

Exposition on Psalm 62

by St. Augustine

The sermon exhorts believers to trust in God's salvation and glory, and to persevere in faith and hope despite the challenges and temptations of the world.

Scripture: Psalm 61:1, Matthew 23:12, Luke 15:32, Romans 8:32, 1 Corinthians 10:13

Topics: "Gods Mercy", "Christian Repentance"

Description

St. Augustine preaches about the power and mercy of God, emphasizing the need to fear God's power while also trusting in His mercy. He delves into the concept of God permitting evil acts to bring about greater good, using the example of Christ's crucifixion to illustrate how God's mercy can be found even in the midst of unjust actions. The sermon highlights the importance of turning to God in penitence, seeking His mercy alone, and being vigilant in guarding against deception and temptation.

Transcript

1. The title of it is, Unto the end, in behalf of Idithun, a Psalm to David himself. I recollect that already to you has been explained what Idithun is....Let us see how far he has leaped over, and whom he has leaped over, and in what place, though he has leaped over certain men, he is situate, whence as from a kind of spiritual and secure position he may behold what is below....He being set, I say, in a certain fortified place, does say, Shall not my soul be subject to God? Psalm 61:1. For he had heard, He that does exalt himself shall be humbled; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted: Matthew 23:12 and fearful lest by leaping over he should be proud, not elated by those things which were below, but humble because of Him that was above; to envious men, as it were threatening to him a fall, who were grieved that he had leaped over, he has made answer, Shall not my soul be subject to God?...For from Himself is my salvation. For Himself is my God and my salvation, my taker up, I shall not be moved more Psalm 61:2. I know who is above me, I know who stretches forth His mercy to men that know Him, I know under the coverings of whose wings I should hope: I shall not be moved more....

2. Therefore, down from the higher place fortified and protected, he, to whom the Lord has been made a refuge, he, to whom is God Himself for a fortified place, has regard to those whom he has leaped over, and looking down upon them speaks as though from a lofty tower: for this also has been said of Him, A Tower of strength from the face of the enemy: he gives heed therefore to them, and says, How long do ye lay upon a man? Psalm 61:3. By insulting, by hurling reproaches, by laying wait, by persecuting, you lay upon a man burthens, you lay upon a man as much as a man can bear: but in order that a man may bear,

under him is He that has made man.

If to a man ye look, slay ye, all of you. Behold, lay upon, rage, slay ye, all of you. As though a wall bowed down, and as a fence smitten against; lean against, smite against, as if going to throw down. And where is, I shall not be moved more? But wherefore? I shall not be moved more. Because Himself is God my Saving One, my taker up, therefore ye men are able to lay burdens upon a man; can you anywise lay upon God, who protects man? Slay ye, all of you. What is that size of body in one man so great as that he may be slain by all?

But we ought to perceive our person, the person of the Church, the person of the Body of Christ. For one Man with His Head and Body is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the Body and the Members of the Body: two in one Flesh, and in one voice, and in one passion, and, when iniquity shall have passed over, in one rest. The sufferings therefore of Christ are not in Christ alone; nay, there are not any save in Christ. For if Christ you understand to be Head and Body, the sufferings of Christ are not, save in Christ: but if Christ thou understand of Head alone, the sufferings of Christ are not in Christ alone.

For if the sufferings of Christ are in Christ alone, to wit in the Head alone; whence says a certain member of Him, Paul the Apostle, In order that I may supply what are wanting of the oppressions of Christ in my flesh? Colossians 1:24 If therefore in the members of Christ you are, whatsoever man you are that art hearing these words, whosoever you are that dost hear these words (but however, you hear, if in the members of Christ you are): whatsoever thing you suffer from those that are not in the members of Christ, was wanting to the sufferings of Christ.

Therefore it is added because it was wanting; you fill up the measure, you cause it not to run over: you suffer so much as was to be contributed out of your sufferings to the whole suffering of Christ, that has suffered in our Head, and does suffer in His members, that is, in our own selves. Unto this our common republic, as it were each of us according to our measure pays that which we owe, and according to the powers which we have, as it were a quota of sufferings we contribute.

