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ALLEGORIES OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

Allegoriae Sacrae Scripturae

SABBATISMUS

Saint Isidore of Seville (560–636)
Allegoriae Sacrae Scripturae · Allegories of Sacred Scripture

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I have quickly compiled some of the most well-known names from the Law and the Gospels, which are imaginatively veiled under allegory and require some interpretation, briefly excerpting them to render them plain and open to readers. Because these were unexplained, the brief material compelled me to make these annotations, and it permitted neither the creation of a proper booklet nor the fullest explanation of the mysteries of the figures. The meaning was indeed such that from the things stated, both what precedes and what follows might be understood.

We therefore offer these things to your understanding to be handled and approved, so that you may diligently take care to emend whatever, in the reasoning of the words and meanings, hangs unskillfully. For I, my dearest, will deem myself excusable in any censure of this work, because I have not kept these things by my own judgment, but have committed them to your judgment to be corrected.

Adam (Genesis 1) bore the figure of Christ; for just as he was formed on the sixth day in the image of God, so in the sixth age of the world the Son of God put on the form of flesh, that is, He took the form of a servant, to reform man to the likeness of God.

Eve (Ibid.) designates the Church, made through the mystery of the font, which flowed from the side of Christ dying on the cross, just as Eve came from the rib of the sleeping man.

Abel, a shepherd of sheep (Genesis 4), held the type of Christ, who is the true and good shepherd,

as He Himself says: "I am the good shepherd, who lays down my life for my sheep," the future ruler of the faithful peoples.

Cain, his elder brother (Ibid.), who killed the same Abel in the field, signifies the former people who killed Christ in the place of Calvary.

Enoch, son of Cain (Ibid.), in whose name his father founded a city, signifies that the impious are founded only in this life.

Seth (Ibid.), which is interpreted as "resurrection," points to Christ Jesus, in whom is the true resurrection and life of the faithful.

Enos, his son (Ibid.), who in hope called upon the name of the Lord, declares the Church living in hope, until it arrives at the blessedness of the promised felicity.

Lamech held the figure of this age, whose sin Christ absolved through the shedding of His blood after seventy-seven generations of the world, according to how Luke the Evangelist described them (Luke 3).

Enoch (Genesis 5), who was the seventh from Adam and was translated, signifies the seventh rest of the future resurrection, when the saints will be transferred into the life of perpetual immortality.

Noah, who is interpreted as "rest," presents a likeness of the Lord, in whose Church all who are freed from the ruin of this world find rest, as in the ark.

Shem, however, held the type of the prophets and apostles, who are born from his lineage.

Japheth figured the people of the Gentiles, who dwell in the churches of the Israelites.

Ham signifies the Jews, who mock Christ incarnate and dead.

Canaan, his son, who is condemned with a curse for his father's offense (Genesis 9), indicates the posterity of the Jews, who in the Passion of the Lord received the sentence of damnation, with the Jews crying out: "His blood be upon us, and upon our children."

Nimrod the giant expressed the type of the devil, who with proud desire sought the summit of divine highness, saying: "I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the Most High."

Eber, in whose house the original language remained when the other tongues were divided, suggests our Redeemer, in whose Church the unity of faith perseveres without schism.

Melchizedek (Genesis 14), who offered a sacrifice to the Lord from the fruits of the earth, prefigured the kingdom and priesthood of Christ, who is the true king of justice, whose sacrament of body and blood, that is, the offering of bread and wine, is offered throughout the whole world.

Abraham bore the type of God the Father, who handed over His beloved Son to be sacrificed for the salvation of the world.

The three angels who came to him (Genesis 18) historically suggest the divine Trinity.

Moreover, the two wives whom Abraham had (Gen. 16, 21), that is, the free woman and the

handmaid, the Apostle designates as the two Testaments (Gal. 4).

Isaac and Ishmael signify the two peoples proceeding from each Testament.

The servant of Abraham designates the image of the ancient law, through whom the Church as a bride was prophetically prepared for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Esau, hairy and red (Gen. 25), is the people of the Jews, bloodstained from the impious persecution of Christ and the prophets, and horrible by the sign of his hairy skin, a covering of sins.

Jacob, however (ibid.), represents Christ, or the people of the Gentiles, who by the blessing of God the Father was preferred to the former people of the Jews.

Laban held the type of the law and of the devil, from whose body Christ took to himself two wives, namely, the people of the circumcision and of the Gentiles.

Leah had the figure of the Synagogue, which could not contemplate the sacraments of God with the weak eyes of the heart.

Rachel, however, clear of sight, held the type of the Church, which discerns the mysteries of Christ with the keenness of contemplation.

The man who entered into a struggle with Jacob figured the contest of Christ with the people of Israel. For just as Jacob limped in the contest, so the Jews limped in faith at the Passion of the Lord.

