not anxious to cross the [P. 76, l. 5.] boundary] of fishes, the sons of water. And how do they flee from this boundary and rank of the Sons of the Light; and (yet) the Darkness, their Father, made an Assault to enter within the boundaries of the Sons of the Light, and why are (the words) 'refined,' and 'first' (used to describe him)? But if their Father made an Assault, but they flee, it is found that these blind and dark moles do (in reality) come from the nature and abode of the Good (World of Light). For, behold, they flee from their opposite. Nor (even) like these blind moles is the perception of Souls which see and hear and speak and perceive that they may flee from the vile boundary of the Darkness.

How could Darkness swallow Light? Again, let us turn and ask the advocates of Error, that is, its Preachers--how were the Sons of the Light cast into the mouths of the Sons of the Darkness? And how did the Darkness swallow the Light--a thing which is not natural to it? But the nature of both is that the Light swallows and the Darkness is swallowed. And if here (in our world) the [P. 76.] Light swallows the Darkness as experience shows, but there the Light is swallowed, as the Heretics say, it is clear that this Darkness which is swallowed here is not akin to that Darkness which swallows there ; just as also the Light which swallows the Darkness is not akin to that which is swallowed by the Darkness. And if they strive to make a stand, again they fall. For one fall is not sufficient for them. For really it is not a case of falling at all. For this takes place (only) where there has been standing ; they are always prostrate-- they do not wish to stand.

Again, let them understand (?) that as regards this Light which swallows the Darkness here with us, and this Darkness which here amongst us is swallowed by the Light, it it is the nature of that which swallows to swallow, and of that which is swallowed to disappear. Or has the Creator's own will changed their natures? And if it is due to (His) Will, where was their (unchangeable) Nature? If he is one who submitted (?) himself there, and is the Light-God who did not [P. 77.] aid himself, whose Light was swallowed by the Darkness, how has he to-day changed the nature of the Darkness that it should be swallowed by the Light? For they say that he is the Maker. And, if the Darkness changed its nature, it is unlikely that it would bring itself to the weakness, so that he who swallowed them is swallowed to-day. Since that true saying demands that natures essentially fixed cannot be changed; but that Freewill, because He created it to say everything, proclaims by name those Entities whose true nature it cannot declare. But, because those names belong to the Entities, the Entities of the substances (?) are changed. For if the substances (?) of the Entities had been like the names of the Entities, and were fixed natures, they could not be changed ; because a thing which exists in the natural condition of its original Essence, so exists as it is, and so remains for ever and ever.

But let us inquire about the nature of this Darkness, whether this is natural to it, (namely), that it should be swallowed by the Light, just as our sight proves . . . that [P. 78.] it (i.e., the Darkness), too, is swallowed here so that both here and there it has an essential Nature. For one Entity cannot be divided into two Entities, even though the Heretics speak absurdities. And if the nature of the Light around us, as it proves about itself, is such that it swallows and is not swallowed, and there is no means whereby Light is swallowed by Darkness, at any time and for all time to come, it is clear . . . that as it swallows the Darkness here, so it swallows there, and was not swallowed (by the Darkness). Refutatory Summary.

Also the perverse ones do perversely proclaim the Teaching --but here [we have correctly refuted what] they say concerning the Light and the Darkness . . . we hear that it was done there in quite a contrary and opposite way. On which (opinion), therefore, is it right that we should stand--on the cunning tale which is proclaimed preposterously, or on true evidence, whereof the correctness is seen by practice? . . . For not a little . . . because it was not right that they should [P. 79, l. 2, Ll. 7, 8, 9.] be a little ashamed. For . . . to speak . . . against . . . that rightly . . . but also those who believe. (?) For according [Ll. 10, 14.] to the great falsehood and untruth . . . difficult . . . he [Ll. 17, 24.] gives them a preposterous account of a thing which we see in practice correctly every day. For it seems that he made them drunk first, and then he told them a tale. For he was afraid of the truth of Nature, lest it should refute him. But, if not, how (?) was the perverse tale not disgraced in their ears, that, while they see that the Light swallows the Darkness here, they think that there it (i.e., the Light) is swallowed by the Darkness?