The storehouse of all men's sufferings will not be completely made up, save when the world shall have been ended....That whole City therefore is speaking, from the blood of righteous Abel even to the blood of Zacharias. Matthew 23:35 Thence also hereafter from the blood of John, through the blood of the Apostles, through the blood of Martyrs, through the blood of the faithful ones of Christ, one City speaks, one man says, How long do ye lay upon a man? Slay ye, all of you. Let us see if you efface, let us see if you extinguish, let us see if you remove from the earth the name thereof, let us see if you peoples do not meditate of empty things, saying, When shall She die, and when shall perish the name of Her?

As though She were a wall bowed down, and a fence smitten against, lean ye against Her, smite against Her. Hear from above: My taker up, I shall not be moved more: for as though a heap of sand I have been smitten against that I might fall, and the Lord has taken me up.

3. Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back Psalm 61:4. Conquered while they slay men yielding, by the blood of the slain multiplying the faithful, yielding to these and no longer being able to kill; Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back. Now because a Christian cannot be killed, pains are taken that a Christian should be dishonoured. For now by the honour of Christians the hearts of ungodly men are tortured: now that spiritual Joseph, after his selling by his brethren, after his removal from his home into Egypt as though into the Gentiles, after the humiliation of a prison, after the made-up tale of a false witness, after that there had come to pass that which of him was said, Iron passed through the soul

of him: now he is honoured, now he is not made subject to brethren selling him, but grain he supplies to them hungering. Genesis 42:5 Conquered by his humility and chastity, uncorruptness, temptations, sufferings, now honoured they see him, and his honour they think to check....Is it all against one man, or one man against all; or all against all, or one against one? Meanwhile, when he says, ye lay upon a man, it is as it were upon one man: and when he says, Slay all you, it is as if all men were against one man: but nevertheless it is also all against all, because also all are Christians, but in One. But why must those various errors hostile to Christ be spoken of as all together? Are they also one? Truly them also as one I dare to speak of: because there is one City and one city, one People and one people, King and king. One City and one city is what? Babylon one, Jerusalem one. By whatsoever other mystical names besides She is called, yet One City there is and one city; over this the devil is king, over that Christ is King....

4. Give heed, brethren, give heed, I entreat you. For it delights me yet to speak a few words to you of this beloved City. For most glorious things of You have been spoken, City of God. And, if I forget You, O Jerusalem, let my own right hand forget me. For dear is the one Country, and truly but one Country, the only Country: besides Her whatsoever we have, is a sojourning in a strange land. I will say therefore that which you may acknowledge, that of which you may approve: I will call to your minds that which you know, I will not teach that which you know not.

Not first, says the Apostle, that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards that which is spiritual. 1 Corinthians 15:46 Therefore the former city is greater by age, because first was born Cain, and afterwards Abel: Genesis 4:1-2 but in these the elder shall serve the younger. Genesis 25:23 The former greater by age, the latter greater in dignity. Wherefore is the former greater by age? Because not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural. 1 Corinthians 15:46 Wherefore is the latter greater in dignity?

Because the elder shall serve the younger. Genesis 25:23 ...Cain first built a city, and in that place he built where no city was. But when Jerusalem was being built, it was not built in a place where there was not a city, but there was a city at first which was called Jebus, whence the Jebusites. This having been captured, overcome, made subject, there was built a new city, as though the old were thrown down; and it was called Jerusalem, Joshua 18:28 vision of peace, City of God.

Each one therefore that is born of Adam, not yet does belong to Jerusalem: for he bears with him the offshoot of iniquity, and the punishment of sin, having been consigned to death, and he belongs in a manner to a sort of old city. But if he is to be in the people of God; his old self will be thrown down, and he will be built up new. For this reason therefore Cain built a city where there was not a city. For from mortality and from naughtiness every one sets out, in order that he may be made good hereafter.

