Bede's Of the Temple of Solomon

The Venerable Bede (AD 673–735)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

Bede's Of the Temple of Solomon

Translated from Migne's Patrologia Latina, De templo Salomonis, Vol 91
EPISTOLA AD EUMDEM ACCAM, DE TEMPLO SALOMONIS

The vessel of election and teacher of nations exhorts us to the reading of divine words, bearing true witness with his voice that whatever has been written has been written for our instruction, so that through patience and the consolation of the Scriptures, we may have hope (Rom. XV). There he declares that in order to obtain the hope of heavenly goods, we must have patience and regard for the consolation of the Scriptures. Namely, patience, so that whatever adversities may arise, we may bear them with a humble and submissive mind, as if they were scourges inflicted by a just judge and merciful father; either for the glory of virtues and the increase of merits, if we the just and innocent are afflicted; or for the correction of morals, if we are entangled in vices. The consolation of the Scriptures is to be sought, so that by frequent meditation on them, we may recall to memory how much those supreme fathers, and the illustrious lights of the Church, often endured the affliction of darkness in this present life, how much glory with the Lord they rightfully received in the future life for their piety and patience, and how much incorruptible praise and renown they also left among all the faithful in this life, as Scripture says (Prov. X): The memory of the just is with praises, and again (Eccli. XLIV): The bodies of the saints are buried in peace; and their names live through generations and generations. Also, the apostle James (James V):

Behold, we call blessed those who have endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of the Lord. It is not for nothing that he added, after speaking of the hardships of the just: And you have seen the outcome of the Lord; because he who lived without fault here did not depart from here without a scourge; he who appeared in the world to heal the sick and raise the dead chose, in order to teach us the example of patience, to leave the world through the weakness of death. Hence, the Psalmist, having said (Psalm. LXVII): Our God is the God of salvation; immediately adds, in admiration or rather in astonishment: And the Lord God has the ways out of death. Therefore, through patience and the consolation of the Scriptures, let us have hope, also of consoling ourselves after our afflictions and pressures, since we too have endured patiently in tribulation, and have recalled to mind their actions, who both by the merit of justice have far surpassed

us, and have endured far greater struggles of adversity than we have. Indeed, they often suffered persecution from the unjust because of the justice in which they excellently shone, so that they might receive, along with the exercise of justice, the crown of invincible patience, and moreover, leave behind with glorious perseverance the preordained footsteps for all who follow them.

However, we are often chastised by the mercy and providence of our Creator for our transgressions, so that, returning to our conscience with healthful compunction, we may diligently punish with tears what we have committed through deceiving allurements and negligences; and thus corrected by the Lord's assistance, we may deserve to belong to the hope of life and to the fellowship of those who, though innocently afflicted, were just. For we also find this in the consolation of the Scriptures, because the Lord blessed all those who fear Him, both small and great (Psalm 113), and declared that in the house of His Father there are many mansions for us. With this consolation now, my most beloved bishop, I daily alleviate the present anxieties of temporal matters, and am not in doubt that you are sublimely encouraged to see the good of the Lord in the land of the living, transcending the evils of men who reign in the land of the dying, as one abundantly supplied not only with the pages of divine writings, but also with their pious expositions, which the venerable Scripture of the fathers has left us. However, since new things sometimes delight more, it seemed to me good to send to your holiness a little work that I recently composed allegorically, following the footsteps of great commentators on the creation of the temple of God, for your perusal.

The more you, being intent on its reading, discover the many mysteries of Christ and the Church embedded in the ancient pages, and the greater the gifts of God which you see promised there, either given to us in the present or promised for the future, the lighter and less concerning you will judge all the vanities and adversities of fleeting things, and the prosperous; following the example of the blessed John, who was banished by a wicked emperor to the confines of a very small island, but was immediately introduced by the pious Creator, through the Spirit, to contemplate those infinite secrets of the heavenly mansions. And where he was thought by deceived enemies to be bereft of the support and company of friendly men, there he deserved to enjoy the vision and conversation of angelic friends. Taught by them, he learned ever more and more to scorn the allurements and bitterness of the world, the more sublimely he beheld those things, which by their greatness and eternity are far more to be feared and loved. Farewell always, my most beloved, and intercede for us.

HERE BEGINS THE BOOK. CHAPTER ONE. That the construction of the tabernacle and the temple represents one and the same Church of Christ.

The house of God which King Solomon built in Jerusalem was made as a figure of the holy universal Church, which is being built daily by the grace of the peaceful king, that is, our Redeemer, from the first chosen one to the last one who will be born at the end of the world. This house partly still journeys from Him on earth, partly, having evaded the hardships of pilgrimage, already reigns with Him in heaven, where, after the final judgment is completed, it will fully reign with Him. To this house belong the chosen angels, whose likeness is

promised to us in the future life, with the Lord saying: "But they who are counted worthy of that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Matthew XIX). To this belongs the Mediator Himself, between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, bearing witness Himself when He said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John II). The evangelist, explaining this, added: "But He spoke of the temple of His body. The Apostle says about us: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? (II Cor. VI).

Therefore, if He became the temple of God through assumed humanity, and we are made the temple of God through His Spirit dwelling in us, it certainly stands that the material temple held the figure of all of us and Himself, that is, the Lord and His members which we are. But of Himself, as the uniquely chosen and precious cornerstone laid in the foundation, and of us as living stones built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, that is, upon the Lord Himself (Ephesians II). This will be better revealed from the considered order of the temple itself, so that in some respects the figure pertains to the Lord Himself, in some respects to all the elect, in some respects it describes the undefiled happiness of the angels in heaven, in some respects the invincible patience of men on earth, in others it shows the help given by angels to men, in others it demonstrates the struggles of men rewarded with angels. The same spiritual house of the Lord is also signified by the tabernacle once made in the desert by Moses (Exodus XXV). But because that house was in the journey to the land of promise, whereas this one was built in the land of promise itself and in the city of Jerusalem; that one, so that it might be transported frequently from place to place by the ministry of the Levites and finally brought into the land of promised inheritance;

this one, so that it might stand with an inviolable foundation always constructed in the royal city itself, till it fulfilled the given role of heavenly figures; in that could be figured the labor and exile of the present Church, in this the future rest and blessedness. Or certainly because that was made by the sons of Israel only, but this by proselytes and gentiles also, in that can be symbolically expressed principally the fathers of the Old Testament and the ancient people of God, in this, however, the Church gathered from the gentiles. Although the building of both houses, thoroughly examined in a spiritual sense, is shown in multiple ways to indicate the daily labors of the present Church, the eternal rewards in the future, and the joys of the heavenly kingdom, and the election of the first Church from Israel, and the salvation of all nations in Christ. Therefore, intending to discuss, with the Lord's help, the construction of the temple, and to seek in the material structure the spiritual dwelling of God, it seems appropriate to say something first about its workers, who and where they were from, and about the building material itself. For the Apostle testifies that these are pregnant with spiritual mysteries, saying, "All these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our instruction" (I Cor. X).

CHAPTER II. How Hiram, King of Tyre, Assisted Solomon in His Work. The historical account in the Books of Kings narrates that Solomon, intending to build a house for the

Lord, sought assistance from Hiram, king of Tyre, who was always a friend of David and had also begun to establish peace with Solomon after he obtained the kingdom. He found Hiram readily willing to assist him in all things, to the extent that Hiram provided him with artisans, wood, and gold as needed. In gratitude for this kindness, Solomon annually provided him with many measures of wheat and oil for his household (1 Kings 5). There is no doubt that Solomon, whose name means "peaceful," both by his name and the very peaceful condition of his reign, signifies the one of whom Isaiah says: "His dominion will be multiplied, and his peace will have no end" (Isaiah 9). Hiram, whose name means "living on high" in Latin, symbolically represents the Gentile believers who are glorious in both faith and life. There is also nothing to prevent considering that Hiram, being a king and assisting Solomon with royal power in the building of the house of the Lord, typically denotes the rulers converted to the faith, through whose aid the Church is often assisted, nobly augmented, and strengthened against heretics, schismatics, and pagans by their princely decrees.

Therefore, Solomon sought help from Hiram in the work of the temple because, when the Lord came in the flesh to build for Himself His beloved house, the Church, He intended to choose assistants from not just the Jews but also from the Gentiles. For from both peoples He took ministers of the word. Hiram sent Solomon cedar and fir wood cut from Lebanon to be placed in the house of the Lord because the converted Gentiles sent to the Lord men who were once renowned in the world but, cut down by the axe of the Lord's admonition, were now cast down and humbled from the mountain of their pride. Being instructed according to the standard of evangelical truth, they are placed in the building of the Church according to their merit or time. He also sent artisans as philosophers converted to true wisdom, who by right were appointed to rule over the peoples by virtue of their teaching, offered by the Lord to the nations. Such was Dionysius the Areopagite in the times of the apostles, such thereafter was the sweet teacher and most steadfast martyr Cyprian, and many others. He also sent gold, which is accepted in the same significance, as it undoubtedly signifies men distinguished by wisdom. For all these offerings the nations expect from the Lord the gifts of heavenly grace, namely the wheat of the word of God, and the oil of charity and anointment, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

It aptly corresponds to the matters of the Church that Solomon urgently says to Hiram for the aid of the sacred work: "So command that cedars be cut for me from Lebanon, and my servants will be with your servants. Indeed, the servants of Hiram, who cut the cedars from Lebanon for Solomon, are the teachers chosen from the nations, whose duty is to correct those who rejoiced in worldly matters and glory, subduing their pride and transferring their will to the service of their Redeemer. Solomon's servants were with those servants, laboring together in the mentioned work; because the first teachers from the nations needed to be instructed in the word of faith by the apostles themselves, who had learned from the Lord, lest if they began to teach without teachers, they would be teachers of error. Therefore Solomon wanted Hiram's servants to cut timber for him from Lebanon, because they were more skilled than his own servants at cutting. And for this reason, he wanted his own

servants to be present, to show the cutters what size the timbers should be. The figure of this matter is evident, as unquestionably the apostles, who were privileged to hear the word of the gospel from the Lord, knew how to preach it more precisely to others; but the gentiles converted from error and transformed to the truth of the Gospel knew the errors of the gentiles better, and as they knew them more precisely, they learned how to refute and nullify them more skillfully.

Indeed, Paul knew the mystery of the Gospel better, which he learned through revelation, but Dionysius could better refute the false doctrines of Athens, whose errors and all the arguments he had known since childhood. To this understanding corresponds aptly what follows: "For you know that there is no one among my people who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians. For there was no one among the people of the Jews, where the Lord physically taught, who knew so skillfully to refute the errors of the nations, as the gentiles converted to faith, and made Christians from the nations. For the Sidonians and Tyrians, being people of the gentiles, are rightly taken in figure to represent the gentiles.

CHAPTER III. How many workmen Solomon had in the work of the temple. How many servants our Solomon has sent into this work is indicated in the following mystical speech: "Solomon chose workmen from all Israel, and the number was thirty thousand men, and he sent them to Lebanon ten thousand by month in rotation, so that they were in their own homes for two months. First, it should be noted that Solomon did not choose workers from all of Israel in vain, nor was there any portion of the people from which worthy men were not chosen, because now they are not to be chosen from one tribe of Aaron's priesthood, but they are to be sought from the whole Church, who are sufficient to build the Lord's house either by their example or by their teaching, and wherever they are found, they are to be immediately promoted to the office of teachers without any respect of persons. When such men are ordained to instruct the unfaithful and call them into the fellowship of the Church, they are nurtured as brave and chosen men to fell the materials for the temple in Lebanon. Indeed, the number of thirty thousand, in which these woodcutters were counted, can be aptly referred to the figure of those who are perfected in the faith of the Trinity, which is especially fitting to teachers. But because thirty thousand were so ordered that ten thousand labored in the holy work each month, we must consider the sacrament of the number ten more carefully.

Ten thousand men from Israel are sent to cut wood for the work of the Lord, because whoever are to be ordained as teachers and instructors of the ignorant must both observe the ten commandments of the law in all things themselves and teach their hearers that they must be observed, and must always hope for and intimate to their hearers the rewards in heaven, which are usually figured by the denarius. Furthermore, the three months during which the rotation was imposed on each group of cutters typically announce the perfection of the three virtues of the Gospels, namely almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. When the Lord said in the Gospel, "Take heed that you do not do your righteousness before men, to be seen by them" (Matthew 6); in the continuation of the same sentence, he mentioned nothing other

than almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, which are to be done not for the display to men, but for the glory of the internal observer alone, otherwise they would remain void of the fruit of eternity. By these words, he clearly taught that all the fruits of virtues are insinuated by these three, as if by branches springing from the one root of charity. For by almsgiving is comprehended all that we work benevolently towards our brothers to fulfill the love of neighbor. Through prayer, we join ourselves to our Creator in all things through internal compunction.

Through fasting, we guard ourselves from the contamination of sins and the enticements of the world, so that with a free mind and chaste body, we may constantly adhere to the love of our Creator and our neighbor. And these are the three months of the temple workers. For since a month is completed by the fullness of the days of the lunar cycle, through it the fullness of each one's spiritual virtue is shown, in which the mind of the faithful is daily illuminated by the Lord, as the moon is by the sun. One month during which wood was cut for the work of the temple means almsgiving, that is, the work of mercy by which we labor for the salvation of our neighbor, that by progressing well they may arrive in the unity of the holy Church, by teaching, correcting, spending temporal goods, and showing examples of life. The other two months, during which they were allowed to remain in their own houses and attend to their own needs, represent prayer and fasting, by which, besides the efforts towards the needs of our brothers externally, we inwardly turn our mind to the Lord to care for our own salvation. And since they alone perfectly care for either their own or their brother's salvation, who humbly submit to the insight of divine grace, it rightly follows: And Adoniram was over such a levy. For Adoniram, who is called "My Lord is exalted" in Latin, insinuates none better than the Lord Savior, whom he imitates by name.

And now Adoniram is placed over the temple workers so that by his provision it is duly ordered, in which months each should go out to work, and when they should return again to care for their own house; since the Lord and our Savior, with His familiar illumination, informs the minds of holy preachers to discern when it is fitting to undertake the work of building the Church by preaching or performing other works of piety; and when it is again appropriate to return to examine their own conscience, as if to inspect their own house, and render it worthy of the heavenly visitor and inspector through prayers and fasting. Therefore, Solomon had seventy thousand who bore burdens, and eighty thousand hewers in the mountain, besides the chiefs who numbered three thousand three hundred, overseeing the people and those who did the work. He calls hewers of stones stonemasons. The same hewers of stones and wood also figuratively designate the holy preachers, who labor with the word of God on the minds of the foolish, and strive to transform them from the baseness and deformity in which they were born, and responsibly render them suitable for the unity of the faithful, that is, for edification.

And both wood and stones are cut in the mountain, and the hewn and prepared materials are transported to the mountain of the house of the Lord, showing that all men are born on the mountain of pride, because we have derived the origin of our flesh from the transgression

of the first man, which pride caused. Whoever, by the grace of God, are preordained for life, are cut down through catechizing and receiving the sacraments of faith, and are transferred from the mountain of pride to the mountain of the house of the Lord, because they are rescued from the power of darkness to the summit of virtues, which is in the unity of the holy Church. It should be noted, however, that these workers were so distributed that part were cutting stones in the mountain, and part were carrying burdens. For there are diverse gifts of the Spirit, and some have greater constancy in speaking and rebuking the unruly, some are gentler for consoling the faint-hearted and uplifting the weak, and some are endowed with the gift of both virtues meeting for the work of the Lord; such as those whom the Apostle speaks to, saying: "Admonish the unruly, comfort the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient with all. But the officers who were over each work are the authors of the holy Scripture, by whose teaching we are instructed in all ways how to teach the ignorant, rebuke the contemptuous, how we should bear one another's burdens to fulfill the law of Christ.

And the more anyone labors in supporting the needs of others, or in correcting their faults, the more certain future rewards he expects, whether of the rest of souls after death or of the blessed immortality of the bodies. Hence rightly the aforementioned workers are said to be seventy thousand and eighty thousand. Seventy, for the sabbath rest of souls; for the seventh day is consecrated for rest. Eighty, for the hope of resurrection, which preceded on the eighth day, that is, after the sabbath in the Lord, and is also hoped to come for us on the eighth day and in the eighth age. The chiefs, however, were three thousand three hundred, accurately signifying the faith of the holy Trinity, which the holy Scriptures preach to us. And if, instead of three thousand three hundred chiefs, it is written three thousand six hundred in the book of Chronicles, it refers to the same perfection of those noble men. For since the Lord completed the adornment of the world in the number six, rightly in it the works of the good are frequently figured; and because holy Scripture, with the faith of truth, teaches us to have works of justice, rightly it is testified that the chiefs of the temple were three thousand six hundred. Nor should it be passed over that these seventy and eighty thousand burden bearers and stonemasons with their chiefs were not from Israel, but from proselytes, that is, strangers dwelling among them. For it is written in the book of Chronicles:

"Solomon counted all the men who were aliens in the land of Israel, after the number which David his father had counted, and they found one hundred fifty-three thousand six hundred, and made seventy thousand of them bearers of burdens," etc. Proselytes were called in Greek those who, having come from other nations, by accepting circumcision, had entered into the faith and fellowship of the people of God. Therefore, the workers of the house of the Lord were from the children of Israel, from proselytes, and from the Gentiles. From the children of Israel, namely, thirty thousand were sent to cut cedars from Lebanon. From the proselytes those of whom we were just speaking, stonemasons. From the Gentiles, Hiram himself and his servants, who cut wood from Lebanon with the servants of Solomon. Indeed, every kind of man, by which the church was to be built, preceded in the building of the

temple. For Jews, proselytes, and Gentiles converted to the truth of the Gospel, construct one and the same Church of Christ, whether by living rightly or by teaching.

CHAPTER IV. Of what kind of stone the temple is made. And the king commanded that they should take large, precious stones for the foundation of the temple, etc. The foundation of the temple is mystically understood as nothing other than what the Apostle shows, saying: For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid, which is Jesus Christ (I Cor. III). Who, therefore, may rightly be called the foundation of the house of the Lord, because (as Peter says) there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts IV). Into this foundation, large and precious stones are taken, when eminent men by their deeds and holiness adhere with intimate holiness of mind to their Creator, so that the more firmly they place their hope in Him, the more strongly they suffice to guide the lives of others, which means to bear the breadth. Thus, the stones which were placed in the foundation of the temple to bear the entire building are properly the prophets and apostles, who received the word and sacraments of truth, whether visibly or invisibly, from the wisdom of God itself. Hence, we who strive to imitate their doctrine and life according to our capacity, are said by the Apostle to be founded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph. II).

But also, generally, all the perfect ones, who have learned to adhere faithfully to the Lord Himself and to bear strongly the necessities of their brethren imposed upon them, can be indicated by these large and precious stones. These stones are rightly ordered to be first squared and then placed in the foundation. For every square thing, whichever way it is turned, is accustomed to stand fixed. To which figure indeed the hearts of the elect are likened, who have learned to stand in the firmness of faith such that by no adversity of occurring events, nor even by death itself, can they be inclined from their uprightness of state. Such teachers the Church has received abundantly, not only from Judea but also from the Gentiles. Hence, it is fittingly added about such large, precious, and squared stones: Which the builders of Solomon and the builders of Hiram dressed. Precious stones are dressed, indeed, when the chosen believers, by the instruction and diligence of the saints, leave behind whatever harmful and vain elements they have within themselves, and before the sight of their Creator, they show only the rule of inherent justice, as the form of squaring. The stones, however, were worked upon not only by Solomon's masons but also by Hiram's masons, because from both groups of God's people there were some who by the right of their eminent teachers also became teachers, and as it were, squared them to prepare the lifting of the building to the house of the Lord.

For not only Jeremiah and Isaiah and the other prophets from among the circumcision but also the blessed Job with his sons, who were from the Gentiles, provided to the teachers of the following age the highest example of life and patience and the greatest proclamations of salvific doctrine, so that with unnecessary words, acts, and thoughts cast aside, they would become worthy and fit to bear the burden of the Holy Church. Moreover, the Giblites prepared wood and stones for building the house. Giblos is a city of Phoenicia, mentioned

by Ezekiel, saying, "Thy wise men, O Tyre, became thy pilots; the elders of Gebal and its wise men" (Ezek. 27), in lieu of which in Hebrew it is Gobel or Gebel, which means 'defining' or 'bordering'. This term aptly suits those who prepare the hearts of men for the spiritual building, constructed from the virtues of the soul. Thus, indeed, their listeners are able to teach faith and works of justice, while they themselves, having been first educated by the holy scriptures, have learned diligently the sure definition of truth, what faith is to be held, and the path of virtues to be walked. For one who ignores the discernment of the Catholic faith claimed the office of doctor in vain. Nor do they build a sanctuary for the Lord, but rather ruin for themselves, those who try to teach others a rule which they themselves have not learned.