Lot (Gen. 19) held the type of the saints who at the end of the age will be freed from the fire of the impious.

Lot's wife (ibid.) held the type of those who, having been called by the grace of God, afterwards look back.

Consequently, Lot himself bore the person of the law, from which those who use it with a carnal understanding bring forth works of infidelity (See variant readings).

His two daughters (Gen. 19) signify Samaria and Jerusalem, who fornicate in the law through the adultery of illicit doctrine.

Reuben (Gen. 31), the firstborn, is interpreted as 'son of vision'. He figured the people who violated the bed of God the Father, when they fixed to the gibbet of the cross the flesh that Christ had espoused to himself.

Simeon designates the scribes of the Jews, who in their fury killed the prophets, and in their wrath pierced Christ—the firmest wall, in whom believers are fortified with stable strength—with the fastenings of nails.

Levi is both the author and the figure of the chief priests who crucified Christ.

Judah signifies Christ, who in the chamber of the sepulchre, like a lion, secure, after the sleep of the body and having conquered the dominion of death, rose again after three days.

Issachar held the type of the Church, which submitted its shoulder to bear the burden of the cross.

Zebulun signifies the same Church, which, dwelling beside the waves of this life, endures all the temptations and tempests of the age.

Naphtali expresses all the holy preachers, who, leaping like a stag, raise themselves to heavenly things and bestow the utterances of doctrine upon all believers.

Dan signifies the Antichrist, who on the path of this life strives to trip up the heels of the horse, that is, the final things of the age, with the bite of his pestiferous preaching, so that he may cast out those who are exalted in the delights and riches of this world.

Gad represents Christ, who announces that in his second coming he will fight against the Antichrist, girded with the power of a judge.

Asher represents the same Lord Jesus Christ, whose bread is rich in the mouth of the faithful.

Joseph (Gen. 37), who was sold by his brothers and exalted in Egypt, signifies our Redeemer, handed over by the people of the Jews into the hands of persecutors, and now exalted among the Gentiles.

Benjamin prefigured the image of the apostle Paul, because he was both the last and the least of all the apostles by election, and he descended from his tribe. This is the ravenous wolf, in the morning a plundering persecutor, in the evening a feeding teacher.

Manasseh bore the figure of the former people.

Ephraim, however, signifies the Gentiles, who through the patriarch's blessing was placed before the elder people of the Jews.

Tamar (Gen. 38) bears the image of the Church, which from Christ, through the ring of faith and the staff of the cross, merited the conception of a holy fruitfulness.

The two twins in the womb of Tamar (Ibid.) prefigured two peoples, of whom the one born later, who first put his hand out of the womb, because the people of the gentiles was indeed shown beforehand by the prophets, but revealed later, whose right hand the midwife therefore bound with a scarlet thread, because this same people was marked by the sign of the cross through the blood of Christ.

Dinah, the daughter of Jacob (Genesis 34), signifies the Synagogue, or the soul: whom Shechem, a prince of the land, finding her among the external cares of the world, oppresses, that is, the devil corrupts her with the vice of carnal concupiscence.

Bilhah, the concubine of Jacob (Genesis 35), whom Reuben polluted with the crime of incest, signifies the law of the Old Testament, which the people of Israel defiled by transgressing.

Job, in his deeds and words, expresses the person of the Redeemer.

His wife (Job 2), who provokes him to curse, designates the depravity of carnal people.

The three friends of Job held the type of heretics, who under the appearance of consoling, carry out the business of seducing.

Elihu, however, demonstrates the proud and arrogant teacher, who harshly inflicts his rebuke upon the faithful within the holy Church.

Pharaoh held the figure of the devil, who attempted to destroy the people of God with the captivity of this world and to overwhelm them with the earthly works of vices.

The daughter of Pharaoh (Exodus 2), who took in Moses when he was exposed on the river-bank, is the Church of the gentiles, which finds Christ at the river of the saving bath.

Moses (Exodus 13) bore the type of Christ, who snatched the people of God from the yoke of diabolical servitude, and condemned the devil himself to eternal punishment.

Aaron the priest, who expiated the people with the blood of victims, signifies Christ, who washes away the sins of the world by the sacrifice of His own blood.

Miriam, the sister of Moses (Numbers 12), presented the image of the Synagogue, which became leprous on account of slander and murmuring against Christ.

The Ethiopian wife of Moses (Exodus 2) prefigured the Church from the gentiles joined to Christ, on account of which the Synagogue, detracting from Christ out of jealousy, is immediately afflicted with the contagion of leprosy.

Amalek designates the figure of the devil who, opposing the people of God, is overcome by the sign of the cross.