For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One Man many shall be made just. Romans 5:19 And all we in Adam do die: 1 Corinthians 15:22 and each one of us of Adam was born. Let him pass over to Jerusalem, he shall be thrown down old, and shall be built new. As though to conquered Jebusites, in order that there may be built up Jerusalem, is said, Put ye off the old man, and put on the new. And now to them built in Jerusalem, and shining by the light of Grace, is said, You have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord.

Ephesians 5:8 The evil city therefore from the beginning even unto the end does run on, and the good City by the changing of evil men is built up. And these two cities are meanwhile mingled, at the end to be severed; against each other mutually in conflict, the one for iniquity, the other for the truth. And sometimes this very temporal mingling brings it to pass that certain men belonging to the city Babylon, do order

matters belonging to Jerusalem, and again certain men belonging to Jerusalem, do order matters belonging to Babylon.

Something difficult I seem to have propounded. Be patient, until it be proved by examples. For all things in the old people, as writes the Apostle, in a figure used to befall them: but they have been written for our amendment, upon whom the end of the world has come. 1 Corinthians 10:11 Regard therefore that people as also set to intimate an after people; and see then what I say. There were great kings in Jerusalem: it is a known fact, they are enumerated, are named. They all were, I say, wicked citizens of Babylon, and they were ordering matters of Jerusalem: all men from thence to be dissevered at the end, to no one but to the devil do belong.

Again we find citizens of Jerusalem to have ordered certain matters belonging to Babylon. For those three children, Nabuchodonosor, overcome by a miracle, made the ministers of his kingdom, and set them over his Satraps; and so there were ordering the matters of Babylon citizens of Jerusalem. Observe now how this is being fulfilled and done in the Church, and in these times....Every earthly commonwealth, sometime assuredly to perish, whereof the kingdom is to pass away, when there shall come that kingdom, whereof we pray, Your kingdom come; Matthew 6:10 and whereof has been foretold, And of His kingdom shall be no end: Luke 1:33 an earthly commonwealth, I say, has our citizens conducting the affairs of it.

For how many faithful, how many good men, are both magistrates in their cities, and are judges, and are generals, and are counts, and are kings? All that are just and good men, having not anything in heart but the most glorious things, which of You have been said, City of God. And as if they were doing bond-service in the city which is to pass away, even there by the doctors of the Holy City they are bidden to keep faith with those set over them, whether with the king as supreme, or with governors as though sent by God for the punishment of evil men, but for the praise of good men: 1 Peter 2:13-14 or as servants, that to their masters they should be subject, Ephesians 6:5 even Christians to Heathens, and the better should keep faith with the worse, for a time to serve, for everlasting to have dominion.

For these things do happen until iniquity do pass away. Servants are commanded to bear with masters unjust and capricious: the citizens of Babylon are commanded to be endured by the citizens of Jerusalem, showing even more attentions, than if they were citizens of the same Babylon, as though fulfilling the precept, He that shall have exacted of you a mile, go with him other two. Matthew 5:41 ...

5. I have run in thirst. For they were rendering evil things for good things: for them was I thirsting: mine honour they thought to drive back: I was thirsting to bring them over into my body. For in drinking what do we, but send into our members liquor that is without, and suck it into our body? Thus did Moses in that head of the calf. Exodus 32:10 The head of the calf is a great sacrament. For the head of the calf was the body of ungodly men, in the similitude of a calf eating hay, seeking earthly things: because all flesh is hay. Isaiah 40:6 ...And what now is more evident, than that into that City Jerusalem, of which the people Israel was a type, by Baptism men were to be made to pass over? Therefore in water it was scattered, in order that for drink it might be given. For this even unto the end this man thirsts; he runs and thirsts. For many men He drinks, but never will He be without thirst. For thence is, I thirst, woman, give Me to drink. John 4:7 That Samaritan woman at the well found the Lord thirsting, and by Him thirsting she was filled: she first found Him thirsting, in order that He might drink her believing. And when He was on the Cross, I thirst, John 19:28 He said, although they gave not to Him that for which He was thirsting. For for themselves He was thirsting: but they gave vinegar, not new wine, wherewith are filled up the new bottles, but old wine, but old to its loss. Matthew 9:17 For old vinegar also is said of the old men, of whom has been said, For to

them is no changing; namely, that the Jebusites should be overthrown, and Jerusalem be built. 2 Samuel 5:9