In building the house of the Lord, first it is necessary to cut the wood and stones from the mountain; because those whom we seek to instruct in the faith of the truth, we must first teach to renounce the devil and be released by being reborn from the lot of the first transgression in which they were born. Then we must seek precious and large stones, and place them in the foundation of the temple; so that we remember, having rejected former conduct, to examine their lives and morals in all things, to set them as an example for our listeners to imitate, whom we know to particularly adhere to the Lord through the virtue of humility, whom we see to endure immovable as if squared against all incursions of temptations with invincible mental stability, whom we recognize as precious and large by reputation and merit. After such significant and great stones are composed in the foundation, the house must be built with carefully prepared woods and stones, and placed in proper order, having been formerly abstracted from their original situation or root: because after the rudiments of faith, after laying in us the foundation of humility following the example of eminent men, a wall of good works must be added upwards, as if by superimposed layers of stones, by walking and progressing from virtue to virtue. Or certainly the large, precious, squared stones of the foundation are the first, as I said before, teachers of the churches, who heard the word of salvation directly from the Lord.

The subsequent orders of stones or woods are the successive priests and teachers of their time, by whose preaching and ministry the Ecclesia building grows or is arranged with virtues. Moreover, the color of the stones with which the temple was made is clearly stated in the book of Paralipomenon, with David speaking to Solomon, showing him the expenses for the temple which he had prepared: "I have prepared every precious stone and Parian marble in abundance. But Parian marble says white marble, such as that island is accustomed to produce; whence the poet says: Olearon, and snow-white Paros, and the scattered Cyclades across the sea, and we read the frequent straights stirred by the winds.

Therefore, he calls Paros snow-white, because it sends marble of the whitest kind: moreover, it is one of the Cyclades, with which stone Josephus indicates the temple had been made, saying: "He raised the temple to the ceiling, constructed from white stone, its height was 60 cubits and one hundred" (Book VIII Antiquities 3); nor is the meaning of the mystery hidden. For it is clear to anyone that the white marble from which the house of the Lord

is constructed signifies the clean action of the chosen ones and a conscience purified from every stain of corruption. Such as the wise architect wished them to be, placing them as precious stones adorned with gold and silver upon the foundation of Christ: "Beloved," he said, "let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, completing holiness in the fear of God."

CHAPTER V. When and where the temple was built. Thus it happened in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, etc. What is said in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month of King Solomon over Israel, is the intended meaning. In the fourth year of King Solomon, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month. The second month, however, is called May: for April, in which the Passover is celebrated, was the beginning of months among the Hebrews, the first of the months of the year. From this it is plainly evident that immediately, after the Passover was completed, he began to build the house for the Lord, and the people, consecrated by the mystical solemnity, set their hands to the mystical work. There is also a mention of the exodus from Egypt when the tabernacle began to be built, so that the reader may be reminded of how many years elapsed between the construction of each house, and may recognize the spiritual sacrament of this total period. For four hundred and twenty make four hundred and eighty. Four, however, are aptly suited to the evangelical perfection, because of the number of the evangelists themselves. One hundred and twenty pertain to the teaching of the law, because of the same number of years as the lawgiver.

In this number, too, the grace of the Holy Spirit was received by the early Church, clearly showing that those who use the law lawfully, that is, recognizing and embracing the grace of Christ in it, are rightly filled with the grace of His Spirit, by which they become more fervent in His love. We have also said that by the tabernacle which Moses and the children of Israel made in the desert, the synagogue was meant; but by the temple which Solomon and the children of Israel, with the help of proselytes and Gentiles, constructed, the church of the Gentiles can be designated. The worship and religion of the tabernacle remained for four hundred and eighty years, and then the temple began to be built, because the scripture of the Old Testament abounds with such perfection that if anyone understands it well, it contains within itself all the mysteries of the New Testament. Many of the fathers of the Old Testament lived with such a pinnacle of perfection that they should in no way be considered inferior to the apostles and apostolic men. The tabernacle remained with the people of God until the construction of the temple, for four hundred and eighty years, that is, one hundred and twenty multiplied by four: for from the time of the giving of the law of God until the incarnation of the Lord and the time of revealed grace, there have never been lacking men who, established in the law, observed the evangelical perfection in mind and work;

nor was there a lack of scripture that intimated the grace of the New Testament in the Old with prophetic sayings. But the fact that the house of the Lord began to be built in the fourth year of King Solomon can be mystically referred to as occurring after the completion of the dispensation of the Lord's incarnation, written in the four books of the Gospel, sent

down from Heaven by the Holy Spirit, and the structure of the church began. And the fact that it was begun in the second month can be referred to the choice of the Gentiles, who received the building after Israel was first. Hence the second month was granted in the law for making the Passover to those who were unclean because of a soul or who were far away and could not come in the first month to make the Passover. In which we are most clearly designated, who were unclean because of the death of our soul, and still far off from the people of God, unable to keep the first Passover, which was made in the flesh and blood of the Lamb. But today we celebrate the second Passover, made in the body and blood of our Redeemer, by whom we have been sought and cleansed. As for the place where the temple was built, it is more clearly shown in the book of Chronicles, where it is written:

And Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, which had been shown to David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (2 Chron. 3). Therefore, the house of the Lord is built on the mountain, in the vision of peace, because the church, expanded throughout the world, stands firm in one and the same faith and in the fellowship of Catholic truth. For God is not in the division of minds, but His place is made in peace, and His habitation in Zion (Psalm 75). It is built on the mountain, namely on the Lord the Savior Himself, about whom Isaiah says: "In the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established at the summit of the mountains" (Isaiah 2). And He says about Himself in the Gospel: "A city set on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5). He is indeed the mountain of mountains, who, though He arose from the earth through the origin of the flesh He assumed, surpasses the power and sanctity of all earthborn beings by the summit of His unique dignity. Certainly, on this mountain the city or house of the Lord is erected, for if our hope and faith do not take root in Him, they are nothing.

This mountain is rightly called Moriah, that is, the vision, because He deigns to see and help His chosen, who labor in this present life, preserving them for the eternal vision of His glory. For He is the place where Abraham offered his son Isaac to the Lord and, by the devotion of his obedience, deserved to be seen by Him, from which it also received its name. Hence, the Lord says: "Take your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of vision, and offer him as a burnt offering" (Genesis 22). For the land of vision, in Hebrew, it says the land of Moriah. And because the sacrifice of Isaac prefigured the Lord's Passion, it is rightly that a temple is built on the place of the same sacrifice; for by faith and the mysteries of the Lord's Passion, the church, dedicated, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. About this mountain, it is well added: "Which was shown to David his father. For it was shown to David, as well as to the other prophets, that the Lord would come in the flesh, who would cleanse the church called from the Gentiles from sins through the sacraments of His own Incarnation, and would consecrate it as a faithful and beloved house for Himself. It is well, however, added: "In the place which David had prepared. For David had prepared a place for the Lord by singing, and the other prophets by prophesying, truly to Solomon, in whom the house would be built;

for they established the hearts of their hearers in the faith of the truth, diligently admonishing them to receive the Son of God coming in the flesh with a faithful and devoted mind. Hence, the Lord, about the peoples prepared to believe in Him, says to His disciples: "Lift up your eyes, and see the fields, that they are already white for harvest; and he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together" (John 4). As if He were saying with other words about the building of the temple: "Lift up your eyes, and see the place, for it is now ready for the building of the house of the Lord. And he who builds by teaching receives wages, and gathers precious stones into eternal life, that both he who prepares the place and he who builds may rejoice together"; that is, the prophet predicting the coming of the Lord and the apostle proclaiming His coming both obtain one reward together. The same place was well in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, for the church is customarily designated by the term threshing floor, as John says about the Lord: "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor" (Matthew 3:12). Ornan, who is interpreted as illuminated, was a Jebusite by nation.

By nationality, he signifies the Gentiles, but by name shows those same Gentiles to be enlightened by the Lord and transformed into sons of the Church, to whom the Apostle rightly says: "You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8). Jebus is the same city as Jerusalem. And Jebus indeed means trampled; but Jerusalem means the vision of peace: in which, as long as Ornan, a Gentile, reigned, it was called Jebus. When David bought the place of the burnt offering in it, and Solomon built the Temple of the Lord in it, it was no longer called Jebus, but Jerusalem; for surely the Gentiles, as long as they remained ignorant of the divine worship, were trampled upon and mocked by unclean spirits, following as they were led towards mute idols. But when the grace of their Creator regarded them, they immediately found both the place and name of peace within themselves, with the Lord saying about them: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). Therefore, when Ornan still had the kingdom in this city, it was called Jebus; but when he sold the place of his threshing floor with the oxen and threshing sledges to King David, it received the name Jerusalem; for while the Gentiles persisted in their obstinacy, they were trampled upon, as vile and abject, by malignant spirits.

But when they learned to sell all their possessions and offer them to the true King, they could no longer be trampled on by demons and vices but became more composed of the inner peace which they had with their Creator.

Chapter VI. Of what measure it was made. The house which King Solomon built for the Lord had 60 cubits in length, etc. The length of the house signifies the longsuffering of the holy Church, by which in the exile of this pilgrimage patiently tolerates all adversities, until it reaches the homeland it expects. The width intimates charity, by which, with the breadth of the heart opened, it rejoices to love not only friends in God but also enemies for God's sake, until the time comes when, with its enemies converted or utterly destroyed, it rejoices with

friends alone in God in peace. The height proclaims the hope of future remuneration, by the consideration of which it willingly despises all lowly things, whether they allure or oppose, until, surpassing both, it alone deserves to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living; hence the length of the house is aptly comprehended by the number sixty cubits. For the number six, in which the world was made, usually designates the perfection of good works. And it is necessary for us to bear the distresses of our pilgrimage with patience, so that by the merit of good operation we may be able to enter the promised homeland when it appears. The width is determined by the number twenty, on account of the double aspect of charity, by which we love God and our neighbor.

The height by the number thirty, on account of the faith of the holy Trinity, who is [which is] one God, in the vision of whom all the desires of our hope are suspended. Thus six pertains to the perfection of work, two to the love of God and neighbor, three to the hope of divine vision. Each of these numbers is rightly multiplied by ten because it is only through faith and the observance of the Decalogue of the law that either our patience is healthfully exercised, or charity is beneficially kindled, or hope is sublimely carried off to eternal desires. It should be noted here that the 30 cubits of height did not reach to the roof of the temple but to the lower ceiling: for it is clearly written in the book of Chronicles that the height was 120 cubits (II Chron. III). The mysteries of which will be more aptly treated later, when the order of reading reaches the middle and third chambers. There was a portico in front of the temple 20 cubits in length, according to the measure of the width of the temple, and it was 10 cubits wide in front of the face of the temple. Of this portico, it is written in the book of Chronicles: But the portico in front of the house was extended in length according to the measure of the width of the house, 20 cubits. Thus it is evident that this portico was made on the eastern part of the temple.

For the temple was oriented to the east, just as the tabernacle, and it had the door of the portico facing the east towards the door of the temple, as the Jewish historian Josephus very clearly teaches: so that the rising equinoctial sun, with the lines of its rays directed through the three doors, namely of the portico, the temple, and the oracle, could shed light upon the Ark of the Covenant (Antiq. l. VIII, c. 3). Because the temple designates the holy Church, the portico which was in front of and closer to the temple usually received the sunlight; what is more fitting than to consider that it typifies that part which preceded the times of the Lord's incarnation? in which the patriarchs and prophets are included, who were the first to receive the rising Sun of Righteousness in this world, and they bore witness to the Lord being born in the flesh, either by living, preaching, being born, or dying. Therefore, the door of the temple is the Lord; because no one comes to the Father except through Him. Hence, elsewhere He says: I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved (John X). The door of the portico is the prophetic word, which guided those entering by a straight path to the door of the Lord; because it proclaimed the grace of the Lord Savior, by which He was to redeem the world. Therefore, the entire construction of the portico signifies the faithful of that time.

Accordingly, the door in the portico symbolizes the teachers, who illuminated others with the light of life and opened the gate of entry to the Lord. And rightly there is one door because of the consonant faith and love for the truth among all the saints; which portico, according to the width of the temple, was twenty cubits long, because the ancient just awaited with much patience and long-suffering the time when the Lord, manifest in the flesh, would bring the new grace of the Gospel to the world, not themselves having received the promises, but seeing and greeting them from afar. Therefore, they equaled the length of the temple in their own length, because with the long-suffering of a devout mind they desired the expansion of the Church in the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; although they were as yet separated by time from the sacraments of the Lord's incarnation, they were nevertheless near in faith and proclamation. In the very front part of this most sacred portico were the blessed proto-martyr Abel, Seth, Enoch, and the other just ones of the original world; in its innermost part and almost near the mystical wall of the temple, the parents of the Lord's precursor, Simeon, Anna, and others occupied a place. And although they merited to see His birth, they could not reach the hearing of His doctrine and the perception of His sacraments.

This portico was well ten cubits wide, because such as these, even if they had not yet received the words or mysteries of the Gospel, which were to be delivered through the Lord; nevertheless, they kept the commandments of the Decalogue, which they received, with a heart enlarged in perfect love of the Lord.

CHAPTER VII. On its windows and panels around. And he made windows for the temple with oblique latticework. The windows of the temple are holy teachers and spiritual ones in the Church, who, being spiritually elevated, are permitted to see the heavenly secrets more clearly than others. When they reveal publicly to the faithful what they see in secret, it is as if the oblique lattice windows, which were wider inside, receive the sunlight; because it is necessary for anyone who perceives the light of higher contemplation, even for a moment, to immediately broaden the embrace of their heart by greater diligence in chastening and preparing for higher deeds. And he built chambers around the wall of the temple, in the walls of the house, around the temple and the oracle, and made lateral chambers around it. The upper chamber had a width of five cubits, the middle chamber six cubits, and the third chamber seven cubits in width (Matt. IV). These chambers in the Gospel, where the Lord was tempted by the devil, were called the pinnacles of the temple. And we read also that James, the brother of the Lord, an apostle, was lifted to the pinnacle of the temple, from where he preached to the people (Hegesippus, l. V). However, whether it was customary for teachers to sit in these chambers to make sermons to the crowd below, we do not find anywhere in the Scriptures.

Therefore, the reason for the sacrament is clear, because these three chambers represent the three degrees of the faithful, namely those who are married, those who are continent, and virgins, distinguished indeed by the height of their profession but all relating to the house of God and adhering to it with a fixed mind in the same faith and truth. Where it

is beautifully said, the upper chamber had a width of five cubits, the middle six, the third seven. Therefore, the upper chamber was narrower than the others, the middle wider than the upper, but narrower than the lowest, because an exalted profession of virtue should uphold a higher way of living. For whoever has renounced the bond of marriage and consecrated their virginity to the Lord should also display manners worthy of virginity. They should abstain from idle talk, anger, strife, slander, indecent attire, feasting, drinking, contention, and jealousy; and on the contrary, they should devote themselves to holy vigils, prayers, divine readings, psalms, teachings, and almsgiving, as well as other fruits of the Spirit, such that they hold the state of future life in their profession where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven. They should strive to imitate this state, as much as possible for mortals, in the present. But the lowest chamber had a greater width, because it is not said to the married: "Go, sell what you have and give to the poor"; but, "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.

You shall not commit murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness," and so on (Matt. XIX). The continent hold a middle place, inferior to the virgins but superior to the married. Their most glorious portion built the primitive church in Jerusalem, where it is written by blessed Luke, "The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul," and so on (Acts IV). History testifies that most of them had left their wifely embraces, as it mentions in the story of Saint Stephen, where it calls the women of the same religion, not wives, but widows of them. Each floor had walls around it, that is, little towers, so that no one standing or sitting on the same floors could fall to the lower levels (Acts VI), which we read happened to King Ahaziah in Samaria. Truly, these walls are fittingly designated as the daily defenses of divine protection towards us. Concerning which the Psalmist says: "The angel of the Lord shall encamp around those who fear him, and deliver them" (Psalm XXXIII). Indeed, King Ahaziah of Samaria ascended to the upper room, he who had separated himself from the house of David, but fell through the lattice;

because even if heretics or schismatics seem to ascend some height of good action, since they do not have the bond of Church unity, as if protected by open and unstable walls, they always relapse into the depths of vice, while, deprived of divine aid, they perish in the pride of their stubbornness. It is explained by what skill these aforementioned floors are attached to the walls of the temple when it is added: "He placed beams around the house on the outside, so they would not be attached to the walls of the temple. Therefore, the beams that fortified and adorned the house from the inside were so long that their ends projected outward: indeed, in the lowest order seven cubits, in the middle six, in the highest five. And on these ends of the beams the floors were placed, not attached to the temple walls, but positioned next to the walls, on the beams that extended from the walls. Who then are designated as the beams of the house, which carry the floors, if not preachers? While themselves holding a high and honorable place in the church of God, they lift the weaker and more fragile away from the desire of the lowly by their preaching, and elevate them to desire and hope for heavenly things. They also help by their intercessions, so that they may

persist in their endeavors. We read in the book of Chronicles that the beams of the temple, like its other interiors, were covered with gold.

There is no doubt that this was so, the parts of the beams which were inside the temple were covered with gold plates, but the parts that were visible outside were not gilded, showing the appearance and shape of the cedar itself, on which the floors were laid. Therefore, what part of the beams protruded outward signifies the life of the saints, which could become known to us below. What shone gilded inside the temple metaphorically signifies the clarity with which they rejoice in the heavenly homeland in the sight of their Creator. This clarity of the golden beams was visible only to those who had entered the temple, because how great is the abundance of the sweetness of God, which he hides for those who fear him, and those who perfectly hope in him, only those who have merited to enter the heavenly kingdom know. Yet, when we see or read about the life, sufferings, and teachings of the saints, we are motivated by their example, as if we are lifted up from the earth by the ends of the beams that appear outward, because although we still cannot perceive the internal glory of the saints, from what we have been able to see outwardly, we faithfully adhere to the lofty members of the Church. We can also understand these things about the saints still in this life, whose purity of love, with which they shine in the hidden parts of their hearts before the Lord, we cannot see.

Yet, from what they show outwardly by speaking, acting, or suffering, we find help for our salvation.

The house, however, when it was being built from hewn stones, etc. These things properly belong to that part of the church which, after the labors and struggles of this age, will have deserved to be introduced to eternal rewards. For there only the perfect and spotless, and those chastened from every stain of iniquity, enter. For nothing defiled, making an abomination and falsehood, will enter that city, as John wrote in the Apocalypse. Hammer and axe, and every tool of iron, are not heard, because here we are beaten with adversities, and we are exercised by the discipline of truth, that there we may be arranged in places according to our merit, and with chastisement ceasing, by the glue of love alone, by which we are bound to one another, we may be enriched by being filled with one spirit. However, although it is said: Noah was a perfect man in his generations, and blessed are the spotless in the way, and such like, no one can truly be perfect and without blemish, as long as he walks in the way of this life. For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin. Nevertheless, according to the manner of this time, those are called perfect and spotless, who will then truly be perfected, when, released from the bonds of the body, they reach that immortal beauty of the house of the Lord, and ascend to the place of the tabernacle of His glory, and only the perfect and spotless, and those chastened from every stain of iniquity, will enter that city.

CHAPTER VIII On the ascent or structure of the middle and third tabernacle. The door of the middle side was on the right side of the house, etc. Some, misunderstanding this place, think that the door of the temple was on the south, not paying attention that if Scripture

had wanted to signify this, it would not say in this way: the door of the middle side was on the right side of the house, but rather simply, and the house had a door to the south. Now, however, it signifies something far different. The right side of the house, indeed, refers to the southern side of the temple. In whose eastern part the door was made at the very corner, near the ground. Entering in, they immediately ascended gradually to higher places, having a way of ascent through the very inner sides of the wall, until by such a journey they reached the middle chamber, and from the middle to the third. This is undoubtedly the case, although Scripture does not say so, because ascending in this way they had very frequent windows from the south, by the light of which they could make the journey surely and without stumbling. This place indeed specifically regards the body of the Lord, which he took from the Virgin. For the door of the middle side was on the right side of the house, because when the Lord died on the cross, one of the soldiers opened his side with a spear.

And rightfully on the right side of the house, because the holy Church believes that his right side was opened by the soldier. Where the evangelist also used an apt word, not to say struck or wounded, but opened, as if the door of the middle side, through which the way to heavenly things would be opened to us. Accordingly, he added: And immediately blood and water came out. Water with which we are washed in baptism, and blood with which we are consecrated in the holy chalice. Through this door, we have an ascent into the middle chamber, and from the middle to the third; because through the faith and mysteries of our Redeemer, from the present conversation of the church, we ascend to the rest of souls after death, and again from the rest of souls on the coming day of judgment to the immortality of bodies as if to the third chamber with a higher advancement, from which we will live forever in great happiness of both, namely body and soul. Which journey was indeed done invisibly, so that only those who entered knew it, although those outside also saw the door itself, because indeed the acts of the faithful in this world, and the celebrations of the sacraments can also be seen by the reprobates; but the secrets of faith and the grace of intimate love none recognize unless through these things the Lord as a guide leads to heavenly things. For whoever says he knows God, and does not keep his commandments, is a liar.