Sihon also, king of the Amorites, which is translated into Latin as "temptation of the eyes,"

signifies the same devil, who by the lie of deception transfigures himself into an angel of light. He is Og, king of Bashan, which is interpreted as "conclusion," who strives to block the path of our faith with the difficulty of vices, lest the passage to the promised kingdom of eternal life be open to us.

The seventy-two elders, upon whom the Spirit of God fell, show the seventy-two languages of the nations spread throughout this world, from which many believers have received the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Dathan and Abiram, and the others, who, separating themselves from Moses and Aaron, attempted to usurp the sacrifice (Numbers 16), designate the depravity of heretics, and the ruin of those who divide themselves from the priests of Christ and from the society of the Church, and take up profane sacrifices.

Balaam, who, falling, had his eyes open (Numbers 22), held the type of those who through faith have knowledge of God, but, obscured by evil works, fall.

Phinehas, who killed both Zimri and the harlot as they were engaged in adultery (Numbers 25), held the figure of the holy doctors, who strike Jews and heretics with a spiritual sword as they come together in the embrace of false doctrine.

He who, gathering wood on the Sabbath, is ordered to be stoned, signifies him whom Christ will find with sin on the day of judgment.

The twelve spies held the image of the scribes and Pharisees, who turned the Israelite people

away from trusting that they could obtain the grace of the divine promise through Christ.

The two bearers, who carried a cluster of grapes from the promised land on a pole upon their shoulders (Numbers 13), expressed the significance of two peoples, of whom the first, the Jewish, walking away, turns his back on Christ; the latter, the Christian, looks upon and follows Him whom he carries.

Joshua, son of Nun, expressed the image of the Savior, who led us into the land of promise, and placed us in the kingdom of heavenly glory.

73. Rahab the harlot held the figure of the Church, which through the scarlet thread, that is, through the sign of the Lord's passion, is saved from the destruction of the world.

74. The two spies sent by Joshua into Jericho, whom Rahab received (Joshua 2), are understood as the two Testaments sent into the world, which the Church, gathered from the gentiles, received.

75. Achan, who coveted the accursed thing from Jericho, signifies the wicked and the sinner, who after faith desires worldly customs or the allurements of the world.

76. Gideon, who went to battle with three hundred men (Judges 7), bore the type of Christ, who brought back victory from the world in the sign of the cross. For the number three hundred is contained in the letter Tau, through which the form of the cross is shown.

77. Sisera was a type of the devil. Jael, however, who pierced his temples with a nail and hammer, expressed the type of the Church, which through

the banner of the cross destroyed the devil's empire.

78. Deborah herself also, bearing the type of the same Church, with the devil having been conquered in Sisera, proclaims a canticle of celestial glory.

79. Jephthah, who for the victory obtained sacrificed his daughter (Judges 11), showed the figure of the Redeemer, who, triumphing over the world, offered his own flesh in sacrifice.

80. Samson prefigured the death and victory of our Savior, whether because he snatched the gentiles from the jaws of the devil, like the honeycomb from the mouth of the discovered lion, or because after death he gained more, and dying extinguished more than when living.

81. Delilah, who shaved Samson's head (Judges 16), signifies the Synagogue, which crucified Christ in the place of Calvary.

82. Ruth the foreigner, who married an Israelite man, shows the Church coming from the gentiles to Christ.

83. Boaz, however, expressed Christ, the true spouse of the Church.

84. Hannah, who was sterile and afterwards was made fertile (1 Samuel 1), signifies the Church of Christ, which previously was sterile among the gentiles, but now flourishes abundantly throughout the whole earth with the offspring of numerous fecundity.

85. Eli the reprobate priest (1 Samuel 3) prefigured the rejection of the priesthood of the Old Testament.

86. Samuel, however, who succeeded the reprobate Eli in the priestly ministry (*Ibid.*), foretold the succession of the new priesthood, the old priesthood having been rejected.

87. The two sons of Eli the priest, who were slain when the ark was captured by the gentiles (1 Samuel 4), signify that the posterity of the prior priesthood was extinguished, and that the Testament of the law was transferred to the worship of the gentiles.

88. Saul intimates the promise, or reprobation, of the Judaic kingdom, or the emulation of the same people, who tried to kill David, that is, Christ, with an unjust hatred of envy.

89. David expressed the image of the Son of God and our Savior, whether because he endured unjust persecution from the pursuit of the Jews, or because Christ assumed flesh from his lineage.

90. Uriah the Hittite had the type of the devil, to whose union the Church was previously joined, whom Christ desired as she was washing herself from the filth of the world, and purifying herself through the water of the bath.

91. Solomon foretells the figure of Christ, who built a house for God in the heavenly Jerusalem, not of wood and stones, but of all the saints.

92. The Queen of the South, who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon (1 Kings 10; 2 Chronicles 9), is understood as the Church, which is gathered to the word of God from the uttermost ends of the earth.

