The Divine Institutes Book 4

Lactantius (c. AD 250–325)

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Chapter I.-Of the Former Religion of Men, and How Error Was Spread Over Every Age, and of the Seven Wise Men of Greece.

When I reflect, O Emperor Constantine, and often revolve in my mind the original condition of men, it is accustomed to appear alike wonderful and unworthy that, by the folly of one age embracing various superstitions, and believing in the existence of many gods, they suddenly arrived at such ignorance of themselves, that the truth being taken away from their eyes, the religion of the true God was not observed, nor the condition of human nature, since men did not seek the chief good in heaven, but on earth. And on this account assuredly the happiness of the ancient ages was changed. For, having left God, the parent and founder of all things, men began to worship the senseless works of their own hands. And what were the effects of this corruption, or what evils it introduced, the subject itself sufficiently declares. For, turning away from the chief good, which is blessed and everlasting on this account, because it cannot be seen, or touched, or comprehended, and from the virtues which are in agreement with that good, and which are equally immortal, gliding down to these corrupt and frail gods, and devoting themselves to those things by which the body only is adorned, and nourished, and delighted, they sought eternal death for themselves, together with their gods and goods relating to the body, because all bodies are subject to death. Superstitions of this kind, therefore, were followed by injustice and impiety, as must necessarily be the case. For men ceased to raise their countenances to the heaven;

but, their minds being depressed downwards, clung to goods of the earth, as they did to earth-born superstitions.There followed the disagreement of mankind, and fraud, and all wickedness; because, despising eternal and incorruptible goods, which alone ought to be desired by man, they rather chose temporal and short-lived things, and greater trust was placed by men in evil, inasmuch as they preferred vice to virtue, because it had presented itself as nearer at hand.

CHAPTER I.-OF THE FORMER RELIGION OF MEN, AND HOW ERROR WAS SPREAD OVER EVE

Thus human life, which in former ages had been occupied with the clearest light, was overspread with gloom and darkness; and in conformity with this depravity, when wisdom was taken away, then at length men began to claim for themselves the name of wise. For at the time when all were wise, no one was called by that name. And would that this name, once common to all the class, though reduced to a few, still retained its power! For those few might perhaps be able, either by talent, or by authority, or by continual exhortations, to free the people from vices and errors. But so entirely had wisdom died out, that it is evident, from the very arrogance of the name, that no one of those who were so called was really wise. And yet, before the discovery of this philosophy, as it is termed, there are said to have been seven, who, because they ventured to inquire into and discuss natural subjects, deserved to be esteemed and called wise men.

O wretched and calamitous age, in which through the whole world there were only seven who were called by the name of men, for no one can justly be called a man unless he is wise! But if all the others besides themselves were foolish, even they themselves were not wise, because no one can be truly wise in the judgment of the foolish. So far were they removed from wisdom, that not even afterwards, when learning increased, and many and great intellects were always intent upon this very subject, could the truth be perceived and ascertained. For, after the renown of those seven wise men, it is incredible with how great a desire of inquiring into the truth all Greece was inflamed. And first of all, they thought the very name of wisdom arrogant, and did not call themselves wise men, but desirous of wisdom. By which deed they both condemned those who had rashly arrogated to themselves the name of wise men, of error and folly, and themselves also of ignorance, which indeed they did not deny. For wherever the nature of the subject had, as it were, laid its hands upon their minds, so that they were unable to give any account, they were accustomed to testify that, they knew nothing, and discerned nothing. Wherefore they are found to be much wiser, who in some degree saw themselves, than those who had believed that they were wise.

Chapter II.-Where Wisdom is to Be Found; Why Pythagoras and Plato Did Not Approach the Jews.

Wherefore, if they were not wise who were so called, nor those of later times, who did not hesitate to confess their want of wisdom, what remains but that wisdom is to be sought elsewhere, since it has not been found where it was sought. But what can we suppose to have been the reason why it was not found, though sought with the greatest earnestness and labour by so many intellects, and during so many ages, unless it be that philosophers sought for it out of their own limits? And since they traversed and explored all parts, but nowhere found any wisdom, and it must of necessity be somewhere, it is evident that it ought especially to be sought there where the title of folly appears; under the covering of which God hides the treasury of wisdom and truth, lest the secret of His divine work should be exposed to view. Whence I am accustomed to wonder that, when Pythagoras, and after him Plato, inflamed with the love of searching out the truth, had penetrated as far as to the Egyptians, and Magi, and Persians, that they might become acquainted with their religious rites and institutions (for they suspected that wisdom was concerned with religion), they did not approach the Jews only, in whose possession alone it then was, and to whom they might have gone more easily.

But I think that they were turned away from them by divine providence, that they might not know the truth, because it was not yet permitted for the religion of the true God and righteousness to become known to men of other nations. For God had determined, as the last time drew near, to send from heaven a great leader, who should reveal to foreign nations that which was taken away from a perfidious and ungrateful people. And I will endeavour to discuss the subject in this book, if I shall first have shown that wisdom is so closely united with religion, that the one cannot be separated from the other.

Chapter III.-Wisdom and Religion Cannot Be Separated: the Lord of Nature Must Necessarily Be the Father of Every One.

The worship of the gods, as I have taught in the former book, does not imply wisdom; not only because it gives up man, who is a divine animal, to earthly and frail things, but because nothing is fixed in it which may avail for the cultivation of the character and the framing of the life; nor does it contain any investigation of the truth, but only the rite of worship, which does not consist in the service of the mind, but in the employment of the body. And therefore that is not to be deemed true religion, because it instructs and improves men by no precepts of righteousness and virtue. Thus philosophy, inasmuch as it does not possess true religion, that is, the highest piety, is not true wisdom. For if the divinity which governs this world supports mankind with incredible beneficence, and cherishes it as with paternal indulgence, wishes truly that gratitude should be paid, and honour given to itself, man cannot preserve his piety if he shall prove ungrateful for the heavenly benefits; and this is certainly not the part of a wise man. Since, therefore, as I have said, philosophy and the religious system of the gods are separated, and far removed from each other; seeing that some are professors of wisdom, through whom it is manifest that there is no approach to the gods, and that others are priests of religion, through whom wisdom is not learned; it is manifest that the one is not true wisdom, and that the other is not true religion.

Therefore I philosophy was not able to conceive the truth, nor was the religious system of the gods able to give an account of itself, since it is without it. But where wisdom is joined by an inseparable connection with religion, both must necessarily be true; because in our worship we ought to be wise, that is, to know the proper object and mode of worship, and in our wisdom to worship, that is, to complete our knowledge by deed and action.

Where, then, is wisdom joined with religion? There, indeed, where the one God is worshipped, where life and every action is referred to one source, and to one supreme authority: in short, the teachers of wisdom are the same, who are also the priests of God. Nor,

however, let it affect any one, because it often has happened, and may happen, that some philosopher may undertake a priesthood of the gods; and when this happens, philosophy is not, however, joined with religion; but philosophy will both be unemployed amidst sacred rites, and religion will be unemployed when philosophy shall be treated of. For that system of religious rites is dumb, not only because it relates to gods who are dumb, but also because its observance is by the hand and the fingers, not by the heart and tongue, as is the case with ours, which is true. Therefore religion is contained in wisdom, and wisdom in religion. The one, then, cannot be separated from the other; because wisdom is nothing else but the worship of the true God with just and pious adoration. But that the worship of many gods is not in accordance with nature, may be inferred and conceived even by this argument: that every god who is worshipped by man must, amidst the solemn rites and prayers, be invoked as father, not only for the sake of honour, but also of reason; because he is both more ancient than man, and because he affords life, safety, and sustenance, as a father does.

Therefore Jupiter is called father by those who pray to him, as is Saturnus, and Janus, and Liber, and the rest in order; which Lucilius laughs at in the council of the gods: "So that there is none of us who is not called excellent father of the gods; so that father Neptunus, Liber, father Saturnus, Mars, Janus, father Quirinus, are called after one name. But if nature does not permit that one man should have many fathers (for he is produced from one only), therefore the worship of many gods is contrary to nature, and contrary to piety.

One only, therefore, is to be worshipped, who can truly be called Father. He also must of necessity be Lord, because as He has power to indulge, so also has He power to restrain. He is to be called Father on this account, because He bestows upon us many and great things; and Lord on this account, because He has the greatest power of chastising and punishing. But that He who is Father is also Lord, is shown even by reference to civil law. For who will be able to bring up sons, unless he has the power of a lord over them? Nor without reason is he called father of a household, although he only has sons: for it is plain that the name of father embraces also slaves, because "household" follows; and the name of "household" comprises also sons, because the name of "father" precedes: from which it is evident, that the same person is both father of his slaves and lord of his sons. Lastly, the son is set at liberty as if he were a slave; and the liberated slave receives the name of his patron, as if he were a son. But if a man is named father of a household, that it may appear that he is possessed of a double power, because as a father he ought to indulge, and as a lord to restrain, it follows that he who is a son is also a slave, and that he who is a father is also a lord. As, therefore, by the necessity of nature, there cannot be more than one father, so there can only be one lord. For what will the slave do if many lords shall give commands at variance with each other? Therefore the worship of many gods is contrary to reason and to nature, since there cannot be many fathers or lords; but it is necessary to consider the gods both as fathers and lords.

Therefore the truth cannot be held where the same man is subject to many fathers and lords, where the mind, drawn in different directions to many objects, wanders to and fro, hither

and thither. Nor can religion have any firmness, when it is without a fixed and settled dwelling-place. Therefore there can be no true worship of many gods; just as that cannot be called matrimony, in which one woman has many husbands, but she will either be called a harlot or an adulteress. For when a woman is destitute of modesty, chastity, and fidelity, she must of necessity be without virtue. Thus also the religious system of the gods is unchaste and unholy, because it is destitute of faith, for that unsettled and uncertain honour has no source or origin.

Chapter IV.-Of Wisdom Likewise, and Religion, and of the Right of Father and Lord.

By these things it is evident how closely connected are wisdom and religion. Wisdom relates to sons, and this relation requires love; religion to servants, and this relation requires fear. For as the former are bound to love and honour their father, so are the latter bound to respect and venerate their lord. But with respect to God, who is one only, inasmuch as He sustains the twofold character both of Father and Lord, we are bound both to love Him, inasmuch as we are sons, and to fear Him, inasmuch as we are servants. Religion, therefore, cannot be divided from wisdom, nor can wisdom be separated from religion; because it is the same God, who ought to be understood, which is the part of wisdom, and to be honoured, which is the part of religion. But wisdom precedes, religion follows; for the knowledge of God comes first, His worship is the result of knowledge. Thus in the two names there is but one meaning, though it seems to be different in each case. For the one is concerned with the understanding, the other with action. But, however, they resemble two streams flowing from one fountain. But the fountain of wisdom and religion is God; and if these two streams shall turn aside from Him, they must be dried up: for they who are ignorant of Him cannot be wise or religious.

Thus it comes to pass that philosophers, and those who worship many gods, either resemble disinherited sons or runaway slaves, because the one do not seek their father, nor the other their master. And as they who are disinherited do not attain to the inheritance of their father, nor runaway slaves impunity, so neither will philosophers receive immortality, which is the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom, that is, the chief good, which they especially seek; nor will the worshippers of gods escape the penalty of everlasting death, which is the punishment of the true Master against those who are deserters of His majesty and name. But that God is Father and also Lord was unknown to both, to the worshippers of the gods as well as to the professors of wisdom themselves: inasmuch as they either thought that nothing at all was to be worshipped; or they approved of false religions or, although they understood the strength and power of the Supreme God (as Plato, who says that there is

one God, Creator of the world, and Marcus Tullius, who acknowledges that man has been produced by the Supreme God in an excellent condition), nevertheless they did not render the worship due to Him as to the supreme Father, which was their befitting and necessary duty. But that the gods cannot be fathers or lords, is declared not only by their multitude, as I have shown above, but also by reason: because it is not reported that man was made by gods, nor is it found that the gods themselves preceded the origin of man, since it appears that there were men on the earth before the birth of Vulcan, and Liber, and Apollo, and Jupiter himself. But the creation of man is not accustomed to be assigned to Saturnus, nor to his father Coelus.

But if none of those who are worshipped is said to have originally formed and created man, it follows that none of these can be called the father of man, and so none of them can be God. Therefore it is not lawful to worship those by whom man was not produced, for he could not be produced by many. Therefore the one and only God ought to be worshipped, who was before Jupiter, and Saturnus, and Coelus himself, and the earth. For He must have fashioned man, who, before the creation of man, finished the heaven and the earth. He alone is to be called Father who created us; He alone is to be considered Lord who rules, who has the true and perpetual power of life and death. And he who does not adore Him is a foolish servant, who flees from or does not know his Master; and an undutiful son, who either hates or is ignorant of his true Father.

Chapter V.-The Oracles of the Prophets Must Be Looked Into; And of Their Times, and the Times of the Judges and Kings.

Now, since I have shown that wisdom and religion cannot be separated, it remains that we speak of religion itself, and wisdom. I am aware, indeed, how difficult it is to discuss heavenly subjects; but still the attempt must be ventured, that the truth may be made clear and brought to light, and that many may be freed from error and death, who despise and refuse the truth, while it is concealed under a covering of folly. But before I begin to speak of God and His works, I must first speak a few things concerning the prophets, whose testimony I must now use, which I have refrained from doing in the former books. Above all things, he who desires to comprehend the truth ought not only to apply his mind to understand the utterances of the prophets, but also most diligently to inquire into the times during which each one of them existed, that he may know what future events they predicted, and after how many years their predictions were fulfilled. Nor is there any difficulty in making these computations; for they testified under what king each of them received the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. And many have written and published books respecting the times, making their commencement from the prophet Moses, who lived about seven hundred years before the Trojan war. But he, when he had governed the people for forty years, was succeeded by Joshua, who held the chief place twenty-seven years.