It should be noted that the height of 30 cubits, mentioned above, reached up to the middle chamber. Additionally, another thirty cubits were added up to the third chamber, reaching the portico that surrounded the temple from the south, north, and west, as we learn from the account of Josephus. Then, up to the top of the temple roof, another 60 cubits were counted, thus the total height of the house, according to the book of Chronicles, was completed at 120 cubits. The portico, which was in front of the temple to the east, according to the testimony of the aforementioned volume, had the same height in cubits. The book calls the porticoes we mentioned around the temple, storehouses and chambers. Moreover, David gave his son Solomon the description of the portico and temple, and the storehouses, and upper chambers, and inner rooms in the sanctuary and the house of atonement. He also mentioned the outer houses that were beyond the court of priests around the temple when he immediately added: "And also all the courts and rooms around for the treasuries of the house of the Lord, and the treasuries of the holy things. The fact that the entire height of

the temple was 120 cubits refers to the same mystery, that the early church in Jerusalem, after the passion, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord into heaven, received the grace of the Holy Spirit in this number of men.

For fifteen, which consists of seven and eight, is sometimes referred to as a signification of future life, which is now carried on in the rest of the souls of the faithful and will be completed at the end of the world in the resurrection of immortal bodies. The fifteen taken in a triangular number, that is, when all its parts are counted, make 120. Therefore, the number of one hundred and twenty appropriately signifies the great blessedness of the elect in the future life. Aptly in this, the third chamber of the house of the Lord is consummated, because after the present labors of the faithful, after the rest of the souls is received in the future, the full happiness of the whole church will be completed in the glory of the resurrection. To this mystery it also pertains, as we have said, that the Lord, rising from the dead and ascending to heaven, sent the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire to this number of men, who made those who were separated by the diversity of languages have a common speech in the praise of God. For the church also, rising from death in its own time, and ascending to heaven in corrupted flesh, will be fully and perfectly illuminated by the gift of the Holy Spirit, when according to the promise of the apostle God will be all in all.

Then there will be a complete union of languages in all to proclaim the great deeds of God because in harmonious mind and voice, everyone will praise the glory of the divine majesty, which they will see present.

CHAPTER IX. That the walls are covered with cedar and the floor with fir. And he built the house, and completed it, etc. The ceilings are panels, which, arranged and decorated with great beauty, are affixed with beams to the lower part. And because the house of the Lord was made with three floors, it undoubtedly had three ceilings. But what more fitting can we believe is signified by the ceilings than the more elevated righteous ones in the holy church? Whose work and teaching, set forth as an example to all, preeminently stands out as if higher up, and who, through their intercessions and exhortations, protect the minds of the weak, so they do not fall in temptations. These ceilings, appropriately, are described as being made of cedar. For cedar is a tree of entirely imperishable nature, of pleasant odor, bright appearance, driving away and killing serpents with its burning scent. These attributes suit those who are perfect, whose patience is invincible, their fame of virtues is outstanding, their presence is most pleasing to all good people, their authority is most steadfast in overcoming and refuting those who resist the truth, who in this life and in the next shine with singular eminence above other saints.

And he built a platform over the entire house, etc. It signifies little towers that were made around the highest part of the roof of the house, lest anyone reaching higher spots might suddenly fall down. Moses commanded this to be done in every house that anyone would build. He said, "When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you do not bring bloodshed on your house if someone falls from it. These platforms or little towers are called side structures above; where it was said, "He built platforms around

the wall of the temple, on the walls of the house, around the temple and the oracle"; immediately it was added, "And he made sides around it. In these sides, indeed, we understand that divine protections are designated, which assist us daily, laboring still in this world and striving towards higher things as much as we can, so that we do not fail. We should understand this place according to its form, but with the distinction that in this life, amid frequent temptations from the enemy or obstacles from our own frailty, we are defended by the constant gift of divine grace so that we do not fall. In that other life, however, which the highest roof of the temple, as we have taught above, signifies, we are so fortified by the grace of present protection that we neither wish to sin anymore, nor can we, nor are we affected by any fear of death, pain, or tempting adversary.

Concerning the present helps from the Lord, as from the sides of the platforms, the Lord Himself says, speaking of His people: "He called upon me, and I will hear him and glorify him. But concerning the future grace with which that heavenly city is illuminated, the prophet says to the same city: "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," and so forth to: "He makes peace in your borders. But this platform is rightly remembered to be five cubits high in the roof of the house of the Lord, because in that homeland, the presence of divine brightness fills us so that our sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch have nothing sweet except to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength; and to love our neighbor as ourselves. And he covered the house with cedars. Here it refers to the very highest roof of the house, that is, the platform that was placed on top of the highest beams. The temple, like the tabernacle, did not have a peak at the top but was flat, as it is customary for all builders in Palestine and Egypt to construct houses this way. But this very framework, with which the house and ceilings are covered, signifies the eminent men in the glory of resurrection, and those who attain the pinnacle of virtue with unparalleled sanctity; of one of whom it is said: Among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist (Matt. XI).

If you wish to know the magnitude of his comparison, hear what the Angel said to his father: He will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke I). And he built the walls of the house inside with cedar panels, from the floor of the house to the top of the walls, and covered the ceilings with wood. The inside of the house was lined with cedar. For externally the stone itself, of which it was made, shone with such brilliance as if it were covered with a white stone. According to mystical senses, the walls of the temple are the people of the faithful, from whom the universal Holy Church consists, whose expansion through the world the width of the walls indicates, and the hope and all intention directed towards heavenly things the height indicates. Or certainly the height of the wall, which consists of the orders of stones placed one upon another, designates the state of the present Church; where the elect, all built upon the foundation of Christ, succeed in order over the course of times in succession, supporting one another, fulfill the law of Christ, which is love. For as those who are now taught by preceding teachers, in turn teach others, as in orders laid upon one another like living stones in the house of God, they are carried by the steadfastness fixed

by others, so that they themselves suffice to carry others unto the last, who will be born at the end of the world, the righteous;

who, as if placed at the top of the house of God, are taught and carried by others, but do not have those they would teach, or whose frailty they should tolerate; who indeed are covered with cedar panels within, when the hearts of the faithful overflow with the love of virtue. For as we have taught above, the nature of cedar typically denotes perfect men; so also in appropriate places, it not unjustly designates the height of virtues by which that same perfection is attained. But all things are covered with wood, from the floor of the house to the top of the walls, and to the ceilings, when the elect from the rudiments of faith to the perfection of good action, and up to the entry into the heavenly homeland, do not cease to labor in good works, as from the first just to the last, in the consummation of the age, all strive for virtues, by whose merit they can rightly declare, for we are a pleasing aroma of Christ to God in every place. And he covered the floor with pine boards. This is more fully explained in the book of Chronicles, where it is written: He also spread the floor of the temple with the most precious marble, laid with great beauty (2 Par. III). Whence it is evident that he did not place the pine boards, with which he covered the floor, on the ground;

but first spread it with marble, and then placed the boards on top, and added gold over these two, as is read in the following: For just as the height of the wall rising on high, and reaching up to the ceilings, signifies the progress of virtues by which the elect attain to the heavenly kingdom, or certainly the very choirs of the elect succeeding one another through changing times, so the equality of the floor justly demonstrates their concordant lowliness, by which, placed in temporal life, they interact socially with one another as dictated by love. For that floor, laid with the most precious marble, with great beauty, and the same marble soon covered with pine boards; for indeed the life of the just must first be fortified in the heart with the firmness of faith, and then adorned in work by the breadth of spiritual virtues; otherwise, what benefit would the decoration of the most precious marble covered by wood boards have, if it did not silently signify something mystical, and teach that the amplitude of good works must be supported by the strength of undefiled faith? Pine, because of its height and durable strength, not inappropriately signifies the mind of the elect, despising the lowest desires of the mind, always intent on heavenly contemplation, and excelling in the virtue of patience. The gold panels, which are placed over the marble and pine boards, is the breadth of charity itself, from a pure heart and a good conscience, and unfeigned faith;

which, as gold is more precious than the other metals, so it shines with singular light among the other virtues in the temple of God. Hence well does the Apostle, when he enumerated many goods of virtues, which must be kept by those humble in heart, as the ornament of the floor, saying: Clothe yourselves therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, with compassion, kindness, humility, patience, meekness, bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, if anyone has a complaint against another: even as Christ forgave us, so

also should you do (Coloss. III); suddenly, as if adding the covering of gold from above, he subjoined: Above all, have charity, which is the bond of perfection.

Chapter X. On the specific measurement of the temple itself and the oracle. He also built with cedar boards of twenty cubits, etc. He speaks of the western rear side of the temple. For the temple had an entrance from the rising of the sun, and the interior house from the setting, which is the Holy of Holies. But when he says that the boards, which separated the interior house from the exterior, were built from the floor up to the upper parts, he does not mean up to the ceilings which were thirty cubits suspended high from the floor, as said above, but only up to twenty cubits in height, as it is clearly read in the following. The remaining part above the boards was open and empty up to the ceilings of ten cubits in height, and twenty cubits in length, according to the width of the house, through which naturally the smoke of the burning incense used to ascend into the Holy of Holies and penetrate to cover the Ark of the Lord (Heb. IX). In this distinction of the house of the Lord, a mystical figure is revealed, and with the apostle explaining, it is as clear as light, because the first house, into which the priests always entered, completing the duties of sacrifices, represents the present Church, where we daily offer sacrifices of praise to the Lord, attending to pious works.

The inner house, which was made at the back part of the temple, is the life promised to us in the heavens, which is indeed more inward compared to this current life of our exile; for in the presence of the highest King, the perpetual celebration of blessed angels and humans takes place there. Hence it is well and rightfully said to the deserving servant: Enter into the joy of your Lord (Matt. XXV). But it is later in time, because after the labors of this present age, we are led to enter it. The boards, however, which divide both houses from each other, are the barriers of heaven, whose opening we daily long for, and, as much as the Lord grants, with constant piety, we knock until they open and we are allowed to enter: where, even if we are not yet permitted to enter before the dissolution of the bodies, we nonetheless have an open door to the divine mercy, through which we may send ahead the incense of our prayers, almsgiving, fasting, and other works. Hence it is that the cedar wall of the interior house had a door in its upper parts throughout the whole length, through which the smoke of the incense would enter; because the eyes of the Lord are open over His house day and night, and His ears attentive to the prayers of His servants, and this through the entire width of the Church spread throughout the world.

The altar of the incense, which indeed stood in the exterior house but near the door of the interior house, was a type of the perfected just ones, who, though retained in the world by their bodies, are wholly lifted to heavenly things with all desire, and, like incense, emit rising smoke into the Holy of Holies, for burning with heavenly love, by frequent calls of prayers, they knock at the ears of their Creator. And it finds the door widely open with the smoke of incense above because the more pure each one is on earth, and as if residing closer to the heavenly homeland, the sooner they receive all that they ask for from the Lord. Moreover, the inner house was made 20 cubits long, because of the mystery of the twin love, of which we spoke above, which in this meanwhile life illuminates the minds of the

elect to the greatest extent, but in that homeland, when the works of other virtues cease, it alone reigns perpetually. Furthermore, the temple itself was 40 cubits, in front of the oracle. We said the temple itself typified the Church; whence it was rightly 40 cubits: this number is often placed in significance of the present labor of the faithful, in the same way that fifty is in the significance of future rest and peace. For the precepts are contained in the number ten, through the observance of which we arrive at life. Equally, ten signifies that very eternal life which we desire and labor for.

The world, too, is quadrangular, in which we fight for acquiring that same life. Whence the Psalmist, seeing the Church to be gathered from the nations, said: He gathered them from the regions, from the rising and setting of the sun, from the north and the sea (Psalm 106). Ten multiplied by four makes forty. Hence the people, liberated from Egypt, exercised many labors in the desert for forty years, in the figure of the present Church, and at the same time was refreshed with heavenly bread, and thus finally arrived at the long-promised homeland. For it is tried in temptations for forty years, to denote the bearers of the Church, who sweat to observe God's law throughout the world: it is fed with manna from heaven for those same forty years, to show that the very sufferings which the Church endures are to be alleviated by the hope of heavenly reward, that is, eternal beatitude: where those who now hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled; and as the same Church sings to its Redeemer God: But I shall appear before you in righteousness; I will be satisfied when your glory is manifested (Psalm 17). Thus, the people of God are both afflicted by adversities and refreshed with manna; so that the word of the Apostle is fulfilled: Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation (Rom. 12). In this figure, our Lord also fasted for forty days before his death in the flesh (Matt. 4):

he also feasted with his disciples for forty days after his resurrection in the flesh, appearing to them with many proofs, and speaking of the kingdom of God, and eating together. By fasting, he showed our labor within himself, but by eating and drinking with his disciples, he showed his consolation within us. By fasting, he seemed to cry out: Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing and drunkenness, and the cares of this life (Luke 21): but by eating and drinking, he seemed to cry out: Behold, I am with you all the days, even to the consummation of the age (Matt. 28); and again he said: I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you (John 16). For while we tread the way of the Lord, we both fast from the emptiness of this present age and are refreshed by the promise of the future, not setting our heart here, but feeding it on high there.

CHAPTER XI. That the whole house may be adorned with cedar and gold. And the whole house was adorned internally with cedar, etc. We have spoken about cedar, that it signifies the insurmountable beauty of virtues. By this wood, the whole house of the Lord is adorned internally when the hearts of the righteous shine with the love of good works alone. The house of the Lord has carvings and crafted joinings in cedar boards when each of the elect connect themselves to each other with the most beautiful bond of charity; so that although

the multitude of the faithful is innumerable, yet they are rightly said to have one heart and one soul for the fellowship of common faith and love (Acts 3). For the carvings, which were placed at the joinings of the boards so that one panel was made from all, are the offices of charity, by which holy brotherhoods are connected to each other and composed into one house of Christ throughout the whole world.

This house also has prominent engravings when the saints do not hide their works of virtues clandestinely, but manifestly present them to everyone, showing how they live and what they do as examples of living, just as the apostle Paul did, who not only showed how much he excelled by preaching Christ to the Gentiles and suffering for Christ, but also declared in his letters to the Churches how many dangers he endured for Christ and how many revelations he was elevated by Christ, who did not hesitate to say to his listeners: Be followers of me, even as I also am of Christ (1 Cor. 11). What else does he show in the house of the Lord but prominent engravings, since he provided himself as imitable to all by the singular height of his virtue? Everything was adorned with cedar boards, and no stone could be seen on the wall. And the stones of the wall or pavement, the boards, and the gold, all signify the life of the saints in the Church. However, when they are placed together with distinction: the living stones are the saints, glued together in one and the same rule by the strength of faith; the cedar or fir boards are the saints connected by the breadth of various virtues, according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit in one and the same faith; the gold plates are the eminent saints, having the charity of knowledge, and rejoicing together with this most pleasing splendor. The blessed apostle comprehended these three in one sentence, saying:

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any power, but faith which works by love (Gal. 5). The stone held the figure of invincible faith, the cedar of fragrant action, the gold of transcendent love. The stone wall is adorned with cedar boards when the profession of faith is adorned with good works, lest it be judged idle or dead without works. But because the law was written on stone, the doctrine of the Gospel was confirmed by the wood of the Lord's passion, hence the people were circumcised with stone, we are consecrated on the forehead by the sign of the cross. Not incongruously, the stone walls of the temple and the pavement of precious marble can bear the type of those who lived faithfully and perfectly in the law; the cedar or fir boards can indicate the just of the New Testament, who, willing to follow the Lord, deny themselves, and taking up their cross daily, follow him. And since the common glory of the supernal reward remains for the just of both times, a threefold appearance of gold plates is joined to the stones and precious wood. Nor should it seem contradictory, what we said above, that the portico which was in front of the temple bears the figure of the faithful of ancient times; but the temple itself, of those who came into the world after the time of the Lord's Incarnation; and furthermore, that the inner house figures the joys of the heavenly kingdom, which are given to both the righteous;

now let us say that the stone walls designate the ancient people of God, the cedar boards the new, and the golden plates, the rewards of both in heaven, since the same temple walls,

both in the portico, and in the temple itself, and in the Holy of Holies were equally made of stones, wood, and gold. For the repetition of the same figures in diverse matters is manifold. But this must also be said, that there were many, both under the law and before the written law, who served the Lord lawfully, not killing, not fornicating, not stealing, not bearing false witness, honoring father and mother, and loving their neighbors as themselves. These belonged to the stone walls of the portico. There were others, who with greater perfection, having left the business of the world, and taken up their cross, followed the Lord, who, as the Apostle says: "experienced ridicule and beatings, moreover bonds and imprisonment, were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy" (Heb. XI). Those who led an evangelical life before the manifested times of the Gospel, what did they shine with, except as cedar boards in the portico before entering the temple? Both of whom, since the same heavenly kingdom receives them in common, although in distinct mansions, are adorned with gold internally, like the portico of the temple after the stones and cedar.

However, there are many at this time, who content with the legal precepts that we have mentioned above, believe it sufficient for themselves if they may deserve to come to life. There are others who striving for perfection, having sold all that they have, follow the Lord, mindful of his promise, in which he foretold not only life, but also a special honor to be given to such in the resurrection: "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man will sit on the throne of his glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. XIX). These pertain figuratively to the walls of the temple made of white stone, those to the cedar boards, both awaiting from the Lord the rewards of eternal light, as if golden plates with which to be adorned. In the hidden places of the temple there are precious stones, there are boards of aromatic wood, both covered with gold; because both those who walked undefiled in the law of the Lord, and those who received perfectly the grace of the Gospel, equally enjoy eternal life. Moreover, he had made an oracle in the middle of the house in the inner part, to place there the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

This was previously explained preemptively, that the oracle, that is, the sanctuary of the Holy of Holies, would signify the mysteries of the heavenly homeland, with the ark of the covenant representing the Lord Savior, in whom alone we have a covenant of peace with the Father; who after his resurrection, ascending into heaven, placed the flesh which he assumed from the virgin at the right hand of the Father. Furthermore, the oracle had twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in height. It signifies the cedar wall, which separated the oracle, that is, the Holy of Holies from the outer temple, as we also said above. Therefore, the oracle, where the ark was, had twenty cubits in length and breadth and height, that is, in a square; because in that heavenly homeland, where the eyes of the saints see the King in his beauty, only the charity of divine and fraternal grace shines through all; which is also established by the present words, when

it is said: "And he covered it and overlaid it with pure gold"; which is plainly to say, that the walls of the heavenly city are filled with the grace of charity.

CHAPTER XII. How the altar of the oracle is covered with cedar and gold. He also covered the altar with cedar. He refers to the altar of incense, which was before the oracle, about which it is added a little later: But he also covered the entire altar of the oracle with gold. From this it is understood that the same altar was indeed made of stone, covered with cedar, and then overlaid with gold. This typically signifies the life of perfected righteous men, who are as if placed near the oracle; because having forsaken lower delights, they devote all their care solely to the entrance of the heavenly kingdom. Hence it is fitting that on this altar no flesh of victims was burned, but only incense; because such men do not need to still slay the sins of the flesh and the enticements of thoughts within themselves, but they offer only the scents of spiritual prayers and heavenly desires, through the fire of eternal love in the presence of their Creator. What stone, cedar, and gold signify in this altar can be easily understood from those things which were said earlier. He also covered the house before the oracle with purest gold, and affixed the plates with golden nails. We have said that the house before the oracle holds the type of the present church, where we so burn with the love of our Redeemer that we are not yet able to see Him face to face.

Hence this house was aptly covered with the best gold, but was separated by an intervening wall from the oracle. For it is called an oracle when either divine or angelic speech is granted to men with the revelation of some secrets. Hence it is fitting that the oracle is made in hidden places, that is, in the inner house, because in the heavenly homeland both the vision and speech of angels, and the very presence of God will be revealed to us; according to what the Truth itself promises to those who love Him, saying: But he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him (John XIV); and again: The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in proverbs, but will tell you plainly about My Father (John XVI). Therefore, the house before the oracle is covered with gold, because the perfected righteous in this life, where they can neither hear nor see the Father plainly yet, adorn their faith and the work of justice with divine love, through which they may deserve perfect vision and full knowledge of God. The golden plates with which the house was covered are the various acts of piety which pure love displays in the service either of its Creator or of fraternal necessity.