93. Rehoboam, son of Solomon, and Jeroboam the servant, by whom Israel was divided into two

parts, signify that division made at the Lord's coming, in which the part of believers from the Jews reigns with Christ, who is born from the lineage of David; but the other part followed the Antichrist, to whose worship they are bound by the error of nefarious servitude.

94. Goliath (1 Samuel 17) designates the devil, whose pride of elevation the humility of Christ prostrated.

95. Elijah demonstrates Christ, because just as he was taken up to the heavens in a fiery chariot, so Christ was assumed into heaven by the ministries of angels.

The widow to whom Elijah is sent to be fed (3 Kings 17) is the Church, to which Christ is read to have come through faith; whose flour and oil are blessed and do not fail—that is, the grace of the body of Christ and the anointing of chrism, which is bestowed daily throughout the whole world and is never diminished.

Elisha prefigured the same Lord the Redeemer, who, descending from the height of the mountain—that is, from the sublimity of the heavens—humbled himself from the form of God to the form of man, and applied his own limbs to the dead limbs, and healed our mortality with the medicine of his body.

The boys who, insulting Elisha, cried out, 'Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead,' and were attacked by a bear and perished (4 Kings 2), represent the Jewish people, who with childish foolishness derided Christ crucified at the place

of Calvary, and, captured by two bears—that is, Titus and Vespasian—were destroyed.

The servant of Elisha, sent with a staff to resuscitate the woman's son (4 Kings 4), shows a type of the old law, which, though transmitted to the human race, accomplished nothing, except that in the rod it showed only the authority of severity.

The dead son of the Shunammite woman (Ibid.) holds the figure of the human race, upon whom Christ, yawning seven times, spiritually breathes the Spirit of sevenfold grace, so that it may revive from the death of sin.

The seven thousand men, of whom it was said to Elijah that they had not bent their knees before Baal, signify the number of the saints who, filled with the Spirit of sevenfold grace, have renounced the devil.

Naaman the Syrian signifies the people from the Gentiles, polluted by the stains of their offenses, and purified by Christ through the sacrament of baptism.

King Uzziah, who, on account of the merit of his crimes, is covered with the contagion of leprosy on his forehead (2 Chronicles 26), indicates the kingdom of the Jews, who bear the disgrace and evil of perfidy on their foreheads, where they ought to have borne the sign of the cross.

King Hezekiah, to whose life fifteen years are added for his good work (4 Kings 20; 2 Chronicles 32; Isaiah 39; Ecclesiasticus 48), signifies all the saints, to whom, for acquiring eternal life, the five books of the Law with the ten words of the

Decalogue have been given, so that through the fulfillment of the law and the precepts they may attain the fullness of the heavenly kingdom.

King Josiah, who celebrated the Passover and drove many idols from the temple of the Lord (4 Kings 23; 2 Chronicles 35), signifies Christ, who undertook the passion for us and, casting down all the abominations of the nations from the temples of our body, consumed them with the fire of his power, crushed them, and threw them into the torrent of this world.

Zedekiah, whose eyes the king of Babylon tore out at Riblah (4 Kings 25), signifies the rich and sinners of this world. For Riblah is translated into Latin as 'these many things,' and therefore he signifies those who are involved in the many actions and affections of this world and, captured by the devil, lose the eyes of their intelligence.

Isaiah expressed the form of the evangelists and apostles, who preached all the mysteries of Christ not as if they were future, but as if they were present.

Jeremiah, however, in his words and sufferings, prefigured the death and passion of the Lord Savior.

Ezekiel bore the image of Christ, who, placed in earthly pilgrimage, urges the people on with salutary precepts.

Daniel, who maintained a celibate life, held in his continence a likeness to those who are in holy leisure (*otio sancto*) and do not abuse earthly resources.

Hosea demonstrates the figure of Christ, who took the Church into his body from the fornication of the Gentiles.

Joel, which is interpreted as 'beginning,' typically indicates those who are beginning to know the gateway of faith and the mystery of divine science.

Amos, a shepherd and a countryman, is a type of Christ, who, transferred from the pastoral office of sheep—that is, from the governance of the Hebrews—now pastures other flocks among the Gentiles.

Obadiah, who fed a hundred prophets in Samaria (3 Kings 18), signifies all preachers of the faith, who in this world refresh all believers with the nourishment of the Sacred Scriptures.

Jonah (Jonah 2) prefigured the death of Christ, who for three days and nights rested in the heart of the earth, as if in the belly of the whale.

Habakkuk, the strong wrestler, is the faithful people, who, established on high, contemplates the Lord on the cross, saying: Horns are in his hands, there the strength of his glory was confirmed.

Zephaniah, who is interpreted as "watchman" or "the hidden thing of the Lord," signifies those who, through the secret of contemplation, arrive at the perfection of merits.