After this they were under the government of judges during three hundred and seventy years. Then their condition was changed, and they began to have kings; and when they had ruled during four hundred and fifty years, until the reign of Zedekiah, the Jews having been besieged by the king of Babylon, and carried into captivity, endured a long servitude, until, in the seventieth year afterwards, the captive Jews were restored to their own lands and settlements by Cyrus the elder, who attained the supreme power over the Persians, at the time when Tarquinius Superbus reigned at Rome. Wherefore, since the whole series of times may be collected both from the Jewish histories and from those of the Greeks and

Romans, the times of the prophets individually may also be collected; the last of whom was Zechariah, and it is agreed on that he prophesied in the time of King Darius, in the second year of his reign, and in the eighth month. Of so much greater antiquity are the prophets found to be than the Greek writers. And I bring forward all these things, that they may perceive their error who endeavour to refute Holy Scripture, as though it were new and recently composed, being ignorant from what fountain the origin of our holy religion flowed. But if any one, having put together arid examined the times, shall duly lay the foundation of learning, and fully ascertain the truth, he will also lay aside his error when he has gained the knowledge of the truth.

Chapter VI.-Almighty God Begat His Son; And the Testimonies of the Sibyls and of Trismegistus Concerning Him.

God, therefore, the contriver and founder of all things, as we have said in the second hook, before He commenced this excellent work of the world, begat a pure and incorruptible Spirit, whom He called His Son. And although He had afterwards created by Himself innumerable other beings, whom we call angels, this first-begotten, however, was the only one whom He considered worthy of being called by the divine name, as being powerful in His Father's excellence and majesty. But that there is a Son of the Most High God, who is possessed of the greatest power, is shown not only by the unanimous utterances of the prophets, but also by the declaration of Trismegistus and the predictions of the Sibyls. Hermes, in the book which is entitled The Perfect Word, made use of these words: "The Lord and Creator of all things, whom we have thought right to call God, since He made the second God visible and sensible. But I use the term sensible, not because He Himself perceives (for the question is not whether He Himself perceives), but because He leads to perception and to intelligence. Since, therefore, He made Him first, and alone, and one only, He appeared to Him beautiful, and most full of all good things; and He hallowed Him, and altogether loved Him as His own Son." The Erythraean Sibyl, in the beginning of her poem, which she commenced with the Supreme God, proclaims the Son of God as the leader and commander of all, in these verses:-

"The nourisher and creator of all things, who placed the sweet breath in all, and made God the leader of all." And again, at the end of the same poem:- "But whom God gave for faithful men to honour." And another Sibyl enjoins that He ought to be known:- "Know Him as your God, who is the Son of God." Assuredly He is the very Son of God, who by that most wise King Solomon, full of divine inspiration, spake these things which we have added: "God founded me in the beginning of His ways, in His work before the ages. He set me up in the beginning, before He made the earth, and before He established the depths, before the fountains of waters came forth: the Lord begat me before all the hills; He made the regions,

and the uninhabitable boundaries under the heaven. When He prepared the heaven, I was by Him: and when He separated His own seat, when He made the strong clouds above the winds, and when He strengthened the mountains, and placed them under heaven; when He laid the strong foundations of the earth, I was with Him arranging all things. I was He in whom He delighted: I was daily delighted, when He rejoiced, the world being completed." But on this account Trismegistus spoke of Him as "the artificer of God," and the Sibyl calls Him "Counsellor," because He is endowed by God the Father with such wisdom and strength, that God employed both His wisdom and hands in the creation of the world.

Chapter VII.-Of the Name of Son, and Whence He is Called Jesus and Christ.

Some one may perhaps ask who this is who is so powerful, so beloved by God, and what name He has, who was not only begotten at first before the world, but who also arranged it by His wisdom and constructed it by His might. First of all, it is befitting that we should know that His name is not known even to the angels who dwell in heaven, but to Himself only, and to God the Father; nor will that name be published, as the sacred writings relate, before that the purpose of God shall be fulfilled. In the next place, we must know that this name cannot be uttered by the mouth of man, as Hermes teaches, saying these things: ”Now the cause of this cause is the will of the divine good which produced God, whose name cannot be uttered by the mouth of man. And shortly afterwards to His Son: ”There is, O Son, a secret word of wisdom, holy respecting the only Lord of all things, and the God first perceived by the mind, to speak of whom is beyond the power of man. But although His name, which the supreme Father gave Him from the beginning, is known to none but Himself, nevertheless He has one name among the angels, and another among men since He is called Jesus among men: for Christ is not a proper name, but a title of power and dominion; for by this the Jews were accustomed to call their kings.

But the meaning of this name must be set forth, on account of the error of the ignorant, who by the change of a letter are accustomed to call Him Chrestus. The Jews had before been directed to compose a sacred oil, with which those who were called to the priesthood or to the kingdom might be anointed. And as now the robe of purple is a sign of the assumption of royal dignity among the Romans, so with them the anointing with the holy oil conferred the title and power of king. But since the ancient Greeks used the word xri/esqai to express the art of anointing, which they now express by a0lei/fesqai, as the verse of Homer shows,

”But the attendants washed, and anointed them with oil; ” on this account we call Him Christ, that is, the Anointed, who in Hebrew is called the Messias. Hence in some Greek writings, which are badly translated from the Hebrew, the word eleimmenos is found written, from the word aleiphesthai, anointing. But, however, by either name a king is signified:

not that He has obtained this earthly kingdom, the time for receiving which has not yet arrived, but that He sways a heavenly and eternal kingdom, concerning which we shall speak in the last book. But now let us speak of His first nativity.

Chapter VIII.-Of the Birth of Jesus in the Spirit and in the Flesh: of Spirits and the Testimonies of Prophets.

For we especially testify that He was twice born, first in the spirit, and afterwards in the flesh. Whence it is thus spoken by Jeremiah: "Before I formed Thee in the womb I knew Thee." And likewise by the same: "Who was blessed before He was born; " which was the case with no one else but Christ. For though He was the Son of God from the beginning, He was born again a second time according to the flesh: and this twofold birth of His has introduced great terror into the minds of men, and overspread with darkness even those who retained the mysteries of true religion. But we will show this plainly and clearly, that they who love wisdom may be more easily and diligently instructed. He who hears the Son of God mentioned ought not to conceive in his mind so great impiety as to think that God begat Him by marriage and union with a woman, which none does but an animal possessed of a body, and subject to death. But with whom could God unite Himself, since He is alone? or since His power was so great, that He accomplished whatever He wished, assuredly He did not require the co-operation of another for procreation. Unless by chance we shall [profanely] imagine, as Orpheus supposed, that God is both male and female, because otherwise He would have been unable to beget, unless He had the power of each sex, as though He could have intercourse with Himself, or without such intercourse be unable to produce.

But Hermes also was of the same opinion, when he says that He was "His own father," and "His own mother." But if this were so, as He is called by the prophets father, so also He would be called mother. In what manner, then, did He beget Him? First of all, divine operations cannot be known or declared by any one; but nevertheless the sacred writings teach us, in which it is laid down that this Son of God is the speech, or even the reason of God, and also that the other angels are spirits of God. For speech is breath sent forth with a voice signifying something. But, however, since breath and speech are sent forth from different parts, inasmuch as breath proceeds from the nostrils, speech from the mouth, the difference

between the Son of God and the other angels is great. For they proceeded from God as silent spirits, because they were not created to teach the knowledge of God, but for His service. But though He is Himself also a spirit, yet He proceeded from the mouth of God with voice and sound, as the Word, on this account indeed, because He was about to make use of His voice to the people; that is, because He was about to be a teacher of the knowledge of God, and of the heavenly mystery to be revealed to man: which word also God Himself first spoke, that through Him He might speak to us, and that He might reveal to us the voice and will of God.

With good reason, therefore, is He called the Speech and the Word of God, because God, by a certain incomprehensible energy and power of His majesty, enclosed the vocal spirit proceeding from His mouth, which he had not conceived in the womb, but in His mind, within a form which has life through its own perception and wisdom, and He also fashioned other spirits of His into angels. Our spirits are liable to dissolution, because we are mortal: but the spirits of God both live, and are lasting, and have perception; because He Himself is immortal, and the Giver both of perception and life. Our expressions, although they are mingled with the air, and fade away, yet generally remain comprised in letters; how much more must we believe that the voice of God both remains for ever, and is accompanied with perception and power, which it has derived from God the Father, as a stream from its fountain! But if any one wonders that God could be produced from God by a putting forth of the voice and breath, if he is acquainted with the sacred utterances of the prophets he will cease to wonder. That Solomon and his father David were most powerful kings, and also prophets, may perhaps be known even to those who have not applied themselves to the sacred writings; the one of whom, who reigned subsequently to the other, preceded the destruction of the city of Troy by one hundred and forty years.

His father, the writer of sacred hymns, thus speaks in the thirty-second Psalm: ”By the word of God we, re the heavens made firm; and all their power by the breath of His mouth. And also again in the forty-fourth Psalm: ”My heart hath given utterance to a good word; I speak of my doings towards the king; ”testifying, in truth, that the works of God are known to no other than to the Son alone, who is the Word of God, and who must reign for ever. Solomon also shows that it is the Word of God, and no other, by whose hands these works of the world were made. ”I,” He says, ”came forth out of the mouth of the Most High before all creatures: I caused the light that faileth not to arise in the heavens, and covered the whole earth with a cloud. I have dwelt in the height, and my throne is in the pillar of the cloud. John also thus taught: ”In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made.”

Chapter IX.-Of the Word of God.

But the Greeks speak of Him as the Logos, more befittingly than we do as the word, or speech: for Logos signifies both speech and reason, inasmuch as He is both the voice and the wisdom of God. And of this divine speech not even the philosophers were ignorant, since Zeno represents the Logos as the arranger of the established order of things, and the framer of the universe: whom also He calls Fate, and the necessity of things, and God, and the soul of Jupiter, in accordance with the custom, indeed, by which they are wont to regard Jupiter as God. But the words are no obstacle, since the sentiment is in agreement with the truth. For it is the spirit of God which he named the soul of Jupiter. For Trismegistus, who by some means or other searched into almost all truth, often described the excellence and majesty of the word, as the instance before mentioned declares, in which he acknowledges that there is an ineffable and sacred speech, the relation of which exceeds the measure of man's ability. I have spoken briefly, as I have been able, concerning the first nativity. Now I must more fully discuss the second, since this is the subject most controverted, that we may hold forth the light of understanding to those who desire to know the truth.

Chapter X.-Of the Advent of Jesus; Of the Fortunes of the Jews, and Their Government, Until the Passion of the Lord.

In the first place, then, men ought to know that the arrangements of the Most High God have so advanced from the beginning, that it was necessary, as the end of the world approached, that the Son of God should descend to the earth, that He might build a temple for God, and teach righteousness;<dawn> but, however, not with the might of an angel or with heavenly power, but in the form of man and in the condition of a mortal, that when He had discharged the office of His ministry, He might be delivered into the hands of wicked men, and might undergo death, that, having subdued this also by His might, He might rise again, and bring to man, whose nature He had put on and represented, the hope of overcoming death, and might admit him to the rewards of immortality. And that no one may be ignorant of this arrangement, we will show that all things were foretold which we see fulfilled in Christ. Let no one believe our assertion unless I shall show that the prophets before a long series of ages published that it should come to pass at length that the Son of God should be born as a man, and perform wonderful deeds, and sow the worship of God throughout the whole earth, and at last be crucified, and on the third day rise again. And when I shall have proved all these things by the writings of those very men who treated with violence their God who had assumed a mortal body, what else will prevent it from being manifest that true wisdom is conversant with this religion only? Now the origin of the whole mystery is to be related.

Our ancestors, who were chiefs of the Hebrews, when they were distressed by famine and want, passed over into Egypt, that they might obtain a supply of corn; and sojourning there a long time, they were oppressed with an intolerable yoke of slavery. Then God pitied them, and led them out, and freed them from the hand of the king of the Egyptians, after four hundred and thirty years, under the leadership of Moses, through whom the law was afterwards given to them by God; and in this leading out God displayed the power of His majesty. For He made His people to pass through the midst of the Red Sea, His angel going before

and dividing the water, so that the people might walk over the dry land, of whom it might more truly be said (as the poet says), that "the wave, closing over him after the appearance of a mountain, stood around him. And when he heard of this, the tyrant of the Egyptians followed with this great host of his men, and rashly entering the sea which still lay open, was destroyed, together with his whole army, by the waves returning to their place. But the Hebrews, when they had entered into the wilderness, saw many wonderful deeds. For when they suffered thirst, a rock having been struck with a rod, a fountain of water sprung forth and refreshed the people. And again, when they were hungry, a shower of heavenly nourishment descended.

Moreover, also, the wind brought quails into their camp, so that they were not only satisfied with heavenly bread, but also with more choice banquets. And yet, in return for these divine benefits, they did not pay honour to God; but when slavery had been now removed from them, and their thirst and hunger laid aside, they fell away into luxury, and transferred their minds to the profane rites of the Egyptians. For when Moses, their leader, had ascended into the mountain, and there tarried forty days, they made the head of an ox in gold, which they call Apis, that it might go before them as a standard. With which sin and crime God was offended, and justly visited the impious and ungrateful people with severe punishments, and made them subject to the law which He had given by Moses.

But afterwards, when they had settled in a desert part of Syria, the Hebrews lost their ancient name; and since the leader of their host was Judas, they were called Jews, and the land which they inhabited Judaea. And at first, indeed, they were not subject to the dominion of Kings, but civil Judges presided over the people and the law: they were not, however, appointed only for a year, as the Roman consuls, but supported by a perpetual jurisdiction. Then, the name of Judges being taken away, the kingly power was introduced. But during the government of the Judges the people had often undertaken corrupt religious rites; and God, offended by them, as often brought them into bondage to n strangers, until again, softened by the repentance of the people, He freed them from bondage.Likewise under the Kings, being oppressed by wars with their neighbours on account of their iniquities, and at last taken captive and led to Babylon, they suffered punishment for their impiety by oppressive slavery, until Cyrus came to the kingdom, who immediately restored the Jews by an edict. Afterwards they had tetrarchs until the time of Herod, who was in the reign of Tiberius Caesar; in whose fifteenth year, in the consulship of the two Gemini, on the 23d of March, the Jews crucified Christ. This series of events, this order, is contained in the secrets of the sacred writings. But I will first show for what reason Christ came to the earth, that the foundation and the system of divine religion may be manifest.

