

Homily 3

by Clement of Rome

Clement of Rome addresses the dangers of false teachings and emphasizes the importance of faith in the one true God and the necessity of repentance for salvation.

Scripture: Mark 1:9, Acts 6:1, Acts 13:2, Galatians 6:2, 1 Peter 5:2

Topics: "Church Governance", "Spiritual Discipline"

Description

Peter appoints Zacchaeus as the bishop to lead the Church, emphasizing the importance of good governance and obedience to Church leaders. He instructs the believers to show love and care for one another, to honour elders, catechists, deacons, widows, and orphans, and to contribute together for the needs of the community. Peter also highlights the significance of baptism, fasting, and seeking guidance through prayer and laying on of hands. He sends out spies to gather information about Simon the magician's activities in Tyre, recognizing the importance of being informed to counter false teachings.

Transcript

CHAPTER 1. THE MORNING OF THE DISCUSSION

Two days, therefore, having elapsed, and while the third was dawning, I Clement, and the rest of our companions, being roused about the second cock-crowing, in order to the discussion with Simon, found the lamp still alight, and Peter kneeling in prayer. Therefore, having finished his supplication, and turning round, and seeing us in readiness to hear, he said: --

CHAPTER 2. SIMON'S DESIGN

I wish you to know that those who, according to our arrangement, associate with Simon that they may learn his intentions, and submit them to us, so that we may be able to cope with his variety of wickedness, these men have sent to me, and informed me that Simon today is, as he arranged, prepared to come before all, and show from the Scriptures that He who made the heaven and the earth, and all things in them, is not the Supreme God, but that there is another, unknown and supreme, as being in an unspeakable manner God of gods; and that He sent two gods, one of whom is he who made the world, and the other he who gave the law. And these things he contrives to say, that he may dissipate the right faith of those who would worship the one and only God who made heaven and earth.

CHAPTER 3. HIS OBJECT

When I heard this, how was I not disheartened! Wherefore I wished you also, my brethren, who associate with me, to know that I am beyond measure grieved in my soul, seeing the wicked one awake for the temptation of men, and men wholly indifferent about their own salvation. For to those from amongst the Gentiles who were about being persuaded respecting the earthly images that they are no gods, he has contrived to bring in opinions of many other gods, in order that, if they cease from the polytheo-mania, they may be deceived to speak otherwise, and even worse than they now do, against the sole government of God, so that they may not yet value the truths connected with that monarchy, and may never be able to obtain mercy. And for the sake of this attempt Simon comes to do battle with us, armed with the false chapters of the Scriptures. And what is more dreadful, he is not afraid to dogmatize thus against the true God from the prophets whom he does not in fact believe.

CHAPTER 4. SNARES LAID FOR THE GENTILES

And with us, indeed, who have had handed down from our forefathers the worship of the God who made all things, and also the mystery of the books which are able to deceive, he will not prevail; but with those from amongst the Gentiles who have the polytheistic fancy bred in them, and who know not the falsehoods of the Scriptures, he will prevail much. And not only he; but if any other shall recount to those from among the Gentiles any vain, dreamlike, richly set out story against God, he will be believed, because from their childhood their minds are accustomed to take in things spoken against God. And few there shall be of them, as a few out of a multitude, who through ingenuousness shall not be willing so much as to hear an evil word against the God who made all things. And to these alone from amongst the Gentiles it shall be vouchsafed to be saved. Let not any one of you, therefore, altogether complain of Simon, or of any one else; for nothing happens unjustly, since even the falsehoods of Scripture are with good reason presented for a test.

CHAPTER 5. USE OF ERRORS

Then I Clement, hearing this, said: How say you, my lord, that even the falsehoods of the Scriptures are set forth happily for the proof of men? And he answered: The falsehoods of the Scriptures have been permitted to be written for a certain righteous reason, at the demand of evil. And when I say happily, I mean this: In the account of God, the wicked one, not loving God less than the good one, is exceeded by the good in this one thing only, that he, not pardoning those who are impious on account of ignorance, through love towards that which is profound, desires the destruction of the impious; but the good one desires to present them with a remedy. For the good one desires all to be healed by repentance, but saves those only who know God. But those who know Him not He does not heal: not that He does not wish to do so, but because it is not lawful to afford to those who, through want of judgment, are like to irrational animals, the good things which have been prepared for the children of the kingdom.

CHAPTER 6. PURGATORY AND HELL

Such is the nature of the one and only God, who made the world, and who created us, and who has given us all things, that as long as any one is within the limit of piety, and does not blaspheme His Holy Spirit, through His love towards him He brings the soul to Himself by reason of His love towards it. And although it be sinful, it is His nature to save it, after it has been suitably punished for the deeds it has done. But if any one shall deny Him, or in any other way be guilty of impiety against Him, and then shall repent, he shall be punished indeed for the sins he has committed against Him, but he shall be saved, because he turned and lived. And perhaps excessive piety and supplication shall even be delivered from punishment,

ignorance being admitted as a reason for the pardon of sin after repentance. But those who do not repent shall be destroyed by the punishment of fire, even though in all other things they are most holy. But, as I said, at an appointed time a fifth part, being punished with eternal fire, shall be consumed. For they cannot endure for ever who have been impious against the one God.

CHAPTER 7. WHAT IS IMPIETY?

But impiety against Him is, in the matter of religion, to die saying there is another God, whether superior or inferior, or in any way saying that there is one besides Him who really is. For He who truly is, is He whose form the body of man bears; for whose sake the heaven and all the stars, though in their essence superior, submit to serve him who is in essence inferior, on account of the form of the Ruler. So much has God blessed man above all, in order that, loving the Benefactor in proportion to the multitude of His benefits, by means of this love he may be saved for the world to come.

CHAPTER 8. WILES OF THE DEVIL

Therefore the love of men towards God is sufficient for salvation. And this the wicked one knows; and while we are hastening to sow the love towards Him which makes immortal in the souls of those who from among the Gentiles are ready to believe in the one and only God, this wicked one, having sufficient armour against the ignorant for their destruction, hastens to sow the supposition of many gods, or at least of one greater, in order that men, conceiving and being persuaded of what is not wisdom, may die, as in the crime of adultery, and be cast out from His kingdom.