Haggai and Zechariah bore the figure of the saints, who declare to us in the life of this pilgrimage the future time of liberation.

Malachi, who is interpreted as "angel of the Lord," held the type of our Savior, who is called the Angel of great counsel.

Jesus, the high priest, bore the figure of Christ, through whom entry is open for us from the pilgrimage of this world to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Zerubbabel, the priest (II Esdras II ff.), is a type of the Lord Savior, who led the people back from captivity and built a temple for the Lord from living stones.

Judith and Esther bear the type of the Church; they punish the enemies of the faith and rescue the people of God from destruction.

Tobias held the image of the old law, whose eyes the Jewish swallows blind, while they, poorly understanding the sacraments of light, blind them.

Tobias, his son, had the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, who illuminates with the clarity of his power the law, which was as if hidden and blinded by the darkness of figure.

The three youths (Daniel III) prefigured the saints who offered their bodies in persecution for the name of Christ.

Susanna (Daniel XIII) has the figure of the Church, whom the false Jewish witnesses accuse as if she were an adulteress of the law.

King Nebuchadnezzar (IV Kings XXV) was a type of the devil, who led the people of the heretics, conquered by the captivity of error, away from Jerusalem, that is, from the Church, into Babylon, that is, into the confusion of ignorance.

The captain of the cooks, who overthrew the walls of Jerusalem, signifies this: that all who serve the desire of the belly destroy the virtues of the soul.

The seven Maccabees, who under Antiochus suffered the most bitter torments and were most gloriously crowned (II Maccabees VII), signify the sevenfold Church, which endured a great slaughter of martyrs from the enemies of Christ and received the crown of heavenly glory.

The four evangelists figuratively express Jesus Christ under the faces of four animals.

For Matthew, announcing our same Redeemer born and suffered, compares him to the likeness of a man.

Mark, beginning from the wilderness, takes on the figure of a lion, and proclaims the unconquered kingdom and power of Christ.

Luke also, through the mystical face of a calf, preaches Christ immolated for us.

John, however, through the figure of an eagle, shows that the same Lord flew up into heaven after the resurrection of the flesh.

Peter bears the person of the Church, which has the power of forgiving sins and of leading men back from the underworld to the heavenly kingdoms (Matthew VI).

All the Apostles also bear the type of the whole Church, because they too received a similar power in forgiving sins, having indeed also the form of the patriarchs, who through the word of preaching spiritually begot peoples for God throughout the whole world.

The seventy-two disciples signify the enlightenment of the whole world through the Gospel of the Trinity. For the whole world is traversed in twenty-four hours, which number, tripled on account of the same Trinity, is brought to seventy-two. Therefore, they are sent in pairs, for the sake of preaching the love of God and of neighbor, or the twin Testaments of the mysteries.

Joseph typically bore the likeness of Christ, who was appointed for the custody of the holy Church, which has no spot or wrinkle.

Mary, however, signifies the Church, which, although she is espoused to Christ, as a virgin conceived us of the Holy Spirit, and as a virgin also gives birth (Matthew I).

Zechariah the priest, who became mute at the angel's command (Luke I), showed the silence of the law and the prophets at the coming of Christ.

John had the form of the law, who announced Christ and preached the remission of sins through the grace of the bath [of baptism].

The Magi prefigured the peoples of the gentiles, who were to know the light of faith, indicating by the sacramental gifts that Christ was God through frankincense, a man who suffered and was buried through myrrh, and the king of all ages through gold (Matthew 2).

Herod, who brought death to the infants (Matthew 2), represented the form of the devil, or of the gentiles, who, desiring to extinguish the name of Christ from the world, raged in the slaughter of the martyrs.

The mute in the Gospel signify those who do not confess the faith of Christ.

The blind signify those who in no way understand the faith which they believe.

The deaf prefigure those who do not show obedience to the precepts.

The lame point to those who neglect to fulfill the salutary precepts.

The prudent man, who built his house upon a rock, signifies the faithful teacher, who establishes the foundation of his doctrine and his life in Christ.

But he who built his house upon the sand designates the heretic, who builds a false doctrine, so as to cause a great ruin.

The leper, whom Christ first cured when descending from the mountain (Matthew 8), indicates the human race, stained by the contagion of sin.

This the Redeemer, when He descended from the height of the heavens as if from a mountain, drew away from the varied worship of demons, and restored to the unity of faith.

The centurion (Ibid.) signifies the faith of the gentiles, who, seeking the health of his son who was sick unto death, humbly said: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, I who have persecuted your Church."

Moreover, the servant of the Centurion, and the daughter of the Canaanite woman, whom Christ saves without coming to them (Matthew 15), show those same gentiles, whom the Lord

did not visit with a corporal presence, but saved through faith in the word.