Chapter XI.-Of the Cause of the Incarnation of Christ.

When the Jews often resisted wholesome precepts, and departed from the divine law, going astray to the impious worship of false gods, then God filled just and chosen men with the Holy Spirit, appointing them as prophets in the midst of the people, by whom He might rebuke with threatening words the sins of the ungrateful people, and nevertheless exhort them to repent of their wickedness; for unless they did this, and, laying aside their vanities, return to their God, it would come to pass that He would change His covenant, that is, bestow the inheritance of eternal life upon foreign nations, and collect to Himself a more faithful people out of those who were aliens by birth. But they, when rebuked by the prophets, not only rejected their words; but being offended because they were upbraided for their sins, they slew the prophets themselves with studied tortures: all which things are sealed up and preserved in the sacred writings. For the prophet Jeremiah says: "I sent to you my servants the prophets; I sent them before the morning light; but ye did not hearken, nor incline your ears to hear, when I spake unto you: let every one of you turn from his evil way, and from your most corrupt affections; and ye shall dwell in the land which I gave to you and to your fathers for ever. Walk ye not after strange gods, to serve them; and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands, that I should destroy you." The prophet Ezra also, who was in the times of the same Cyrus by whom the Jews were restored, thus speaks: They rebelled against Thee, and cast Thy law behind their backs, and slew Thy prophets which testified against them, that they might turn unto Thee."

The prophet Elias also, in the third book of Kings: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, because the children of Israel have forsaken Thee, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away. On account of these impieties of theirs He cast them off for ever; and so He ceased to send to them prophets. But He commanded His own Son, the first-begotten, the maker of all things, His own counsellor, to descend from heaven, that He might transfer the sacred religion of God to the Gentiles, that is, to those who were ignorant of God, and might teach them righteousness, which the perfidious people had cast aside· And He had long before threatened that He would do this, as the prophet Malachi shows, saying: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord, and I will not accept an offering from your hands; for from the rising

of the sun even unto its setting, my name shall be great among the Gentiles. David also in the seventeenth Psalm says: "Thou wilt make me the head of the heathen; a people whom I have not known shall serve me" Isaiah also thus speaks: "I come to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory; and I will send among them a sign, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations which are afar off, which have not heard my fame;

and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. Therefore, when God wished to send to the earth one who should measure His temple, He was unwilling to send him with heavenly power and glory, that the people who had been ungrateful towards God might be led into the greatest error, and suffer punishment for their crimes, since they had not received their Lord and God, as the prophets had before foretold that it would thus happen. For Isaiah whom the Jews most cruelly slew, cutting him asunder with a saw, thus speaks: "Hear, O heaven; and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have begotten sons, and lifted them up on high, and they have rejected me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's stall; but Israel hath not known, my people has not understood. Jeremiah also says, in like manner: "The turtle and the swallow hath known her time, and the sparrows of the field have observed the tithes of their coining: but my people have not known the judgment of the Lord. How do you say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? The meting out is in vain; the scribes are deceived and confounded: the wise men are dismayed and taken, for they have rejected the word of the Lord."

Therefore (as I had begun to say), when God had determined to send to men a teacher of righteousness, He commanded Him to be born again a second time in the flesh, and to be made in the likeness of man himself, to whom he was about to be a guide, and companion, and teacher. But since God is kind and merciful to His people, He sent Him to those very persons whom He hated, that He might not close the way of salvation against them for ever, but might give them a free opportunity of following God, that they might both gain the reward of life if they should follow Him (which many of them do, and have done), and that they might incur the penalty of death by their fault if they should reject their King. He ordered Him therefore to be born again among them, and of their seed, lest, if He should be born of another nation, they might be able to allege a just excuse from the law for their rejection of Him; and at the same time, that there might be no nation at all under heaven to which the hope of immortality should be denied.

Chapter XII.-Of the Birth of Jesus from the Virgin; Of His Life, Death, and Resurrection, and the Testimonies of the Prophets Respecting These Things.

Therefore the Holy Spirit of God, descending from heaven, chose the holy Virgin, that He might enter into her womb. But she, I being filled by the possession of the Divine Spirit, conceived; and without any intercourse with a man, her virgin womb was suddenly impregned. But if it is known to all that certain animals are accustomed to conceive by the wind and the breeze, why should any one think it wonderful when we say that a virgin was made fruitful by the Spirit of God, to whom whatever He may wish is easy? And this might have appeared incredible, had not the prophets many ages previously foretold its occurrence. Thus Solomon speaks: ”The womb of a virgin was strengthened, and conceived; and a virgin was made fruitful, and became a mother in great pity. Likewise the prophet Isaiah, whose words are these: ”Therefore God Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son; and ye shall call His name Emmanuel. What can be more manifest than this? This was read by the Jews, who denied Him. If any one thinks that these things are invented by us, let him inquire of them, let him take especially from them: the testimony is sufficiently strong to prove the truth, when it is alleged by enemies themselves, But He was never called Emmanuel, but Jesus, who in Latin is called Saving, or Saviour, because He comes bringing salvation to all nations.

But by this name the prophet declared that God incarnate was about to come to men. For Emmanuel signifies God with us; because when He was born of a virgin, men ought to confess that God was with them, that is, on the earth and in mortal flesh. Whence David says in the eighty-fourth Psalm, ”Truth has sprung out of the earth; ”because God, in whom is truth, hath taken a body of earth, that He might open a way of salvation to those of the earth. In like manner Isaiah also: ”But they disbelieved, and vexed His Holy Spirit; and He

was turned to be their enemy. And He Himself fought against them, and He remembered the days of old, who raised up from the earth a shepherd of the sheep. But who this shepherd was about to be, he declared in another place, saying: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the clouds put on righteousness; let the earth open, and put forth a Saviour. For I the Lord have begotten Him. But the Saviour is, as we have said before, Jesus. But in another place the same prophet also thus proclaimed: "Behold, unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, whose dominion is upon His shoulders, and His name is called Messenger of great counsel.

For on this account He was sent by God the Father, that He might reveal to all the nations which are under heaven the sacred mystery of the only true God, which was taken away from the perfidious people, who ofttimes sinned against God. Daniel also foretold similar things: "I saw," he said, "in a vision of the night, and, behold, one like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came even to the Ancient of days. And they who stood by brought Him near before Him. And there was given unto Him a kingdom, and glory, and dominion; and all people, tribes, and languages shall serve Him: and His dominion is everlasting, which shall never pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed. How then do the Jews both confess and expect the Christ of God? who rejected Him on this account, because He was born of man. For since it is so arranged by God that the same Christ should twice come to the earth, once to announce to the nations the one God, then again to reign, why do they who did not believe in His first advent believe in the second?

But the prophet comprises both His advents in few words. Behold, he says, one like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. He did not say, like the Son of God, but the Son of man, that he might show that He had to be clothed with flesh on the earth, that having assumed the form of a man and the condition of mortality, He might teach men righteousness; and when, having completed the commands of God, He had revealed the truth to the nations, He might also suffer death, that He might overcome and lay open the other world also, and thus at length rising again, He might proceed to His Father borne aloft on a cloud. For the prophet said in addition: And came even to the Ancient of days, and was presented to Him. He called the Most High God the Ancient of days, whose age and origin cannot be comprehended; for He alone was from generations, and He will be always to generations. But that Christ, after His passion and resurrection, was about to ascend to God the Father, David bore witness in these words in the cixth Psalm: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Whom could this prophet, being himself a king, call his Lord, who sat at the right hand of God, but Christ the Son of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords? And this is more plainly shown by Isaiah, when he says:

"Thus saith the Lord God to my Lord Christ, whose right hand I have holden; I will subdue nations before Him, and will break the strength of kings. I will open before Him gates, and the cities shall not be closed. I will go before Thee, and will make the mountains level; and I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and shatter the bars of iron; and I will give Thee the

hidden and invisible treasures, that Thou mayest know that I am the Lord God, which call Thee by Thy name, the God of Israel. Lastly, on account of the goodness and faithfulness which He displayed towards God on earth, there was given to Him a kingdom, and glory, and dominion; and all people, tribes, and languages shall serve Him; and His dominion is everlasting, and that which shall never pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed. And this is understood in two ways: that even now He has an everlasting dominion, when all nations and all languages adore His name, confess His majesty, follow His teaching, and imitate His goodness: He has power and glory, in that all tribes of the earth obey His precepts. And also, when He shall come again with majesty and glory to judge every soul, and to restore the righteous to life, then He shall truly have the government of the whole earth:

then, every evil having been removed from the affairs of men, a golden age (as the poets call it), that is, a time of righteousness and peace, will arise. But we will speak of these things more fully in the last book, when we shall speak of His second advent; now let us treat of His first advent, as we began.

Chapter XIII.-Of Jesus, God and Man; And the Testimonies of the Prophets Concerning Him.

Therefore the Most High God, and Parent of all, when He had purposed to transfer His religion, sent from heaven a teacher of righteousness, that in Him or through Him He might give a new law to new worshippers; not as He had before done, by the instrumentality of man. Nevertheless it was His pleasure that He should be born as a man, that in all things He might be like His supreme Father· For God the Father Himself, who is the origin and source of all things, inasmuch as He is without parents, is most truly named by Trismegistus ”fatherless” and ”motherless,” because He was born from no one. For which reason it was befitting that the Son also should be twice born, that He also might become ”fatherless” and ”motherless. For in His first nativity, which was spiritual, He was ”motherless,” because He was begotten by God the Father alone, without the office of a mother. But in His second, which was in the flesh, He was born of a virgin’s womb without the office of a father, that, bearing a middle substance between God and man, He might be able, as it were, to take by the hand this frail and weak nature of ours, and raise it to immortality. He became both the Son of God through the Spirit, and the Son of man through the flesh,-that is, both God and man. The power of God was displayed in Him, from the works which He performed;

the frailty of the man, from the passion which He endured: on what account He undertook it I will mention a little later. In the meantime, we learn from the predictions of the prophets that He was both God and man-composed of both natures. Isaiah testifies that He was God in these words: ”Egypt is wearied, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and the Sabaeans, men of stature, shall come over unto Thee, and shall be Thy servants: and they shall walk behind Thee; in chains they shall fall down unto Thee, and shall make supplication unto Thee, Since God is in Thee, and there is no other God besides Thee. For Thou art God, and we knew Thee not, the God of Israel, the Savour. They shall all be confounded and ashamed who oppose Thee, and shall fall into confusion. In like manner the prophet Jeremiah thus speaks: ”This is our God, and there shall none other be compared unto Him. He hath found out all the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob His servant, and to Israel His

beloved. Afterward He was seen upon earth, and dwelt among men."David also, in the forty-fourth Psalm: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness. By which word he also shows His name, since (as I have shown above) He was called Christ from His anointing.

Then, that He was also man, Jeremiah teaches, saying: "And He is a man, and who hath known Him? "Also Isaiah: "And God shall send to them a man, who shall save them, shall save them by judging. But Moses also, in Numbers, thus speaks: "There shall arise a star out of Jacob, and a man shall spring forth from Israel. On which account the Milesian Apollo, being asked whether He was God or man, replied in this manner: "He was mortal as to His body, being wise with wondrous works; but being taken with arms under Chaldean judges, with nails and the cross He endured a bitter end. In the first verse he spoke the truth, but he skilfully deceived him who asked the question, who was entirely ignorant of the mystery of the truth. For he appears to have denied that He was God. But when he acknowledges that He was mortal as to the flesh, which we also declare, it follows that as to the spirit He was God, which we affirm. For why would it have been necessary to make mention of the flesh, since it was sufficient to say that He was mortal? But being pressed by the truth, he could not deny the real state of the case; as that which he says, that He was wise.

What do you reply to this, Apollo? If he is wise, then his system of instruction is wisdom, and no other; and they are wise who follow it, and no others. Why then are we commonly esteemed as foolish, and visionary, and senseless, who follow a Master who is wise even by the confession of the gods themselves? For in that he said that He wrought wonderful deeds, by which He especially claimed faith is His divinity, he now appears to assent to us, when he says the same things in which we boast. But, however, he recovers himself, and again has recourse to demoniacal frauds. For when he had been compelled to speak the truth, he now appeared to be a betrayer of the gods and of himself, unless he had, by a deceptive falsehood, concealed that which the truth had extorted from him. He says, therefore, that He did indeed perform wonderful works, yet not by divine power, but by magic. What wonder if Apollo thus persuaded men ignorant of the truth, when the Jews also, worshippers (as they seemed to be) of the Most High God, entertained the same opinion, though they had every day before their eyes those miracles which the prophets had foretold to them as about to happen, and yet they could not be induced by the contemplation of such powers to believe that He whom they saw was God? On this account, David, whom they especially read above the other prophets, in the twenty-seventh Psalm thus condemns them:

"Render to them their desert, because they regard not the works of the Lord. Both David himself and other prophets announced that of the house of this very David, Christ should be born according to the flesh. Thus it is written in Isaiah: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and He who shall arise to rule over the nations, in Him shall the Gentiles trust; and His rest shall be glorious. And in another place: "There shall come forth a rod

out of the stem of Jesse, and a blossom shall grow out of his root; and the Spirit of God shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge and ofpiety; and He shall be filled with the spirit of fear of the Lord. Now Jesse was the father of David, from whose root he foretold that a blossom would arise; namely him of whom the Sibyl speaks, "A pure blossom shall spring forth."