The Light and Darkness have no bodies. And the Darkness when it is swallowed here by the Light has not even a body ; for nothing is separated from itself (i.e., the Darkness), seeing that it vanishes altogether. But a house full of darkness shows that if a man opens the doors [P. 80, 11.] and windows in the daytime, whither can that darkness, which is in it, go up [to hide]? There is no room for it to go outside, for the Light which is from outside absorbs it. If we say that it stays within, it does not remain there. For the rays of the Sun entering pursue it. And if it does not exist within, and goes out, it is clear that it has all come to an end ; and with it has come to an end all that Teaching which says that it (i.e., Darkness) has a kind of body in reality. For in this manner it (i.e., the Teaching) says that it has a body, in that "it verily ate those brilliant Shining Ones (ZIWANE) who were cast into its mouth." So Darkness and Light have become composite bodies--a thing which nature does not teach. For a man never eats Light nor ever swallows Darkness.

The Body has not the same Nature as Darkness, nor has the Soul the same, Nature as Light. And if this Body with which we are clothed is of the same nature as the Darkness, as they say, and this Soul which is in us is of the same nature as the Light, when we look at these two natures which are in us, and at the two (natures) of Light and Darkness which are outside of us, they are refuted (and shown) that these are not from those, neither these from those. For how can the bright Soul which is within be over[P. 81, l. 13.] come by the Body which is akin to the Darkness? For the outer Light which is akin to it (i.e., the Soul)

overcomes the Darkness. Moreover, how does this Body overwhelm the bright Soul, seeing that this outer Darkness which is akin to it is consumed and swallowed by the Light?

The Sons of Light were not used as bait (?) to catch the Sons of Darkness.

And as for these things which are obvious even to simpletons and madmen, how do they who will not distinguish between statements which are correct, and those which are self contradictory, applaud them when they hear them? For how dost thou receive (this) into thy mind, O wise Hearer, and how is there a (healthy) ear . . . that thou shouldst hear [L. 32. L. 37. Ll. 38, 39.] . . . when . . . and explains with explanations which are worthy of ridicule?. . . [for he says] that the Primal Man(? cast(? "the Sons of the Light into the mouths of the Sons of the Darkness as (into the mouths) of hunters, and that the Light was pleasant and agreeable and sweet to those Sons of the Darkness; and thus they were found to eat them [P. 82. greedily, and they were cast in and entered into their midst and were mixed with them. O how exceedingly ridiculous that a man . . . O what vile blasphemy! . . . wolves eat lambs and lions eat calves, and the eater and the [L. 11. eaten are quite content with one another! And these are bodies, and these are composite things, and both of them . . . if ... the Sons of the Darkness are bodies because (they [Ll. 21, 22. have) bodies as they say (but) the nature of the Sons of the Light is spiritual, as they say ;

for this Light, too, is akin to them, how is it fitting (that) this thing which is mingled (with the Darkness) should be held fast? And the Soul which dwells in the Body [would not be held fast] since it is akin to it ... so that if the Soul was akin to the Darkness . . . this [Ll. 38, 41. [perturbed] Body . . . lo, they are akin to its nature as they say [L. 46. [for] that Darkness . . . and as the wise ones profess. . . .

Darkness by the Primal [Man] who bore it, he would have [P. 83, l. 9.] died ; since it is difficult . . . which (is) in its Essence . . and also the Parts . . . which he slew . . because they [Ll. 16, 18,19.] teach that the Darkness has a nature . . . and goes into anything which he catches.[L. 22.] The Sons of Light had a composite Nature.