CHAPTER 9. UNCERTAINTY OF THE SCRIPTURES

Worthy, therefore, of rejection is every one who is willing so much as to hear anything against the monarchy of God; but if any one dares to hear anything against God, as trusting in the Scriptures, let him first of all consider with me that if any one, as he pleases, form a dogma agreeable to himself, and then carefully search the Scriptures, he will be able to produce many testimonies from them in favour of the dogma that he has formed. How, then, can confidence be placed in them against God, when what every man wishes is found in them?

CHAPTER 10. SIMON'S INTENTION

Therefore Simon, who is going to discuss in public with us tomorrow, is bold against the monarchy of God, wishing to produce many statements from these Scriptures, to the effect that there are many gods, and a certain one who is not He who made this world, but who is superior to Him; and, at the same time, he is going to offer many scriptural proofs. But we also can easily show many passages from them that He who made the world alone is God, and that there is none other besides Him. But if any one shall wish to speak otherwise, he also shall be able to produce proofs from them at his pleasure. For the Scriptures say all manner of things, that no one of those who inquire ungratefully may find the truth, but simply what he wishes to find, the truth being reserved for the grateful now gratitude is to preserve our love to Him who is the cause of our being.

CHAPTER 11. DISTINCTION BETWEEN PREDICTION AND PROPHECY

Whence it must before all things be known, that nowhere can truth be found unless from a prophet of truth. But He is a true Prophet, who always knows all things, and even the thoughts of all men, who is without sin, as being convinced respecting the judgment of God. Wherefore we ought not simply to consider

respecting His foreknowledge, but whether His foreknowledge can stand, apart from other cause. For physicians predict certain things, having the pulse of the patient as matter submitted to them; and some predict by means of having fowls, and some by having sacrifices, and others by having many various matters submitted to them; yet these are not prophets.

CHAPTER 12. THE SAME

But if any one should say that the foreknowledge shown by these predictions is like to that foreknowledge which is really implanted, he were much deceived. For he only declares such things as being present, and that if he speaks truth. However, even these things are serviceable to me, for they establish that there is such a thing as foreknowledge. But the foreknowledge of the one true Prophet does not only know things present, but stretches out prophecy without limit as far as the world to come, and needs nothing for its interpretation, not prophesying darkly and ambiguously, so that the things spoken would need another prophet for the interpretation of them; but clearly and simply, as our Master and Prophet, by the inborn and ever-flowing Spirit, always knew all things.

CHAPTER 13. PROPHETIC KNOWLEDGE CONSTANT

Wherefore He confidently made statements respecting things that are to be--I mean sufferings, places, limits. For, being a faultless Prophet, and looking upon all things with the boundless eye of His soul, He knows hidden things. But if we should hold, as many do, that even the true Prophet, not always, but sometimes, when He has the Spirit, and through it, foreknows, but when He has it not is ignorant,--if we should suppose thus, we should deceive ourselves and mislead others. For such a matter belongs to those who are madly inspired by the spirit of disorder--to those who are drunken beside the altars, and are gorged with fat.

CHAPTER 14. PROPHETIC SPIRIT CONSTANT

For if it were permitted to any one who will profess prophecy to have it believed in the cases in which he was found false, that then he had not the Holy Spirit of foreknowledge, it will be difficult to convict him of being a false prophet; for among the many things that he speaks, a few come to pass, and then he is believed to have the Spirit, although he speaks the first things last, and the last first; speaks of past events as future, and future as already past; and also without sequence; or things borrowed from others and altered, and some that are lessened, unformed, foolish, ambiguous, unseemly, obscure, proclaiming all unconscientiousness.

CHAPTER 15. CHRIST'S PROPHECIES

But our Master did not prophesy after this fashion; but, as I have already said, being a prophet by an inborn and ever-flowing Spirit, and knowing all things at all times, He confidently set forth, plainly as I said before, sufferings, places, appointed times, manners, limits. Accordingly, therefore, prophesying concerning the temple, He said: 'See ye these buildings? Verily I say to you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be taken away; and this generation shall not pass until the destruction begin. For they shall come, and shall sit here, and shall besiege it, and shall slay your children here.' And in like manner He spoke in plain words the things that were straightway to happen, which we can now see with our eyes, in order that the accomplishment might be among those to whom the word was spoken. For the Prophet of truth utters the word of proof in order to the faith of His hearers.

CHAPTER 16. DOCTRINE OF CONJUNCTION

However, there are many proclaimers of error, having one chief, even the chief of wickedness, just as the Prophet of truth, being one, and being also the chief of piety, shall in His own times have as His prophets all who are found pure. But the chief cause of men being deceived is this, their not understanding beforehand the doctrine of conjunction, which I shall not fail to expound to you in private every day, summarily; for it were too long to speak in detail. Be you therefore to me truth-loving judges of the things that are spoken.

CHAPTER 17. WHETHER ADAM HAD THE SPIRIT

But I shall begin the statement now. God having made all things, if any one will not allow to a man, fashioned by His hands, to have possessed His great and Holy Spirit of foreknowledge, how does not he greatly err who attributes it to another born of a spurious stock! And I do not think that he will obtain pardon, though he be misled by spurious scripture to think dreadful things against the Father of all. For he who insults the image and the things belonging to the eternal King, has the sin reckoned as committed against Him in whose likeness the image was made. But then, says he, the Divine Spirit left him when he sinned. In that case the Spirit sinned along with him; and how can he escape peril who says this? But perhaps he received the Spirit after he sinned. Then it is given to the unrighteous; and where is justice? But it was afforded to the just and the unjust. This were most unrighteous of all. Thus every falsehood, though it be aided by ten thousand reasonings, must receive its refutation, though after a long time.

CHAPTER 18. ADAM NOT IGNORANT

Be not deceived. Our father was ignorant of nothing; since, indeed, even the law publicly current, though charging him with the crime of ignorance for the sake of the unworthy, sends to him those desirous of knowledge, saying, 'Ask your father, and he will tell you; your elders, and they will declare to you.' This father, these elders ought to be inquired of. But you have not inquired whose is the time of the kingdom, and whose is the seat of prophecy, though He Himself points out Himself, saying, 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all things whatsoever they say to you, hear them.' Hear them, He said, as entrusted with the key of the kingdom, which is knowledge, which alone can open the gate of life, through which alone is the entrance to eternal life. But truly, He says, they possess the key, but those wishing to enter they do not suffer to do so.