Also in the second book of Kings, the prophet Nathan was sent to David, who wished to build a temple for God; and this was the word of the Lord to Nathan, saying: "Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord Almighty, Thou shall not build me a house for me to dwell in; but when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build me a house for my name, and I will set up His throne for ever; and I will be to Him for a father, and He shall be to me for a son; and His house shall be established, and His kingdom for ever. But the reason why the Jews did not understand these things was this, because Solomon the son of David built a temple for God, and the city which he called from his own name, Jerusalem. Therefore they referred the predictions of the prophets to him. Now Solomon received the government of the kingdom from his father himself. But the prophets spoke of Him who was then born after that David had slept with his fathers. Besides, the reign of Solomon was not everlasting; for he reigned forty years. In the next place, Solomon was never called the son of God, but the son of David;

and the house which he built was not firmly established, as the Church, which is the true temple of God, which does not consist of walls, but of the heart and faith of the men who believe on Him, and are called faithful. But that temple of Solomon, inasmuch as it was built by the hand, fell by the hand. Lastly, his father, in the cxxvith Psalm, prophesied in this manner respecting the works of his son: "Except the Lord build the house, they have laboured in vain that built it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman hath waked but in vain."

Chapter XIV.-Of the Priesthood of Jesus Foretold by the Prophets.

From which things it is evident that all the prophets declared concerning Christ, that it should come to pass at some time, that being born with a body of the race of David, He should build an eternal temple in honour of God, which is called the Church, and assemble all nations to the true worship of God. This is the faithful house, this is the everlasting temple; and if any one hath not sacrificed in this, he will not have the reward of immortality. And since Christ was the builder of this great and eternal temple, He must also have an everlasting priesthood in it; and there can be no approach to the shrine of the temple, and to the sight of God, except through Him who built the temple. David in the cixth Psalm teaches the same, saying: "Before the morning-star I begat Thee. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec."Also in the first book of Kings: "And I will raise me up a faithful Priest, who shall do all things that are in mine heart; and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk in my sight all his days. But who this was about to be, to whom God promised an everlasting priesthood, Zechariah most plainly teaches, even mentioning His name:

"And the Lord God showed me Jesus the great Priest standing before the face of the angel of the Lord, and the adversary was standing at His right hand to resist Him. And the Lord said unto the adversary, The Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; and lo, a brand plucked out of the fire. And Jesus was clothed with filthy garments, and He was standing before the face of the angel. And He answered and spake unto those that stood around before His face, saying, Take away the filthy garments from Him, and clothe Him with a flowing garment, and place a fair mitre upon His head; and they clothed Him with a garment, and placed a fair mitre upon His head. And the angel of the Lord stood, and protested, saying to Jesus: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If Thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my precepts, Thou shalt judge my house, and I will give Thee those that may walk with Thee in the midst of these that stand by. Hear, therefore, O Jesus, Thou great Priest."

Who, therefore, would not believe that the Jews were then deprived of understanding, who, when they read and heard these things, laid impious hands upon their God? But from the time in which Zechariah lived, until the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, in

which Christ was crucified, nearly five hundred years are reckoned; since he flourished in the time of Darius and Alexander, who lived not long after the banishment of Tarquinius Superbus. But they were again misled and deceived in the same manner, in supposing that these things were spoken concerning Jesus the son of Nave, who was the successor of Moses, or concerning Jesus the high priest the son of Josedech; to whom none of those things which the prophet related was suited. For they were never clothed in filthy garments, since one of them was a most powerful prince, and the other high priest; or suffered any adversity, so that they should be regarded as a brand plucked from the fire: not did they ever stand in the presence of God and the angels; nor did the prophet speak of the past so much as of the future. He spoke, therefore, of Jesus the Son of God, to show that He would first come in humility and in the flesh. For this is the filthy garment, that He might prepare a temple for God, and might be scorched as a brand with fire-that is, might endure tortures from men, and at last be extinguished.

For a haft-burnt brand drawn forth from the hearth and extinguished, is commonly so called, But in what manner and with what commands He was sent by God to the earth, the Spirit of God declared through the prophet, teaching us that when He had faithfully and uniformly fulfilled the will of His supreme Father, He should receive judgment and an everlasting dominion. If, He says, Thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my precepts, then Thou shalt judge my house. What these ways of God were, and what His precepts, is neither doubtful nor obscure. For God, when He saw that wickedness and the worship of false gods had so prevailed throughout the world, that His name had now also been taken away from the memory of men (since even the Jews, who alone had been entrusted with the secret of God, had deserted the living God, and, ensared by the deceits of demons, had gone astray, and turned aside to the worship of images, and when rebuked by the prophets did not choose to return to God), He sent His Son as an ambassador to men, that He might turn them from their impious and vain worship to the knowledge and worship of the true God; and also that He might turn their minds from foolishness to wisdom, and from wickedness to deeds of righteousness. These are the ways of God, in which He enjoined Him to walk. These are the precepts which He ordered to be observed. But He exhibited faith towards God.

For He taught that there is but one God, and that He alone ought to be worshipped. Nor did He at any time say that He Himself was God; for He would not have maintained His faithfulness, if, when sent to abolish the false gods, and to assert the existence of the one God, He had introduced another besides that one. This would have been not to proclaim one God, nor to do the work of Him who sent Him, but to discharge a peculiar office for Himself, and to separate Himself from Him whom He came to reveal. On which account, because He was so faithful, because He arrogated nothing at all to Himself, that He might fulfil the commands of Him who sent Him, He received the dignity of everlasting Priest, and the honour of supreme King, and the authority of Judge, and the name of God.

Chapter XV.-Of the Life and Miracles of Jesus, and Testimonies Concerning Them.

Having spoken of the second nativity, in which, He showed Himself in the flesh to men, let us come to those wonderful works, on account of which, though they were signs of heavenly power, the Jews esteemed Him a magician. When He first began to reach maturity He was baptized by the prophet John in the river Jordan, that He might wash away in the spiritual layer not His own sins, for it is evident that He had none, but those of the flesh, which He bare; that as He saved the Jews by undergoing circumcision, so He might save the Gentiles also by baptism-that is, by the pouring forth of the purifying dew. Then a voice from heaven was heard: "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten Thee. Which voice is found to have been foretold by David. And the Spirit of God descended upon Him, formed after the appearance of a white dove. From that time He began to perform the greatest miracles, not by magical tricks, which display nothing true and substantial, but by heavenly strength and power, which were foretold even long ago by the prophets who announced Him; which works are so many, that a single book is not sufficient to comprise them all. I will therefore enumerate them briefly and generally, without any designation of persons and places, that I may be able to come to the setting forth of His passion and cross, to which my discourse has long been hastening. His powers were those which Apollo called wonderful:

that wherever He journeyed, by a single word, and in a single moment, He healed the sick and infirm, and those afflicted with every kind of disease: so that those who were deprived of the use of all their limbs, having suddenly received power, were strengthened, and themselves carried their couches, on which they had a little time before been carried. But to the lame, and to those afflicted with some defect of the feet, He not only gave the power of walking, but also of running. Then, also, if any had their eyes blinded in the deepest darkness, He restored them to their former sight. He also loosened the tongues of the dumb, so that they discoursed and spoke eloquently. He also opened the ears of the deaf, and caused them to hear; He cleansed the polluted and the blemished. And He performed all these things

not by His hands, or the application of any remedy, but by His word and command, as also the Sibyl had foretold: "Doing all things by His word, and healing every disease."

Nor, indeed, is it wonderful that He did wonderful things by His word, since He Himself was the Word of God, relying upon heavenly strength and power. Nor was it enough that He gave strength to the feeble, soundness of body to the maimed, health to the sick and languishing, unless He also raised the dead, as it were unbound from sleep, and recalled them to life. And the Jews, then, when they saw these things, contended that they were done by demoniacal power, although it was contained in their secret writings that all things should thus come to pass as they did. They read indeed the words of other prophets, and of Isaiah, saying: "Be strong, ye hands that are relaxed; and ye weak knees, be comforted. Ye who are of a fearful heart, fear not, be not afraid: our Lord shall execute judgment; He Himself shall come and save us. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear: then shall the lame man leap as a deer, and the tongue of the dumb speak plainly: for in the wilderness water hath broken forth, and a stream in the thirsty land." But the Sibyl also foretold the same things in these verses:-

"And there shall be a rising again of the dead; and the course of the lame shall be swift, and the deaf shall hear, and the blind shall see, the dumb shall speak." On account of these powers and divine works wrought by Him when a great multitude followed Him of the maimed, or sick, or of those who desired to present their sick to be healed, He went up into a desert mountain to pray there. And when He had tarried there three days, and the people were suffering from hunger, He called His disciples, and asked what quantity of food they had with them. But they said that they had five loaves and two fishes in a wallet. Then He commanded that these should be brought forward, and that the multitude, distributed by riffles, should recline on the ground. When the disciples did this, He Himself broke the bread in pieces, and divided the flesh of the fishes, and in His hands both of them were increased. And when He had ordered the disciples to set them before the people, five thousand men were satisfied, and moreover twelve baskets were filled from the fragments which remained. What can be more wonderful, either in narration or in action? But the Sibyl had before foretold that it would take place, whose verses are related to this effect:-

"With five loaves at the same time, and with two fishes, He shall satisfy five thousand men in the wilderness; And afterwards taking allthe fragments that remain, He shall fill twelve baskets to the hope of many." I ask, therefore, what the art of magic could have contrived in this case, the skill of which is of avail for nothing else than for deceiving the eves? He also, when He was about to retire to a mountain, as He was wont, for the sake of prayer, directed His disciples to take a small ship and go before Him. But they, setting out when evening was now coming on, began to be distressed through a contrary wind. And when they were now in the midst of the sea, then, setting His feet on the sea, He came up to them, walking as though on the solid ground, not as the poets fable Orion walking on the sea, who, while a part of his body was sunk in the water,

"With his shoulder rises above the waves." And again, when He had gone to sleep in the ship, and the wind had begun to rage, even to the extremity of danger, being aroused from sleep, He immediately ordered the wind to be silent; and the waves, which were borne with great violence, were still, and immediately at His word there followed a calm. But perhaps the sacred writings speak falsely, when they teach that there was such power in Him, that by His command He compelled the winds to obey, the seas to serve Him, diseases to depart, the dead to be submissive. Why should I say that the Sibyls before taught the same things in their verses? one of whom, already mentioned, thus speaks:- "He shall still the winds by His word, and calm the sea As it rages, treading with feet of peace and in faith." And again another, which says:-

"He shall walk on the waves, He shall release men from disease. He shall raise the dead, and drive away many pains; And from the bread of one wallet there shall be a satisfying of men." Some, refuted by these testimonies, are accustomed to have recourse to the assertion that these poems were not by the Sibyls, but made up and composed by our own writers. But he will assuredly not think this who has read Cicero, and Varro, and other ancient writers, who make mention of the Erythraean and the other Sibyls, from whose books we bring forward these examples; and these authors died before the birth of Christ according to the flesh. But I do not doubt that these poems were in former times regarded as ravings, since no one then understood them. For they announced some marvellous wonders, of which neither the manner, nor the time, nor the author was signified. Lastly, the Erythraean Sibyl says that it would come to pass that she would be called mad and deceitful. But assuredly

"They will say that the Sibyl Is mad, and deceitful: but when all things shall come to pass, Then ye will remember me; and no one will any longer Say that I, the prophetess of the great God, am mad." Therefore they were neglected for many ages; but they received attention after the nativity and passion of Christ had revealed secret things. Thus it was also with the utterances of the prophets, which were read by the people of the Jews for fifteen hundred years and more, but yet were not understood until after Christ had explained them both by His word and by His works. For the prophets spoke of Him; nor could the things which they said have been in any way understood, unless they had been altogether fulfilled.

Chapter XVI.-Of the Passion of Jesus Christ; That It Was Foretold.

I come now to the passion itself, which is often cast in our teeth as a reproach: that we worship a man, and one who was visited and tormented with remarkable punishment: that I may show that this very passion was undergone by Him in accordance with a great and divine plan, and that goodness and truth and wisdom are contained in it alone. For if He had been most happy on the earth, and had reigned through all His life in the greatest prosperity, no wise man would either have believed Him to be a God, or judged Him worthy of divine honour: which is the case with those who are destitute of true divinity, who not only look up to perishable riches, and frail power, and the advantages arising from the benefit of another, but even consecrate them, and knowingly do service to the memory of the dead, worshipping fortune when it is now extinguished, which the wise never regarded as an object of worship even when alive and present with them. For nothing among earthly things can be venerable and worthy of heaven; but it is virtue alone, and justice alone, which can be judged a true and heavenly, and perpetual good, because it is neither given to any one, nor taken away. And since Christ came upon earth, supplied with virtue and righteousness, yea rather, since He Himself is virtue and Himself righteousness, He descended that He might teach it and mould the character of man.

And having performed this office and embassy from God, on account of this very virtue which He at once taught and practised, He deserved, and was able, to be believed a God by all nations. Therefore, when a great multitude from time to time flocked to Him, either on account of the righteousness which He taught or on account of the miracles which He worked, and heard His precepts, and believed that He was sent by God, and that He was the Son of God, then the rulers and priests of the Jews, excited with anger because they were rebuked by Him as sinners, and perverted by envy, because, while the multitude flocked to Him, they saw themselves despised and deserted, and (that which was the crowning point of their guilt) blinded by folly and error, and unmindful of the instructors sent from heaven, and of the prophets, they caballed against Him, and conceived the impious design of putting Him to death, and torturing Him: of which the prophets had long before written.

*CHAPTER XVI.-OF THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST; THAT IT WAS FORETOLD.*34

For both David, in the beginning of his Psalms, foreseeing in spirit what a crime they were about to commit, says, "Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the way of the ungodly; "and Solomon in the book of Wisdom used these words: "Let us defraud the righteous, for he is unpleasant to us, and upbraideth us with our offences against the law. He maketh his boast that he has the knowledge of God; and he calleth himself the Son of God. He is made to reprove our thoughts: it grieveth us even to look upon him: for his life is not like the life of others; his ways are of another fashion. We are counted by him as triflers, hewithdraweth himself from our ways as from filthiness; he commendeth greatly the latter end of the just, and boasteth that he has God for his Father. Let us see, therefore, if his words be true; let us prove what end he shall have let us examine him with rebukes and torments that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience; let us condemn him to a shameful death. Such things have they imagined, and have gone astray. For their own folly hath blinded them, and they do not understand the mysteries of God. Does he not describe that impious design entered into by the wicked against God, so that he clearly appears to have been present? But from Solomon, who foretold these things, to the time of their accomplishment, ten hundred and ten years intervened.