The Canaanite woman herself (Ibid.) also bears the figure of the Church from the gentiles, who, like a dog, sought the crumbs from the masters' table, that is, to be satisfied with the doctrines of the apostles and prophets.

Peter's mother-in-law, suffering from a fever (Matthew 8), signifies the Synagogue, inflamed by the heat of carnal desires, whose daughter is that part of the believers which was given to Peter to rule.

The rejected scribe, who followed the Lord for the sake of gain (Ibid.), signifies those who seek the faith of Christ not for the Lord's sake, but for the sake of worldly profit.

The demoniac whom the Lord cured of a legion of demons in the region of the Gerasenes (Ibid.) signifies the gentile people, subject to the cults of many demons.

The fleeing swineherds, who announce in the city what had happened (Ibid.), signify the princes of the impious, who, while they flee the faith of Christ, nevertheless, being amazed, admire and proclaim his virtues.

The paralytic, lying on a bed (Matthew 9), is the soul dissolved in vices in its body, which, when it has been healed by the grace of Christ through the remission of sins, immediately, having received its former strength, rises again, and carries the bed of the flesh, on which it formerly lay weak, back to the house of virtues, so that it may confine itself within the secrets of its

own conscience, and not run about any longer dissolved in external pleasures.

The daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, to whom the Lord was going to heal her, yet before He came to her, a woman who suffered from a flow of blood touched him from behind (Ibid.), held the figure of the Church coming from the gentiles, which, since it believed after the preaching, and after the passion, and after the ascension of Christ, touched the Lord as if from behind, and deserved to receive salvation before the Synagogue.

The two blind men, sitting by the wayside (Ibid.), signify both the peoples of the Jews and of the gentiles, approaching Christ through faith, who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

The one possessed by a demon, blind and mute, who is written to have been cured by the Savior (Ibid.), indicates those who are converted from the idolatry of the gentiles to the Lord's faith; for them, however, once the cult of demons is expelled from the heart, when they first perceive the light of faith, their tongue is afterwards loosed to praise God, so that they confess Him whom they had previously denied.

The man having a withered hand (Matthew 12) signifies the Synagogue, or a soul unfruitful in works of mercy, to whom, when it is said, "Extend your hand," it admonishes that alms should always be extended to the poor.

The man from whom an unclean spirit, having gone out, occupies him again (Ibid.), signifies the people of the Jews, and the penitent man, whose

mind the pleasure of the flesh more sharply occupies through subsequent negligence, with seven other spirits of vices joined to it, that is, wrath, avarice, envy, and gluttony, vainglory, fornication, and pride.

The householder, bringing forth from his treasure new and old things (Matthew 13), is Christ, bringing forth from His impenetrable wisdom the twin Testaments, namely the Old, in which earthly happiness is promised, and the New, through which the kingdom of heaven is hoped for.

The man who sowed in his field a grain of mustard seed (Luke 13) is Christ, who sowed faith in the world, in which the birds of the air, that is, spiritual souls, rest.

The woman who hid leaven in three measures of flour (Ibid.) signifies the wisdom of spiritual doctrine, fervent in the love of the Trinity.

The man who found a hidden treasure in a field (Matthew 13), is he who in this world, having sold all things, acquires Christ and eternal life.

The five thousand men who were fed with five loaves and two fish (John 6) are the peoples of the Church, who through the five senses of the body are refreshed by Christ with the nourishment of the spiritual law, and are sated by the twofold Testament, as if by twin fishes.

But the four thousand men who are fed with the other seven loaves (Mark 8) are the same Church of the gentiles, which is spread through-

out the four parts of the world and is recreated by the abundance of the sevenfold grace.

He who often fell now into fire, now into water (Matthew 17), signifies the world. Fire, however, demonstrates inflaming cupidity, and water the pleasure of the flesh, into which, always seized, he is cast down by a daily fall.

Moses and Elijah, who appeared with the Lord on the mountain (Ibid.; Luke 9; Mark 9), are understood as the law and the prophecy, by whose voices the passion, resurrection, and glory of the Lord are declared.

The man having a hundred sheep, who, leaving them, seeks the lost sheep, and having found it, carries it back on his shoulders (Luke 15), expressed the figure of Christ, who, leaving the thousands of angels in heaven, as a good shepherd, sought and found among the gentiles the sheep that had perished in Adam, and carried it back to paradise on the shoulders of His cross.

The woman who finds the lost drachma is the Church, which, when she has found through penance the soul snatched away and lost by the snares of the devil, causes the joy of both angels and men.

The debtor of ten thousand talents (Matthew 18) signifies men who are liable to God through the transgression of the ten commandments, but just as the bonds of sin are loosened for us by the Lord when we ask, so let each one of us forgive by the example of the Lord, lest, while we do not concede the smallest debts to those sinning

against us, we be compelled to pay our greater ones with the interest of punishments.