The golden nails with which the plates were affixed are the very precepts of charity or the promises of eternal glory, through which, in the practice and pursuit of virtue, we are kept from failing, by the grace of Christ given. Hence it is well written about these nails in the Book of Chronicles: But he also made golden nails, so that each nail weighed fifty shekels (2 Chronicles 3). For the number fifty is often used in the Scriptures to symbolize the remission of sins, the grace of the Holy Spirit, and eternal rest. This is because the fiftieth Psalm is one of penance and remission, the fiftieth year is the jubilee year, and on the fiftieth day after Easter, the Holy Spirit came and consecrated the primitive Church. Additionally, each nail, which fastened the golden plates to the walls of the house of the Lord, was made of

fifty shekels, symbolizing that the divine words, by which we advance in the love of good works and are preserved, promise us the forgiveness of sins, the grace of the Holy Spirit, and eternal rest in the future. These are the nails of love. There are also other nails of fear, by which beginners, not yet reaching perfection, mortify the enticements of carnal vices and pleasures. These are the words of truth, whose instruction teaches us to crucify our flesh with its vices and concupiscences, which the prophet desired when he said: "Crucify my flesh with the nails of your fear, for I feared your judgments" (Psalm 118).

When he reached perfection, he spoke of the nails of love: "But as for me, it is good to be near God" (Psalm 73). And there was nothing in the temple that was not covered with gold. He also covered the entire altar of the oracle with gold. Previously it was stated about the altar, but these things are more fully explained in the book of Chronicles, where it is shown that the porch, which was before the front of the temple, was gilded on the inside, and the upper chambers were also covered. Here the mystery's figure is evident: the whole Church, both in this age and the future, abounds in the gift of charity, surpassing other virtues that are pleasing to God and, singularly, appears prominently. The porch before the temple was gilded because the fathers of the Old Testament pleased God through charity. The temple was gilded because this same charity of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who was given to us. The inner house was gilded because in the heavenly homeland, charity alone reigns. But there more truly and securely, for God Himself, who is charity, is seen; there more certainly, for the Mediator between God and men, who alone is privy to the Father's secrets, is always beheld like the Ark of the Covenant. That the upper chambers are also covered with gold refers to the same meaning.

Just as the inner house of the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was, signifies the life of the saints in the presence of their Creator and Redeemer, as the Psalmist says: "You hide them in the secret of your face from the disturbance of men" (Psalm 31); so too, the upper chambers signify the same life being in the heights, that is, in heaven, and not in this world, as the Apostle says: "Seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."

CHAPTER XIII. On the construction of the Cherubim. And he made two Cherubim in the oracle, etc. Cherubim, as the prophet Ezekiel clearly declares, is a term of angelic dignity, and in the singular is called Cherub, in the plural Cherubim. Hence, the Cherubim figures made in the oracle can aptly be understood to represent the angelic ministries, which always attend their Creator in the heavens. These are rightly said to be made from olive wood, because angelic powers, anointed with the grace of the Holy Spirit, never wither away from the love of God. For they, together with us, partake of Him of whom the prophet says in praise of Christ: "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions" (Psalm 44). They are figuratively made from olive wood because He who created them filled them with heavenly wisdom. Hence, they are called Cherub, which in Latin is interpreted as "multiplied knowledge" or "multitude of knowledge. They are ten cubits in height because they enjoy the tenfold measure of eternal life, having the inviolable image

of their Redeemer within them, preserving holiness, righteousness, and truth perpetually as they received from their first condition. A denarius indeed consists of ten obols and is accustomed to contain the name and image of Caesar. Therefore, the figure of the heavenly kingdom excellently fits, where the holy angels always remain in the image of their Creator, to which they were made, and the elect humans receive back His image, which they lost by sinning.

For we know, he says, that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). One wing of a cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub was five cubits, that is, having ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other wing. When wings are placed in the figure of holy men, they signify their virtues, by which they always soar to the heavens and delight in having their conversation in them. However, when wings are placed in the signification of angels, what is more fitting than the grace of their perpetual and unfailing happiness, by which they always persist in their Creator's ministry in the heavens? Or certainly because they are endowed with the lightness of spiritual nature, so that wherever they wish, they reach almost as if flying, and they are depicted with wings here, and shown to the prophets with wings. It is well said that one wing of a cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of a cherub was five cubits; because angelic virtues keep the law of God, which is described in five books, with tireless devotion, namely by loving God and their Lord with all their strength, and loving neighbors as themselves. For the fullness of the law is charity. Their neighbors are both the angelic spirits among themselves, and the elect humans as their equally fellow citizens.

Hence, each wing is said to be of the same measure, because they desire our company ascending to God with the same devotion they love each other in God. Thus, together, the wings complete ten cubits as the angels rejoice in their Creator's presence in the exercise of twin charity. The second cherub was also ten cubits, the same measure, and there was one work in the two cherubim. There were two cherubim made to signify the fellowship of the same charity, about which we speak, because charity cannot exist among less than two. Hence, the Savior took care to send two disciples to preach, so that he might silently teach that the virtue of love must be held above all works by those who proclaim the word of faith. The two cherubim were of one measure and work, because there is no disparity of wills or thoughts in that upper country, where all are equally enlightened and glorified by the vision and presence of God. And he placed the cherubim in the midst of the inner temple. The cherubim extended their wings, and one wing of the cherub touched one wall, and the wing of the second cherub touched the other wall. The other wings touched each other in the middle of the temple. It is clear from these things which have been said why the cherubim are placed in the midst of the inner temple, whose abode is always in the heavens.

The cherubim extended their wings as if to fly, because angelic spirits always have their minds ready for the service of the divine will. But that one wing touched the wall, and the wing of the second cherub touched the other wall, pertains to the administration of charity which the angels show us. That the other wings touched each other in the middle of the tem-

ple expresses that grace of love by which they embrace each other. It follows well, "He also overlaid the cherubim with gold," because the Creator exalted their nature with immortal love, and filled their minds with the true light of love and humility. It is certainly noteworthy that when Moses made the tabernacle, he also made two golden cherubim, which he placed on the atonement cover, which was above the ark. Solomon, however, added two others, greater ones, which he placed in the temple, under whose wings he placed the ark in the middle with the atonement cover and the former cherubim. Thus it happened that there were two cherubim indeed in the tabernacle, but four in the temple. Both pertain to one and the same meaning. But the work was splendidly repeated and through Solomon, to be typically taught, that the Church, multiplied through the Incarnation of the Lord, should broadly expand the sublimity of the heavenly citizens to the nations. Therefore, they praise the Creator for the gift of blessedness granted to them, so that they also rejoice about our rescue and introduction to the same blessedness.

For they extend their wings toward each other over the ark, when they refer to the praise of the Lord Savior any good they have received. They extend their other wings to the walls of the oracle, when they rejoice in seeing holy men among them and touch them as if with the tips of their wings, exulting that they have been companions and imitators of their purity in this life. Moreover, they touch the two walls equally with their wings, because they have the faithful of both peoples, namely Jews and Gentiles, as co-possessors of the heavenly hall with them. Not that there is any local distinction between the two peoples in that country, but because the joy of internal blessedness is greater due to the fellowship of united brotherhood. Therefore, the cherubim extend their wings to each wall of the oracle, because rejoicing in the heavenly country, they also delight in the vision of the just of both peoples, encouraging praise of their Creator through their glory. Not only do the heavenly hosts rejoice in the happiness of those righteous men whom they have with them inside, but they also show diligent care for us, who are still placed outside and cry to the Lord from the depths. Hence it is well written about the same cherubim in the Book of Chronicles: "They stood with outstretched feet, and their faces were toward the outer house.

The cherubim stood with outstretched feet because they never deviated from the path of truth on which they were placed as soon as they were created. The angels have their faces toward the outer house because they desire to bring us, rescued from this wretched pilgrimage, to their fellowship. Thus, they stood with outstretched feet, extended their wings to the gold-covered walls of the oracle, and had their faces turned toward the outer house, because the angels keep their perpetual innocence, rejoice in the blessedness of holy souls in heaven, and do not cease to assist the elect whom they still see as pilgrims on earth, until they also bring them to the heavenly country. For all are ministering spirits, sent to serve for the sake of those who inherit salvation. The two cherubim can also symbolize the two Testaments; indeed, the cherubim were made in the oracle, because in the counsel of divine providence unfathomable and incomprehensible to us, it was decreed before the ages when, and how, and by what authors, sacred Scripture would be composed. They were made of olive wood because through men of mercy, whose works of piety have not been lacking, through men

enlightened by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the divine books have been written. They were made of olive wood because they give us the light of knowledge, helped by the flame of God's charity, which is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

They were ten cubits high, because they proclaim that God should be served through the observance of the Decalogue; and they show that those who serve God faithfully will receive the reward of the eternal kingdom. They have twin wings, which declare that the Testaments have always aimed for the heavens with tireless resolve through both hardships and prosperity; because this is what they demonstrate should be done by their listeners. One wing of a cherub is five cubits, and the other wing of a cherub is also five cubits; because in the entire variation of passing days, the saints extend all the senses of their body in service to their Creator, always having their eyes on the Lord, desiring to hear His voice of praise, and to recount all His wonders, holding His words sweet in their mouths, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, running in the odor of His ointments, and as long as there is breath in them, and the Spirit of God in their nostrils, not speaking iniquity with their lips, nor uttering foolishness with their tongue. And so, advancing through the armor of righteousness on the right and on the left, they come to the reception of the heavenly denarius, which the supreme householder promised to the cultivators of His vineyard. And in the two cherubim there was one work, because the writers of both instruments served God with the same chastity of work, and the devotion of charity, proclaiming with one and harmonious voice and faith.

And indeed, the New Testament narrates the events of the Lord's incarnation, passion, resurrection, ascension, the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, and the multifaceted tribulation of the Church; the Old Testament rightly understood, truly proclaimed these things as to be done. Therefore, the coming of the Antichrist, the end of the world, the day of the final judgment, and the eternal glory of the good, and the punishment of the reprobate, both Testaments confirm with concordant truth. Therefore, the inner wings of the cherubim touching each other over the ark signify that both Testaments agree with equal attestation concerning the Lord. Likewise, with their outer wings, one touches one wall, the other the other wall, because the Old Testament was specifically written for God's ancient people, but the New Testament was for us who came to faith after the Lord's Incarnation: and we are rightly compared to the second wall, that is, the northern, to whom, after the cold and darkness of idolatry, the light of truth was given to know. For although the early Church flourished greatly from the Jews, and all Israel is believed to be saved towards the end of the world, yet many faithful of this time are gathered from the Gentiles to receive the sacraments of the Gospel; to whom also it has been divinely granted to know with the eyes of their hearts revealed, that the letter of the Old Testament is full of the mysteries of evangelical grace.

The cherubim have their faces turned to the outer house, because the divine books were made for us who still stand outside, not in reality but in hope being saved; because their writers, now reigning with the Lord, and praising Him in the heavens, care for our salvation,

and intercede with His mercy for our errors. The cherubim are surrounded by gold, because the authority of the Testaments is confirmed by the illustrious works of their writers. With the manifest knowledge of divine Scriptures spread through the world and the internal glory of the heavenly hosts (for both the cherubim, as we have said, signify both angels and Testaments), many began to be converted to the faith and abound in good works, whence it is aptly added:

CHAPTER XIV. As the walls are sculpted, and the pavement is covered with gold. And he sculpted all the walls of the temple around, etc. All the walls of the temple around are the peoples of the holy Church, which, being placed on the foundation of Christ, have filled the circumference of the whole world, and the building of faith begun, with the daily addition of new members as if by the addition of precious stones, does not cease to grow. These walls are sculpted with various carvings, when to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith in the same Spirit, to another the grace of healings in one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. And when we come to those virtues which we can all possess—charity, joy, peace, long-suffering, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, modesty, continence, and the other fruits of the Spirit—what are they but the carvings of the walls of the temple, since they are the ornaments of the hearts of the people of God. The same walls are also sculpted with a lathe, as the faithful with a ready mind are strong to do all things which the Lord has commanded, to endure all things which He permits, saying from the heart at all events that occur: "I will bless the Lord at all times" (Psalm 34);

and "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready; I will sing and give praise to the Lord" (Psalm 56). They are sculpted with a lathe when they apply themselves so much to virtues that they can be turned aside from their course by no dangers of surrounding things, nor by any enticements. Because the lathe excels in speed above other arts, and sets a rule for itself by which it completes its work without error, rightly by this the holy life of the saints is signified, which is always ready for the service of divine will and has learned to fulfill it without deviation from long practice in virtues. Wherefore the holy Church, admiring the virtues of her spouse and Redeemer in the Song of Songs, said: "His hands are golden, full of hyacinths" (Cant. 5). His hands are indeed golden, because appearing in the flesh, the sanctities and miracles which He willed, without any delay of dallying, without any winding of errors, the power and wisdom of God accomplished. They are full of hyacinths, because what He commanded to be done outwardly by word, He inwardly granted to be more fully accomplished by divine power. They are full of hyacinths, because He referred all the things that He did to the glory of the Father, because by the works which He did, He raises our minds to seek the heavenly things.

Therefore, all the walls of the temple around are carved with various engravings and turned with a lathe, as the Church throughout the world devotes itself with prompt devotion to the execution of spiritual virtues without any error whatsoever, where it is well said: And he

made on them cherubim and palm trees, and various pictures, as if they were protruding from the wall, and coming out. For Solomon makes cherubim on the walls of the temple when he grants his chosen ones to direct their lives according to the rule of the Holy Scriptures, in which there is a multitude of knowledge. He makes cherubim when he teaches them to imitate, as far as their capacity allows, the chastity of angelic life in this world, which is especially done by vigils and divine praises, by sincere love of the Creator and neighbor. He makes palms when he impresses the memory of eternal retribution in their minds, so that they may less turn away from the summit of righteousness, which they always have before the eyes of their heart: he makes various pictures, as if protruding from the wall, and coming out, when he grants the faithful the many works of virtues; for example, the bowels of mercy, kindness, humility, patience, modesty, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, but above all these, to have charity, which is the bond of perfection.

And when these virtues have come into such a habit among the chosen that they seem to be naturally implanted in them, what else are the pictures of the house of the Lord protruding as if they were coming out of the wall? For they no longer learn the words and works of truth from others externally, but rooted and prepared from the depths of their hearts, they bring forth what is to be done or taught. And he covered the floor of the house with gold inside and outside. Inside and outside, in the oracle and in the very temple, he signifies. But we have said above that the evenness of the pavement signifies the humble concord of holy brotherhood; where there are Jews and Gentiles, barbarians and Scythians, free and slaves, nobles and ignobles, all boast that they are brothers in Christ, that they all have the same Father who is in heaven. For no one may doubt the most concordant humility of the heavenly citizens. Therefore, Solomon covered the floor of the house with gold inside and outside, because our peaceful King has perfectly and fully filled both the angels and the souls of the righteous in heaven with the gift of love, and has set apart from the vileness of other mortals those wandering in this world as citizens of the same heavenly homeland with the seal of love: In this, he said, all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13).

CHAPTER XV. On the entrance of the temple or oracle. And at the entrance of the oracle he made doors of olive wood, etc. What he had first said: He made doors of olive wood, this same thing he seems to have wanted to explain more clearly when he added: And two doors of olive wood; for there was one entrance to the oracle, but the same entrance was closed by two doors. And again, when they were unlocked, it was opened, just as the temple and the porch in front of the temple had no longer a single entrance; certainly for a determined mystery, because one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one entrance is to be hoped for into the present Church through baptism, one into the heavenly kingdom through works of faith. For as there was one entrance to the oracle, this is testified by what is written below about the ark: And when the poles were extended, and the tops of them appeared outside in the sanctuary in front of the oracle, they did not appear further outside (1 Kings 8). Where it is plainly shown, unless I am mistaken, that there was one entrance to the oracle, and this made opposite the ark, which was in the middle of the same oracle; the entrance doors

of which can be taken by different significations in many ways. For they clearly designate the angelic spirits, by whose ministry we are introduced into the habitation of the heavenly homeland;

and equally of apostolic men, who hold the figure of the apostles, to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given; who, having received from the Lord the power of binding and loosing, admit the worthy within the gate of the kingdom, and, by excommunicating or anathematizing, eliminate the rebellious impure and proud from the entrance of eternal life. But also the works of justice, by whose merit one arrives at the heavenly kingdom, can be rightly typified by doors through which one entered into the holy of holies; as it is written in the book of Wisdom: The keeping of the laws is the perfection of incorruption, and incorruption brings one close to God. The desire for wisdom leads to the everlasting kingdom (Wisdom 6). To all these things, it aptly agrees that the same doors are made of olive wood, because indeed both angels and perfect men show themselves glorious in the house of God by the fruit of mercy and works of light; moreover, all the chosen open the entrance of the heavenly homeland for themselves through the weapons of light and piety. However, there are two doors, since both angels and holy men love God and their neighbors; nor can the gate of life be entered except through this double love; or because the same gate of life is opened to both faithful peoples, namely Jews and Gentiles.

They have posts of five cubits, because not only the souls of the chosen are received into the hall of heaven, but in the judgment, they will also open its doors to bodies adorned with immortal glory. For there are five senses of our body, which we have mentioned above: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Or certainly, each post of the tabernacle is made five cubits, because the entrance of the celestial homeland is opened only to those who have been diligent in serving the Lord with all the senses of their body and mind; of the body, namely when they perform something for Him through those senses; of the mind, when they soberly, justly, and devoutly think about those things they decide to do through the senses of the body. And he carved on them cherubim, and palm trees, and very prominent engravings, and covered them with gold. Γλυφ in Greek is called sculpture in Latin. But all these things with cherubim placed in the decoration of the walls of the temple, set forth according to our comprehension. No need to laboriously establish that those entrusted with the care of the faithful and to whom the keys of the heavenly kingdom have been given, ought to strive with all diligence in the works of virtue which the Church exercises in her saints and perfect ones throughout the world, so that they may excel in good action as much by merit as they preeminence others in rank.

For they possess, in themselves, the angelic life represented by the cherubim, as much as is possible for mortals, both in mind and in deed. They also have the images of palms when they constantly meditate on the gifts of heavenly rewards with unshaken intent. For the palm is the ornament of a victorious hand. They have very prominent engravings, when they reveal to all who observe the most certain signs of good works which no one can interpret to the left. And all these works are covered with golden plates, since, as often said, the

brilliance of love especially outshines other virtues in the great members of the Church. The words of the days relate that a veil was also added to these doors. He made the veil, it says, from azure, purple, scarlet, and fine linen, and he wove cherubim into it. This was done for the sake of decoration, so that along with the gilded walls, the silk itself would gleam. But in the signification of the same mystery, to which the doorways before the ark and the entrance of the oracle were attached; so that as the doors were opened at appropriate hours, so too the veil would be revealed whenever those who were to enter the holy of holies would come. Therefore, the diligent revelation of this veil signifies the opening of the law and the heavenly kingdom which was granted to us through the incarnation of our Lord and Savior.

From this it is also evident that when He was baptized, the heavens were opened to show that through baptism, which He consecrated for us, we ought to enter the gate of the heavenly homeland. And when He died on the cross, the same veil was torn in two from top to bottom to clearly teach that the legal figures had then come to an end, and that the truth of the Gospel and the heavenly mysteries, and the entrance to heaven itself, were not only to be prophesied and figuratively signified, but were already then to be made plainly open to all who passed from the world in the faith of the truth from the beginning of the world to that time. For on the fortieth day after the resurrection of the Lord, they all ascended to heaven with Him, and with every covering removed, they received their places in the Father's house according to their merits. But at the same time, the entrance to that heavenly city and the house of the Father was laid open for us who were still to come. In truth, no one ascends to that city unless through the internal desires for eternal good things, by faith and the sacraments of the Lord's passion, through the fervor of sincere love, by mortification of carnal desire, and with daily help from the angels.

Hence it is rightfully remembered that the same veil, under which one entered the oracle, was made of azure and purple, scarlet, and fine linen, and the cherubim were also woven into it. For azure, which imitates the color of heaven, is aptly compared to desires for heavenly things; purple, which is made from the blood of shellfish and bears the appearance of blood, rightly signifies the sacrament of the Lord's passion, by which we must be initiated, and which we should imitate by carrying our cross. Scarlet, which gleams with a red color, aptly expresses the virtue of love, of which the disciples who walked with the Lord said in wonder: "Was not our heart burning within us while He was speaking to us on the way and explaining the Scriptures to us? (Luke 24:32). Fine linen, which is derived from the green shoot of the earth, and through the long labor of craftsmen loses its green and gets to a white appearance, fittingly implies the chastisement of our flesh, of which the Apostle Paul figuratively orders the innate moisture to be dried, saying: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). To what grace of whiteness this should lead is shown by the same Apostle saying: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

Cherubim are woven into the veil, made of the same four excellent colors, for in all that we piously do, by the protection of angels, we are defended by the Lord. Cherubim are woven into the veil when in good actions we continually use the multitude of knowledge, always looking to the divine words; and lest we stray from the path of virtues, we guide our steps by their contemplation. He made doorposts for the entrance to the temple from squared olive wood, and two doors from pine wood on either side; and each door was double and opened holding itself together. Just as the entrance to the oracle, leading to the ark of the Lord surrounded by cherubim, signifies the entrance to the kingdom of heaven, wherein we hope and desire to be introduced to the vision of our Creator and the heavenly citizens, the entrance into the temple typifies the beginnings of our conversion to God when we enter into the present Church. One signifies our entry into faith, the other into vision. Therefore, the doorposts of this entrance were aptly made square for the four books of the holy Gospel, whose doctrine instructs us in the faith of truth, or for the four principal virtues: prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice, upon which, as on a most firm foundation, the whole structure of good deeds rests. Prudence is that by which we learn what we should do and how we should live.