We feign nothing; we add nothing. They who performed the actions had these accounts; they, against whom these things were spoken, read them. But even now the inheritors of their name and guilt have these accounts, and in their daily readings re-echo their own condemnation as foretold by the voice of the prophets; nor do they ever admit them into their heart, which is also itself a part of their condemnation. The Jews, therefore, being often reproved by Christ, who upbraided them with their sins and iniquities, and being almost deserted by the people, were stirred up to put Him to death.

Now His humility emboldened them to this deed. For when they read with what great power and glory the Son of God was about to descend from heaven, but on the other hand saw Jesus humble, peaceful, of low condition, without comeliness, they did not believe that He was the Son of God, being ignorant that two advents on His part were foretold by the prophets: the first, obscure in humility of the flesh; the other, manifest in the power of His majesty. Of the first David thus speaks in the seventy-first Psalm: "He shall descend as rain upon a fleece; and in His days shall righteousness spring forth, and abundance of peace, as long as the moon is lifted up. For as rain, if it descends upon a fleece, cannot be perceived, because it makes no sound; so he said that Christ would come to the earth without exciting the notice of any, that He might teach righteousness and peace. Isaiah also thus spoke: "Lord, who bath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We made proclamation before Him as children, and as a root in a thirsty land: He has no form nor glory; and we saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness. But His form was without honour, and defective beyond the rest of men. He is a man acquainted with grief, and knowing how to endure infirmity, because He turned His face away from us; and He was not esteemed.

He carries our sins, and He endures pain for us: and we thought that He Himself was in pain and grief, and vexation. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our offences; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, by His bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, and God hath delivered Him up for our sins. And in the same manner the Sibyl spoke: "Though an object of pity, dishonoured, without form, He will give hope to those who are objects of pity. On account of this humility they did not recognise their God, and entered into the detestable design of depriving Him of life, who had come to give them life.

Chapter XVII.-Of the Superstitions of the Jews, and Their Hatred Against Jesus.

But they alleged other causes for their anger and envy, which they bore shut up within in their hearts-namely, that He destroyed the obligation of the law given by Moses; that is, that He did not rest on the Sabbath, but laboured for the good of men; that He abolished circumcision; that He took away the necessity of abstaining from the flesh of swine; -in which things the mysteries of the Jewish religion consist. On this account, therefore, the rest of the people, who had not yet withdrawn to Christ, were incited by the priests to regard Him as impious, because He destroyed the obligation of the law of God, though He did this not by His own judgment, but according to the will of God, and after the predictions of the prophets. For Micah announced that He would give a new law, in these terms: "The law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations." For the former law, which was given by Moses, was not given on Mount Zion, but on Mount Horeb; and the Sibyl shows that it would come to pass that this law would be destroyed by the Son of God:-

"But when all these things which I told you shall be accomplished, then all the law is fulfilled with respect to Him." But even Moses himself, by whom the law was given which they so tenaciously maintain, though they have fallen away from God, and have not acknowledged God, had foretold that it would come to pass that a very great prophet would be sent by God, who should be above the law, and be a bearer of the will of God to men. In Deuteronomy he thus left it written: "And the Lord said unto me, I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my word in His month, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And whosoever will not hearken to those things which that Prophet shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." The Lord evidently announced by the law-giver himself that He was about to send His own Son-that is, a law alive, and present in person, and destroy that old law given by a mortal, that by Him who was eternal He might ratify afresh a law which was eternal.

In like manner, Isaiah thus prophesied concerning the abolition of circumcision: "Thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah who dwell at Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord your God, and take away the foreskins of your heart, lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it. Also Moses himself says: "In the last days the Lord shall circumcise thine heart to love the Lord thy God. Also Jesus the son of Nun, his successor, said: "And the Lord said unto Jesus, Make thee knives of flint very sharp, and sit and circumcise the children of Israel the second time. He said that this second circumcision would be not of the flesh, as the first was, which the Jews practise even now, but of the heart and spirit, which was delivered by Christ, who was the true Jesus. For the prophet does not say, "And the Lord said unto me," but "unto Jesus," that he might show that God was not speaking of him, but of Christ, to whom God was then speaking. For that Jesus represented Christ: for when he was at first called Auses, Moses, foreseeing the future, ordered that he should be called Jesus; that since he had been chosen as the leader of the warfare against Amalek, who was the enemy of the children of Israel, he might both subdue the adversary by the emblem of the name, and lead the people into the land of promise.

And for this reason he was also successor to Moses, to show that the new law given by Christ Jesus was about to succeed to the old law which was given by Moses. For that circumcision of the flesh is plainly irrational; since, if God had so willed it, He might so have formed man from the beginning, that he should be without a foreskin. But it was a figure of this second circumcision, signifying that the breast is to be laid bare; that is, that we ought to live with an open and simple heart, since that part of the body which is circumcised has a kind of resemblance to the heart, and is to be treated with reverence. On this account God ordered that it should be laid bare, that by this argument He might admonish us not to have our breast hidden in obscurity; that is, not to veil any shameful deed within the secrets of conscience. This is the circumcision of the heart of which the prophets speak, which God transferred from the mortal flesh to the soul, which alone is about to endure.

For being desirous of promoting our life and salvation in accordance with His own goodness, in that circumcision He hath set before us repentance, that if we lay open our hearts,-that is if we confess our sins and make satisfaction to God,-we shall obtain pardon, which is denied to those who are obstinate and conceal their faults, by Him who regards not the outward appearance, as man does, but the innermost secrets of the heart.

The forbidding of the flesh of swine also has the same intention; for when God commanded them to abstain from this, He willed that this should be especially understood, that they should abstain from sins and impurities. For this animal is filthy and unclean, and never looks up to heaven, but prostrates itself to the earth with its whole body and face: it is always the slave of its appetite and food; nor during its life can it afford any other service, as the other animals do, which either afford a vehicle for riding, or aid in the cultivation of the fields, or draw waggons by their neck, or carry burthens on their back, or furnish a covering with their skins, or abound with a supply of milk, or keep watch for guarding

our houses. Therefore He forbade them to use the flesh of the pig for food, that is, not to imitate the life of swine, which are nourished only for death; lest, by devoting themselves to their appetite and pleasures, they should be useless for working righteousness, and should be visited with death. Also that they should not immerse themselves in foul lusts, as the sow, which wallows in the mire; of that they do not serve earthly images, and thus defile themselves with mud: for they do bedaub themselves with mud who worship gods, that is, who worship mud and earth. Thus all the precepts of the Jewish law have for their object the setting forth of righteousness, since they are given in a mysterious manner, that under the figure of carnal things those which are spiritual might be known.

Chapter XVIII.-Of the Lord's Passion, and that It Was Foretold.

When, therefore, Christ fulfilled these things which God would have done, and which He foretold many ages before by His prophets, incited by these things, and ignorant of the sacred Scriptures, they conspired together to condemn their God. And though He knew that this would come to pass, and repeatedly said that He must suffer and be put to death for the salvation of many, nevertheless He withdrew Himself with His disciples, not that He might avoid that which it was necessary for Him to undergo and endure, but that He might show what ought to take place in every persecution, that no one should appear to have fallen into it through his own fault: and He announced that it would come to pass that He should be betrayed by one of them. And thus Judas, induced by a bribe, delivered up to the Jews the Son of God. But they took and brought Him before Pontius Pilate, who at that time was administering the province of Syria as governor, and demanded that He should be crucified, though they laid nothing else to His charge except that He said that He was the Son of God, the King of the Jews; also His own saying, "Destroy this temple, which was forty-six years in building, and in three days I will raise it up again without hands," -signifying that His passion would shortly take place, and that He, having been put to death by the Jews, would rise again on the third day. For He Himself was the true temple of God. They inveighed against these expressions of His, as ill-omened and impious. And when Pilate had heard these things, and He said nothing in His own defence, he gave sentence that there appeared nothing deserving of condemnation in Him. But those most unjust accusers, together with the people whom they had stirred up, began to cry out, and with loud voices to demand His crucifixion.

Then Pontius was overpowered both by their outcries, and by the instigation of Herod the tetrarch, who feared lest he should be deposed from his sovereignty. He did not, however, himself pass sentence, but delivered Him up to the Jews, that they themselves might judge Him according to their law. Therefore they led Him away when He had been scourged with rods, and before they crucified Him they mocked Him; for they put upon Him a scarlet robe, and a crown of thorns, and saluted Him as King, and gave Him gall for food, and mingled for Him vinegar to drink. After these things they spat upon His face, and struck Him with the palms of their hands; and when the executioners themselves contended about His garments,

they cast lots among themselves for His tunic and mantle. And while all these things were doing, He uttered no voice from His mouth, as though He were dumb. Then they lifted Him up in the midst between two malefactors, who had been condemned for robbery, and fixed Him to the cross. What can I here deplore in so great a crime? or in what words can I lament such great wickedness? For we are not relating the crucifixion of Gavius, which Marcus Tullius followed up with all the spirit and strength of his eloquence, pouring forth as it were the fountains of all his genius, proclaiming that it was an unworthy deed that a Roman citizen should be crucified in violation of all laws.

And although He was innocent, and undeserving of that punishment, yet He was put to death, and that, too, by an impious man, who was ignorant of justice. What shall I say respecting the indignity of this cross, on which the Son of God was suspended and nailed? Who will be found so eloquent, and supplied with so great an abundance of deeds and words, what speech flowing with such copious exuberance, as to lament in a befitting manner that cross, which the world itself, and all the elements of the world, bewailed?

But that these things were thus about to happen, was announced both by the utterances of the prophets and by the predictions of the Sibyls. In Isaiah it is found thus written: "I am not rebellious, nor do I oppose: I gave my back to the scourge, and my cheeks to the hand: I turned not away my face from the foulness of spitting." In like manner David, in the thirty-fourth Psalm: "The abjects were gathered together against me, and they knew me not: they were dispersed, nor did they feel remorse; they tempted me, and greatly derided me; and they gnashed upon me with their teeth." The Sibyl also showed that the same things would happen:- "He shall afterwards come into the hands of the unjust and the faithless; and they shall inflict on God blows with impure hands, and with polluted mouths they shall send forth poisonous spittle; and He shall then absolutely give His holy back to stripes."

Likewise respecting His silence, which He perseveringly maintained even to His death, Isaiah thus spoke again: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before the shearer is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." And the above-mentioned Sibyl said:- "And being beaten, He shall be silent, lest any one should know what the Word is, or whence it came, that it may speak with mortals; and tie shall wear the crown of thorns." But respecting the food and the drink which they offered to Him before they fastened Him to the cross, David thus speaks in the sixty-eighth Psalm: "And they gave me gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."The Sibyl foretold that this also would happen:- "They gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst vinegar; this inhospitable table they will show." And another Sibyl rebukes the land of Judges in these verses:-

"For you, entertaining hurtful thoughts, did not recognise your God sporting with mortal thoughts; but crowned Him with a crown of thorns, and mingled dreadful gall."

Now, that it would come to pass that the Jews would lay hands upon their God, and put Him to death, these testimonies of the prophets foretold. In Esdras it is thus written: "And Ezra said to the people, This passover is our Saviour and our refuge. Consider and let it come

into your heart, that we have to abase Him in a figure; and after these things we will hope in Him, lest this place be deserted for ever, saith the Lord God of hosts. If you will not believe Him, nor hear His announcement, ye shall be a derision among the nations. From which it appears that the Jews had no other hope, unless they purified themselves from blood, and put their hopes in that very person whom they denied. Isaiah also points out their deed, and says: "In His humiliation His judgment was taken away. Who shall declare His generation/ for His life shall be taken away from the earth; from the transgressions of my people He was led away to death. And I will give Him the wicked for His burial, and the rich for His death, because He did no wickedness, nor spoke guile with His mouth. Wherefore He shall obtain many, and shall divide the spoils of the strong; because He was delivered up to death, and was reckoned among the transgressors; and He bore the sins of many, and was delivered up on account of their transgressions. David also, in the ninety-third Psalm:

"They will hunt after the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood; and the Lord is become my refuge. Also Jeremiah: "Lord, declare it unto me, and I shall know. Then I saw their devices; I was led as an innocent lamb to the sacrifice; they meditated a plan against me, saying, Come, let us send wood into his bread, and let us sweep away his life from the earth, and his name shall no more be remembered. Now the wood signifies the cross, and the bread His body; for He Himself is the food and the life of all who believe in the flesh which He bare, and on the cross upon which He was suspended.

Respecting this, however, Moses himself more plainly spoke to this effect, in Deuteronomy: "And Thy life shalL hang before Thine eyes; and Thou shall fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of Thy life." And the same again in Numbers: "God is not in doubt as a suffer threats as the son of man, nor does He man." Zechariah also thus wrote: "And they shall look on me, whom they pierced." Also David in the twenty-first Psalm: "They pierced my hands and my feet; they numbered all my bones; they themselves looked and stared upon me; they divided my garments among them; and upon my vesture they did cast lots." It is evident that the prophet did not speak these things concerning himself. For he was a king, and never endured these sufferings; but the Spirit of God, who was about to suffer these things, after ten hundred and fifty years, spoke by him. For this is the number of years from the reign of David to the crucifixion of Christ. But Solomon also, his son, who built Jerusalem, prophesied that this very city would perish in revenge for the sacred cross: "But if ye turn away from me, saith the Lord, and will not keep my truth, I will drive Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have built for them in my name, I will cast it out from all: and Israel shall be for perdition and a reproach to the people; and this house shall be desolate, and every one that shall pass by it shall be astonished, and shall say, Why hath God done these evils to this land and to this house? And they shall say, Because they forsook the Lord their God, and persecuted their King most beloved by God, and crucified Him with great degradation, therefore hath God brought upon them these evils."

Chapter XIX.-Of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus; And the Predictions of These Events.