The rich man, who is compared to a camel (Matthew 19; Mark 10), indicates the person of the Jews, who glory in the power of the law, although on account of earthly things, which they cultivate, they do not have the kingdom of heaven, where the people of the gentiles, crooked with crimes and weighed down by the burdens of sins, more easily enter through the eye of a needle, as if through the straits of passion, sorrows, and labors.

The householder who hires workers for the vineyard and promises a denarius (Matthew 20) is Christ, who calls all to the worship of faith, promising them the reward of perfect beatitude.

The workers hired at the first hour are those who have followed the worship of faith from the rudiments of infancy.

But those hired at the third hour are those who have come to the faith from adolescence.

And those who were hired at the sixth hour are those who believed in the age of youth.

But those who came at the ninth hour are they who, already declining from youth into old age, received grace.

But those who went at the last hour (Ibid.), are those who, already decrepit and called at the very end of their life's time, came to Christ. They, however, receive a reward of blessedness equal to the first, with Christ preserving justice in those who worked from the first hour of birth, and be-

stowing mercy on these who labored for one hour of life.

The two sons sent to work in the vineyard (Matthew 21) show the type of two peoples. For the first one sent is called the people of the Gentiles, called through the understanding of nature to the cultivation of the divine work, who nevertheless at first was defiant and refused to go. But with the coming of the Lord, a subsequent obedience cleanses the prior defiance. The second one sent, however, that of the Jews, responded through knowledge of the law: 'All that the Lord has said, we will do'; but he is condemned for this reason, because not only did he transgress in his profession of the law, but he also laid parricidal hands upon the very Lord of the vineyard.

The man who planted a vineyard (Matthew 21; Luke 20) is God, who founded Jerusalem, in which He built a tower and dug a winepress, namely the temple and the altar, and surrounded it with a hedge, that is, fortified it with the protection of angels.

But the tenants to whom he leased the vineyard (Ibid.), are the people of Israel, who possessed Jerusalem under divine worship.

But the servants who were sent at the time of the harvest and were killed by the tenants (Ibid.), are understood to be the prophets, whose blood was shed by the Jews while they sought from them the fruit of justice and of the law.

But the son sent last, whom the tenants cast out of the vineyard and killed (Ibid.), is Christ,

whom the Jews crucified, casting him out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

The tenants, too, whom the Lord of the vineyard destroys (*Ibid.*), are understood to be the peoples of the Jews, who long ago, as it seems, were dispersed and destroyed. But those farmers to whom the vineyard is commanded to be transferred signify the apostles, or the successors of the apostles.

The king who made a wedding feast for his son (Matthew 22) is understood to be God the Father, who joined virgin flesh from a virgin to Christ. The servants, indeed, who were sent to call the invited guests, are the apostles and prophets, who called the Jews through the Law and the Gospel; but they, pressed now by earthly pleasures, now by the burden of the flesh and the Law, scorned the solemnity of the Lord's coming, by which they deemed themselves unworthy of eternal life, while the Gentiles are shown to have entered.

The angry king, who sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned their city (*Ibid.*), is God the Father, who raised up Vespasian, Caesar of the Romans, who both devastated the people with the sword and utterly overthrew the city of Jerusalem with all its inhabitants, so that it could no longer wage war.

But the man not having a wedding garment at the banquet, who fell silent when the king spoke; whom he orders the servants to take away and cast into the outer darkness (*Ibid.*), is he who indeed rests in faith with the others; but if on the

day of judgment he is found to have the garment of the flesh polluted, he is immediately ordered to be taken by the angels and plunged into the Gehenna of eternal fire.

The two debtors, one of whom owed the moneylender five hundred denarii, and the other fifty (Luke 7), signify both peoples, namely, of the Jews and of the Gentiles, of whom the one who owed fifty denarii had the type of the Jews; but the one who owed five hundred expressed the figure of the Gentiles, who, being always a debtor from the beginning of the world, did not cancel the bond (*chirographum*) of sin through penitence. And so, with the coming of Christ, he at last believed and received a more abundant fruit of mercy, whence because more was granted to him by Christ, he loves Christ more, as it is written: 'He to whom more is forgiven, loves more.'

But the seven brothers who married one woman and died without children (Mark 12) are understood to be unfaithful men, who through the seven ages of the world have consumed their whole life on this earth without the fruit of justice.

Two in a bed (Matthew 24) figure those who, removed from the crowds, seem to be at leisure in a certain quietness of life.

Two women grinding (*Ibid.*) are understood to be those who are occupied with the business of temporal things.

The two in the field (*Ibid.*) are those who labor in the ministry of the Church, as if in the Lord's field, from whom, when night comes, that is, the

adversity of the age, some remain in the faith and are taken up to life, while others depart and are left for punishment.