Fortitude is through which we fulfill what we have learned to be done, virtues which the prophet briefly encompasses in one verse, saying: "The Lord is my light and my salvation" (Psalm 27:1). Light, indeed, to illuminate what we ought to do; salvation, to strengthen us to accomplish these deeds. Temperance, by which we discern that we are not found more or less devoted to prudence or fortitude than is just. And since anyone who uses prudence, fortitude, and temperance without any contradiction is proved just, the fourth virtue after prudence, fortitude, and temperance is justice. The two doors that lead into this entrance are the love of God and neighbor; they are said to be made side by side because they look at each other, so that one cannot be had without the other: For everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. And everyone who loves Him who begot also loves Him who is begotten of Him (1 John 5). And as it says again: For he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? (1 John 4). Hence, rightly, the outer door is understood as brotherly love, and the inner as divine love, because the former comes first in time, the latter is more sublime in dignity. And through the former, one enters into the latter, because from the love of neighbor, one learns how the Creator should be loved.

Both doors were double and opened by holding each other, because in each kind of love we must observe two things primarily. In the love of God, it is necessary to have faith in truth and purity of good operation. For without faith it is impossible to please God; and faith without works is dead; moreover, in the love of brotherhood, patience and kindness must be preserved, as the apostle Paul says: Charity is patient, is kind (1 Cor. 13). Patient, namely, to endure the troubles and injuries of neighbors; kind, indeed, to forgive from the heart and to do good to those whose injuries it endures. Such charity the Lord wanted us to have when He said: Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you (Luke 6). Forgive the injuries of those harming you, give acts of mercy to those whom you forgive

their injuries. He desires us to spend such love, who commanded us to say in prayer: Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors (Matt. 6). However, both doors were double, and each type of love is performed in a twin manner. Both holding each other opened, because the virtues are joined and cannot be divided from each other. For neither faith without works, nor good works without faith, can be pleasing. Nor, indeed, is it sufficient to endure injuries if one despises ministering necessities to the one he tolerates when he could;

nor is it enough for one who has the world's substance to give from it to a needy neighbor if he does not sincerely from the heart forgive the troubles inflicted on him. What is said about both doors holding each other opened does not designate the separation of spiritual virtues from each other; rather, it indicates that through their conjunction, the entrance of the holy Church is more open to us, such that the more we abound in them, the more truly we are joined to the assemblies of the saints. Just as also the division of the Red Sea, through which the people of God escaped the pursuing Egyptian, did not signify the division of the one baptism, but rather the opening, through which, with all sins extinguished, we pass to the shore and wilderness of virtues; or certainly, the door which holds each other opens when through the ministry of the preacher it is discerned what properly pertains to the knowledge of faith and what to the chastity of living, both of which, however, cannot be separated from their connection; how near to each other are enduring the evils of neighbors and commending our goods to them, when these most certainly remain indissoluble in the one and the same heart of the perfect. It is indeed noteworthy that at the entrance of the oracle there are said to be two doors, but these are not said to be double;

in the temple, that is, in the entry of the former house, there were two doors, each of which was double, because in the present church it is necessary for us to enter and lead a life in such a way that we preserve the love of God and neighbor through faith and action, through patience and kindness. But in future life, where we will see God and neighbors in the light of eternal happiness, certainly with the same twofold love, without any labor at all, indeed in great rest, we will enjoy the multitude of divine sweetness. Therefore, fittingly the entrance of the inner house had two doors, but simple ones here. For faith is not necessary there, where all things which we now believe and hope for will be seen in manifest light; works are not necessary there, where we will be rewarded with the perpetual reward of those things for which we labor here; patience is not necessary, where no one inflicts anything adverse; generosity is not necessary, where no one needs what is useful. These things about the form of the doors we have discussed according to our ability, following the footsteps of the Fathers; indeed, according to the form of the work, for the sake of beauty, it was provided that in one and the same entrance of the temple there should be two doors.

It was necessary that the walls of the house, which were twenty cubits in height, should also have some thickness, on the outermost part of which the doors were fixed, so that each door might be equal to the wall, and whether someone was inside or outside the temple, looking at the door, it might seem to them to be a continuous wall through all things. Similarly,

the cedar wall, being twenty cubits in length and height, also had to have a substantial thickness. Therefore, in the entrance of this too, two doors were made, so that from either side, that is, inside and outside, the door would be equal to the wall; and because the door had the same paintings as the wall, the wall, continuously extended through all things, might truly seem to be one, presenting one form of beauty, representing another aspect of the mystery. But what follows, having described the doors of the temple: "And he carved cherubim and palms, and very eminent engravings, and covered all with golden plates, with work squared by the rule," has been explained above, because paintings or carvings have been made both in the walls of the house, and in the doors, and in the inner parts of the Church. The figure's reason is clear why the first door of the temple and the inner one should receive the same paintings and carvings, the same cherubim: because the sublime and the perfect captivate the same sublime secrets of faith, hope, and charity.

And whatever all the elect fully perceive in the divine vision in heaven, those beginning in catechesis are also instructed and taught through their own, so that initiated into the holy mysteries, they may someday arrive at grasping those things which they have piously believed.

CHAPTER XVI. On the courts of the house of the Lord. He built the inner court with three courses of polished stones, etc. He briefly mentions the inner court and seems to entirely leave out the outer court. However, in the Chronicles, both are mentioned, where it is written: He also made the court of the priests and the great basilica, and doors in the basilica that he covered with bronze (1 Peter IV). Therefore, the inner court, which is called the priests' court because the priests and Levites ministered there, was surrounded by the temple on all sides, but from the east, where the entrance to the temple was, it was much farther away from the temple than from the other three sides, because undoubtedly in that direction, that is, before the temple, the ministries of the saints were carried out. There the bronze altar for offering sacrifices to the Lord, the ten lavers for washing these same sacrifices, and the bronze sea for washing the hands and feet of the priests when they entered to minister were located. This court had a height of three cubits, as Josephus narrates, so that it would prevent foreigners from entering the temple and spell out that only priests were allowed. And there was a door to the east, up to which the people inserted their sacrifices and offerings, to be received from there by the priests and carried to the altar. Concerning the outer court, which the Chronicles call the great basilica, Josephus writes thus:

Outside this temple, he built another hall, made in a quadrangular scheme, erecting the greatest and broadest colonnades; and he placed high and wide gates at the four parts of the world, each facing the four winds at the corners, where he set bronze doors (Book VIII). And a little later: Into this sanctuary came all the peoples, who had purification and observance of the laws. These colonnades Cassiodorus the senator, in the Pandects, as he himself recalls in his exposition of the Psalms, distinguished in a threefold order. Namely, he placed the first order outside the priests' court on all sides in a square; the second likewise

outside the innermost colonnades, all around in a circle; the last similarly all around the earlier colonnades in a circuit. Thus, the temple was fortified on all sides with a threefold structure of buildings, with a marble pavement under the open sky between each building's interiors, that is, those looking toward the temple, made between the columns, the outer ones being solid. Thus, it was made that the entire structure of the temple was reasonably distinguished by the variety of gradations. For when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, the priests were purified in the temple itself; in the priests' court, the unpurified priests, along with the Levites and singers, in the innermost court of the greater basilica, the purified Jewish men standing and praying under the open sky if it was clear; if it was stormy, they would retreat to the nearest colonnades;

in the outer court, the purified Jewish women; and in the farthest court, the Gentiles and Jews who had recently come from the Gentiles up to the sixth day of purification. We have taken care to briefly note these things as they were depicted in Cassiodorus's picture, learning thus from the ancient Jews, and not wishing that a man so learned would propose something to be read as an example which he had not previously known to be true. These are the places mentioned by the supreme Psalm of degrees, which begins thus: Behold now, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God (Psalm 134). In its porticoes, Jeremiah and other prophets, in these the Lord and the apostles preached the word to the people. In one of these, the Lord was sitting teaching when the adulterous woman was brought to him for judgment by the testing Pharisees. In these, he found those buying and selling oxen, sheep, and doves; and he drove them out with their merchandise from the temple. In these, Peter and John, finding a lame man, healed him, and led him inside to pray. In these, all the multitude of the people prayed when the angel appeared to Zechariah at the altar of incense and taught him about the birth of the Lord's forerunner.

However, these courts with their porticoes could not hide the view of the temple from those seeing from afar, because the place where the temple stood was much higher than where the porticoes were built. For Josephus writes thus: "The farthest structures of the courtyards, though they were erected at four hundred cubits, nevertheless reached up to the summit of the mount on which the temple was built" (Ibid.); we believed these details of the temple's destruction should be conveyed to the diligent reader. Truly, in them, whatever the Holy Scripture chose to report, we seek the figures of mysteries, while we simply use the rest through knowledge of history. Therefore, the building of the temple inside the priests' courtyard represents the life of the perfected in the holy Church and the lofty men, namely those who by the excellence of virtues draw near to the Lord and tend to show others the way of salvation by word and deed. For a priest in Latin received his name from providing sacred guidance to inferiors. By this name in Scriptures, mystically, not only the ministers of the altar, namely bishops and priests, are considered, but indeed all who by the height of a righteous conversation and the eminence of saving doctrine, benefit not only themselves but also many others, while presenting their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing

to God. For the apostle Peter was speaking not only to bishops or priests but to the entire Church when he said:

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession" (1 Peter 2). The ancient people of God were also distinguished with this honor of dignity as He said to Moses: "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel" (Exodus 19). And shortly after: "And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The great basilica, which was outside the priests' courtyard, where the whole multitude of the people used to worship or converge to hear the word, figuratively indicates the life and manners of the secular in the holy Church, to whom the Apostle says: "And I, brothers, could not speak to you as to spiritual people, but as to people of the flesh, as to infants in Christ. I fed you milk, not solid food" (1 Corinthians 3). This is well represented by the great basilica, because without any doubt, the number of such people in the holy Church is much greater than that of the perfected. But as much as they excel in number, they fall short in merit. Hence this great basilica aptly, though it accommodates many, does not allow them into the interior of the gilded temple, not to the altar's duty, nor even into the priests' courtyard because those who are fleshly and still weak in the churches, though devoted to God for the merit of chaste faith and piety, yet far from equaling those who confidently proclaim:

"For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed" (Romans 15). And again: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4). Indeed, the crowd approached up to the courtyard of the priests and brought their sacrifices to the door, which were received by the priests and presented at the altar, and they observed. Even into the temple, when it was opened, they directed their sight from afar, yet they did not have the ability to enter the courtyard of the priests; however, they cried out to the Lord from below, for even the simplicity of the fleshly in the Church is not despised by the Lord when they faithfully offer what they can of piety's vows. For they direct their sight from afar to the temple of God, when they eagerly rejoice in learning and imitating the life of the high, and those whom they cannot follow by imitating virtue, they embrace with the affection of pious veneration. They see the sacrifices of the priests consumed by the sacred fire on the altar, because they recognize the great rewards of works graciously received from the Lord through the Holy Spirit.

They also bring their own sacrifices to the court of the priests to be offered to the Lord by them, while they perform good deeds that prevail, strengthened by the exhortation of the elders and the learned, and commended by their intercession. They also then offer their own sacrifices to the priests to be commended to the Lord through them, when, out of the highest regard for merit, they give to the saints in need of the necessities of this world, which they themselves abound in, prompted by the admonition of the Lord who says: "Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails, they may receive you

into the eternal dwellings" (Luke 16). And, he says: "And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward" (Matt. 10). And thus, the same sacred fire of God consumes the sacrifices of both when the Lord deems the alms of the rich, by which they have ministered to the saints, worthy of His condescension and reward, along with the great virtues of the same saints. Therefore, the multitude of believers, who, having left their possessions, serve the Lord with one heart and soul, is itself the temple of God and the place within the court of the priests consecrated especially to Him.

Furthermore, the great basilica and those praying in it around the court of the priests in a circle, symbolize those who at that time believed from the Gentiles in Syria, Antioch, and other provinces and cities, to whom the apostles and elders in Jerusalem imposed no greater burden than to abstain from what had been sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from fornication. Yet they desired that the offerings be used to sustain the poor among the saints in Jerusalem, so that by ministering their material goods to them, they might become partakers of their spiritual benefits. Barnabas and Paul, with their companions who received their offerings and brought them to Jerusalem, are the priests who, receiving the offerings, carried them to the altar of the Lord to be consecrated, because the devotion of those offering demanded that the saints pray for them. Therefore, the court, which was placed between the place of the laity and the priests, signifies that division in the holy Church, whereby those who are carnal, though just beginning to walk in the way of righteousness, are separated from the height of the perfect, not by the choice of election, but by the magnitude of their merits. For the carnal believe they suffice if they have faith, hope, charity, and the purity of works.

But the perfect have these as well, and in addition, they labor in preaching the word, give all their goods to the poor, attend to vigils, fasts, hymns, and spiritual songs, devote themselves to sacred readings, endure persecutions and dangers for justice, and execute all other things which Paul boasts of having accomplished with his companions, with prompt devotion of mind. Hence it is properly mentioned that the court of the priests was built with three rows of polished stones and one row of cedar wood. For the three rows of polished stones are faith, hope, and charity. And rightly polished, because it is certainly necessary to learn the skill by which each one may discern what to believe, what to hope, or what to love. The one row of cedar wood is good operation exhibited without the corruption of dissimulation, without which additional support faith, hope, and charity cannot be true. For it has been said often that cedar wood, due to its pleasant scent and the incorruptible power of its nature, signifies the perseverance and fame of pious actions. To this court all the elect ascend, who, with faith, hope, and love, and good works, seek to please God. The perfect transcend this high grace of merits when they progress to such a pinnacle of virtues that they can say to their listeners: "Be imitators of us, as we are of Christ" (1 Cor. 4); and they glory and say: "Do you not know that we are to judge angels, how much more, matters pertaining to this life?

(1 Cor. 6).

Chapter XVII. In how many years the temple was built. The house of the Lord was founded in the fourth year, etc. The sense of the allegory is evident as to why the house of the Lord was built in seven years, because indeed the holy Church is constructed from chosen souls throughout the whole duration of this age, which is accomplished in a circuit of six days, and with the end of the age, it also brings its own growth to an end. Or certainly it is built in seven years because of the signification of spiritual grace, through which the Church only perceives itself as being the Church. Isaiah enumerates the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa. XI), without which no one can either become faithful, or maintain faith, or merit the crown of righteousness by faith. But for the fact that in the seventh year, and in the eighth month of this year, the house of the Lord was completed in all its work and in all its utensils, it pertains to the future age and the day of judgment, when the holy Church will reach such a state of perfection that nothing more can be found to be added to it. For then it will have what the pious suppliant desirously sought from the Lord, saying: Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us (John XIV).

For it is well known that the day of judgment is often typically expressed in Scripture by the number eight because it follows this age which runs in seven days. Hence, the prophet gave the psalm a title for the eighth, which he sang out of fear of the same severe Judge, beginning thus: Lord, rebuke me not in your anger, nor chasten me in your wrath, etc. (Psalm VI). But a not-to-be-dismissed question arises, as to how it is said that the house of the Lord was completed in the eighth month in all its work and in all its utensils, when in the following sections it is read that its perfection and dedication were completed in the seventh month. It is not, however, incredible that Solomon, having built the temple indeed in seven years, completed it in the eighth month of the eighth year, or that he perfectly delayed the dedication until the seventh month of the ninth year. Wherefore it seems more likely that the house was built in seven years and seven months, so that in the same seventh month the solemnity of the dedication was celebrated, and on the twenty-third day of that month, as the words of the days narrate (II Chronicles VII), Solomon dismissed the people to their tents, and thus after one week, with the eighth month approaching, the house of the Lord was found completed, and in all its works, and its dedication previously completed.

Unless perhaps we ought to think that after the temple was dedicated, something of the tools for its ministry was still added, up to the entrance of the eighth month, with the king hastening that in the seventh month, which was entirely solemn, the temple might be dedicated; and thus both will be found true, namely that the temple was completed in the eighth month in all its work and tools, and was dedicated in the seventh month. Moreover, King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre, the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, his father being a Tyrian, a craftsman in bronze, full of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, to do all works in bronze. When he came to King Solomon, he did all his work (I Kings VII). This was done for the sake of mystery. For the Tyrian craftsman whom Solomon took as a helper signifies the chosen ministers of the word from the nations; indeed this craftsman is beautifully said to be the son of an Israelite widow. In this person, sometimes the present Church of the time is figured, for which her man, namely Christ, having tasted

death, rose again, and ascending into the heavens, left her meanwhile wandering on the earth. Nor is it necessary to labor in explaining how the sons of this widow are holy preachers, since all those chosen individually confess themselves to be sons of the Church, since of the same preachers of the new testament it is specially promised, the prophet saying:

"Instead of your fathers, sons are born to you, you will make them princes over all the earth" (Psalm 45). Hiram did all the work for Solomon; for surely the holy preachers, while they faithfully attend to the ministry of the word, certainly do the work of God, because by speaking outwardly, they open the way of truth to those whom He inwardly enlightens for eternal life. "I (said) planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (I Corinthians 3). He made the work out of bronze, because the diligent instructor seeks to entrust the word to those who wish to receive it piously and to preserve it perseveringly, and who also strive rightly to spread more widely by preaching to others whatever they have learned. For it is known that the metal of bronze is very durable and extremely sonorous.

CHAPTER XVIII On the brazen columns. And he made two brazen columns, etc. These are the columns of which Paul speaks: James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave the right hand of fellowship to me and Barnabas, that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision (Gal. II). With these words, he appears to explain the mystery of the material columns and what they prefigure, and why two were made. They signify the apostles and all spiritual teachers, strong in faith and work, and raised to the contemplation of heavenly things. There are two of them to introduce both Gentiles and the circumcised into the Church through preaching. They stood in the porch before the doors of the temple, and adorned its entrance marvelously with their beauty and elegance from both sides. The door of the temple is the Lord, because no one comes to the Father except through Him; and as He says elsewhere: I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved (John X). The columns placed on either side before the door represent the ministers of the word showing both peoples the entrance to the heavenly kingdom, so that whether someone comes from the light of legal knowledge or from the severity of paganism to faith in the Gospel, they have those ready who can show them the way of salvation by word and example. Certainly, since about these columns it is written in the book of Chronicles:

And he set up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left (II Chron. III), therefore two columns were made and placed so as to teach us that in both prosperity and adversity, the entrance to the heavenly country must be kept before the eyes of our mind. From this we know that Paul, indeed the most excellent column of the house of the Lord, earnestly exhorts us, using the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left by his and his followers' examples, so that neither delighted by prosperity nor broken by adversity, we should deviate in any part from the royal road of life, by which we must go to the promised inheritance of the heavenly country (II Cor. VI). It is noteworthy in this sentence of Chronicles, which I have cited, that the same porch of the temple was also called the vestibule of the temple; and that what we read in the prophets: The priests were praying between the porch and the altar should be understood as between the vestibule and

the altar. Well, each column is remembered to have a height of 18 cubits. For three times six make eighteen. And it is clear that three pertains to faith because of the Holy Trinity, and six to operation, for in that number of days the world was made. And three are multiplied by six when the righteous, who lives by faith, accumulates the knowledge of pious belief by the execution of good deeds.

For a column before the doors of the temple is eighteen cubits high when any distinguished preacher openly declares to all that we cannot reach the joys of the heavenly life except through faith and works of righteousness. Although this can also be understood more deeply, the name Jesus among the Greeks begins with this number. For the first letter of the name Jesus among them signifies ten, the second eight. And fittingly, the columns of the house of God are eighteen cubits high, because holy teachers, indeed all the chosen ones, aim to live well to deserve to see their Creator face to face. For they will have nothing more to seek when they have reached Him who is above all. And the line of twelve cubits encircled each column. The line of twelve cubits is the rule of apostolic institution, which indeed encircles each column when any teacher sent to preach whether to Jews or to Gentiles, ensures to do and teach what the holy Church received and learned through the apostles. For if anyone wishes to live or preach differently and either despises the apostolic decrees or prefers to establish new things on his own whim, such a one is not a column fit for the temple of God, because while he disdains to follow the apostolic statutes, he does not comply with the line of twelve cubits because of either the narrowness of his laziness or the gross bulk of his arrogance.