What more can now be said respecting the crime of the Jews, than that they were then blinded and seized with incurable madness, who read these things daily, and yet neither understood them, nor were able to be on their guard so as not to do them? Therefore, being lifted up and nailed to the cross, He cried to the Lord with a loud voice, and of His own accord gave up His spirit. And at the same hour there was an earthquake; and the veil of the temple, which separated the two tabernacles, was rent into two parts; and the sun suddenly withdrew its light, and there was darkness from the sixth even to the ninth hour. Of which event the prophet Amos testifies: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that the sun shall go down at noon, and the daylight shall be darkened; and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and your songs into lamentation." Also Jeremiah: "She who brings forth is affrighted, and vexed in spirit; her sun is gone down while it was yet mid-day; she hath been ashamed and confounded; and the residue of them will I give to the sword in the sight of their enemies." And the Sibyl:-

"And the veil of the temple shall be rent, and at midday there shall be dark vast night for three hours," When these things were done, even by the heavenly prodigies, they were not able to understand their crime.

But since He had foretold that on the third day He should rise again from the dead, fearing lest, the body having been stolen by the disciples, and removed, all should believe that He had risen, and there should be a much greater disturbance among the people, they took Him down from the cross, and having shut Him up in a tomb, they securely surrounded it with a guard of soldiers. But on the third day, before light, there was an earthquake, and the sepulchre was suddenly opened; and the guard, who were astonished and stupefied with fear, seeing nothing, He came forth uninjured and alive from the sepulchre, and went into Galilee to seek His disciples: but nothing was found in the sepulchre except the grave-clothes in which they haft enclosed and wrapt His body. Now, that He would not remain in bell, but rise again on the third day, had been foretold by the prophets. David says, in the

fifteenth Psalm: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy one to see corruption." Also in the third Psalm: "I laid me down to sleep, and took my rest, and rose again, for the Lord sustained me." Hosea also, the first of the twelve prophets, testified of His resurrection: "This my Son is wise, therefore He will not remain in the anguish of His sons: and I will redeem Him from the power of the grave. Where is thy judgment, O death? or where is thy sting? "The same also in another place: "After two days, He will revive us in the third day." And therefore the Sibyl said, that after three days' sleep he would put an end to death:-

"And after sleeping three days, He shall put an end to the fate of death; and then, releasing Himself from the dead, He shall come to light, first showing to the called ones the beginning of the resurrection." For He gained life for us by overcoming death. No hope, therefore, of gaining immortality is given to than, unless he shall believe on Him, and shall take up that cross to be borne and endured.

Chapter XX.-Of the Departure of Jesus into Galilee After His Resurrection; And of the Two Testaments, the Old and the New.

Therefore He went into Galilee, for He was unwilling to show Himself to the Jews, lest He should lead them to repentance, and restore them from their impiety to a sound mind. And there He opened to His disciples again assembled the writings of Holy Scripture, that is, the secrets of the prophets; which before His suffering could by no means be understood, for they told of Him and of His passion. Therefore Moses, and the prophets also themselves, call the law which was given to the Jews a testament: for unless the testator shall have died, a testament cannot be confirmed; nor can that which is written in it be known, because it is closed and sealed. And thus, unless Christ had undergone death the testament could not have been opened; that is, the mystery of God could not have been unveiled and understood.

But all Scripture is divided into two Testaments. That which preceded the advent and passion of Christ-that is, the law and the prophets-is called the Old; but those things which were written after His resurrection are named the New Testament. The Jews make use of the Old, we of the New: but yet they are not discordant, for the New is the fulfilling of the Old, and in both there is the same testator, even Christ, who, having suffered death for us, made us heirs of His everlasting kingdom, the people of the Jews being deprived and disinherited. As the prophet Jeremiah testifies when he speaks such things: ”Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new testament to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not according to the testament which I made to their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; for they continued not in my testament, and I disregarded them, saith the Lord.”Also in another place he says in like manner: ”I have forsaken my house, I have given up mine heritage into the hand of its enemies. Mine heritage is become unto me as a lion in the forest; it hath cried out against me, therefore have I hated it. Since the inheritance is His heavenly kingdom, it is

evident that He does not say that He hates the inheritance itself, but the heirs, who have been ungrateful towards Him, and impious.

Mine heritage, he says, is become unto me as a lion; that is, I am become a prey and a devouring to my heirs, who have slain me as the flock. It hath cried out against me; that is, they have pronounced against me the sentence of death and the cross. For that which He said above, that He would make a new testament to the house of Judah, shows that the old testament which was given by Moses was not perfect; but that that which was to be given by Christ would be complete. But it is plain that the house of Judah does not signify the Jews, whom He casts off, but us, who have been called by Him out of the Gentiles, and have by adoption succeeded to their place, and are called sons of the Jews, which the Sibyl declares when she says:-

"The divine race of the blessed, heavenly Jews." But what that race was about to be, Isaiah teaches, in whose book the Most High Father addresses His Son: "I the Lord God have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee: and I have given Thee for covenant of my race, for a light of the Gentiles to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." When, therefore, we who were in time past as it were blind, and as it were shut up in the prison of folly, were sitting in darkness, ignorant of God and of the truth, we have been enlightened by Him, who adopted us by His testament; and having freed us from cruel chains, and brought us out to the light of wisdom, He admitted us to the inheritance of His heavenly kingdom.

Chapter XXI.-Of the Ascension of Jesus, and the Foretelling of It; And of the Preaching and Actions of the Disciples.

But when He had made arrangements with His disciples for the preaching of the Gospel and His name, a cloud suddenly surrounded Him, and carried Him up into heaven, on the fortieth day after His passion, as Daniel bad shown that it would be, saying: ”And, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days. But the disciples, being dispersed through the provinces, everywhere laid the foundations of the Church, themselves also in the name of their divine Master doing many and almost incredible miracles; for at His departure He had endowed them with power and strength, by which the system of their new announcement might be founded and confirmed. But He also opened to them all things which were about to happen, which Peter and Paul preached at Rome; and this preaching being written for the sake of remembrance, became permanent, in which they both declared other wonderful things, and also said that it was about to come to pass, that after a short time God would send against them a king who would subdue the Jews, and level their cities to the ground, and besiege the people themselves, worn out with hunger and thirst. Then it should come to pass that they should feed on the bodies of their own children, and consume one another.

Lastly, that they should be taken captive, and come into the hands of their enemies, and should see their wives most cruelly harassed before their eyes, their virgins ravished and polluted, their sons torn in pieces, their little ones dashed to the ground; and lastly, everything laid waste with fire and sword, the captives banished for ever from their own lands, because they had exulted over the well-beloved and most approved Son of God. And so, after their decease, when Nero had put them to death, Vespasian destroyed the name and nation of the Jews, and did all things which they had foretold as about to come to pass.

Chapter XXII.-Arguments of Unbelievers Against the Incarnation of Jesus.

I have now confirmed, as I imagine, the things which are thought false and incredible by those who are not instructed in the true knowledge of heavenly learning. But, however, that we may refute those also who are too wise, not without injury to themselves and who detract from the credit due to divine things, let us disprove their error, that they may at length perceive that the fact ought to have been as we show that it actually was. And although with good judges either testimonies are of sufficient weight without arguments, or arguments without testimonies, we, however, are not content with the one or the other, since we are supplied with both, that we may not leave room for any one of depraved ingenuity either to misunderstand or to dispute on the opposite side. They say that it was impossible for anything to be withdrawn from an immortal nature. They say, in short, that it was unworthy of God to be willing to become man, and to burthen Himself with the infirmity of flesh; to become subject of His own accord to sufferings, to pain, and death: as though it had not been easy for Him to show Himself to men without the weakness incident to a body, and to teach them righteousness (if He so wished) with greater authority, as of one who acknowledged Himself to be God. For in that case all would have obeyed the heavenly precepts, if the influence and power of God enjoining them had been united with them.

Why, then (they say), did He not come as God to teach men? Why did He render Himself so humble and weak, that it was possible for Him both to be despised by men and to be visited with punishment? why did He suffer violence from those who are weak and mortal? why did He not repel by strength, or avoid by His divine knowledge, the hands of men? why did He not at least in His very death reveal His majesty? but He was led as one without strength to trial, was condemned as one who was guilty, was put to death as one who was mortal. I will carefully refute these things, nor will I permit any one to be in error. For these things were done by a great and wonderful plan; and he who shall understand this, will not only cease to wonder that God was tortured by men, but also will easily see that it

could not have been believed that he was God if those very things which he censures had not been done.

Chapter XXIII.-Of Giving Precepts, and Acting.

If any one gives to men precepts for living, and moulds the characters of others, I ask whether he is bound himself to practise the things which he enjoins, or is not bound. If he shall not do so, his precepts are annulled. For if the things which are enjoined are good, if they place the life of men in the best condition, the instructor ought not to separate himself from the number and assemblage of men among whom he acts; and he ought himself to live in the same manner in which he teaches that men ought to live, lest, by living in another way, he himself should disparage his own precepts, and make his instruction of less value, if in reality he should relax the obligations of that which he endeavours to establish by his words. For every one, when he hears another giving precepts, is unwilling that the necessity of obeying should be imposed upon him, as though the right of liberty were taken from him. Therefore he answers his teacher in this manner: I am not able to do the things which you command, for they are impossible. For yon forbid me to be angry, you forbid me to covet, you forbid me to be excited by desire, you forbid me to fear pain or death; but this is so contrary to nature, that all animals are subject to these affections.

Or if you are so entirely of opinion that it is possible to resist nature, do you yourself practise the things which you enjoin, that I may know that they are possible? But since you yourself do not practise them, what arrogance is it, to wish to impose upon a free man laws which you yourself do not obey! You who teach, first learn; and before you correct the character of others, correct your own. Who could deny the justice of this answer? Nay! a teacher of this kind will fall into contempt, and will in his turn be mocked, because he also will appear to mock others.

What, therefore, will that instructor do, if these things shall be objected to him? how will he deprive the self-willed of an excuse, unless he teach them by deeds before their eyes that he teaches things which are possible? Whence it comes to pass, that no one obeys the precepts of the philosophers. For men prefer examples rather than words, because it is easy to speak, but difficult to accomplish. Would to heaven that there were as many who acted well as there are who speak well! But they who give precepts, without carrying them out into action, are distrusted; and if they shall be men, will be despised as inconsistent: if it

shall be God, He will be met with the excuse of the frailty of man's nature. It remains that words should be confirmed by deeds, which the philosophers are unable to do. Therefore, since the instructors themselves are overcome by the affections which they say that it is our duty to overcome, they are able to train no one to virtue, which they falsely proclaim; and for this cause they imagine that no perfect wise man has as vet existed, that is, in whom the greatest virtue and perfect justice were in harmony with the greatest learning and knowledge. And this indeed was true. For no one since the creation of the world has been such, except Christ, who both delivered wisdom by His word, and confirmed His teaching by presenting virtue to the eyes of men.

Chapter XXIV.-The Overthrowing of the Arguments Above Urged by Way of Objection.

Come, let us now consider whether a teacher sent from heaven can fail to be perfect. I do not as yet speak of Him whom they deny to have come from God. Let us suppose that some one were to be sent from heaven to instruct the life of men in the first principles of virtue, and to form them to righteousness. No one can doubt but that this teacher, who is sent from heaven, would be as perfect in the knowledge of all things as in virtue, lest there should be no difference between a heavenly and an earthly teacher. For in the case of a man his instruction can by no means be from within and of himself. For the mind, shut in by earthly organs, and hindered by a corrupt body, of itself can neither comprehend nor receive the truth, unless it is taught from another source. And if it had this power in the greatest degree, yet it would be unable to attain to the highest virtue, and to resist all vices, the materials of which are contained in our bodily organs. Hence it comes to pass, that an earthly teacher cannot be perfect. But a teacher from heaven, to whom His divine nature gives knowledge, and His immortality gives virtue, must of necessity in His teaching also, as in other things, be perfect and complete. But this cannot by any means happen, unless He should take to Himself a mortal body. And the reason why it cannot happen is manifest.

For if He should come to men as God, not to mention that mortal eyes cannot look upon and endure the glory of His majesty in His own person, assuredly God will not be able to teach virtue; for, inasmuch as He is without a body, He will not practise the things which He will teach, and through this His teaching will not be perfect. Otherwise, if it is the greatest virtue patiently to endure pain for the sake of righteousness and duty, if it is virtue not to fear death itself when threatened, and when inflicted to undergo it with fortitude; it follows that the perfect teacher ought both to teach these things by precept, and to confirm them by practice. For he who gives precepts for the life, ought to remove every method of excuse, that he may impose upon men the necessity of obedience, not by any constraint, but by a sense of shame, and yet may leave them liberty, that a reward may be appointed for those who obey, because it was in their power not to obey if they so wished; and a punishment for

those who do not obey, because it was in their power to obey if they so wished. How then can excuse be removed, unless the teacher should practise what he teaches, and as it were go before and hold out his hand to one who is about to follow? But how can one practise what he teaches, unless he is like him whom he teaches?

For if he be subject to no passion, a man may thus answer him who is the teacher: It is my wish not to sin, but I am overpowered; for I am clothed with frail and weak flesh: it is this which covets, which is angry, which fears pain and death. And thus I am led on against my will; and I sin, not because it is my wish, but because I am compelled. I myself perceive that I sin; but the necessity imposed by my frailty, which I am unable to resist, impels me. What will that teacher of righteousness say in reply to these things? How will he refute and convict a man who shall allege the frailty of the flesh as an excuse for his faults, unless he himself also shall be clothed with flesh, so that he may show that even the flesh is capable of virtue? For obstinacy cannot be refuted except by example. For the things which you teach cannot have any weight unless you shall be the first to practise them; because the nature of men is inclined to faults, and wishes to sin not only with indulgence, but also with a reasonable plea. It is befitting that a master and teacher of virtue should most closely resemble man, that by overpowering sin he may teach man that sin may be overpowered by him. But if he is immortal, he can by no means propose an example to man. For there will stand forth some one persevering in his opinion, and will say:

You indeed do not sin, because you are free from this body; you do not covet, because nothing is needed by an immortal; but I have need of many things for the support of this life. You do not fear death, because it can have no power against you. You despise pain, because you can suffer no violence. But I, a mortal, fear both, because they bring upon me the severest tortures, which the weakness of the flesh cannot endure. A teacher of virtue therefore ought to have taken away this excuse from men, that no one may ascribe it to necessity that he sins, rather than to his own fault. Therefore, that a teacher may be perfect, no objection ought to be brought forward by him who is to be taught, so that if he should happen to say, You enjoin impossibilities; the teacher may answer, See, I myself do them. But I am clothed with flesh, and it is the property of flesh to sin. I too bear the same flesh, and yet sin does not bear rule in me. It is difficult for me to despise riches, because otherwise I am unable to live in this body. See, I too have a body, and yet I contend against every desire. I am not able to bear pain or death for righteousness, because I am frail. See, pain and death have power over me also; and I overcome those very things which you fear, that I may make you victorious over pain and death.