And, therefore; if the Sons of the Light were eaten and entered into the belly and were digested in the stomach, it must be that they were dissolved in the excrement and waste refuse. For these are plausible statements to be made by their own about their own! And, therefore, those Sons of the Light are natures which can be dissolved and destroyed. And it is proper to ask concerning this nature, as to how it existed from all eternity. For if they were compounded they are also dissolved . . . and also destroyed; they are not the thing [P. 84.] which they were before they were destroyed ; and besides this, it is clear that if he collects and compounds them, . . . has compounded them from the beginning. And if from all eternity they have not been compounded, but are natures which are not composite (they spring) from an Existence which is not composite. So that by plain things they have been refuted who speak much falsehood about secret things . . . [L. 18.] akin to the body, as they say, that body is found not only [unable] to eat or to destroy or to torture . . . but, also, it [L. 30.] is unable to understand their plain things . . . as they say, [L. 37.] [that as] the

Darkness ate the Light . . . which was in it, [L. 40.] and it was all inside the Darkness . . . how did it eternally and from the beginning both seize it and feel it . . . into [P. 85, l. 7] its midst . . . and how . . .?

Judge judged and the tormenting Fire. But they say these things in addition to those other things, (namely), "that the Souls came to the Judge." For if that nature is one, how can part of it judge and part of it be judged? And also the Souls are part of the Essence (?), how (does [L. 16.] there spring) from it one who torments and one who is tormented? And if, too, the fire which torments is akin to him who torments, and to those who are tormented, what ear is there which can endure this blasphemy that the judge and the judged and the tormentor are from one good Essence, as they say? And how are there in it these three opposites? For He also who judges the judged came hither in his entirety and was mixed with the Body ; thus he sinned and offended just as those Souls who are from him offended. And if these Souls. had stayed in their (native) Domain and had not come hither, these would have possessed it, after he had gone thither. And how are they true natures, those natures which did not [P. 86.] preserve their Essence?

The Body can be pure and righteous. For, consider the pure and righteous Body, how it is not such as the apostates state (when they say), "that the Body is a covering which is from the evil Nature." nor is the Soul as they say, from a pure Root. For the eyes of the glorious body clothe themselves with chastity, its ears with purity, its limbs with glory, its senses with holiness, in its mouth is praise and on its tongue is thanksgiving, and in its lips is blessing, in its feet is the habit of visiting the sick, in its hands alms for the needy, in its heart is true faith, and in its . . . love (?). And that wall was built by God and [He made it to be] a pure shrine for Him, and a temple . . . for its architect when . . . in (?) the body . . . he (i.e., Mani) says . . . that it (i.e., the Body) is from a nature so that it sins . . . it is a shame to them since it shows that the Body . . . And if they are not [L. 39.] persuaded to secret sin, they will be persuaded by a devil. How did he(?) force . . .

The Soul is not necessarily pure. Consider again the refined Soul about which they say [P. 87.] that its nature is from the Good (Being), it shows concerning its nature . . . the Body is . . . (a nature) which is evil. Also . . . the refined Soul which they say is the Daughter of the Light puts on that Darkness in its deeds and . . . in its conduct. . . . And if (it is) from God [how does it revile [L. 23.] Him?] . . . and if (it is) from [the Holy One, how is it impure] . . . and if (it is) from . . . behold it puts on ... and if it is from the Good (Being), how has it become a den and nest of unmixed Evil? How can Light which formerly pleased finally torture Darkness?

And if all this was pleasant in the midst of Satan, how do they say that some of these Souls who sin much and do much wickedness, and blaspheme much, and are guilty of great unbelief are found like dregs in the midst of one whom they call BOLOS? As they say that "when the fire dissolves all his interior, there is collected every portion of the Light which was mixed and mingled among created things, and those Souls [P. 88, l. 3.] who have done much wickedness are assigned to the realm of the Darkness when he is tortured." And if

it (i.e., the Light) is a nature which pleases him, as the beginning of their Teaching says, how is it the cause of his torment, as the end of their fabricated system says? But that that Luminous Nature should become at one time his enjoyment, and [that he should like it] and enjoy it, and that, again it should be assigned to his realm, and that he (i.e., the Darkness) should be imprisoned and tortured therein--this may happen in the cases of changeable Natures which are created out of nothing : according to the Will of the Creator they can be changed to anything.