The Lord surrounded the columns of His temple with these lines when, sending his disciples to teach and baptize all nations, he said: "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28). Therefore, he who observes and teaches all that the Lord commanded the apostles, neither adding anything nor omitting any part of it, is indeed a column in the house of God, which is the Church, and the firmament of truth, such as the apostle Paul admonished Timothy to be. However, since without knowledge of the Scriptures, the life or speech of teachers cannot be firm, it is aptly added: "He also made two capitals to be placed on the tops of the columns, cast in bronze. One capital was five cubits high, and the other capital was five cubits high. For the tops of the columns, that is their uppermost part, are the hearts of the faithful teachers, whose devoted thoughts to God direct all their works and words just as the head directs the members. Moreover, the two capitals, which were placed on these heads, are the two Testaments, to whose meditation and observance the holy teachers are wholly dedicated both in spirit and body. Hence, it is fitting that each capital had five cubits height, because undoubtedly the Mosaic Law is comprised of five books, and the entire series of the Old Testament is encompassed by five ages of the world. The New Testament, indeed, preaches nothing else to us than what Moses and the prophets had foretold to be preached through it.

Hence, the Lord said to the Jews who adhered futilely to the letter of the Old Testament and spurned the grace of the New: "If you believed Moses, you would perhaps believe also in me;

for he wrote of me" (John 5). For Moses wrote of God both figuratively and explicitly when he recounts the promise made to Abraham by the Lord, that in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed; and when he himself says to the sons of Israel: "For the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers. Him you shall hear according to all that he will speak to you. The voice of the Father from heaven reminded the disciples of this prophecy when, with the Lord appearing to them in glory, between Moses himself and Elijah, on the holy mountain, it thundered, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Luke 9). Therefore, with the admirable harmony of divine operation, and first the grace of the New Testament was hidden under the veil of the Old, and now the sacraments of the Old Testament are revealed by the light of the new, as if the capital of each column is five cubits high, because evidently it is manifest that in the Old Testament, whose sacraments are either prefigured in the five books of the law or are fully comprehended in the five ages, the grace of evangelical perfection is also implanted.

Thus it comes about that a distinguished preacher, whether sent to the Jews or to the Gentiles, confirmed by the harmonious testimony of divine utterances, preserves the contest of faith and the rectitude of work without error, and knows to bring forth from his treasury things new and old when teaching. Not only do the Testaments sing in harmony with one another in the relation of the divine sacraments, but also all the elect contained in the books of the same Testaments, endowed with one faith, are connected with each other by the same love. Whence it is aptly added about the construction of their capitals: And as if in the manner of a network, and chains wonderfully intertwined with each other, each capital of the columns was cast. Which in the book of Chronicles is thus written: And also like little chains in the oracle, and he placed them on the tops of the columns (II Chronicles III). For the appearance of the chains, the likeness of a network in the capitals, is the variety of spiritual virtues in the saints, about which it is sung to the Lord in the Psalms: The queen stood at your right hand in a gilded garment, surrounded with variety (Psalms XLIV); that is, clothed in the garment of shining love, surrounded with the variety of different charisms.

Or certainly, the manifold interweaving of chains and the expansion of the network signifies the multifarious persons of the elect, who by faithfully listening to and obeying the words of the holy preachers adhere to them, as if the little chains placed on the tops of the columns offer to all who gaze upon them the miracle of their connection. These chains indeed are wonderfully intertwined with each other, because it is wholly by the miraculous grace of the Holy Spirit that the life of the faithful, both in places and times, and in rank and condition, and in sex and age, although greatly separate from each other, is nonetheless united by one and the same faith and love. For this fraternal union of the just, separated by places and times, is made by the unification of spiritual gifts, as is shown by the following words, when about the construction of the capitals it is added: Seven nets of verses in one capital, and seven nets in the other capital. For by the number seven, the grace of the Holy Spirit is accustomed to be designated, as John attests in Revelation; who when he said he saw a Lamb having seven horns and seven eyes, immediately added by explaining: Which are the

seven Spirits of God, sent into all the earth (Apoc. I). Which the prophet Isaiah more clearly explains, when speaking of the Lord to be born in the flesh:

The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and piety, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him (Isa. XI). Therefore there were seven nets of verses in each capital, and the fathers of both testaments received the grace of the one and same sevenfold Spirit to be the elect. And he made the columns and two rows around the circumference of each network, to cover the capitals. There were indeed two rows of networks around the capital, but each row ran with a sevenfold number of verses, until, having circled around the capital, it returned to itself, as if forming a circle. This figure of the sacrament is not hidden, for why there are two rows of networks, when it is evident that the virtue of love is of twin distinction, when we are commanded to love God with all our heart, and with all our soul, with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. But each of those rows has seven nets of verses, because neither can God be loved without the grace of the Holy Spirit, nor the neighbor. For the truthful saying remains, because the love of God is poured into our hearts, not by our merit, but by the Holy Spirit who is given to us.

Where the love of God is, there indeed the love of neighbor is also poured into the hearts of the faithful, because surely one cannot be had without the other. But these networks were made to cover the capitals, that is, to surround them all around, because the whole page of Holy Scripture, when rightly understood, sounds of the grace of love and peace in all things. For indeed the capitals of divine utterances are the bonds of mutual affection. And capitals are covered with network, when sacred utterances, so to speak, are proven to be restored everywhere by the gift of charity. For even in those things which we do not understand in the Scriptures, charity is widely manifested. Moreover, concerning these networks or capitals, it is rightly added: Which were above the tops of the pomegranates. For pomegranates, whose nature is to enclose many seeds within a single outer rind, aptly represent the holy Church, which customarily encloses innumerable groups of the elect within the safeguard of one catholic faith. However, it can also designate the justice and morals of each individual, who, like many seeds encompassed within one rind, takes care to surround with firm custody of faith and humility the many marks of spiritual thoughts and virtues, lest they possibly dissolve.

And quite fittingly, the capitals of the columns were surrounded in a circle by pomegranates, because it is necessary for the holy teachers to recall the lives of the faithful predecessors to memory, and to continually fortify their actions and words with their examples in every part, lest they err by living or teaching otherwise than the rule of those forebears holds. Just as therefore the admirable connection of the networks signifies the unity of the faithful, which is in the bond of peace, so also the pomegranates typically announce that same unity, which binds countless peoples throughout the world in one rule of catholic faith. Or indeed the admirable connection of the networks manifestly demonstrates the clear concord of all the faithful; the position of the pomegranates expresses the inward virtues of the soul,

which cannot at all be seen by others, namely patience, humility, kindness, modesty, and the like. And as the beautiful outer appearance of the fruits is seen, but the multitude of seeds enclosed within is not visible, so the pious work of the saints is shown openly to all, but the grace of faith, hope, and love, and the other inner spiritual goods cannot be seen. Accordingly, when it was said of the networks that they cover the capitals which were above the tops of the pomegranates, it appears according to the order of that work that the pomegranates were made around the capitals at the lower part, and from the same pomegranates arose the networks, by which the capitals were in some part covered.

And the figure of the mystery is clear, because networks were attached above the tops of the pomegranates, which pertain to almost one significance either of persons or of spiritual virtues. For we know that virtues are born from virtues, and that the saints walk from virtue to virtue, until the God of gods appears in Zion. Hence also the Apostle says: Knowing that tribulation produces patience, and patience produces experience, and experience produces hope (Romans 5:3-4). But even in the very universal assembly of the elect, the just persons succeed one another in various ways, and the lesser rejoice to faithfully adhere to the footsteps of the greater and their predecessors, and to their sayings or writings, lest they might possibly fall into error. Therefore, the networks are placed above the tops of the pomegranates, when the concord of charity is added to perfect deeds. And when both gifts of virtue, namely operation and charity, are added, the life of the saints shines forth clearly, as the concatenation of the networks is superadded to the circle of pomegranates in the capitals of the column. And because all the gifts of present virtues look towards the glory of eternal remuneration, which is promised and ministered to us by the Gospel, it is aptly added: But the capitals which were above the heads of the columns were made like the work of lilies in the vestibule, four cubits high.

What is signified by lilies, but the brightness of the heavenly country, and the pleasantness of paradise resplendent with the flowers of immortality? What is signified by four cubits, but the evangelical sermon, which promises us the entrance into that eternal beatitude and shows the way by which it is reached? When therefore the holy teachers show us the promised thresholds of the heavenly kingdom in the four books of the holy Gospel, as it were, the heads of the columns display in themselves the work of lilies of four cubits. Where it ought to be noted according to the letter, because when the work of the lily is mentioned in the capitals of four cubits, it did not add whether of width or height, and it was left to the reader's judgment whether it should be understood in height or in width. But it is evident without any doubt, because the column, which a rope of twelve cubits encompassed, had four cubits of girth. For every circle has as much space in diameter as it has three times in circumference. Accordingly, the brazen sea, because it had a diameter of ten cubits, as it is read later, consequently had thirty cubits in circumference. However, because it is said that the work of the lily was four cubits, whether it signifies width or height, nonetheless, the rationale of the figure is clear, because not otherwise than through the Gospel did that most desired voice sound to the world, saying: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:2).

What follows: And again other capitals on the tops of the columns above, according to the measure of the column, opposite the networks; according to the measure of the column, it says, of such a height as the column was, whose height, however, is not narrated. These capitals, however they were made and of whatever size they were (for Scripture does not explicitly state their measurements), appear to resemble lilies; from their construction, if we wish to inquire about any mystical meaning, they can not inappropriately signify that sublimity of the perpetual kingdom which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those who love Him. After the lilies of four cubits, other capitals are set upon them, the height of which is not mentioned, because we read much about heavenly beatitude in the Gospel; such as the pure in heart will see God, they will be equal to the angels of God, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, they will no longer die, where Christ is, there also His servants will be, He will manifest Himself to them, He will proclaim openly about the Father to them, the joy of His vision will be taken away by no one. But the very nature of these things that we have spoken of, the status and way of life of the heavenly country itself, is known only to those who have deserved to enter it, its citizens.

Hence, the construction or height of these capitals above the lilies is fittingly considered incomprehensible by earthly beings, by which the quality of the heavenly habitation is suggested; about which it is least disputed that all there enjoy the common happiness of divine vision, each one more elevated according to the purity of heart's eyes with which they see Him. For He who said: "He blessed all those who fear God, the small with the great", also said: "For You will render to each one according to his works" (Psalm 113). Therefore, the common blessing of all the elect will be there. Nevertheless, according to the distinct quality of works, there are many mansions of the blessed in the one and same eternal house of the Father in heaven: which I think is mystically meant in the construction of these columns, when it is said: "And again there were other capitals on the tops of the columns above, according to the measure of the column, opposite the nets". For the capitals are made above, according to the measure of the column, when the holy teachers, rather all the just, following the footsteps of the same doctors, receive the rewards of heavenly retribution, according to the merits of holy operations. Also, the capitals are made opposite the nets, because according to the measure of the love with which the holy brotherhood is united in this life, they will be united in the fellowship of the heavenly citizens in the presence of their Creator in heaven.

However, since the same fellowship of heavenly citizens is granted to the faithful of both peoples, it is fittingly added: "There were two hundred pomegranates in rows around the second capital". We have said that the pomegranates hold the type of the whole holy Church; and the number one hundred, which first reaches the right hand, sometimes is a figure of eternal blessed life. This number of pomegranates is doubled around the second capital, to mystically denote that the people of both testaments are to be united in Christ to be led into the crown of eternal life. This figure corresponds to what is written about the apostles fishing after the Lord's resurrection, when they saw Him standing on the shore: "For they

were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits, dragging the net full of fish" (John 21). By two hundred cubits, the disciples drag the net full of large fish to the Lord, showing the effect of His resurrection on the shore; when holy preachers commit the word of faith to both Jews and Gentiles, and lead the elect of both peoples, extracted from the waves of the present age, to the glory of future peace and immortality. Therefore, the circumference of the second capital has two hundred rows of pomegranates, when the sublimity of the heavenly kingdom collects the elect of both peoples in one summit of blessedness. And he set up two columns in the porch of the temple.

When he set up the right column, he called it by the name Jachin, that is, firmness. Similarly, he set up the second column, and called its name Boaz, that is, in strength. The right column, as we have said above, expresses the figure of the teachers who established the primitive Church in Jerusalem; the second, those who were appointed to preach to the Gentiles. Or certainly, the right column signifies those who prophesied the coming Lord in the flesh; the second, those who testify that He has already come, and redeemed the world by His blood. And aptly, both columns were considered by a similar name, when one was called firmness, the other in strength; that the one strength of faith and work might be shown to be in all teachers, and the inertia of our time might be noted, where some teachers, priests, wish to be seen and called columns of God, though they have nothing at all of firm faith to despise the pomps of the world, and to desire invisible good things, nor strength to correct, nor industry at least to understand the errors of those over whom they have been set.

CHAPTER XIX. Concerning the brazen sea. He also made a molten sea, etc. This molten sea was made in the form of the saving laver, in which we are cleansed for the remission of sins. For the priests washed themselves in it, as the words of the days openly testify. Moreover, it is clear that all who are chosen are typically called priests in the Scriptures, because they are members of our Lord Jesus Christ, the high priest. And rightly does Scripture attribute the name of "sea" to this vessel, namely, in memory of the Red Sea, in which a form of baptism first appeared through the destruction of the Egyptians and the liberation of God's people, as the Apostle expounds, saying: "For all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. The sacrament of baptism, on the other hand, secures for us purity of life in this world and promises us the glory of eternal life in the future (I Cor. X). Both of these are signified in this brazen sea by one statement, as it is said to be ten cubits from lip to lip. For the Lord expressed in the Law all that we should do in the ten commandments. Likewise, He marked the reward of the good works with the number ten, with which He foretold to be given to those laboring in the vineyard. Therefore, the sea was ten cubits from lip to lip;

for from the first baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to the last, who is to believe and be baptized at the end of the world, the entire chorus of the faithful ought to enter the one and the same way of truth and hope for the common crown of righteousness from the Lord. It was round in circumference, as the universal globe, in the circle of life, was designated to be cleansed from the stain of sins; concerning which it is well added: Its height was five

cubits because indeed whatever we sin by sight, whatever by hearing, whatever by smell, whatever by taste, whatever by touch, all this is remitted to us by the grace of God through the washing of the life-giving fountain. But the remission of past sins is not sufficient unless each one endeavors to persist in good deeds from henceforth; otherwise, the devil, who had departed from the man, if he sees him to be idle from good works, returns more abundantly and makes the latter state of that man worse than the former. Hence it is aptly added: And a line of thirty cubits compassed it round about.

By the line, indeed, the discipline of heavenly precepts, by which we are bound from our lusts, can be aptly signified, with Scripture bearing witness, for a threefold cord is not quickly broken, because indeed the observance of God's commandments, which is established in the hearts of the chosen by faith, hope, and love of divine retribution, cannot be broken by any obstacle of temporal things. And the line encompasses the sea when the sacrament of baptism which we have received, we strive to confirm by pious deeds, which line is aptly said to be thirty cubits. For five times six makes thirty. By the number six, in which God made man when he did not exist and when he had perished recreated him, our good action is also rightly figured. And six are multiplied by five to reach thirty when we humbly subject all the senses of our body to divine commands. We can also mystically accept this marine number of thirty in another way; because three times ten makes thirty. And humanity after the flood filled the breadth of the whole world from the progeny of Noah's three sons. For indeed, the descendants of Shem occupied Asia, the descendants of Ham Africa, and the descendants of Japheth Europe and the islands of the sea.

And since the mystery of baptism, along with the performance of good works and the hope of heavenly rewards, was meant to be ministered to all nations, it is fitting that a cord of thirty cubits encircled that sea in which the wave of baptism was symbolized. But it is also to be noted that the Lord, having thirty years of age, came to the Jordan to be baptized by John. Since by His baptism, which the thirty-year span received, He consecrated the water of the saving washing for us, it is fitting that the sea, which symbolized our baptism, was encompassed by a cord of thirty cubits; so that it might be signified that the baptism dedicated to the remission of sins for all of us who believe in Him comes from the gift of Him who underwent baptism without sin. And the sculpture below the brim encircled it, measuring ten cubits around the sea. There were two rows of sculpted oxen. When it was previously mentioned that a cord of thirty cubits circled the sea, and now it is added that a sculpture below the brim measured ten cubits around, it is clear from both accounts that the basin was expanded and spread like a lily, being fitted from a circumference of thirty cubits at the brim to ten cubits. However, a sculpted ox is one that mimics some histories of events.

Hence, rightly through the carved oxen that encircled the sea, examples of prior times are designated, which it is necessary for us to diligently observe in order to see by what works the saints pleased God from the beginning, by what obstinacy the wicked persisted in their crimes, and by what great iniquity the reprobates perished for their crimes; how at the be-

ginning of the nascent world Cain was condemned for the malice of envy, Abel was crowned for the merit of righteousness, Lamech cursed for adultery and murder, Enoch brought back to paradise for his grace of piety; how after the flood Ham was detested by his father for impiety, Shem and Japheth, due to reverence, were granted perpetual blessings, Abraham was made the heir of the divine promise due to the merit of faith, the rest of the multitude of nations was left in ancestral infidelity; how, with the Lord coming in the flesh, Judea was repelled for the crime of perfidy, and the gentiles were brought back to salvation through the grace of faith; and such other things which, when diligently and piously considered in both Testaments, greatly benefit any zealous people. And perhaps for this reason, two orders of carved oxen were made in the brazen sea, so that those imbued with the font of baptism might diligently heed the histories of both Testaments. Therefore it was ten cubits around, so that anyone committed in these histories to the divine commands and entirely attentive to heavenly rewards might be seen and imitated. It follows well:

And it stood upon twelve oxen, out of which three looked toward the north, and three toward the west, and three toward the south, and three toward the east. For we understand, from the teaching of the Apostle, that oxen should be understood as the apostles and evangelists, indeed all ministers of the word, as the Apostle explains the commandment of the law which says: You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain. Is God really concerned with oxen (Deut. 25)? Or is it surely said for our sake? It is written for our sake, because whoever plows should plow in hope, and whoever threshes should thresh in expectation of reaping (1 Cor. 9). Thus, the twelve oxen are the twelve apostles and all who have taken up their place in governing the Holy Church; who indeed carry the sea over themselves when the apostles and their successors diligently fulfill the duty of evangelizing that has been imposed on them with prompt devotion. And three looked toward the north, and three toward the west, and three toward the south, and three toward the east, when they preached in all parts of the world the faith of the Holy Trinity. For the apostles were chosen as twelve, that is, four times three, by that mystery, so that they might baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, preaching the faith and confession of the Holy Trinity to the four corners of the world.

The words, actions, and passions of these apostles and their successors can be easily discerned in the present by observing or by reading; but what glorious reward awaits them in the future, we are not yet able to see. Hence it is aptly said: Whose hind parts were all hidden within. For indeed, the hind parts of the oxen are all hidden within; because the eternal reward which the holy preachers will receive is already determined in the judgment of the internal arbiter; but for us, who are still outside, it remains altogether hidden. However, this cannot remain hidden to anyone who receives the baptismal washing for salvation, and who must have life, faith, hope, and charity; without these three virtues, no one can operate anything, nor enter into life. Hence it is rightly added: The thickness of the basin was three inches. The thickness of the basin in the sea is the firmness of virtue in baptism. And this thickness is three inches, as it is fortified by the strength of faith, hope, and love during the reception of baptism. It is also shown that it can be profitable to the recipients

only if the firm certainty of these virtues strengthens the mind and actions of the recipients. The washing of baptism is received and celebrated in the example of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection from the dead; according to what the Apostle explains: For all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death.

Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, surely we will also be united in the likeness of his resurrection (Rom. 6). This is also signified in a typological manner by the figure of the bronze sea when it is subsequently added: Its rim was shaped like a cup's rim, resembling the petals of a lily. By the cup's rim, the taste of the Lord's Passion is expressed; by the petals of the crossed lily, the revealed brightness of His Resurrection is conveyed. For indeed, the Lord, about to undergo His Passion, prayed to the Father, saying: Father, if You are willing, take this cup away from me (Luke 22). The lily, with its pleasant fragrance and white color on the outside and golden hue inside, aptly represents the glory of His Resurrection, which manifested both the immortality of His body to His disciples outwardly and the divine luminosity of His soul inwardly. The opened lily can also fittingly represent the Mediator between God and humans crowned with glory and honor after His Passion. Before His Passion, He was as a lily still closed, shining with the miracles He performed as a clear human;

after His Resurrection and Ascension, He revealed Himself as an outstretched lily to the citizens of the heavenly homeland, showing in His assumed humanity the power of divine splendor that He had with the Father before the world existed. Therefore, in the Song of Songs, He wished to designate Himself with the term lily, saying: I am a flower of the field and a lily of the valleys (Cant. 2). Thus, the rim of the sea, where the priests washed, was like the rim of a cup and the petals of an opened lily; because the lifesaving washing, by which we become members of the High Priest, sanctifies us in the faith of His holy Passion from all the stain of sins, and purifies us to enter into the vision of His eternal glory: in this washing, indeed, both peoples, that is, of circumcision and of the foreskin, are made one in the Lord through faith, hope, and love, as He Himself attests, who preached circumcision saying among other things: And I have other sheep that are not of this sheepfold, and I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. There shall be one flock and one Shepherd (John 10). What was symbolically prefigured in this sea as well; for it follows: It could hold two thousand baths. For the number of a thousand in Scripture is usually set for the signification of perfection; because indeed the number ten squared makes a solid. For ten times ten makes a hundred.