I go before you through those things which you allege that it is impossible to endure: if you are not able to follow me giving directions, follow me going before you. In this way all excuse is taken away, and you must confess that man is unjust through his own fault, since he does not follow a teacher of virtue, who is at the same time a guide. You see, therefore, how much more perfect is a teacher who is mortal, because he is able to be a guide to one who is mortal, than one who is immortal, for he is unable to teach patient endurance who is not subject

to passions. Nor, however, does this extend so far that I prefer man to God; but to show that man cannot be a perfect teacher unless he is also God, that he may by his heavenly authority impose upon men the necessity of obedience; nor God, unless he is clothed with a mortal body, that by carrying out his precepts to their completion in actions, he may bind others by the necessity of obedience. It plainly therefore appears, that he who is a guide of life and teacher of righteousness must have a body, and that his teaching cannot otherwise be full and perfect, unless it has a root and foundation, and remains firm and fixed among men;

and that he himself must undergo weakness of flesh and body, and display in himself the virtue of which he is a teacher, that he may teach it at the same time both by words and deeds. Also, he must be subject to death and all sufferings, since the duties of virtue are occupied with the enduring of suffering, and the undergoing death; all which, as I have said, a perfect teacher ought to endure, that he may teach the possibility of their being endured.

Chapter XXV.-Of the Advent of Jesus in the Flesh and Spirit, that He Might Be Mediator Between God and Man.

Let men therefore learn and understand why the Most High God, when He sent His ambassador and messenger to instruct mortals with the precepts of His righteousness, willed that He should be clothed with mortal flesh, and be afflicted with torture, and be sentenced to death. For since there was no righteousness on earth, He sent a teacher, as it were a living law, to found a new name and temple, that by His words and example He might spread throughout the earth a true and holy worship. But, however, that it might be certain that He was sent by God, it was befitting that He should not be born as man is born, composed of a mortal on both sides; but that it might appear that He was heavenly even in the form of man, He was born without the office of a father. For He had a spiritual Father, God; and as God was the Father of His spirit without a mother, so a virgin was the mother of His body without a father. He was therefore both God and man, being placed in the middle between God and man. From which the Greeks call Him Mesites, that He might be able to lead man to God-that is, to immortality: for if He had been God only (as we have before said), He would not have been able to afford to man examples of goodness; if He had been man only, He would not have been able to compel men to righteousness, unless there had been added an authority and virtue greater than that of man.

For, since man is composed of flesh and spirit, and the spirit must earn immortality by works of righteousness, the flesh, since it is earthly, and therefore mortal, draws with itself the spirit linked to it, and leads it from immortality to death. Therefore the spirit, apart from the flesh, could by no means be a guide to immortality for man, since the flesh hinders the spirit from following God. For it is frail, and liable to sin; but sin is the food and nourishment of death. For this cause, therefore, a mediator came-that is, God in the flesh-that the flesh might be able to follow Him, and that He might rescue man from death, which has dominion over the flesh. Therefore He clothed Himself with flesh, that the desires of the flesh being

subdued, He might teach that to sin was not the result of necessity, but of man's purpose and will. For we have one great and principal struggle to maintain with the flesh, the boundless desire; of which press upon the soul, nor allow it to retain dominion, but make it the slave of pleasures and sweet allurements, and visit it with everlasting death. And that we might be able to overcome these, God has opened and displayed to us the way of overcoming the flesh. And this perfect and absolutely complete virtue bestows on those who conquer, the crown and reward of immortality.

Chapter XXVI.-Of the Cross, and Other Tortures of Jesus, and of the Figure of the Lamb Under the Law.

I have spoken of humiliation, and frailty, and suffering-why God thought fit to undergo them. Now an account must be taken of the cross itself, and its meaning must be related. What the Most High Father arranged from the beginning, and how He ordained all things which were accomplished, not only the foretelling by the prophets, which preceded and was proved true in Christ, but also the manner of His suffering itself teaches. For whatever sufferings He underwent were not without meaning; but they had a figurative meaning and great significance, as had also those divine works which He performed, the strength and power of which had some weight indeed for the present, but also declared something for the future. Heavenly influence opened the eyes of the blind, and gave light to those who did not see; and by this deed He signified that it would come to pass that, turning to the nations which were ignorant of God, He might enlighten the breasts of the foolish with the light of wisdom, and open the eyes of their understanding to the contemplation of the truth. For they are truly blind who, not seeing heavenly things, and surrounded with the darkness of ignorance, worship earthly and frail things. He opened the ears of the deaf. It is plain that this divine power did not limit its exercise to this point; but He declared that it would shortly come to pass, that they who were destitute of the truth would both hear and understand the divine words of God.

For you may truly call those deaf who do not hear the things which are heavenly and true, and worthy of being performed. He loosed the tongues of the dumb, so that they spake plainly. A power worthy of admiration, even when it was in operation: but there was contained in this display of power another meaning, which showed that it would shortly come to pass that those who were lately ignorant of heavenly things, having received the instruction of wisdom, might speak respecting God and the truth. For he who is ignorant of the divine nature, he truly is speechless and dumb, although he is the most eloquent of all men. For when the tongue has begun to speak truth-that is, to set forth the excellency and majesty of the one God-then only does it discharge the office of its nature; but as long as it speaks

false things it is not rightly employed: and therefore he must necessarily be speechless who cannot utter divine things. He also renewed the feet of the lame to the office of walking,-a strength of divine work worthy of praise; but the figure implied this, that the errors of a worldly and wandering life being restrained, the path of truth was opened by which men might walk to attain the favour of God. For He is truly to be considered lame, who, being enwrapped in the gloom and darkness of folly, and ignorant in what direction to go, with feet liable to stumble and fall, walks in the way of death.

Likewise He cleansed the stains and blemishes of defiled bodies,-no slight exercise of immortal power; but this strength prefigured that by the instruction of righteousness His doctrine was about to purify those defiled by the stains of sins and the blemishes of vices. For they ought truly to be accounted as leprous and unclean, whom either boundless lusts compel to crimes, or insatiable pleasures to disgraceful deeds, and affect with an everlasting stain those who are branded with the marks of dishonourable actions. He raised the bodies of the dead as they lay prostrate; and calling them aloud by their names, He brought them back from death. What is more suitable to God, what more worthy of the wonder of all ages, than to have recalled the life which has run its course, to have added times to the completed times of men, to have revealed the secrets of death? But this unspeakable power was the image of a greater energy, which showed that His teaching was about to have such might, that the nations throughout the world, which were estranged from God and subject to death, being animated by the knowledge of the true light, might arrive at the rewards of immortality. For you may rightly deem those to be dead, who, not knowing God the giver of life, and depressing their souls from heaven to earth, run into the snares of eternal death. The actions, therefore, which He then performed for the present, were representations of future things; the things which He displayed in injured and diseased bodies were figures of spiritual things, that at present He might display to us the works of an energy which was not of earth, and for the future might show the power of His heavenly majesty.

Therefore, as His works had a signification also of greater power, so also His passion did not go before us as simple, or superfluous, or by chance. But as those things which He did signified the great efficacy and power of His teaching, so those things which He suffered announced that wisdom would be held in hatred. For the vinegar which they gave Him to drink, and the gall which they gave Him to eat, held forth hardships and severities in this life to the followers of truth. And although His passion, which was harsh and severe in itself, gave to us a sample of the future torments which virtue itself proposes to those who linger in this world, yet drink and food of this kind, coming into the mouth of our teacher, afforded us an example of pressures, and labours, and miseries. All which things must be undergone and suffered by those who follow the truth; since the truth is bitter, and detested by all who, being destitute of virtue, give up their life to deadly pleasures. For the placing of a crown of thorns upon His head, declared that it would come to pass that He would gather to Himself a holy people from those who were guilty. For people standing around in a circle are called a corona. But we, who before that we knew God were unjust, were thorns-that is, evil and guilty, not knowing what was good; and estranged from the conception and the works of

righteousness, polluted all things with wickedness and lust. Being taken, therefore, from briars and thorns, we surround the sacred head of God; for, being called by Himself, and spread around Him, we stand beside God, who is our Master and Teacher, and crown Him King of the world, and Lord of all the living.

But with reference to the cross, it has great force and meaning, which I will now endeavour to show. For God (as I have before explained), when He had determined to set man free, sent as His ambassador to the earth a teacher of virtue, who might both by salutary precepts train men to innocence, and by works and deeds before their eyes might open the way of righteousness, by walking in which, and following his teacher, man might attain to eternal life. He therefore assumed a body, and was clothed in a garment of flesh, that He might hold out to man, for whose instruction He had come, examples of virtue and incitements to its practice. But when He had afforded an example of righteousness in all the duties of life, in order that He might teach man also the patient endurance of pain and contempt of death, by which virtue is rendered perfect and complete, He came into the hands of an impious nation, when, by the knowledge of the future which He had, He might have avoided them, and by the same power by which He did wonderful works He might have repelled them. Therefore He endured tortures, and stripes, and thorns. At last He did not refuse even to undergo death, that under His guidance man might triumph over death, subdued and bound in chains with all its terrors.

But the reason why the Most High Father chose that kind of death in preference to others, with which He should permit Him to be visited, is this. For some one may perchance say: Why, if He was God, and chose to die, did He not at least suffer by some honourable kind of death? why was it by the cross especially? why by an infamous kind of punishment, which may appear unworthy even of a man if he is free, although guilty? First of all, because He, who had come in humility that He might bring assistance to the humble and men of low degree, and might hold out to all the hope of safety, was to suffer by that kind of punishment by which the humble and low usually suffer, that there might be no one at all who might not be able to imitate Him. In the next place, it was in order that His body might be kept unmutilated, since He must rise again from the dead on the third day.

Nor ought any one to be ignorant of this, that He Himself, speaking before of His passion, also made it known that He had the power, when He willed it, of laying down His life and of taking it again. Therefore, because He had laid down His life while fastened to the cross, His executioners did not think it necessary to break His bones (as was their prevailing custom), but they only pierced His side. Thus His unbroken body was taken down from the cross, and carefully enclosed in a tomb. Now all these things were done lest His body, being injured and broken, should be rendered unsuitable for rising again. That also was a principal cause why God chose the cross, because it was necessary that He should be lifted up on it, and the passion of God become known to all nations. For since he who is suspended upon a cross is both conspicuous to all and higher than others, the cross was especially chosen, which might signify that He would be so conspicuous, and so raised on high, that all nations from

the whole world should meet together at once to know and worship Him. Lastly, no nation is so uncivilized, no region so remote, to which either His passion or the height of His majesty would be unknown.

Therefore in His suffering He stretched forth His hands and measured out the world, that even then He might show that a great multitude, collected together out of all languages and tribes, from the rising of the sun even to his setting, was about to come under His wings, and to receive on their foreheads that great and lofty sign. And the Jews even now exhibit a figure of this transaction when they mark their thresholds with the blood of a lamb. For when God was about to smite the Egyptians, to secure the Hebrews from that infliction He had enjoined them to slay a white lamb without spot, and to place on their thresholds a mark from its blood. And thus, when the first-born of the Egyptians had perished in one night, the Hebrews alone were saved by the sign of the blood: not that the blood of a sheep had such efficacy in itself as to be the safety of men, but it was an image of things to come. For Christ was the white lamb without spot; that is, He was innocent, and just, and holy, who, being slain by the same Jews, is the salvation of all who have written on their foreheads the sign of blood-that is, of the cross, on which He shed His blood. For the forehead is the top of the threshold in man, and the wood sprinkled with blood is the emblem of the cross.

Lastly, the slaying of the lamb by those very persons who perform it is called the paschal feast, from the word "paschein," because it is a figure of the passion, which God, foreknowing the future, delivered by Moses to be celebrated by His people. But at that time the figure was efficacious at the present for averting the danger, that it may appear what great efficacy the truth itself is about to have for the protection of God's people in the extreme necessity of the whole world. But in what manner or in what region all will be safe who have marked on the highest part of their body this sign of the true and divine blood, I will show in the last book.

Chapter XXVII.-Of the Wonders Effected by the Power of the Cross, and of Demons.

At present it is sufficient to show what great efficacy the power of this sign has. How great a terror this sign is to the demons, he will know who shall see how, when adjured by Christ, they flee from the bodies which they have besieged. For as He Himself, when He was living among men, limit to flight all the demons by His word, and restored to their former senses the minds of men which had been excited and maddened by their dreadful attacks; so now His followers, in the name of their Master, and by the sign of His passion, banish the same polluted spirits from men. And it is not difficult to prove this. For when they sacrifice to their gods, if any one bearing a marked forehead stands by, the sacrifices are by no means favourable. "Nor can the diviner, when consulted, give answers." And this has often been the cause of punishment to wicked kings. For when some of their attendants who were of our religion were standing by their masters as they sacrificed, having the sign placed on their foreheads, they caused the gods of their masters to flee, that they might not be able to observe future events in the entrails of the victims. And when the soothsayers understood this, at the instigation of the same demons to whom they had sacrificed, complaining that profane men were present at the sacrifices, they drove their princes to madness, so that they attacked the temple of the god, and contaminated themselves by true sacrilege, which was expiated by the severest punishments on the part of their persecutors. Nor, however, are blind men able to understand even from this, either that this is the true religion, which contains such great power for overcoming, or that that is false, which is not able to hold its ground or to come to an engagement.