For loose dust of the earth is the dwelling of every creeping thing, and according to its liking it crawls in it and dwells in it. But if any one by regulation associates two Natures with the Nature, that is to say, so that it may be moulded with water by the hand of the workman, and receive strength from fire, then there springs from it a vessel and a prison-house to torture . . . that creeping thing which lay in it when it was dust, and crawled in it, and was delighted when it was [P. 89.] clay. When it becomes a vessel moulded and baked in an oven, it becomes the torturer of those that are imprisoned in it. Why was a Wall not built between the Domains?

If, therefore, the Darkness is finally tormented by that Luminous Nature in which it takes pleasure, what was the cause of the negligence long ago (which brought it about) that the Darkness obtained dominion over all this and took pleasure therein? And what is the cause of its fierceness so that at last the Darkness is imprisoned and tormented in it? If its 'Essential nature' has this strength, then where was it "formerly? But if this energy conies from another place, why did it not come formerly? So that instead of the Grave which is now built stupidly for the Darkness, an impregnable wall should have been built, and thus there would have been (a separation) between the two Domains, (such a wall) as it would be fitting for the Good (Being) to make, and right for the Just (Being) to keep in repair, and proper for the Wise (Being) to guard. But after those atrocities which the Darkness wrought [Cf. p. XXXV.] upon the Light, and after those blasphemies which the Souls blasphemed against their Father, and after they committed fornication and folly and polluted and disgraced themselves, [P. 90.] and after great blemishes have appeared in them, so that, although their wounds may be healed, they cannot be effaced, and the places of their spots cannot be covered up, after all this Strife and Contention, and after all this misery and loss [Cf. p. lvi. ll.13, 26 f.] --even if there was a gain, the gain of such things would not be equal to the loss--he has planned to-day to build a Grave for the Darkness so that at last it may be imprisoned there.

And how can a Grave limit him who is infinite? For if the Darkness can be limited, then the Light also can be limited. And if the Good (Being) cannot be limited, but the Evil One can be limited, it is clear that this Evil One who can be limited is not an (eternal) Entity, the Companion of that Good (Being) who is not limited; and it is found that that which limits is an (eternal) Entity, and that which is limited by whoever is able to limit him, is a creature. But if he is not a creature and is an (eternal) Entity, an Entity cannot limit an Entity without itself being also limited by that other one, his equal, which is limited.[P. 91.]

THE END OP THE THIRD DISCOURSE. Note from Vol. 1 Introduction, p. (10): [Short lacunae are indicated in the translation by dots, and longer gaps by asterisks, but in neither case is the number of the dots or asterisks intended to bear any exact relation to the number of the missing words. In respect to this an approximately correct inference may be drawn by consulting the Syriac text.

Double inverted commas mark quotations where the original has [Syriac] Single inverted commas are used in numerous cases where the words seem to be quotations or to belong to a special terminology. Words in italics inside square brackets are to be regarded as conjectural translations or paraphrases. In a few passages, where the text has suffered great mutilation, italics indicate an attempt to summarise the argument from suggestions in the fragments.] [P.101] indicates page 101 of the accompanying Syriac. [l.2] means line 2 of the current page of the accompanying Syriac. [RP] FOOTNOTES I have moved the footnotes to the end. Those consisting of "Read [syriac] for [syriac]" or similar have been omitted, as it has not been possible to transcribe the fragments of Syriac. The pages are numbered with Roman numerals. Arabic numbers and line numbers relate to the Syriac text printed at the back of the paper volume. Greek text is rendered using the Scholars Press SPIonic font, free from here.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.