6. So also the Head of this body even unto the end from the beginning runs in thirst. And as if to Him were being said, Why in thirst? What is wanting to You, O Body of Christ, O Church of Christ? In so great honour, in so great exaltation, in so great height also even in this world established, what is wanting to You? There is fulfilled that which has been foretold of you, There shall adore Him all kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him.. ..They that at Jerusalem's festivals fill up the Churches, at Babylon's festivals fill up the theatres: and for all they serve, honour, obey Her-- not only those very persons that bear the Sacraments of Christ, and hate the commandments of Christ, but also they, that bear not even the mere Sacraments, Heathen though they be, Jews though they be--they honour, praise, proclaim, but with their mouths they were blessing. I heed not the mouth, He knows that has instructed me, with their heart they were cursing. In that place they were cursing, where mine honour they thought to drive back.

7. What are You doing, O Idithun, Body of Christ, leaping over them? What are You doing amid all these things? What will You do? Will you faint? Will You not persevere even unto the end? Will You not hearken, He that shall have persevered even unto the end, the same shall be saved, Matthew 10:22 though for that iniquity abounds, the love of many shall wax cold? Matthew 24:12 And where is it that You have leaped over them? Where is it that Your conversation is in Heaven? Philippians 3:20 But they cleave unto earthly things, as though earthborn they mind the earth, and are earth, the serpent's food. Genesis 3:14 What do you amid these things?...Nevertheless, to God my soul shall be made subject Psalm 61:5. And who would endure so great things, either open wars, or secret lyings-in-wait? Who would endure so great things amid open enemies, amid false brethren? Who would endure so great things? Would a man? And if a man would, would a man of himself? I have not so leaped over that I should be lifted up, and fall: To God my soul shall be made subject: for from Himself is my patience. What patience is there amid so great scandals, except that if for that which we do not see we hope, through patience we look for it? Romans 8:25 There comes my pain, there will come my rest also; there comes my tribulation, there will come my cleansing also. For does gold glitter in the furnace of the refiner? In a necklace it will glitter, in an ornament it will glitter: let it suffer however the furnace, in order that being cleansed from dross it may come into light. This is the furnace, there is there chaff, there gold, there fire, into this blows the refiner: in the furnace burns the chaff, and the gold is cleansed; the one into ashes is turned, of dross the other is cleansed. The furnace is the world, the chaff unrighteous men, the gold just men; the fire tribulation, the refiner God: that which therefore the refiner wills I do; wherever the Maker sets me I endure it. I am commanded to endure, He knows how to cleanse. Though there burn the chaff to set me on fire, and as if to consume me; that into ashes is burned, I of dross am cleansed. Wherefore? Because to God my soul shall be made subject: for from Himself is my patience.

8. For Himself is my God and My Saving One, my Taker up, I will not remove hence Psalm 61:6. Because Himself is my God, therefore He calls me: and my Saving One, therefore He justifies me: and my Taker up, therefore He glorifies me. For here I am called and am justified, but there I am glorified; and from thence where I am glorified, I will not remove. For a sojourner I am with You on earth as all my fathers were. Therefore from my lodging I shall remove, from my Heavenly home I shall not remove. In God is my salvation and my glory Psalm 61:7. Saved I shall be in God, glorious I shall be in God: for not only saved, but also glorious, saved, because a just man I have been made out of an ungodly man, by Him justified; Romans 4:2 but glorious, because not only justified, but also honoured. For those whom He has predestined, those also He has called. Romans 8:30 Calling them, what has He done here? Whom He has