CHAPTER 19. REIGN OF CHRIST

On this account, I say, He Himself, rising from His seat as a father for his children, proclaiming the things which from the beginning were delivered in secret to the worthy, extending mercy even to the Gentiles, and compassionating the souls of all, neglected His own kindred. For He, being thought worthy to be King of the world to come, fights against him who, by predestination, has usurped the kingdom that now is. And the thing which exceedingly grieved Him is this, that by those very persons for whom, as for sons, he did battle, He was assailed, on account of their ignorance. And yet He loved even those who hated Him, and wept over the unbelieving, and blessed those who slandered Him, and prayed for those who were in enmity against Him. And not only did He do this as a father, but also taught His disciples to do the like, bearing themselves as towards brethren. This did our Father, this did our Prophet. This is reasonable, that He should be King over His children; that by the affection of a father towards his children, and the engrafted respect of children towards their father, eternal peace might be produced. For when the good man reigns, there is true joy among those who are ruled over, on account of him who rules.

CHAPTER 20. CHRIST THE ONLY PROPHET HAS APPEARED IN DIFFERENT AGES

But give heed to my first discourse of the truth. If any one do not allow the man fashioned by the hands of God to have had the Holy Spirit of Christ, how is he not guilty of the greatest impiety in allowing another born of an impure stock to have it? But he would act most piously, if he should not allow to another to have it, but should say that he alone has it, who has changed his forms and his names from the beginning of the world, and so reappeared again and again in the world, until coming upon his own times, and being anointed with mercy for the works of God, he shall enjoy rest for ever. His honour it is to bear rule and lordship over all things, in air, earth, and waters. But in addition to these, himself having made man, he had breath, the indescribable garment of the soul, that he might be able to be immortal.

CHAPTER 21. THE EATING OF THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT DENIED

He himself being the only true prophet, fittingly gave names to each animal, according to the merits of its nature, as having made it. For if he gave a name to any one, that was also the name of that which was made, being given by him who made it. How, then, had he still need to partake of a tree, that he might know what is good and what is evil, if he was commanded not to eat of it? But this senseless men believe, who think that a reasonless beast was more powerful than the God who made these things.

CHAPTER 22. MALE AND FEMALE

But a companion was created along with him, a female nature, much differing from him, as quality from substance, as the moon from the sun, as fire from light. She, as a female ruling the present world as her like, was entrusted to be the first prophetess, announcing prophecy with all amongst those born of woman. But the other, as the son of man, being a male, prophesies better things to the world to come as a male.

CHAPTER 23. TWO KINDS OF PROPHECY

Let us then understand that there are two kinds of prophecy: the one male; and let it be defined that the first, being the male, has been ranked after the other in the order of advent; but the second, being female, has been appointed to come first in the advent of the pairs. This second, therefore, being amongst those born of woman, as the female superintendent of this present world, wishes to be thought masculine. Wherefore, stealing the seeds of the male, and sowing them with her own seeds of the flesh, she brings forth the fruits--that is, words--as wholly her own. And she promises that she will give the present earthly riches as a dowry, wishing to change the slow for the swift, the small for the greater.

CHAPTER 24. THE PROPHETESS A MISLEADER

However, she, not only presuming to say and to hear that there are many gods, but also believing herself to be one, and in hope of being that which she had not a nature to be, and throwing away what she had, and as a female being in her courses at the offering of sacrifices, is stained with blood; and then she pollutes those who touch her. But when she conceives and brings forth temporary kings, she stirs up wars, shedding much blood; and those who desire to learn truth from her, by telling them all things contrary, and presenting many and various services, she keeps them always seeking and finding nothing, even until death. For from the beginning a cause of death lies upon blind men; for she, prophesying deceit, and ambiguities, and obliquities, deceives those who believe her.

CHAPTER 25. CAIN'S NAME AND NATURE

Hence the ambiguous name which she gave to her first-born son, calling him Cain, which has a capability of interpretation in two ways; for it is interpreted both Possession and Envy, as signifying that in the future he was to envy either a woman, or possessions, or the love of the parents towards her. But if it be none of these, then it will befall him to be called the Possession. For she possessed him first, which also was advantageous to him. For he was a murderer and a liar, and with his sins was not willing to be at peace with respect to the government. Moreover, those who came forth by succession from him were the first adulterers. And there were psalteries, and harps, and forgers of instruments of war. Wherefore also the prophecy of his descendants being full of adulterers and of psalteries, secretly by means of pleasures excites to wars.

CHAPTER 26. ABEL'S NAME AND NATURE

But he who amongst the sons of men had prophecy innate to his soul as belonging to it, expressly, as being a male, indicating the hopes of the world to come, called his own son Abel, which without any ambiguity is translated Grief. For he assigns to his sons to grieve over their deceived brethren. He does not deceive them when he promises them comfort in the world to come. When he says that we must pray to one only God, he neither himself speaks of gods, nor does he believe another who speaks of them. He keeps the good which he has, and increases more and more. He hates sacrifices, bloodshed, and libations; he loves the chaste, the pure, the holy. He quenches the fire of altars, represses wars, teaches pious preachers wisdom, purges sins, sanctions marriage, approves temperance, leads all to chastity, makes men liberal, prescribes justice, seals those of them who are perfect, publishes the word of peace, prophesies explicitly, speaks decidedly, frequently makes mention of the eternal fire of punishment, constantly announces the kingdom of God, indicates heavenly riches, promises unfading glory, shows the remission of sins by works.

CHAPTER 27. THE PROPHET AND THE PROPHETESS

And what need is there to say more? The male is wholly truth, the female wholly falsehood. But he who is born of the male and the female, in some things speaks truth, in some falsehood. For the female, surrounding the white seed of the male with her own blood, as with red fire, sustains her own weakness with the extraneous supports of bones, and, pleased with the temporary flower of flesh, and spoiling the strength of the judgment by short pleasures, leads the greater part into fornication, and thus deprives them of the coming excellent Bridegroom. For every person is a bride, whenever, being sown with the true Prophet's whole word of truth, he is enlightened in his understanding.