This figure is indeed squared but still full. But that it may rise in height and become solid, a hundred multiplied by ten makes a thousand. Surely by this number, stable and insuperable, and as if squared, the conscience of the just is designated. For wherever you turn it, a square stands. Thus the mind of the chosen knows not to be inclined from the state of its rectitude by any occurrence of temptations. But bath is a measure of the Hebrews, which

they call bath, having three bushels. It is also ephah, which they call epha. But ephah pertains to the measure of dry fruits, wheat, barley, legumes; while bath is for liquid substances, wine, oil, water. Therefore, baths, which are a measure of a certain norm, signify works of equity and justice, with which those who are baptized for the remission of sins need to be instructed. And the sea held a thousand baths, when the water of baptism cleansing the Jewish people transferred them to the heavenly kingdom. And it also received another thousand, when even crowds of nations, reborn from the same font and confirmed by works of justice, were made partakers of the same perpetual kingdom. It is certainly to be noted in this place that there are those who think it is prohibited by the law of God to carve or paint likenesses of either men, or any animals or things in the church or on a wall or in any other place, because it is said in the Decalogue of the law:

You shall not make for yourself a graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth (Exodus 20). They would not think this at all, if they recalled Solomon's work to memory, who made palms and cherubim with various carvings inside the temple; on its pillars pomegranates and networks; on this bronze sea twelve oxen and chased figures, and also on the bases of the lavers, as it is read later, he made lions with oxen, palms, axles, and wheels, with cherubim and a variety of painted forms; or certainly if they considered the works of Moses himself, who by the command of the Lord, first made cherubim on the mercy seat, and afterwards a bronze serpent in the desert, by looking at which the people were saved from the venom of fiery serpents. For if it was permitted to exalt a bronze serpent on wood, which the children of Israel looking upon might live, why is it not permitted to portray to the memory of the faithful the exaltation of the Lord Saviour on the cross, by which He conquered death, or other of His miracles and healings, by which He miraculously triumphed over the same author of death, since the sight of these often provides great compunction to those who look upon them, and even to those who are ignorant of letters, as if displaying a living reading of the Lord's History? For painting is called in Greek ζωγραφία, that is, living writing.

If it was allowed to make twelve bronze oxen, which bearing the sea turned towards the four quarters of the world in groups of three, what prevents us from painting the twelve apostles, as they went forth teaching all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; designating as if by living writing before the eyes of all? And if it was not against the law to make chased figures in a circle of ten cubits on the same sea, how will it be thought contrary to the law if we carve or paint in panels the chased figures of saints and martyrs of Christ, who through the keeping of the divine law deserved to attain to the glory of eternal retribution? But if we more diligently attend to the words of the law, it will perhaps appear that it is not forbidden to make images of things and animals, but it is absolutely prohibited to make these for the sake of idolatry. Finally, when the Lord was about to say on the holy mountain: You shall not make for yourself a graven image, nor any likeness, He preceded it by saying: You shall have no other gods before Me; and then He added: You shall not make for yourself a graven image, nor any likeness of anything

that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; and He concluded: You shall not bow down to them, nor serve them.

By these words it is openly declared that those likenesses are prohibited to be made by all, which the impious are accustomed to make in the worship of strange gods, and which the wandering gentility discovered for the purpose of worship and adoration. Otherwise, simply making these has, as I believe, been prohibited by no letter of the divine law; otherwise, even the Lord, when tempted by the Pharisees about paying tribute to Caesar, in which they said the name and image of Caesar were expressed, would not have responded thus: Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's (Matthew 22); but rather correcting their error, He would say: It is not lawful for you to make the image of Caesar by the striking of your gold, because such sculpture is prohibited by the divine law; nor would He have said this, when shown the coin of tribute, if the image of Caesar on it had been deformed for the sake of idolatry, and not more for the judgement of royal power.

CHAPTER XX. On the ten bases and lavers. And he made ten bronze bases, etc. In many and various ways, the same sacraments of our salvation are prefigured. For the same apostles and apostolic men, who are signified by the oxen bearing the sea, are also signified by the bases, which were prepared for bearing the lavers, just as the lavers themselves bear the type of the same spiritual washing, of which the sea also bore the type. For as the words of the days narrate, they washed in them everything that was to be offered in the burnt offering (2 Chronicles 4). Therefore, the burnt offering of the Lord can be generally understood as the whole multitude of the elect, who, according to the voice of the forerunner, were baptized by Him in the Holy Spirit and fire. Therefore, just as the priests who were washed in the sea represent those who are made partakers of the high priesthood through baptism, which is in the Lord Jesus Christ; so also the burnt offerings most openly signify their figure, since they are filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit through the washing of baptism. For the victim is washed in the laver when a believer is sprinkled with water; but it is offered as a burnt offering when, through the imposition of the bishop's hand, he receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. When Philip the evangelist preached in Samaria, what did he do but wash the Lord's sacrifices in the laver of the temple?

But because the Holy Spirit had not yet descended on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, it was as if the washed sacrifices had not yet reached the fire of the most sacred altar; but when Peter and John, who had been sent there, laid hands on the baptized, and they received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues, the sacrifices had now reached the altar's fire to become a burnt offering, which in Latin is called "totally consumed," because indeed, the grace of the Holy Spirit filling their conscience made them fervent with divine love. And because ten bases were made to carry the lavers, it could mystically be interpreted that the ministers of the vital washing support those they nurture with their voice by the work of their example to the joys of eternal blessedness, which is often figured by the number ten. But because it is distinctly written about those lavers in

the following that five of them were placed on the right side of the temple and five on the left, the mysteries of the number five must be considered more closely in them. For on both sides of the temple are the bases of the lavers, so that the grace of the sacred font might be shown to both peoples of God.

And there are five on each side, so that just as in the exposition of the sea, which we have already said to be five cubits high, so also in the five bases of the lavers, it is typically shown that all that the faithful committed through the five senses of the body is to be remitted through the washing of baptism. Therefore, just as in one sea placed upon twelve oxen the unity of baptism is expressed, which was to be preached to the whole world through the apostles, so also through the two orders of the lavers it is mystically shown that the Gentiles and the Jews were to be gathered into one fellowship of faith through the wave of baptism. For even if sacrifices were washed in twin lavers, some on the right side of the court, and some on the left, they were all consumed by one fire of the altar to become a burnt offering; because whether one receives the washing of Christ in the part of the circumcision or in that of the foreskin, all are sanctified by one Spirit to be made sons of God. Hence indeed the Apostle says, "But you received the Spirit of adoption of sons, in whom we cry: Abba Father. "You received," he says, "one Spirit, in whom all sons of adoption are made; in whom indeed we cry, Abba Father; evidently Abba for those of us who came to the faith from the Hebrews;

Father, for those of us from among the gentiles, invoking one and the same Father God in various tongues due to the diversity of nations, on account of the one Spirit's gift. But it is easy to understand that the bases were each four cubits in length, four cubits in width, and three cubits in height. For the length pertains to the patience of long-suffering, the width to the expansion of love, and the height refers to the hope of heavenly reward. Moreover, there are four principal virtues on which the whole structure of the virtues depends: namely prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice. Therefore, the bases' length and width were of four cubits, because the holy preachers, whether enduring worldly adversities and the length of exile and present labors without, or enlarging their heart in the eternal exultation of their Creator's love and that of their neighbors, always care to devote themselves to the virtues, prudently discerning between good and evil, courageously enduring adversities, tempering the heart from the desire for pleasures, holding to justice in action. The height of the bases, indeed, is of three cubits when through the exercise of virtues, which they practice with patience of evils and love of good things, they strive with continuous intention to reach the vision of the Holy Trinity. The work of the bases itself was pierced, and with sculptures between the joinings.

The joinings seem to refer to those by which the plates of the laver itself were joined together to one another, so that from four or five plates one base would be made. It is revealed what kinds of sculptures these bases had between these joinings, that is, on their sides, front and back, on the right and left, and above too, by the addition which says: Between wreaths and garlands, lions, oxen, and cherubim, and similar joinings above. Therefore, those surfaces of

the bases were not flat but carved all around with mystical figures; because the minds of the saints, indeed their entire conduct, displays virtue's grace in all things, and no hour passes for them without being filled with pious works, words, or surely meditations. They have indeed sculpted wreaths when they pant with unfailing desire for the entrance of eternal life. And they have garlands when, amid the desires for life that is above, they never dissolve the bonds of brotherly fellowship that is near. They have lions between the wreaths and garlands when they thus raise their mind to hope for celestial things and their heart to love their neighbors so that they delay not to show the fervor of severe rebuke to sinners entrusted to them. They have oxen with the lions when they exhibit that same rebuke of correction with the spirit of meekness;

when in the fervor of correcting they never cease to revolve the discernment of right action for speech, never ceasing to ruminate on the words of divine reading in their mouths. Indeed, blessed Stephen, evidently the excellent base of the Lord's temple, appeared to show the fierce teeth and claws of the lion when he said to his persecutors, "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? (Acts VII), and so on. However, while he spoke this, he showed how much tenderness and, so to speak, bovine meekness he carried in his heart when, kneeling, he prayed for those same persecutors raging up to his death, saying: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them. But because neither the hope of eternal things in heaven, nor the love of neighbors on earth, nor the fervor of biting zeal, nor the kindness of compassionate moderation can be had without the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, it is fittingly remembered that cherubim are sculpted between the wreaths and garlands, the lions and oxen. For it is known that cherubim hold the type of sacred Scripture, whether because the two cherubim on the mercy seat of the ark, in the figure of the two Testaments harmoniously singing of Christ, or because their very name signifies the multitude of knowledge.

The more earnestly anyone applies himself to the reading of the pages of divine words, the more necessary it is that he fears the judgment of the internal witness or judge in everything he does or judges, lest in judging the sinners he does too much justly, or again by pardoning without the restraint of just discretion, incurs the wrath of the just Judge. For he who adds knowledge, also adds labor (Eccle. I). Hence, here too, besides the sculptures of cherubim, it is fittingly joined: And on the lions and oxen, as if there were reins hanging made of bronze. For reins hang upon the lions and oxen, when holy teachers, both in the severity of strictness by which they judge sinners, and in the mildness of gentleness by which they forgive the penitent, fear the judgment of their Author, lest they themselves, by unjustly binding, may justly deserve to be bound by Him whose judgment cannot err. And there were four wheels on each pedestal, and bronze axles, and to the four parts were there little shoulders cast underneath the laver, looking towards each other. The four wheels are the four books of the Gospels, which are most aptly compared to wheels, because just as the rolling of a wheel runs swiftly wherever it is driven, so the evangelical word, with the help of the Lord, quickly filled the whole world through the apostles.

Just as a wheel lifts the chariot placed upon it from the earth, and carries it where the charioteer directs, so evangelical preaching suspends the minds of the elect from earthly desires to heavenly aspirations, and, raised thus up, it leads them to the growth of good works or to the ministry of preaching, wherever the helping grace of the Spirit wills. For it says further on: For such were the wheels as are accustomed to be made on a chariot. And we read concerning the saints: The chariots of God are tens of thousands, thousands of rejoicing ones (Psal. XLVII). What therefore does it mean that the wheels of the bases are likened to chariot wheels, except that one and the same Gospel word makes some of them whom it instructs into the chariots of God, and others into bases? Whoever among the doctors used to be sent far and wide into the world to evangelize the word were indeed the chariots of God, and very swift ones, because running through all, they led God to the hearts of the believers. But those who, remaining in one place, announce the word of salvation to their neighbors and drive them to the bath of life, which is celebrated either in baptism or in the contrition of tears, are like the bases of the temple, which carry the lavers for washing the offerings. For they so bestow the ministry of salvation on the faithful whom they oversee, that they do not undergo the labor of running far to acquire new peoples.

Therefore, the wheels of the bases are similar to the wheels of the chariots, because the same books of the Gospels send these teachers forth to preach the faith of truth, and command those others, already initiated into the heavenly sacraments, to remain with the doctors to further confirm the faith. The four wheels supported the base of the laver when the Gospels ordered James, the brother of the Lord, to stay in Jerusalem to strengthen the Church. The wheels placed under them were prepared to run when the same Gospels willed that Paul and Barnabas should travel everywhere to preach to the Gentiles. The wheels set under the base lifted the laver of the temple from the earth, when in our recent times blessed Pope Gregory, fortified with the evangelical words, ruled the Roman Church. The same wheels, attached to the chariot of God, stood far apart when the most reverend Fathers Augustine, Paulinus, and their other companions, confirmed by the same evangelical oracles, came to Britain at his command and entrusted the word of God to peoples long unbelieving.

If, therefore, the bases of the lavers are the holy teachers who minister to us the bath of life, and the four wheels of the bases are the four books of the Gospels, what are the axles of the wheels that bear the bases, but the hearts of the same teachers who, intent diligently on the precepts of the Gospel, lift themselves from the desire of lowly things, just as axles attached to the wheels lift the base higher from the ground? But the little shoulders placed before the wheels, lest they might slip from the axles, are the proclamations of the prophets, by which the evangelical and apostolic Scripture is confirmed, lest it might perhaps come into doubt for any of the readers. Hence the Apostle Peter, speaking about the Lord, says: And we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention (II Petr. I). All the evangelists and apostles also used to make mention of the Law and the Prophets in what they wrote. Thus, Mark says: The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet; and Matthew: All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet (Marc. I), and similar things. It is well

said that the little shoulders, which were placed in four parts under the laver, were looking towards each other, because indeed all prophetic Scripture is in agreement with itself, as it is composed by one Spirit.

There were four little shoulders per base, namely according to the number of wheels, not because there are only four prophetic books, but because in all that the prophets and Moses spoke, they bore testimony to the words of the four evangelists, so that from the agreement of both, one faith and love of Christ might confirm the hearts of all of us. Moreover, the mouth of the laver inside was at the top of the head, and what appeared outwardly was of one cubit, it was all round, and had one and a half cubits in length. The basin's lip measured one cubit, symbolizing the unity of confession and faith by which all are baptized in the confession of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle says: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. And this lip was at the top of the head (Ephesians IV), to teach us that through baptism, the path to the heavenly kingdom has been opened. The basin itself had the width of one and a half cubits, signifying the perfection of the work and the beginning of contemplation. For the whole cubit in the basin represents the perfection of good action, undoubtedly possessed by Job, of whom the Lord said to the ancient tempter: "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is no one like him on the earth, a simple and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil" (Job I)?

The other cubit stands for divine vision, which in some part is granted to the faithful in this life, as to Job, who, after overcoming the adversary, said while speaking with the Lord: "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You" (Job XLII); as the Lord appeared face to face to Moses; as He was seen by Isaiah seated on the throne of the kingdom surrounded by heavenly citizens with due praise; as He often appeared to other prophets; as to blessed Stephen at the moment of his martyrdom, when the heavens were opened and the glory of God was revealed; as to Paul, who was shown the mysteries of the entrance into paradise and the third heaven. But all these are in a very small part, compared to the glory to be revealed in the future. Therefore, after the cubit of good action which can be perfected in this life by the saints, begins the cubit of heavenly contemplation, which in the future life will certainly be completed in all the chosen. This measure of one and a half cubits was found not only in the basins but also in the wheels and their bases. For it is written in the following: "One wheel had a height of a cubit and a half. And a little later: "And on the top of the base, there was some roundness of one and a half cubits, so made that a basin could be placed on top.

The measure of the basin was indeed one cubit and a half because we are washed in the font of life by that faith, so that through works of righteousness we may deserve to enter eternal life, although we cannot be without sin while we live here. Indeed, we can taste the sweetness of the heavenly life partly, and love it in this interim life, but we cannot fully see it in any way. The wheels also measure one and a half cubits, because the study of the evangelical reading shows how those who want to be perfect should live; it demonstrates

hope for eternal reward in the present, and promises that the quality of that reward will be revealed and granted to us in the future. The bases also measure one cubit and a half in width at the top, where the basins would be placed, because the eminent teachers and ministers of the saving bath shone perfectly in this life through their works, but they enjoyed the light of contemplation in part, thus they say: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. In this way, he made ten bases, from a single mold and measure, with similar carvings. He also made ten bronze basins (I Cor. XIII). Why the bases were made, and an equal number of basins placed on them, has already been said.

As to the fact that there was one mold, one measure, and similar carvings for all the bases and basins, this was not done to signify the equality of all the merits of the teachers; rather, it was done because there is one faith of the Gospel by which they are instructed, one sacrament of baptism by which they are washed, and one and the same Spirit by whom all the elect are consecrated, although they have different gifts in that Spirit, who distributes to everyone as He wills. Each basin held forty baths. The number forty regularly holds the type of great perfection, because four times ten makes forty. Ten are the commandments in which all our actions set forth in divine law are included; four are the books of the Gospels, through which the entrance to the heavenly homeland is opened to us by the dispensation of the Lord's incarnation. And because all who belong to the mystery of sacred baptism must show the fruit of right action with faith and the sacraments of the Gospel, each basin, in which the holocausts were washed, appropriately held forty baths. As for what follows: "And it was four cubits either in height or in width," the meaning of the mystery lies clearly herein.

For one basin was four cubits either because of the holy books of the Gospel, in which the form of baptism is set forth, or because of the four cardinal virtues, with which every faithful person, if they are not a faithful person in vain, should be instructed; or certainly because of the four regions of the world to which the bath of salvation is administered, as the Psalmist says: "Whom He redeemed from the hand of the enemy, He gathered from the regions, from the rising and setting of the sun, from the north and the sea" (Psalm LXXVII). As was said above: "And it was one and a half cubits; and whether it signified height or width was not specified, it seems that it is meant to be understood as the breadth of the basin. From the measurement (if I am not mistaken) of the base on which it was placed, each laver is most easily inferred, which is thus described: At the summit of the base was a certain roundness of one and a half cubits, so fashioned that the laver could be placed on top. The width of the base of the lavers was one and a half cubits, and the capacity of the lavers themselves held four cubits. But whether it is in height, or in length, or in both, let him say who knows. And he established ten bases, five on the right side of the temple, five on the left.

The right side of the temple and the left are not within the temple itself, but before the temple to the east, namely in the inner court, which was properly called that of the priests. Five were placed on the right side of the temple for the Jews, who from ancient times used

the Sun of righteousness for the teaching of the law; and five on the left for us, who for a long time with a blind heart adhered to the servitude of him who said: "I will set my throne on the north": which is plainly to say: I desire to rest in those hearts which I consider to be alien from the light of truth and the flame of divine charity. And the sea was placed on the right side of the temple, toward the East, to the South. And this too was placed in the same court toward the East. But when he says: On the right side of the temple, this is what he repeats by saying Toward the South. For those entering the court from the East, turning was first to the South, where the sea in the very corner stood, prepared for the priests to wash; then as they progressed inward, the lavers for washing the sacrifices were encountered, placed on both sides; within these was a bronze base five cubits in length; and five cubits in width, and three cubits in height, on which Solomon stood dedicating the temple;

then going further, the altar of burnt offering faced the south of the court; then the portico of the temple or the vestibule, in which were bronze columns around the door of the temple. Therefore, placing the sea on the right side of the temple signifies that we through the washing of baptism ought to attain the heavenly kingdom, which is rightly figured by the term "right. For he who believes and is baptized shall be saved. For where both the right and the left are taken in a good sense, either Judea and the Gentile world, as we said above in the interpretation of the bases; or the present life of the Church and the future, or the joy of the saints and sorrow, or something of this kind; but where absolutely the right is placed in a good sense, it often indicates eternal joys. But placing the sea toward the east has almost the same significance, namely that through the washing of the sacred font the splendor of internal clarity is opened to us. That it is toward the southern side of the court signifies that the faithful through the reception of the Holy Spirit are accustomed to be kindled to the fervor of true charity. For the fervor of the southern sun is accustomed in the Scriptures to signify the ardor of love and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, through whom the same love is diffused in the hearts of the elect.

CHAPTER XXI. That the vessels of the house of the Lord were made in the region of the Jordan. All the vessels... were of brass, etc. Appropriately, the vessels of the house of the Lord were cast in the region of the Jordan, in which river our Lord deemed to be baptized, and by being dipped in its waters converted the element of water for us into the washing away of sins, because all the baptism of the faithful, by which they are consecrated to the Lord, is celebrated by the example of that baptism by which He sanctified the waters. Rightly, therefore, the vessels of the house of the Lord were made in the region of the Jordan. For we cannot otherwise become vessels of election and mercy unless, looking to His baptism which He underwent in that river, we also strive to be washed in the life-giving stream. It should be noted, however, that the same vessels are said to have been made not only in the region of the Jordan but also in its plain region; signifying the multiplication of the faithful, which was to be throughout the breadth of all nations, fulfilling the prophecy which says: "The fields shall rejoice, and all that is in them" (Ps. 95). Similar to this is what the same

Psalmist says of the mystery of the Lord's Incarnation, from which many came to the faith: "Lo, we heard of it in Ephrathah, we found it in the fields of the wood.