called, the same also He has justified; but whom He has justified, the same also He has glorified. Justification therefore to salvation belongs, glorifying to honour. How glorifying to honour belongs, it is not needful to discuss. How justification belongs to salvation, let us seek some proof. Behold there comes to mind out of the Gospel: there were some who to themselves were seeming to be just men, and they were finding fault with the Lord because He admitted to the feast sinners, and with publicans and sinners was eating; to such men therefore priding themselves, strong men of earth very much lifted up, much glorying of their own soundness, such as they counted it, not such as they had, the Lord answered what? They that are whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick. Matthew 9:13 Whom calls He whole, whom calls He sick? He continues and says, I have not come to call just men, but sinners unto repentance. Matthew 9:12 He has called therefore the whole just men, not because the Pharisees were so, but because themselves they thought so to be; and for this reason were proud, and grudged sick men a physician, and being more sick than those, they slew the Physician. He has called whole, however, righteous men, sick, the sinners. My being justified therefore, says that man that leaps over, from Himself I have: my being glorified, from Himself I have: For God is my salvation and my glory. My salvation, so that saved I am: my glory, so that honoured I am. This thing hereafter: now what? God of my help, and my hope is in God; until I attain unto perfect justification and salvation. For by hope we are saved: but hope which is seen, is not hope. Romans 8:24 ...

9. Hope ye in Him all the council of the people Psalm 61:8. Imitate ye Idithun, leap over your enemies; men fighting against you, stopping up your way, men hating you, leap ye over: Hope in Him all the council of the people: pour out before Him your hearts:...By imploring, by confessing, by hoping. Do not keep back your hearts within your hearts: Pour out before Him your hearts. That perishes not which you pour out. For He is my Taker up. If He takes up, why do you fear to pour out? Cast upon the Lord your care, and hope in Him. What fear ye amid whisperers, slanderers hateful to God, Romans 1:29-30 where they are able openly assailing, where they are unable secretly lying in wait, falsely praising, truly at enmity, amid them what do you fear? God is our Helper. Do they anywise equal God? Are they anywise stronger than He? God is our Helper, be ye without care. If God is for us, who is against us? Romans 8:31 Pour out before Him your hearts, by leaping over unto Him, by lifting up your souls: God is our helper....Nevertheless, vain are the sons of men, and liars are the sons of men in the balances, in order that they may deceive, being at one because of vanity Psalm 61:9. Certainly many men there are: behold there is that one man, that one man that was cast forth from the multitude of guests. Matthew 22:11 They conspire, they all seek things temporal, and they that are carnal things carnal, and for the future they hope them, whosoever do hope: even if because of variety of opinions they are in division, nevertheless because of vanity they are at one. Divers indeed are errors and of many forms, and the kingdom against itself divided shall not stand: Matthew 12:25 but alike in all is the will vain and lying, belonging to one king, with whom into fire everlasting it is to be thrown headlong Matthew 25:41 -- these men because of vanity are at one. And for them see how He thirsts, see how He runs in thirst.

10. He turns therefore Himself to them, thirsting for them: Do not hope in iniquity Psalm 61:10. For my hope is in God. You that will not draw near and pass over, do not hope in iniquity. For I that have leapt over, my hope is in God; and is there anywise iniquity with God? Romans 9:14 This thing let us do, that thing let us do, of that thing let us think, thus let us adjust our lyings in wait; Because of vanity being at one. You thirst: they that think of those things against you are given up by those whom you drink. Do not hope in vanity. Vain is iniquity, nought is iniquity, mighty is nothing save righteousness. Truth may be hidden for a time, conquered it cannot be. Iniquity may flourish for a time, abide it cannot. Do not hope upon iniquity: and for robbery be not covetous. You are not rich, and will you rob? What do you find? What

do you lose? O losing gains! You find money, you lose righteousness. For robbery be not covetous....Therefore, vain sons of men, lying sons of men, neither rob, nor, if there flow riches, set heart upon them: no longer love vanity, and seek lying. For blessed is the man who has the Lord God for his hope, and who has not had regard unto vanities, and lying follies. You would deceive, you would commit a fraud, what bring ye in order that you may cheat. Deceitful balances. For lying, he says, are the sons of men in the balances, in order that they may cheat by bringing forth deceitful balances. By a false balance ye beguile men looking on: know ye not that one is he that weighs, Another He that judges of the weight? He sees not, for whom you weigh, but He sees that weighs you and him. Therefore neither fraud nor robbery covet ye any longer, nor on those things which you have set your hope: I have admonished, have foretold, says this Idithun.