CHAPTER 28. SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

Wherefore, it is fitting to hear the one only Prophet of the truth, knowing that the word that is sown by another bearing the charge of fornication, is, as it were, cast out by the Bridegroom from His kingdom. But to those who know the mystery, death is also produced by spiritual adultery. For whenever the soul is sown by others, then it is forsaken by the Spirit, as guilty of fornication or adultery; and so the living body, the life-giving Spirit being withdrawn, is dissolved into dust, and the rightful punishment of sin is suffered at the time of the judgment by the soul, after the dissolution of the body; even as, among men, she who is caught in adultery is first cast out from the house, and then afterwards is condemned to punishment.

CHAPTER 29. THE SIGNAL GIVEN

While Peter was about to explain fully to us this mystic word, Zacchæus came, saying: Now indeed, O Peter, is the time for you to go out and engage in the discussion; for a great crowd awaits you, packed together in the court; and in the midst of them stands Simon, like a war-chieftain attended by his spearmen. And Peter, hearing this, ordered me to withdraw for prayer, as not yet having received baptism for salvation, and then said to those who were already perfected: Let us rise and pray that God, by His unfailing mercies, may help me striving for the salvation of the men whom He has made. And having thus said, and having prayed, he went out into the uncovered portion of the court, which was a large space; and there were many come together for the purpose of seeing him, his pre-eminence having made them more eagerly hasten to hear.

CHAPTER 30. APOSTOLIC SALUTATION

Therefore, standing and seeing all the people gazing upon him in profound silence, and Simon the magician standing in the midst, he began to speak thus: Peace be to all you who are in readiness to give your right hands to the truth of God, which, being His great and incomparable gift in the present world, He who sent us, being an infallible Prophet of that which is supremely profitable, gave us in charge, by way of salutation before our words of instruction, to announce to you, in order that if there be any son of peace among you, peace may take hold of him through our teaching; but if any of you will not receive it, then we, shaking off for a testimony the road-dust of our feet, which we have borne through our toils, and brought to you that you may be saved, will go to the abodes and the cities of others.

CHAPTER 31. FAITH IN GOD

And we tell you truly, it shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment to dwell in the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, than in the place of unbelief. In the first place, because you have not preserved of yourselves what is reasonable; in the second place, because, hearing the things concerning us, you have not come to us; and in the third place, because you have disbelieved us when we have come to you. Wherefore, being concerned for you, we pray of our own accord that our peace may come upon you. If therefore ye will have it, you must readily promise not to do injustice, and generously to bear wrong; which the nature of man would not sustain, unless it first received the knowledge of that which is supremely profitable, which is to know the righteous nature of Him who is over all, that He defends and avenges those who are wronged, and does good for ever to the pious.

CHAPTER 32. INVITATION

Do you, therefore, as thankful servants of God, perceiving of yourselves what is reasonable, take upon you the manner of life that is pleasing to Him, that so, loving Him, and being loved of Him, you may enjoy good for ever. For to Him alone is it most possible to bestow it, who gave being to things that were not, who created the heavens, settled the earth, set bounds to the sea, stored up the things that are in Hades, and filled all places with air.

CHAPTER 33. WORKS OF CREATION

He alone turned into the four contrary elements the one, first, simple substance. Thus combining them, He made of them myriads of compounds, that, being turned into opposite natures, and mingled, they might effect the pleasure of life from the combination of contraries. In like manner, He alone, having created races of angels and spirits by the Fiat of His will, peopled the heavens; as also He decked the visible firmament with stars, to which also He assigned their paths and arranged their courses. He compacted the

earth for the production of fruits. He set bounds to the sea, marking out a dwelling-place on the dry land. He stores up the things in Hades, designating it as the place of souls; and He filled all places with air, that all living creatures might be able to breathe safely in order that they might live.

CHAPTER 34. EXTENT OF CREATION

O the great hand of the wise God, which does all in all! For a countless multitude of birds have been made by Him, and those various, differing in all respects from one another; I mean in respect of their colours, beaks, talons, looks, senses, voices, and all else. And how many different species of plants, distinguished by boundless variety of colours, qualities, and scents! And how many animals on the land and in the water, of which it were impossible to tell the figures, forms, habitats, colour, food, senses, natures, multitude! Then also the multitude and height of mountains, the varieties of stones, awful caverns, fountains, rivers, marshes, seas, harbours, islands, forests, and all the inhabited world, and places uninhabited!

CHAPTER 35. THESE ARE A PART OF HIS WAYS.

And how many things besides are unknown, having eluded the sagacity of men! And of those that are within our comprehension, who of mankind knows the limit? I mean, how the heaven rolls, how the stars are borne in their courses, and what forms they have, and the subsistence of their being, and what are their ethereal paths. And whence the blasts of winds are borne around, and have different energies; whence the fountains ceaselessly spring, and the rivers, being ever flowing, run down into the sea, and neither is that fountain emptied whence they come, nor do they fill that sea whither they come! How far reaches the unfathomable depth of the boundless Tartarus! Upon what the heaven is upborne which encircles all! How the clouds spring from air, and are absorbed into air! What is the nature of thunder and lightning, snow, hail, mist, ice, storms, showers, hanging clouds! And how He makes plants and animals! And these things, with all accuracy, continually perfected in their countless varieties!

CHAPTER 36. DOMINION OVER THE CREATURES

Therefore, if any one shall accurately scan the whole with reason, he shall find that God has made them for the sake of man. For showers fall for the sake of fruits, that man may partake of them, and that animals may be fed, that they may be useful to men. And the sun shines, that he may turn the air into four seasons, and that each time may afford its peculiar service to man. And the fountains spring, that drink may be given to men. And, moreover, who is lord over the creatures, so far as is possible? Is it not man, who has received wisdom to till the earth, to sail the sea: to make fishes, birds, and beasts his prey; to investigate the course of the stars, to mine the earth, to sail the sea; to build cities, to define kingdoms, to ordain laws, to execute justice, to know the invisible God, to be cognizant of the names of angels, to drive away demons, to endeavour to cure diseases by medicines, to find charms against poison-darting serpents, to understand antipathies?

CHAPTER 37. WHOM TO KNOW IS LIFE ETERNAL.