For we hear in Ephrathah, that is, in Bethlehem, the mysteries of the Lord, revealed through the prophets about the Virgin, who was from the same city, from the fruit of her womb, Christ was to come in the flesh. We found them in the fields of the wood because they were revealed throughout the breadth of the nations across the world, we ourselves have known them, we have seen them, we have become participants in them. Therefore, the king cast the vessels of the house of the Lord in the plain region of the Jordan because the Lord filled the baptism of salvation, through which He made vessels of mercy, throughout the breadth of the world. Clayey earth, from which were made molds for casting the vessels of the house of the Lord, can better than sacred Scripture, from which we receive the rule of good living, be understood? For just as clay hardened by fire exhibits the form of the vessels of the Lord, showing how great and what kind they ought to be made, so the Scripture presents us with the rule of righteousness to follow, and the examples of the saints, who endured invincibly in the fire of tribulations, as a model for us to follow in all things.

If we aspire to be chosen and precious vessels in the house of the Lord, just as molten bronze enters the molds of clay so that the vessel may become fit for heavenly services, so also we, being healthily humbled and softened by the flame of divine love or even human adversity, enter the way of the fathers by doing good, that we may gain the rewards of the fathers by running well. For it is not always necessary for us to be fitted to the rules of good actions, but when the good action is completed, the palm of blessed recompense is to be hoped for, because the vessels were not always kept enclosed in clay molds; rather, when they had reached perfection, they were brought to light, the bonds of the molds broken, and placed in the temple of the Lord each in their own place. We say this, not because the works of the saints are ever to perish, but because once they have received the crown of righteousness, which they have earned by doing well, all the tasks of laborious action cease. For who in that life would suffer martyrdom for the faith of Christ, where, with the adversaries expelled, all the elect rejoice in the presence of Christ (Rev. 7)? Who there would bury the dead, where the land consists only of the living? Who would console the mourner, where God wipes every tear from the eyes of the saints?

Who there would open a home to a wanderer and a guest, where all the elect together have a dwelling from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? Who would bring bread to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, where the Lord will feed me, and nothing will be lacking to me? Therefore, with the necessary molds of the vessels once broken, the vessels themselves now shine brightly in the house of the Lord, because, at the end of the world, with not only the persecutions, which they endure for righteousness' sake, but also the laborious works of righteousness, which they willingly toil for eternal blessedness, ceased, they will rejoice in the precepts of immortality in the vision of their Creator.

CHAPTER XXII. On Both Altars. And Solomon made all the vessels in the house of the Lord, etc. The golden altar signifies the hearts of perfect righteous people, shining with the light

of internal clarity and chastity, the loftiness of which even the location of the same altar appropriately signifies. For it stood before the door of the Holy of Holies, as we clearly read in the making of the tabernacle. On this altar, neither the blood of sacrifices nor libations, but only incense was burned, the smoke of which, rising to the higher regions, covered the ark and filled the oracle with the sweetness of its scent. In this it expressed a figure of the saints, who, neglecting temporal desires, seek heavenly things with full intention, as if they were placed close to the oracle inside, and are not far from the veil which separates the temple from the Holy of Holies. They inhabit the earth only in body, but according to the inner person, their whole conversation is in the heavens. And from this altar of such kind, the smoke of the incenses ascended within the Holy of Holies, where the ark is hidden, when the prayers of the saints, kindled by the flame of charity, reach as far as heaven, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.

For on this altar, the blood of sacrifices was not offered, but only incenses were burned, because such men do not have works of the flesh and blood which they sacrifice on the altar of their heart to the Lord, but they only offer vows of tears and prayers to Him for the desire of the heavenly kingdom. Yet, because no one immediately becomes perfect, but ascends to the desire of the heavenly through the anxious offering of carnal pleasures, Scripture did not omit to place in the mystical construction of the house of the Lord the figure of those who still struggle to burn the carnal desires within themselves that war against the soul with the flame of divine labor, so that having eradicated these from their heart or body, they may subsequently ascend to greater things and offer to God the spiritual incense of prayers and contrition. For indeed another altar was made to offer victims, much larger indeed, but as much as it excelled in size, so much was it inferior in the situation of its location and the appearance of its metal. For it was made of bronze and placed before the doors of the temple. On which surely those are figuratively expressed who serve the Lord with such devotion, that their flesh still lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh (Rom. VII), and who are accustomed to say: For with the mind we serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Those who strive to overcome the impulses of the flesh, to restrain the fleeting pleasures of luxury, by frequent fasting and prayers, vigils, and alms, and other fruits of the Spirit, worthily to approach the tranquility of chastity to God, what do they offer except the sacrifice of their devotion to Him, fulfilling that of the Apostle, who beseeches us through the mercy of God, to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God (Rom. XII)? Since they burn with the fervor of spiritual love, but have not yet achieved triumph over the conquest of carnal desire, the altar of burnt offering has indeed holy fire from heaven, but it presents the appearance of bronze, not of gold. But because there are more carnal than spiritual people in the holy Church, more who restrain themselves by curbing the enticements of vices than those who, having overcome and subdued the struggle with vices, rejoice in the obtained security of virtues, rightly the altar of burnt offering was asserted to be much larger than the altar of incense. For it is written about it in the book of Chronicles: "And he made the bronze altar twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in width, and

ten cubits in height" (II Chron IV). And indeed, Moses made the altar of incense in the wilderness, having one cubit in length, and another in width, and two cubits in height.

However, Scripture does not say how great in size Solomon made this, but only that it is said to be a golden altar. However, it is clear that he could not make it as large as the burnt offering altar, because if it was made twenty cubits in length, it would fill the entire width of the temple. Therefore, as much as the altar of burnt offering was placed further than the altar of incense, and as much as it was lowlier in the kind of offering and the baseness of the metal, it surpassed in the measure of quantity and the frequency of victims, since, surely, there are many more to whom it is said: "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments," than those who delight in hearing: "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor" (Matt. XIX). Nevertheless, the measure of this altar is not without mystical reason and number. For it has twenty cubits in length, and as many cubits in width, and ten cubits in height, of which number, indeed, we have spoken in the exposition of the temple and its vestibule. But now also it must briefly be said that the altar of burnt offering holds the type of the chosen ones in the Church, who seek to consecrate their body and soul to God by the fire of that love;

the perseverance of these in good work is figured by the length of the altar, the breadth of the love of God and neighbor by the width, and hope in the expectation of the divine vision by the height. Furthermore, that the length and width of the altar were each twenty cubits denotes a great perfection of the same unwearied long-suffering and sincere love, which is granted to us by the observance of both Testaments. For four times five make up the number twenty. The five books of the Mosaic law and the four of the evangelical liberty add up to twenty. And when we reach the understanding and spiritual keeping of the law through the illuminating grace of the Gospel, we indeed fulfill the number twenty. Hence, the same number twenty is in the length and width of the altar when the hearts of the chosen, taught by both Testaments and aided by the one Author of both Testaments, maintain the perseverance of good work even in persecutions and exhibit the joy of love towards those who persecute. And by the number ten, hope of heavenly rewards is customarily designated, as the Lord affirms when He testifies that those working in the vineyard of the great householder shall be rewarded with a denarius (Matt. XX). And fittingly, by this number, the eternal reward is figured, in which our nature is eternally joined to the divine vision, because in that number both the divine and human nature are mystically designated simultaneously. For God is indeed a trinity.

Man, on the other hand, is comprehended by the number seven; in four-fold, because of the body which consists of the four elements; and by three-fold, because of the triple difference of the inner man which the holy Scripture shows to us when it commands us to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength. Hence, in the Decalogue of the law, there are three commandments that stir us to the worship of divine love, and seven that commend the love of our neighbor. Those, therefore, who keep the Decalogue in the love of God and neighbor, rightly receive the reward of this observance in the vision of God

and neighbor together. And those who in this life love both the neighbor whom they see, and God whom they do not see, these in the future life will see both God the king in His beauty, and the neighbor glorified and adorned. And therefore the altar, which was made in the figure of the elect, to signify their perpetual life, was ten cubits high. But when it was said that Solomon made the golden altar, it was immediately added: And the table on which the showbread was placed, golden. The golden table, however, is the sacred Scripture, fruitful in the clarity of spiritual understanding; of which the Psalmist says to the Lord: Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies (Psalm 22).

For our Creator has prepared a table of heavenly knowledge for us, so that we may be strengthened in the faith of truth and not led into error by tribulating adversaries. The showbread are indeed the holy teachers, whose works or words of salvation, proposed as examples of life, whoever seeks well always finds in the divine pages. Hence, appropriately, the same bread was commanded to be twelve in number in Exodus, namely on account of the twelve apostles, through whose ministry both the Scripture of the New Testament was established and the mysteries of the Old Instrument were revealed, by the gift of the Lord (Exodus 25). By this number indeed, not only the same apostles but also all those are designated who minister the word as the food of life to the faithful by preaching, because they all certainly follow the same form of doctrine which the apostles received from the Lord. We read, moreover, about these breads in Exodus, that every Sabbath they should be changed and new ones placed on the Lord's table instead of the old, and always prepared with the same measure and like form commanded. From all these, the mystical sense of internal refreshment shines forth clearer than light. For old bread is taken away and new is restored, when, some of the faithful teachers having been taken from this life, the holy Church ordains others in their place.

And this not except on the Sabbath day, because whoever has fought the good fight, finished the race, kept the faith, at the time of his dissolution will enter the blessed rest of eternity. One measure, and not different, always similar bread was made, because indeed there is one and the same form of truth and faith, which at first the apostles showed to their listeners, and afterwards their successors, and all the pious teachers in the churches of Christ throughout the world do not cease to preach.

CHAPTER XXIII. On the ten golden tables. What we read in the words of the days, that Solomon made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right and five on the left, and also one hundred golden basins, it is believable that they were made not so much for the bread of the proposition as for the vessels of the Lord; namely the basins which the Scripture reports were made in like manner; censers, incense burners, and other things which are read in the following. For, a little later in the same volume of words, it is interjected: And he made all the vessels of the house of the Lord, and the bronze altar, and the tables, and upon them the bread of the proposition. Either he put the plural for the singular, the most usual custom in Scriptures; as in the Book of Joshua: But the children of Israel have transgressed the covenant, and have taken of the accursed thing (Joshua VII), since Achan

alone, and not several of the children of Israel, did this; or certainly because the bread of the proposition used to be baked before the sabbath so that it might immediately be placed on the table of proposition on the sabbath; it might have happened that newly baked bread was immediately placed on those tables, and there kept covered that night until the old was removed in the early morning, to be placed warm on the table of proposition.

However, these ten tables do not differ in form from the figure of the one table of proposition. For just as the table, laden with twelve loaves, represents the unanimous harmony of all Scripture fortified by apostolic authority, so not without reason do the ten golden tables figuratively represent the words of divine law and the prophets, which offer us, as the bread of the proposition, the nourishment of the word of God, or propose to us the examples of the faithful, as it were the vessels set upon them, the clarity and miracles of the Lord. And rightly there are five tables on each side, not only because the legislator wrote five volumes, but also because the entire series of the Old Testament embraces five ages of the world. Moreover, the number of tables is doubled, and five are placed on the right and five on the left when, after the Lord's Incarnation, the same Scripture is entrusted either to both peoples of God, namely the Jewish and the Gentile, or revealed full of evangelical figures, which formerly was thought to be understood solely according to the letter by the ancient people of God.

For when we read in the holy Scripture, for example, that Abel was crowned with martyrdom, Enoch was translated from the world, Noah was wondrously saved while the world perished, Lot was eminently rewarded with hospitality while the impious were exterminated, Abraham was made the father of all nations by merit of obedience, Joseph after being sold, by the merit of chastity and innocence, is taken as an example of virtue; what are the five golden tables or the vessels of the Lord, or yet the bread of proposition on the left side of the temple, if not that the divine letters, according to the historical sense, open to us the door to living rightly and hoping for eternal rewards from the Lord? But when we understand the same more deeply or see them to sound forth the dispensation of the Lord's Incarnation or any other sacraments of the holy Church, we find as it were another five tables bearing the vessels of election and the nourishment of spiritual life on the right side of the temple; because we recognize that these very words of sacred history reveal to us a wholly new light of heavenly wisdom, opening new senses from the old; and indeed in this figure five lampstands are made in the temple. For when the Scripture said that King Solomon made the table upon which the bread of proposition might be placed, golden, it subsequently added and said:

CHAPTER XXXIV. On the ten candlesticks. And five golden candlesticks, etc. Indeed, these tables are rightly placed as representations of Holy Scripture, because they provide bread of the word for those who hunger for righteousness, and they carry the vessels of heavenly ministry, that is, they propose the actions of the just as examples to us; thus the same divine words are very aptly represented by candlesticks, evidently because they bring forth the light of wisdom for those who stray. Hence the Psalmist says: "Your word is a lamp to

my feet" (Psalm 118), etc. Hence Solomon says: "For the commandment is a lamp and the law is light" (Proverbs 6). But why there are five candlesticks on the right and five on the left side, is easily understood from what we discussed about the tables. And when he said: Five on the right and five on the left, it is fittingly added: In front of the oracle. For the oracle, where the ark was, as often said, designates the entrance to the heavenly homeland, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, undoubtedly aware of the secrets of the Father. Or the golden candlesticks of the temple are placed in front of the oracle because the divine words always look toward the dwelling place of the heavenly city, to infuse the recognition and desire of it into our hearts, and to kindle those who have their origin in the flesh from the earth to desire and obtain a seat of perpetual abode in the heavens.

However, there are those who think that what is said about the candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left, should be understood that five were on the right of that candlestick which Moses made in the desert, and five on the left, both nevertheless on the southern side, where the one candlestick that Moses made was commanded to stand. They understand the same order for the ten tables, which were all placed on the northern side, but five to the right and five to the left of that Mosaic table. But if you consider the words of sacred Scripture, which say: And five golden candlesticks on the right and five on the left, in front of the oracle, it is clear, I believe, that they were equally placed lengthwise on both sides of the temple. For if all the candlesticks were placed lengthwise on the southern side of the temple, it would not be said to be placed in front of the oracle, but rather in front of the north, or in front of the tables, or even among the tables where they stood; which is spoken of in Exodus, concerning that one candlestick in the tabernacle of testimony, opposite the table, on the southern side (Exodus 25); likewise in the book of Numbers: When you set up the seven lamps, they shall give light in front of the lampstand (Numbers 8).

Candlesticks were on both sides of the temple, and tables were on both sides, because divine Scripture was established for the illumination and refreshment of both peoples of God, which is accustomed to refresh us in both prosperous and adverse situations, in sad and joyful events, so that we do not falter, and to illuminate us so that we do not remain blind. The vessels of mercy placed upon it, that is, the writings of the just deeds, propose examples to both of us, through which we may be strengthened in the practice of justice. But if you ask what the typical difference is between candlesticks and lamps, we can rightly understand that the lamps are holy men, who, having been infused with the oil of the Holy Spirit, also burn with the fire of love in their hearts, and bring the light of knowledge to their neighbors through speech. The candlesticks that elevate these lamps so that they can be seen far and wide in the Church are the Holy Scriptures, which show us the virtues and teachings of the saints through their reading; the interpretation of which is affirmed by the word of the Lord, where it is said of John: He was a burning and shining lamp (John V). We can also very fittingly say that the lamps are the divine words, according to that of the Psalmist, which we have also quoted above: Your word is a lamp to my feet (Psalm CXVIII).

The candlesticks of these lamps are all the saints, who, with humble intent, always subject their hearts and bodies to bearing the commands of the Lord. For whoever cares in no way to follow his own will, but attends to all that the Holy Scripture says, and strives to subject himself to its commands, to listen to its promises, bears the golden lamps of God's house like a golden candlestick, because he strives to submit the pure thoughts of his mind and the pure members of his body to doing what God commands. And this with such a fixed intention as a candlestick, firmly erected toward the heights, must keep the lamps placed upon it not only without falling but also without any change in its stance. When he said: And five golden candlesticks on the right hand and five on the left in front of the oracle, made of pure gold, and added: And like the flowers of lilies, and golden lamps above, it seems according to the letter that the upper part of the candlesticks is shaped in the form of an open lily, which we read was made in the candlestick of the tabernacle, whose middle stem and branches proceeding from it, with cups and knobs, are described as having many lilies. The flowers of the lily, as often said, represent the beauty of the ever-green land of the living. About which blessed Peter says, we are regenerated by the Lord to a living hope to an incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading inheritance, reserved in heaven.

And well the golden lily flowers are made in the candlestick of the house of the Lord, because the divine Scripture, having despised temporal joys, usually encourages us to seek the good of the heavenly homeland. And just as the candlestick erected in height has lily flowers and golden lamps at its head, so all the elect contained in the same sacred Scripture, with their minds raised to the heights, are proven to have sought and received heavenly goods from the Lord. We have said more fully of the table, the candlestick, and both altars, and the base of the house of the Lord, in the books which we have written about the making of the tabernacle and the priestly vestments. Therefore, if anyone wishes to know about these things, according to the capacity of our sense, as born from the tradition of the fathers, let him seek it in that work. It follows:

CHAPTER XXV. On the hinges of the doors and the perfection of the work of the house of the Lord. And the hinges of the doors of the house of the Lord, etc. If the doors of the inner house, the holy of holies, are the angelic mysteries, which, when we depart from the body, reveal to us the entrance to heavenly life, and the doors of the temple house are the holy teachers and priests, who, by instructing, baptizing, and communicating the mysteries of the Lord's body and blood, unfold for us the first lights of the present church, what are the hinges of both sets of doors if not the minds and hearts of the same angels or saints, which immovably adhere to the contemplation and love of their Creator, so that they may rightly fulfill the ministry divinely assigned to them, as they never turn their eyes away from the will of Him whom they serve. Therefore, the doors are opened and closed at the appropriate time, but they never leave their hinges at any time, because both angels and holy men, whether in this life of faith or in that of the vision, always hold their minds fixed in the root of internal love, whether they welcome the faithful and elect. Hence, rightly, these same hinges are said to be made of gold, on account of the merit of their own brightness.

And he completed all the work, etc. Solomon completes the work that he was doing in the house of the Lord when our peaceful king glorifies all the elect with the immortality of the resurrection on the last day. Otherwise, as long as the condition of this age is ongoing, Solomon indeed does the work of the house of the Lord, but he does not yet complete it, because the Lord inspires and helps the hearts of the elect to perform good works; however, He grants that none dwelling merely in this life is without sin, for He reserves this gift for the happiness of the future life. He completes all the work of His temple and makes it fit for dedication when He leads the elect, translated from this life, to the eternal kingdom. This is well signified even in that the temple was built in seven years, but was completed and dedicated in the eighth. For during the seven days all this time is turned. The eighth is the day of judgment and the future resurrection, about which the sixth and eleventh Psalms are titled; to this indeed it properly pertains what follows:

And he brought in what his father David had sacrificed, etc. The silver, indeed, to shine forth eloquence; the gold to radiate wisdom; vessels in general pertain to the rational creature. And David, the father of Solomon, sanctified the silver when God the Father strengthened the eloquent with the grace of the Holy Spirit to speak the word of the Gospel; he sanctified the gold when, filling those endowed with natural talent with His Spirit, He enlightened them to consider the wonders of His law; and he also sanctified the vessels when, granting to all generally the children of the Church the grace of the same Spirit, He inflamed them to love and seek the gifts of eternal salvation. But this silver, this gold, these sanctified vessels Solomon brings into the temple, when our Lord, having completed universal judgment, introduces all the elect, namely the teachers and the assembly of other faithful into the joy of the heavenly kingdom: and he places the vessels of various kinds, whether silver or gold, in the treasures of the house of the Lord, when He hides those who have deserved to enjoy His abundance of sweetness in the secret of His presence from the disturbance of men. And rightly, there are many treasures in which the vessels of election are stored, but one house of the Lord in which the same are made treasures because there is also one Church in which all the elect are contained, however much they may differ in merits:

and that one is the same and not another heavenly homeland, which is promised to all the elect, although, as one star differs from another in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead. Both of these the judge Himself and the distributor of rewards, the Lord, demonstrated in one sentence, when He said: In my Father's house, there are many mansions. Therefore, Solomon made one house of the Lord, but prepared many treasures in it to receive vessels of different kinds, all sanctified by one blessing; indeed, this house of the Father is however not made by hands, eternal in the heavens, but many mansions are within it to receive all who fear and love Him, whom the Lord has blessed, the small with the great. Amen.

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.