11. What follows? Once has God spoken, these two things I have heard, that power is of God Psalm 61:11, and to You, O Lord, is mercy, for You shall render to each one after his works Psalm 61:12....Once has God spoken. What do you say, Idithun? If you that had leapt over them art saying, Once He has spoken; I turn to another Scripture and it says to me, In many quarters and in many ways formerly God has spoken to the fathers in the prophets. Hebrews 1:1 What is, Once has God spoken? Is He not the God that in the beginning of mankind spoke to Adam? Genesis 3:17 Did not the Selfsame speak to Cain, to Noe, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to all the Prophets, and to Moses? One man Moses was, and how often to him spoke God? Behold even to one man, not once but oftentimes God has spoken. Secondly, He has spoken to the Son when standing here, You are My beloved Son. Matthew 3:17 God has spoken to the Apostles, He has spoken to all the Saints, even though not with voice sounding through the cloud, nevertheless in the heart where He is Himself Teacher. What is therefore, Once has God spoken? Much has that man leapt over in order to arrive at that place, where once God has spoken. Behold briefly I have spoken to your Love. Here among men, to men oftentimes, in many ways, in many quarters, through creatures of many forms God has spoken: by Himself once God has spoken, because One Word God has begotten....For it could not be but that God did Himself know that which by the Word He made: John 1:3 but if that which He made He knew, in Him there was that which was made before it was made. For if in Him was not that which was made before it was made, how knew He that which He made? For you can not say that God made things He knew not. God therefore has known that which He has made. And how knew He before He made, if there cannot be known any but things made? But by things made there cannot be known any but things previously made, by you, to wit, who art a man made in a lower place, and set in a lower place: but before that all these things were made, they were known by Him by whom they were made, and that which He knew He made. Therefore in that Word by which He made all things, before that they were made, were all things; and after they have been made there are all things; but in one way here, in another there, in one way in their own nature wherein they have been made, in another in the art by which they have been made. Who could explain this? We may endeavour: go ye with Idithun, and see.

12. ...For even the Lord says, Many things I have to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. John 16:12 What is therefore, These two things I have heard? These two things which to you I am about to say not of myself to you I say, but what things I have heard I say. Once has God spoken: One Word has He, the Only-begotten God. In that Word are all things, because by the Word were made all things. One Word has He, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. Colossians 2:3 One Word He has, once has God spoken. These two things, which to you I am about to say, these I have heard: not of myself I speak, not of myself I say: to this belongs the I have heard. John 8:26 But the friend of the Bridegroom stands and hears Him, that he may speak the truth. For he hears Him, lest by speaking a lie, of his own he

should speak: John 8:44 lest you should say, Who are you that sayest this thing to me? Whence do you say this to me? I have heard these two things, and I that speak to you that I have heard these two things, am one who also does know that once God has spoken. Do not despise a hearer saying to you certain two things for you so necessary; him, I say, that by leaping over the whole creation has attained unto the Only-begotten Word of God, where he has learned that once God has spoken.