But if you art thankful, O man, understanding that God is your benefactor in all things, you may even be immortal, the things that are made for you having continuance through your gratitude. And now you are able to become incorruptible, if you acknowledge Him whom you did not know, if you love Him whom you forsook, if you pray to Him alone who is able to punish or to save your body and soul. Wherefore, before all things, consider that no one shares His rule, no one has a name in common with Him--that is, is called

God. For He alone is both called and is God. Nor is it lawful to think that there is any other, or to call any other by that name. And if any one should dare do so, eternal punishment of soul is his.

CHAPTER 38. SIMON'S CHALLENGE

When Peter had thus spoken, Simon, at the outside of the crowd, cried aloud: Why would you lie, and deceive the unlearned multitude standing around you, persuading them that it is unlawful to think that there are gods, and to call them so, when the books that are current among the Jews say that there are many gods? And now I wish, in the presence of all, to discuss with you from these books on the necessity of thinking that there are gods; first showing respecting him whom you call God, that he is not the supreme and omnipotent Being, inasmuch as he is without foreknowledge, imperfect, needy, not good, and underlying many and innumerable grievous passions. Wherefore, when this has been shown from the Scriptures, as I say, it follows that there is another, not written of, foreknowing, perfect, without want, good, removed from all grievous passions. But he whom you call the Creator is subject to the opposite evils.

CHAPTER 39. DEFECTS ASCRIBED TO GOD

Therefore also Adam, being made at first after his likeness, is created blind, and is said not to have knowledge of good or evil, and is found a transgressor, and is driven out of paradise, and is punished with death. In like manner also, he who made him, because he sees not in all places, says with reference to the overthrow of Sodom, 'Come, and let us go down, and see whether they do according to their cry which comes to me; or if not, that I may know.' Thus he shows himself ignorant. And in his saying respecting Adam, 'Let us drive him out, lest he put forth his hand and touch the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever;' in saying Lest he is ignorant; and in driving him out lest he should eat and live for ever, he is also envious. And whereas it is written that 'God repented that he had made man,' this implies both repentance and ignorance. For this reflection is a view by which one, through ignorance, wishes to inquire into the result of the things which he wills, or it is the act of one repenting on account of the event not being according to his expectation. And whereas it is written, 'And the Lord smelled a scent of sweetness,' it is the part of one in need; and his being pleased with the fat of flesh is the part of one who is not good. But his tempting, as it is written, 'And God did tempt Abraham,' is the part of one who is wicked, and who is ignorant of the issue of the experiment.

CHAPTER 40. PETER'S ANSWER

In like manner Simon, by taking many passages from the Scriptures, seemed to show that God is subject to every infirmity. And to this Peter said: Does he who is evil, and wholly wicked, love to accuse himself in the things in which he sins? Answer me this. Then said Simon: He does not. Then said Peter: How, then, can God be evil and wicked, seeing that those evil things which have been commonly written regarding Him, have been added by His own will! Then said Simon: It may be that the charge against Him is written by another power, and not according to His choice. Then said Peter: Let us then, in the first place, inquire into this. If, indeed, He has of His own will accused Himself, as you formerly acknowledged, then He is not wicked; but if it is done by another power, it must be inquired and investigated with all energy who has subjected to all evils Him who alone is good.

CHAPTER 41. STATUS QUÆSTIONIS.

Then said Simon: You are manifestly avoiding the hearing of the charge from the Scriptures against your God. Then Peter: You yourself appear to me to be doing this; for he who avoids the order of inquiry, does

not wish a true investigation to be made. Hence I, who proceed in an orderly manner, and wish that the writer should first be considered, am manifestly desirous to walk in a straight path. Then Simon: First confess that if the things written against the Creator are true, he is not above all, since, according to the Scriptures, he is subject to all evil; then afterwards we shall inquire as to the writer. Then said Peter: That I may not seem to speak against your want of order through unwillingness to enter upon the investigation, I answer you. I say that if the things written against God are true, they do not show that God is wicked. Then said Simon: How can you maintain that?

CHAPTER 42. WAS ADAM BLIND?

Then said Peter: Because things are written opposite to those sayings which speak evil of him; wherefore neither the one nor the other can be confirmed. Then Simon: How, then, is the truth to be ascertained, of those Scriptures that say he is evil, or of those that say he is good? Then Peter: Whatever sayings of the Scriptures are in harmony with the creation that was made by Him are true, but whatever are contrary to it are false. Then Simon said: How can you show that the Scriptures contradict themselves? And Peter said: You say that Adam was created blind, which was not so; for He would not have pointed out the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to a blind man, and commanded him not to taste of it. Then said Simon: He meant that his mind was blind. Then Peter: How could he be blind in respect of his mind, who, before tasting of the tree, in harmony with Him who made him, imposed appropriate names on all the animals? Then Simon: If Adam had foreknowledge, how did he not foreknow that the serpent would deceive his wife? Then Peter: If Adam had not foreknowledge, how did he give names to the sons of men as they were born with reference to their future doings, calling the first Cain (which is interpreted 'envy'), who through envy killed his brother Abel (which is interpreted 'grief'), for his parents grieved over him, the first slain?

CHAPTER 43. GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE

But if Adam, being the work of God, had foreknowledge, much more the God who created him. And that is false which is written that God reflected, as if using reasoning on account of ignorance; and that the Lord tempted Abraham, that He might know if he would endure it; and that which is written, 'Let us go down, and see if they are doing according to the cry of them which comes to me; and if not, that I may know.' And, not to extend my discourse too far, whatever sayings ascribe ignorance to Him, or anything else that is evil, being upset by other sayings which affirm the contrary, are proved to be false. But because He does indeed foreknow, He says to Abraham, 'You shall assuredly know that your seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not their own; and they shall enslave them, and shall evil entreat them, and humble them four hundred years. But the nation to which they shall be in bondage will I judge, and after that they shall come out hither with much property; but you shall depart to your fathers with peace, being nourished in a good old age; and in the fourth generation they shall return hither, for the sins of the Amorites are hitherto not filled up.'