But they say that the gods do this, not through fear, but through hatred; as though it were possible for any one to hate another, unless it be him who injures, or has the power of injuring. Yea, truly, it would be consistent with their majesty to visit those whom they hated with immediate punishment, rather than to flee from them. But since they can neither approach those in whom they shall see the heavenly mark, nor injure those whom the immortal sign as an impregnable wall protects, they harass them by men, and persecute them by the

hands of others: and if they acknowledge the existence of these demons, we have overcome; for this must necessarily be the true religion, which both understands the nature of demons, and understands their subtlety, and compels them, vanquished and subdued, to yield to itself. If they deny it, they will be refuted by the testimonies of poets and philosophers. But if they do not deny the existence and malignity of demons, what remains except that they affirm that there is a difference between gods and demons? Let them therefore explain to us the difference between the two kinds, that we may know what is to be worshipped and what to be held in execration; whether they have any mutual agreement, or are really opposed to one, another. If they are united by some necessity, how shall we distinguish them? or how shall we unite the honour and worship of each kind?

If, on the other hand, they are enemies, how is it that the demons do not fear the gods, or that the gods cannot put to flight the demons? Behold, some one excited by the impulse of the demon is out of his senses, raves, is mad: let us lead him into the temple of the excellent and mighty Jupiter; or since Jupiter knows not how to cure men, into the lane of Aesculapius or Apollo. Let the priest of either, in the name of his god, command the wicked spirit to come out of the man: that can in no way come to pass. What, then, is the power of the gods, if the demons are not subject to their control? But, in truth, the same demons, when adjured by the name of the true God, immediately flee. What reason is there why they should fear Christ, but not fear Jupiter, unless that they whom the multitude esteem to be gods are also demons? Lastly, if there should be placed in the midst one who is evidently suffering from an attack of a demon, and the priest of the Delphian Apollo, they will in the same manner dread the name of God; and Apollo will as quickly depart from his priest as the spirit of the demon from the man; and his god being adjured and put to flight, the priest will be for ever silent. Therefore the demons, whom they acknowledge to be objects of execration, are the same as the gods to whom they offer supplications.

If they imagine that we are unworthy of belief, let them believe Homer, who associated the supreme Jupiter with the demons; and also other poets and philosophers, who speak of the same beings at one time as demons, and at another time as gods,-of which names one is true, and the other false. For those most wicked spirits, when they are adjured, then confess that they are demons; when they are worshipped, then falsely say that they are gods; in order that they may lead men into errors, and call them away from the knowledge of the true God, by which alone eternal death can be escaped. They are the same who, for the sake of overthrowing man, have founded various systems of worship for themselves through different regions, -under false and assumed names, however, that they might deceive. For because they were unable by themselves to aspire to divinity, they took to themselves the names of powerful kings, under whose titles they might claim for themselves divine honours; which error may be dispelled, and brought to the light of truth. For if any one desires to inquire further into the matter, let him assemble those who are skilled in calling forth spirits from the dead. Let them call forth Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, Mercury, Apollo, and Saturnus the father of all. All will answer from the lower regions; and being questioned they will speak, and confess respecting themselves and God. After these things let them

call up Christ; He will not be present, He will not appear, for He was not more than two days in the lower regions. What proof can be brought forward more certain than this? I have no doubt that Trismegistus arrived at the truth by some proof of this kind, who spoke many things respecting God the Son which are contained in the divine secrets.

Chapter XXVIII.-Of Hope and True Religion, and of Superstition.

And since these things are so, as we have shown, it is plain that no other hope of life is set before man, except that, laying aside vanities and wretched error, he should know God, and serve God; except he renounce this temporary life, and train himself by the principles of righteousness for the cultivation of true religion. For we are created on this condition, that we pay just and due obedience to God who created us, that we should know and follow Him alone. We are bound and tied to God by this chain of piety; from which religion itself received its name, not, as Cicero explained it, from carefully gathering, for in his second book respecting the nature of the gods he thus speaks: "For not only philosophers, but our ancestors also, separated superstition from religion. For they who spent whole days in prayers and sacrifices, that their children might survive them, were called superstitious. But they who handled again, and as it were carefully gathered all things which related to the worship of the gods, were called religious from carefully gathering, as some were called elegant from choosing out, and diligent from carefully selecting and intelligent from understanding. For in all these words there is the same meaning of gathering which there is in the word religious: thus it has come to pass, that in the names superstitious and religious, the one relates to a fault, the other belongs to praise. How senseless this interpretation is, we may know from the matter itself.

For if both religion and superstition are engaged in the worship of the same gods, there is little or rather no difference between them. For what cause will he allege why he should think that to pray once for the health of sons is the part of a religious man, but to do the same ten times is the part of a superstitious man? For if it is an excellent thing to pray once, how much more so to do it more frequently! If it is well to do it at the first hour, then it is well to do it throughout the day. If one victim renders the deity propitious, it is plain that many victims must render him more propitious, because multiplied services oblige rather than offend. For those servants do not appear to us hateful who are assiduous and constant in their attendance, but more beloved. Why, therefore, should he be in fault, and receive a name which implies censure, who either loves his children more, or sufficiently honours the gods; and he, on the contrary, be praised, who loves them less? And this argument has weight also from the contrary. For if it is wrong to pray and sacrifice during whole days,

therefore it is wrong to do so once. If it is faulty frequently to wish for the preservation of our children, therefore he also is superstitious who conceives that wish even rarely.

Or why should the name of a fault be derived from that, than which nothing can be wished more honourable, nothing more just? For as to his saying, that they who diligently take in hand again the things relating to the worship of the gods are called religious from their carefully gathering; how is it, then, that they who do this often in a day lose the name of religious men, when it is plain from their very assiduity that they more diligently gather those things by which the gods are worshipped?

What, then, is it? Truly religion is the cultivation of the truth, but superstition of that which is false. And it makes the entire difference what you worship, not how you worship, or what prayer you offer. But because the worshippers of the gods imagine themselves to be religious, though they are superstitious, they are neither able to distinguish religion from superstition, nor to express the meaning of the names. We have said that the name of religion is derived from the bond of piety, because God has tied man to Himself, and bound him by piety; for we must serve Him as a master, and be obedient to Him as a father. And therefore Lucretius better explained this name, who says that He loosens the knots of superstitions. But they are called superstitious, not who wish their children to survive them, for we all wish this; but either those who reverence the surviving memory of the dead, or those who, surviving their parents, reverenced their images at their houses as household gods. For those who assumed to themselves new rites, that they might honour the dead as gods, whom they supposed to be taken from men and received into heaven, they called superstitious. But those who worshipped the public and ancient gods they named religious. From which Virgil says: -

”Superstition vain, and ignorant of ancient gods.” But since we find that the ancient gods also were consecrated in the same manner after their death, therefore they are superstitious who worship many and false gods. We, on the other hand, are religious, who make our supplications to the one true God.

Chapter XXIX.-Of the Christian Religion, and of the Union of Jesus with the Father.

Some one may perhaps ask how, when we say that we worship one God only, we nevertheless assert that there are two, God the Father and God the Son: which assertion has driven many into the greatest error. For when the things which we say seem to them probable, they consider that we fail in this one point alone, that we confess that there is another God, and that He is mortal. We have already spoken of His mortality: now let us teach concerning His unity. When we speak of God the Father and God the Son, we do not speak of them as different, nor do we separate each: because the Father cannot exist without the Son, nor can the Son be separated from the Father, since the name of Father cannot be given without the Son, nor can the Son be begotten without the Father. Since, therefore, the Father makes the Son, and the Son the Father, they both have one mind, one spirit, one substance; but the former is as it were an overflowing fountain, the latter as a stream flowing forth from it: the former as the sun, the latter as it were a ray extended from the sun. And since He is both faithful to the Most High Father, and beloved by Him, He is not separated from Him; just as the stream is not separated from the fountain, nor the ray from the sun: for the water of the fountain is in the stream, and the light of the sun is in the ray: just as the voice cannot be separated from the mouth, nor the strength or hand from the body. When, therefore, He is also spoken of by the prophets as the hand, and strength, and word of God, there is plainly no separation; for the tongue, which is the minister of speech, and the hand, in which the strength is situated, are inseparable portions of the body.

We may use an example more closely connected with us. When any one has a son whom he especially loves, who is still in the house, and in the power of his father, although he concede to him the name and power of a master, yet by the civil law the house is one, and one person is called master. So this world is the one house of God; and the Son and the Father, who unanimously inhabit the world, are one God, for the one is as two, and the two are as one. Nor is that wonderful, since the Son is in the Father, for the Father loves the Son, and the Father is in the Son; for He faithfully obeys the will of the Father, nor does He ever do nor

has done anything except what the Father either willed or commanded. Lastly, that the Father and the Son are but one God, Isaiah showed in that passage which we have brought forward before, when he said: ”They shall fall down unto Thee, and make supplication unto Thee, since God is in Thee, and there is no other God besides Thee. And he also speaks to the same purport in another place: ”Thus saith God the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the everlasting God; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

When he had set forth two persons, one of God the King, that is, Christ, and the other of God the Father, who after His passion raised Him from the dead, as we have said that the prophet Hosea showed, who said, ”I will redeem Him from the power of the grave: ”nevertheless, with reference to each person, he introduced the words, ”and beside me there is no God,” when he might have said ”beside us; ”but it was not right that a separation of so close a relationship should be made by the use of the plural number. For there is one God alone, free, most high, without any origin; for He Himself is the origin of all things, and in Him at once both the Son and all things are contained. Wherefore, since the mind and will of the one is in the other, or rather, since there is one in both, both are justly called one God; for whatever is in the Father flows on to the Son, and whatever is in the Son descends from the Father. Therefore that highest and matchless God cannot be worshipped except through the Son. He who thinks that he worships the Father only, as he does not worship the Son, so he does not worship even the Father. But he who receives the Son, and bears His name, he truly together with the Son worships the Father also, since the Son is the ambassador, and messenger, and priest of the Most High Father.

He is the door of thegreatest temple, He the way of light, He the guide to salvation, He the gate of life.

Chapter XXX.-Of Avoiding Heresies and Superstitions, and What is the Only True Catholic Church.

But since many heresies have existed, and the people of God have been rent into divisions at the instigation of demons, the truth must be briefly marked out by us, and placed in its own peculiar dwelling-place, that if any one shall desire to draw the water of life, he may not be borne to broken cisterns which hold no water, but may know the abundant fountain of God, watered by which he may enjoy perpetual light. Before all things, it is befitting that we should know both that He Himself and His ambassadors foretold that there must be numerous sects and heresies, which would break the unity of the sacred body; and that they admonished us to be on our guard with the greatest prudence, lest we should at any time fall into the snares and deceits of that adversary of ours, with whom God has willed that we should contend. Then that He gave us sure commands, which we ought always to treasure in our minds; for many, forgetting them, and abandoning the heavenly road, have made for themselves devious paths amidst windings and precipices, by which they might lead away the incautious and simple part of the people to the darkness of death: I will explain: how this happened. There were some of our religion whose faith was less established, or who were less learned or less cautious, who rent the unity and divided the Church. But they whose faith was unsettled, when they pretended that they knew and worshipped God aiming at the increase of their wealth and honour, aspired to the highest sacerdotal power; and when overcome by others more powerful, preferred to secede with their supporters, than to endure those set over them, over whom they themselves before desired to be set.

But some, not sufficiently instructed in heavenly learning, when they were unable to reply to the accusers of the truth, who objected that it was either impossible or inconsistent that God should be shut up in the womb of a woman, and that the Majesty of heaven could not be reduced to such weakness as to become an object of contempt and derision, a reproach and mockery to men; lastly, that He should even endure tortures, and be affixed to the accursed cross; and when they could defend and refute all these things neither by talent nor learning,

for they did not thoroughly perceive their force and meaning, they were perverted from the right path, and corrupted the sacred writings, so that they composed for themselves a new doctrine without any root and stability. But some, enticed by the prediction of false prophets, concerning whom both the true prophets and he himself had foretold, fell away from the knowledge of God, and left the true tradition. But all of these, ensnared by frauds of demons, which they ought to have foreseen and guarded against, by their carelessness lost the name and worship of God. For when they are called Phrygians, or Novarians, or Valentinians, or Marcionites, or Anthropians, or Arians, or by any other name they have ceased to be Christians, who have lost the name of Christ, and assumed human and external names. Therefore it is the Catholic Church alone which retains true worship.

This is the fountain of truth, this is the abode of the faith, this is the temple of God; into which if any one shall not enter, or from which if any shall go out, he is estranged from the hope of life and eternal salvation. No one ought to flatter himself with persevering strife. For the contest is respecting life and salvation, which, unless it is carefully and diligently kept in view, will be lost and extinguished. But, however, because all the separate assemblies of heretics call themselves Christians in preference to others, and think that theirs is the Catholic Church, it must be known that the true Catholic Church is that in which there is confession and repentance, which treats in a wholesome manner the sins and wounds to which the weakness of the flesh is liable. I have related these things in the meanwhile for the sake of admonition, that no one who desires to avoid error may be entangled in a greater error, while he is ignorant of the secret of the truth. Afterwards, in a particular and separate work, we will more fully and copiously contend against all divisions of falsehoods. It follows that, since we have spoken sufficiently on the subject of true religion and wisdom, we discuss the subject of justice in the next book.

General Notes by the American Editor.

I

On cap. 29. Here we should look for something also concerning the Holy Spirit. But our author's principle is doubtless a reflection of the prevailing sentiment of the Church at this period, which was perhaps a violent exaggeration of our Lord's example (Mark 4:33). And see something of this on p. 140, note 6, infra; also Matthew 7:6.

II

On cap. 30. The simplicity with which our author gives a note of the Catholic Church, in accordance with African canons and the teaching of Cyprian, is very noteworthy. It never occurred to him that communion with any one particular See was the note. Hippolytus alone would have reminded him that the worst heretics had been in communion with both Zephyrinus and Callistus in his days (see vol. v. pp. 156 and 160; also Ibid., 125, 130), and that orthodoxy had been persecuted by these bishops of Rome.

CHAPTER XXX.-OF AVOIDING HERESIES AND SUPERSTITIONS, AND WHAT IS THE ONLY TR

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.