13. Let him therefore now say certain two things. For greatly to us belong these two things. For power is of God, and to You, O Lord, is mercy. Are these the two things, power and mercy? These two evidently: perceive ye the power of God, perceive ye the mercy of God. In these two things are contained nearly all the Scriptures. Because of these two things are the Prophets, because of these two, the Patriarchs, because of these the Law, because of these Himself our Lord Jesus Christ, because of these the Apostles, because of these all the preaching and spreading of the word of God in the Church, because of these two, because of the power of God, and His mercy. His power fear ye, His mercy love ye. Neither so on His mercy rely, as that His power ye despise: nor so the power fear ye, as that of mercy ye despair. With Him is power, with Him mercy. This man He humbles, and that man He exalts: this man He humbles with power, that man He exalts in mercy. For if God, willing to show wrath and to prove His power, has in much patience borne with the vessels of wrath, which have been perfected unto perdition Romans 9:22 -- you have heard of power: inquire for mercy-- and that He might make known, He says, His riches unto the vessels of mercy. It belongs therefore to His power to condemn unjust men. And to Him who would say, What have you done? For you, O man, who are you that should make answer to God? Romans 9:20 Fear therefore and tremble at His power: but hope for His mercy. The devil is a sort of power; oftentimes however he wishes to hurt, and is not able, because that power is under power. For if the devil could hurt as much as he would; no one of just men would remain, nor could any one of the faithful be on earth. The same through his vessels smites against, as it were, a wall bowed down: but he only smites against, so far as he receives power. But in order that the wall may not fall, the Lord will support: for He that gives power to the tempter, does Himself to the tempted extend mercy. For according to measure the devil is permitted to tempt. And, You will give us to drink in tears in a measure. Do not therefore fear the tempter permitted to do somewhat: for you have a most merciful Saviour. So much he is permitted to tempt as is profitable for you, that you may be exercised, may be proved; in order that by yourself you may be found out, that know not yourself. For where, or from whence, ought we to be secure, except by this power and mercy of God? After that Apostolic saying, Faithful is God, that does not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able. 1 Corinthians 10:13 ...Fear not the enemy: so much he does as he has received power to do, fear Him that has the chief power: fear Him, that does as much as He wills, and who does nothing unjustly, and whatever He shall have done, is just. We might suppose something or other to be unjust: inasmuch as God has done it, believe it to be just.

14. Therefore, you say, if any one slay an innocent man, does he justly or unjustly? Unjustly certainly. Wherefore does God permit this?...The counsel of God to tell to you, O man, I am not able: this thing however I say, both that the man has done unjustly that has slain an innocent person, and that it would not have been done unless God permitted it: and though the man has done unjustly, yet God has not unjustly permitted this. Let the reason lie concealed in that person whoever it be, for whose sake you are moved, whose innocence does much move you.

For to you speedily I might make answer. He would not have been slain unless he were guilty: but you think him innocent. I might speedily say this to you. For you could not examine his heart, sift his deeds, weigh his thoughts, so that you could say to me, unjustly he was slain. I might easily therefore make

answer: but there is forced upon my view a certain Just One, without dispute just, without doubt just, who had no sin, slain by sinners, betrayed by a sinner; Himself Christ the Lord, of whom we cannot say that He has any iniquity, for those things which He robbed not He paid, is made an objection to my answer.

And why should I speak of Christ? With you I am dealing, you say. And I with you. About Him you propose a question, about Him I am solving the question. For therein the counsel of God we know, which except by His own revealing we should not know: so that when you shall have found out that counsel of God, whereby He has permitted His innocent Son to be slain by unjust men, and such a counsel as pleases you, and such a counsel as cannot displease you, if you are just, you may believe that in other things also by His counsel God does the same, but it escaped you.

Ah! Brethren, need there was of the blood of a just one to blot out the handwriting of sins; need there was of an example of patience, of an example of humility; need there was of the Sign of the Cross to beat down the devil and his angels; need for us there was of the Passion of our Lord; for by the Passion of the Lord redeemed has been the world. How many good things has the Passion of the Lord done! And yet the Passion of this Just One would not have been, unless unrighteous men had slain the Lord.

What then? Is this good thing which to us has been granted by the Lord's Passion to be ascribed to the unjust slayers of Christ? Far be it. They willed, God permitted. They guilty would have been, even if only they had willed it: but God would not have permitted it, unless just it had been....Accordingly, my brethren, both Judas the foul traitor to Christ, and the persecutors of Christ, malignant all, ungodly all, unjust all, are to be condemned all: and nevertheless the Father His own proper Son has not spared, but for the sake of us all He has delivered Him up.