CHAPTER 44. GOD'S DECREES

But what? Does not Moses pre-intimate the sins of the people, and predict their dispersion among the nations? But if He gave foreknowledge to Moses, how can it be that He had it not Himself? But He has it. And if He has it, as we have also shown, it is an extravagant saying that He reflected, and that He repented, and that He went down to see, and whatever else of this sort. Whatsoever things being fore-known before they come to pass as about to befall, take issue by a wise economy, without repentance.

CHAPTER 45. SACRIFICES

But that He is not pleased with sacrifices, is shown by this, that those who lusted after flesh were slain as soon as they tasted it, and were consigned to a tomb, so that it was called the grave of lusts. He then who at the first was displeased with the slaughtering of animals, not wishing them to be slain, did not ordain sacrifices as desiring them; nor from the beginning did He require them. For neither are sacrifices accomplished without the slaughter of animals, nor can the first-fruits be presented. But how is it possible for Him to abide in darkness, and smoke, and storm (for this also is written), who created a pure heaven, and created the sun to give light to all, and assigned the invariable order of their revolutions to innumerable stars? Thus, O Simon, the handwriting of God--I mean the heaven--shows the counsels of Him who made it to be pure and stable.

CHAPTER 46. DISPARAGEMENTS OF GOD

Thus the sayings accusatory of the God who made the heaven are both rendered void by the opposite sayings which are alongside of them, and are refuted by the creation. For they were not written by a prophetic hand. Wherefore also they appear opposite to the hand of God, who made all things. Then said Simon: How can you show this?

CHAPTER 47. FOREKNOWLEDGE OF MOSES

Then said Peter: The law of God was given by Moses, without writing, to seventy wise men, to be handed down, that the government might be carried on by succession. But after that Moses was taken up, it was written by some one, but not by Moses. For in the law itself it is written, 'And Moses died; and they buried him near the house of Phogor, and no one knows his sepulchre till this day.' But how could Moses write that Moses died? And whereas in the time after Moses, about 500 years or thereabouts, it is found lying in the temple which was built, and after about 500 years more it is carried away, and being burnt in the time of Nebuchadnezzar it is destroyed; and thus being written after Moses, and often lost, even this shows the foreknowledge of Moses, because he, foreseeing its disappearance, did not write it; but those who wrote it, being convicted of ignorance through their not foreseeing its disappearance, were not prophets.

CHAPTER 48. TEST OF TRUTH

Then said Simon: Since, as you say, we must understand the things concerning God by comparing them with the creation, how is it possible to recognise the other things in the law which are from the tradition of Moses, and are true, and are mixed up with these falsehoods? Then Peter said: A certain verse has been recorded without controversy in the written law, according to the providence of God, so as to show clearly which of the things written are true and which are false. Then said Simon: Which is that? Show it us.

CHAPTER 49. THE TRUE PROPHET

Then Peter said: I shall tell you immediately. It is written in the first book of the law, towards the end: 'A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until He come whose it is; and He is the expectation of the nations.' If, therefore, any one can apprehend Him who came after the failure of ruler and leader from Judah, and who was to be expected by the nations, he will be able by this verse to recognise Him as truly having come; and believing His teaching, he will know what of the Scriptures are true and what are false. Then said Simon: I understand that you speak of your Jesus as Him who was prophesied of by the scripture. Therefore let it be granted that it is so. Tell us, then, how he taught you to

discriminate the Scriptures.

CHAPTER 50. HIS TEACHING CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES

Then Peter: As to the mixture of truth with falsehood, I remember that on one occasion He, finding fault with the Sadducees, said, 'Wherefore ye do err, not knowing the true things of the Scriptures; and on this account you are ignorant of the power of God.' But if He cast up to them that they knew not the true things of the Scriptures, it is manifest that there are false things in them. And also, inasmuch as He said, 'Be ye prudent money-changers,' it is because there are genuine and spurious words. And whereas He said, 'Wherefore do ye not perceive that which is reasonable in the Scriptures?' He makes the understanding of him stronger who voluntarily judges soundly.

CHAPTER 51. HIS TEACHING CONCERNING THE LAW

And His sending to the scribes and teachers of the existing Scriptures, as to those who knew the true things of the law that then was, is well known. And also that He said, 'I am not come to destroy the law,' and yet that He appeared to be destroying it, is the part of one intimating that the things which He destroyed did not belong to the law. And His saying, 'The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law,' intimated that the things which pass away before the heaven and the earth do not belong to the law in reality.

CHAPTER 52. OTHER SAYINGS OF CHRIST

Since, then, while the heaven and the earth still stand, sacrifices have passed away, and kingdoms, and prophecies among those who are born of woman, and such like, as not being ordinances of God; hence therefore He says, 'Every plant which the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.' Wherefore He, being the true Prophet, said, 'I am the gate of life; he who enters through me enters into life,' there being no other teaching able to save. Wherefore also He cried, and said, 'Come unto me, all who labour,' that is, who are seeking the truth, and not finding it; and again, 'My sheep hear my voice;' and elsewhere, 'Seek and find,' since the truth does not lie on the surface.

CHAPTER 53. OTHER SAYINGS OF CHRIST

But also a witnessing voice was heard from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him.' And in addition to this, willing to convict more fully of error the prophets from whom they asserted that they had learned, He proclaimed that they died desiring the truth, but not having learned it, saying, 'Many prophets and kings desired to see what ye see, and to hear what you hear; and verily I say to you, they neither saw nor heard.' Still further He said, 'I am he concerning whom Moses prophesied, saying, A Prophet shall the Lord our God raise unto you of your brethren, like unto me: Him hear in all things; and whosoever will not hear that Prophet shall die.'

CHAPTER 54. OTHER SAYINGS

Whence it is impossible without His teaching to attain to saving truth, though one seek it for ever where the thing that is sought is not. But it was, and is, in the word of our Jesus. Accordingly, He, knowing the true things of the law, said to the Sadducees, asking on what account Moses permitted to marry seven, 'Moses gave you commandments according to your hard-heartedness; for from the beginning it was not so: for He who created man at first, made him male and female.'