Romans 8:32 Order if you are able; distinguish if you are able (these things): render to God your vows, which your lips have uttered: see what the unjust has here done, what the Just One. The one has willed, the Other has permitted: the one unjustly has willed, the Other justly has permitted. Let unjust will be condemned, just permission be glorified. For what evil thing has befallen Christ, in that Christ has died? Both evil were they that evil willed to do, and yet nothing of evil did He suffer on whom they did it.

Slain was mortal flesh, slaying death by death, giving a lesson of patience, sending before an example of Resurrection. How great good things of the Just One were wrought by the evil things of the unjust! This is the great mystery of God: that even a good thing which you do He has Himself given it to you, and by your evil He does good Himself. Do not therefore wonder, God permits, and in judgment permits: He permits, and in measure, number, weight, He permits. With Him is not iniquity: Romans 9:14 do thou only belong to Him; on Himself set your hope, let Himself be your Helper, your Salvation: in Him be there the fortified place, the tower of strength, your refuge let Himself be, and He will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able to bear, but will make with the temptation also an escape, that you may be able to support it: 1 Corinthians 10:13 so that His suffering you to bear temptation, be His power; His suffering not any more on you to be done than you are able to bear, be His mercy: for power is of God, and to You, O Lord, is mercy, because You will render to each one after his works.

15. That thirst of the Church, would fain drink up that man also whom you see. At the same time also, in order that you may know how many in the mixed multitude of Christians with their mouth do bless, and in their heart curse, this man having been a Christian and a believer returns as a penitent, and being terrified by the power of the Lord, turns him to the mercy of the Lord. For having been led astray by the enemy when he was a believer, long time he has been an astrologer, led astray, leading astray, deceived,

deceiving, he has allured, has beguiled, many lies he has spoken against God, That has given to men power of doing that which is good, and of not doing that which is evil.

He used to say, that one's own will did not adultery, but Venus; one's own will did not manslaying, but Mars; and God did not what is just, but Jupiter; and many other blasphemous things, and not light ones. From how many Christians do ye think he has pocketed money? How many from him have bought a lie, to whom we used to say, Sons of men, how long are you dull of heart, wherefore love ye vanity, and seek a lie? Now, as of him must be believed, he has shuddered at his lie, and being the allurer of many men, he has perceived at length that by the devil he has himself been allured, and he turns to God a penitent.

We think, brethren, that because of great fear of heart it has come to pass. For what must we say? If out of a heathen an astrologer were converted, great indeed would be the joy: but nevertheless it might appear, that, if he had been converted, he was desiring the clerical office in the Church. A penitent he is, he seeks not anything save mercy alone. He must be recommended therefore both to your eyes and hearts. Him whom you see in hearts love ye, with eyes guard ye. See ye him, mark ye him, and wherever he shall have gone his way, to the rest of the brethren that now are not here, point him out: and such diligence is mercy; lest that leader astray drag back his heart and take it by storm.

Guard ye him, let there not escape you his conversation, his way: in order that by your testimony it may be proved to us that truly to the Lord he has been turned. For report will not be silent about his life, when to you he is thus presented both to be seen and to be pitied. You know in the Acts of the Apostles how it is written, that many lost men, that is, men of such arts, and followers of naughty doctrines, brought unto the Apostles all their books; and there were burned so many volumes, that it was the writer's task to make a valuation of them, and write down the sum of the price.

Acts 19:19 This truly was for the glory of God, in order that even such lost men might not be despaired of by Him that knew how to seek that which had been lost. Therefore this man had been lost, is now sought, found, Luke 15:32 led hither, he brings with him books to be burned, by which he had been to be burned, so that when these have been thrown into the fire, he may himself pass over into a place of refreshment. Know ye that he, brethren, once knocked at the Church door before Easter: for before Easter he began to ask of the Church Christ's medicine.

But because the art wherein he had been practised is of such sort as that it was suspected of lying and deceit, he was put off that he might not tempt; at length however he was admitted, that he might not more dangerously be tempted. Pray for him through Christ. Straightway today's prayer pour out for him to the Lord our God. For we know and are sure, that your prayer effaces all his impieties. The Lord be with you.

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