CHAPTER 55. TEACHING OF CHRIST

But to those who think, as the Scriptures teach, that God swears, He said, 'Let your yea be yea, and nay, nay; for what is more than these is of the evil one.' And to those who say that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are dead, He said, 'God is not of the dead, but of the living.' And to those who suppose that God tempts, as the Scriptures say, He said, 'The tempter is the wicked one,' who also tempted Himself. To those who suppose that God does not foreknow, He said, 'For your heavenly Father knows that ye need all these things before ye ask Him.' And to those who believe, as the Scriptures say, that He does not see all things, He said, 'Pray in secret, and your Father, who sees secret things, will reward you.'

CHAPTER 56. TEACHING OF CHRIST

And to those who think that He is not good, as the Scriptures say, He said, 'From which of you shall his son ask bread, and he will give him a stone; or shall ask a fish, and he will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask Him, and to those who do His will!' But to those who affirmed that He was in the temple, He said, 'Swear not by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet.' And to those who supposed that God is pleased with sacrifices, He said, 'God wishes mercy, and not sacrifices' --the knowledge of Himself, and not holocausts.

CHAPTER 57. TEACHING OF CHRIST

But to those who are persuaded that He is evil, as the Scriptures say, He said, 'Call not me good, for One only is good.' And again, 'Be ye good and merciful, as your Father in the heavens, who makes the sun rise on good and evil men, and brings rain upon just and unjust.' But to those who were misled to imagine many gods, as the Scriptures say, He said, 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord your God is one Lord.'

CHAPTER 58. FLIGHT OF SIMON

Therefore Simon, perceiving that Peter was driving him to use the Scriptures as Jesus taught, was unwilling that the discussion should go into the doctrine concerning God, even although Peter had changed the discussion into question and answer, as Simon himself asked. However, the discussion occupied three days. And while the fourth was dawning, he set off darkling as far as Tyre of Phœnicia. And not many days after, some of the precursors came and said to Peter: Simon is doing great miracles in Tyre, and disturbing many of the people there; and by many slanders he has made you to be hated.

CHAPTER 59. PETER'S RESOLUTION TO FOLLOW

Peter, hearing this, on the following night assembled the multitude of hearers; and as soon as they had come together, he said: While I am going forth to the nations which say that there are many gods, to teach and to preach that God is one, who made heaven and earth, and all things that are in them, in order that they may love Him and be saved, evil has anticipated me, and by the very law of conjunction has sent Simon before me, in order that these men, if they shall cease to say that there are many gods, disowning those upon earth that are called gods, may think that there are many gods in heaven; so that, not feeling the excellency of the monarchy, they may perish with eternal punishment. And what is most dreadful, since true doctrine has incomparable power, he forestalls me with slanders, and persuades them to this, not even at first to receive me; lest he who is the slanderer be convicted of being himself in reality a devil, and the true doctrine be received and believed. Therefore I must quickly catch him up, lest the false

accusation, through gaining time, wholly get hold of all men.

CHAPTER 60. SUCCESSOR TO BE APPOINTED

Since, therefore, it is necessary to set apart some one instead of me to fill my place, let us all with one consent pray to God, that He would make manifest who amongst us is the best, that, sitting in the chair of Christ, he may piously rule His Church. Who, then, shall be set apart? For by the counsel of God that man is set forth as blessed, 'whom his Lord shall appoint over the ministry of his fellow-servants, to give them their meat in their season, not thinking and saying in his heart, My Lord delays His coming, and who shall not begin to beat his fellow-servants, eating and drinking with harlots and drunkards. And the Lord of that servant shall come in an hour when he does not look for Him, and in a day when he is not aware, and shall cut him in sunder, and shall assign his unfaithful part with the hypocrites.'

CHAPTER 61. MONARCHY

But if any one of those present, being able to instruct the ignorance of men, shrink from it, thinking only of his own ease, let him expect to hear this sentence: 'O wicked and slothful servant, you ought to have given my money to the exchangers, and I at my coming should have got my own. Cast out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness.' And with good reason; 'for,' says He, 'it is yours, O man, to prove my words, as silver and money are proved among the exchangers.' Therefore the multitude of the faithful ought to obey some one, that they may live in harmony. For that which tends to the government of one person, in the form of monarchy, enables the subjects to enjoy peace by means of good order; but in case of all, through desire of ruling, being unwilling to submit to one only, they must altogether fall by reason of division.

CHAPTER 62. OBEDIENCE LEADS TO PEACE

But, further, let the things that are happening before your eyes persuade you; how wars are constantly arising through there being now many kings all over the earth. For each one holds the government of another as a pretext for war. But if one were universal superior, he, having no reason why he should make war, would have perpetual peace. In short, therefore, to those who are thought worthy of eternal life, God appoints one universal King in the world that shall then be, that by means of monarchy there may be unfailing peace. It behooves all, therefore, to follow some one as a leader, honouring him as the image of God; and it behooves the leader to be acquainted with the road that enters into the holy city.

CHAPTER 63. ZACCHÆUS APPOINTED

But of those who are present, whom shall I choose but Zacchæus, to whom also the Lord went in and rested, judging him worthy to be saved? And having said this, he laid his hand upon Zacchæus, who stood by, and forced him to sit down in his own chair. But Zacchæus, falling at his feet, begged that he would permit him to decline the rulership; promising, at the same time, and saying, Whatever it behooves the ruler to do, I will do; only grant me not to have this name; for I am afraid of assuming the name of the rulership, for it teems with bitter envy and danger.

CHAPTER 64. THE BISHOPRIC

Then Peter said: If you are afraid of this, do not be called Ruler, but The Appointed One, the Lord having permitted you to be so called, when He said, 'Blessed is that man whom his Lord shall Appoint to the ministry of his fellow-servants.' But if you wish it to be altogether unknown that you have authority of

administration, you seem to me to be ignorant that the acknowledged authority of the president has great influence as regards the respect of the multitude. For every one obeys him who has received authority, having conscience as a great constraint. And are you not well aware that you are not to rule as the rulers of the nations, but as a servant ministering to them, as a father to the oppressed, visiting them as a physician, guarding them as a shepherd,--in short, taking all care for their salvation? And do you think that I am not aware what labours I compel you to undertake, desiring you to be judged by multitudes whom it is impossible for any one to please? But it is most possible for him who does well to please God. Wherefore I entreat you to undertake it heartily, by God, by Christ, for the salvation of the brethren, for their ordering, and your own profit.

CHAPTER 65.

NOLO EPISCOPARI

And consider this other thing, that in proportion as there is labour and danger in ruling the Church of Christ, so much greater is the reward. And yet again the greater is also the punishment to him who can, and refuses. I wish, therefore, knowing that you are the best instructed of my attendants, to turn to account those noble powers of judging with which you have been entrusted by the Lord, in order that you may be saluted with the Well done, good and faithful servant, and not be found fault with, and declared liable to punishment, like him who hid the one talent. But if you will not be appointed a good guardian of the Church, point out another in your stead, more learned and more faithful than yourself. But you cannot do this; for you associated with the Lord, and witnessed His marvellous doings, and learned the administration of the Church.

CHAPTER 66. DANGER OF DISOBEDIENCE

And your work is to order what things are proper; and that of the brethren is to submit, and not to disobey. Therefore submitting they shall be saved, but disobeying they shall be punished by the Lord, because the president is entrusted with the place of Christ. Wherefore, indeed, honour or contempt shown to the president is handed on to Christ, and from Christ to God. And this I have said, that these brethren may not be ignorant of the danger they incur by disobedience to you, because whosoever disobeys your orders, disobeys Christ; and he who disobeys Christ offends God.

CHAPTER 67. DUTIES OF CHURCH OFFICE-BEARERS

It is necessary, therefore, that the Church, as a city built upon a hill, have an order approved of God, and good government. In particular, let the bishop, as chief, be heard in the things which he speaks; and let the elders give heed that the things ordered be done. Let the deacons, going about, look after the bodies and the souls of the brethren, and report to the bishop. Let all the rest of the brethren bear wrong patiently; but if they wish judgment to be given concerning wrongs done to them, let them be reconciled in presence of the elders; and let the elders report the reconciliation to the bishop.

CHAPTER 68. MARRIAGE ALWAYS HONOURABLE.

And let them inculcate marriage not only upon the young, but also upon those advanced in years, lest burning lust bring a plague upon the Church by reason of whoredom or adultery. For, above every other sin, the wickedness of adultery is hated by God, because it not only destroys the person himself who sins, but those also who eat and associate with him. For it is like the madness of a dog, because it has the

nature of communicating its own madness. For the sake of chastity, therefore, let not only the elders, but even all, hasten to accomplish marriage. For the sin of him who commits adultery necessarily comes upon all. Therefore, to urge the brethren to be chaste, this is the first charity. For it is the healing of the soul. For the nourishment of the body is rest.

CHAPTER 69. NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF YOURSELVES TOGETHER.

But if you love your brethren, take nothing from them, but share with them such things as ye have. Feed the hungry; give drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked; visit the sick; so far as you can, help those in prison; receive strangers gladly into your own abodes; hate no one. And how you must be pious, your own mind will teach you, judging rightly. But before all else, if indeed I need say it to you, come together frequently, if it were every hour, especially on the appointed days of meeting. For if you do this, you are within a wall of safety. For disorderliness is the beginning of perdition. Let no one therefore forsake the assembly on the ground of envy towards a brother. For if any one of you forsake the assembly, he shall be regarded as of those who scatter the Church of Christ, and shall be cast out with adulterers. For as an adulterer, under the influence of the spirit that is in him, he separates himself on some pretext, and gives place to the wicked one against himself,--a sheep for the stealing, as one found outside the fold.

CHAPTER 70. HEAR THE BISHOP.

However, hear your bishop, and do not weary of giving all honour to him; knowing that, by showing it to him, it is borne to Christ, and from Christ it is borne to God; and to him who offers it, is requited manifold. Honour, therefore, the throne of Christ. For you are commanded even to honour the chair of Moses, and that although they who occupy it are accounted sinners. And now I have said enough to you; and I deem it superfluous to say to him how he is to live unblameably, since he is an approved disciple of Him who taught me also.

CHAPTER 71. VARIOUS DUTIES OF CHRISTIANS

But, brethren, there are some things that you must not wait to hear, but must consider of yourselves what is reasonable. Zacchæus alone having given himself up wholly to labour for you, and needing sustenance, and not being able to attend to his own affairs, how can he procure necessary support? Is it not reasonable that you are to take forethought for his living? Not waiting for his asking you, for this is the part of a beggar. But he will rather die of hunger than submit to do this. And shall not you incur punishment, not considering that the workman is worthy of his hire? And let no one say: Is, then, the word sold which was freely given? Far be it. For if any one has the means of living, and takes anything, he sells the word; but if he who has not takes support in order to live--as the Lord also took at supper and among His friends, having nothing, though He alone is the owner of all things--he sins not. Therefore suitably honour elders, catechists, useful deacons, widows who have lived well, orphans as children of the Church. But wherever there is need of any provision for an emergency, contribute all together. Be kind one to another, not shrinking from the endurance of anything whatever for your own salvation.

CHAPTER 72. ORDINATION

And having thus spoken, he placed his hand upon Zacchæus, saying, O Ruler and Lord of all, Father and God, guard the shepherd with the flock. You are the cause, You the power. We are that which is helped; You the helper, the physician, the saviour, the wall, the life, the hope, the refuge, the joy, the expectation, the rest. In a word, You are all things to us. In order to the eternal attainment of salvation, You co-operate,

preserve, protect. You can do all things. For You are the Ruler of rulers, the Lord of lords, the Governor of kings. Give power to the president to loose what ought to be loosed, to bind what ought to be bound. Make him wise. Protect, as by His name, the Church of Your Christ as a fair bride. For Yours is eternal glory. Praise to the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to all ages. Amen.

CHAPTER 73. BAPTISMS

And having thus spoken, he afterwards said: Whoever of you wish to be baptized, begin from tomorrow to fast, and have hands laid upon you day by day, and inquire about what matters you please. For I mean still to remain with you ten days. And after three days, having begun to baptize, he called me, and Aquila, and Nicetas, and said to us: As I am going to set out for Tyre after seven days, I wish you to go away this very day, and to lodge secretly with Bernice the Canaanite, the daughter of Justa, and to learn from her, and write accurately to me what Simon is about. For this is of great consequence to me, that I may prepare myself accordingly. Therefore depart straightway in peace. And leaving him baptizing, as he commanded, we preceded him to Tyre of Phœnicia.

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