The five wise virgins (Matthew 25) are understood as all holy souls, who, because they admit no corruption of the heart through the five senses of the body, are therefore counted by the number five.

But the five foolish virgins, who have no oil in their vessels (Ibid.), are those souls who indeed have integrity of body, but do not keep the testimony of good works within their conscience, while they glory in appearance before men, and not in their heart before God. And therefore, because they do not carry the splendor of the mind in the vessels of their hearts, when the Lord comes, they are excluded from the joy of His kingdom.

The man going on a journey, who handed over his goods to his servants (Ibid.), is Christ, who, returning to the heavens after His resurrection, handed over the grace of the Gospel to the evangelical merchants to be put to use. But the first servant, in the five talents given to him, received the five books of the Law, which he amplified by the doctrine and work of the ten commandments.

Another, with two talents, earned the two Testaments, and by piously dispensing them in a moral and mystical sense, he doubled them.

The third, under the figure of one talent, obscured the gift of grace he had received in earthly

pleasures, and therefore was cast into hell, because he produced no fruit from it.

Others have understood, in the first servant, the senses of the heart and body that were received; in the second, understanding and work; in the third, reason.

The young son of the widow whom the Lord raised from the dead outside the city gates (Luke 7) signifies one who openly commits any deadly crime; and who sometimes, upon hearing the word of God, rises from the death of sin and begins to live through the penance of Christ; and is returned to his widowed mother, that is, the Church.

The man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers (Luke 10) is himself a figure of Adam in his kind, who, while descending from the celestial paradise into the world, fell among the angels of darkness.

The Samaritan who came down, who healed his wounds (Ibid.), is Christ our guardian, who descended from heaven and healed the human race from the wounds of sin.

The innkeeper (Ibid.) represents the apostles, or their successors, who restore our infirmity by the preaching of the Gospel.

Martha, who received Christ into her home and ministered there (Ibid.), signifies the Church, receiving Christ into her heart in this life and laboring in the work of justice.

Mary, her sister, who sat at the feet of Christ and listened to his word (Ibid.), shows that same Church, in the age to come, ceasing from all work

and resting in the sole contemplation of the wisdom of Christ.

The man who at midnight asked a friend for three loaves (Luke 11) expresses the likeness of anyone who, in the midst of tribulation, asks the Lord to give him knowledge of the Trinity.

The rich man, whose field brought forth abundant fruits (Luke 12), signifies a man given to luxury and abounding in sins, whom, desiring immoderately to sin more and more, the Lord rebukes, saying: 'You fool, this night they will take your soul from you; the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

Those five in one house, that is, father, mother, son, daughter, daughter-in-law, of whom two are divided against three, and three against two (Ibid.), signify the human race separated from one another by faith and religion, partly in the division of schism, which the two signify, partly in the number of the trinity, which the three demonstrate. For the son is divided against his father, that is, the people coming from the Gentiles against the devil, with whom they were previously associated. The daughter is also divided against her mother, that is, the believing people from the Jews against the impious Synagogue. And the daughter-in-law is divided against her mother-in-law, namely, the Church from the Gentiles against the mother of her spouse, the Synagogue, from which Christ was begotten according to the flesh. These people are separated from one another, some seeking earthly glory, others heavenly glory.

The eighteen Galileans upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them (Luke 13), signifies the destruction of the Jewish people. For eighteen among the Greeks is expressed by the letters iota, ι, and eta, η, figures by which the name Jesus is written, and because they were unwilling to believe in him, they were likewise laid low by the Romans along with their city.

The man who planted a fig tree in his vineyard is Christ, who established the Synagogue among the Jewish people; and when the Lord had ordered it to be cut down as useless, a trench of humility was made for it by the apostle vine-dressers, and manure was applied, that is, the confession of sins; and thus by believing in the last days it will be changed for the better, and will give forth abundant fruits of justice.

The woman who had an infirmity for eighteen years and was cured by the Lord (Luke 13) is a type of the Church, which has obtained the salvation of faith at the end of time. For this world is completed in six ages, the time of which, however, has a threefold distinction: one before the law, the second in the law, the third under grace. Therefore, six times three makes eighteen, by which number this time of our salvation is signified, when, freed from the bonds of Satan by which we were bent over, we receive the gift of salvation and the hope of supernal contemplation.

The man with dropsy whom the Lord cured (Luke 14) represents those whom the overflowing flood of carnal pleasures weighs down.

The man having two sons (Luke 15) is God, having two peoples, of whom the elder held the figure of the Jews, who remained in the worship of God; the other, the younger, of the Gentiles, who, having deserted the creator, became a servant of idols. God the Father mercifully received him upon his return through poverty of faith, and for his conversion, He immolates His only Son in the type of a calf; He also bestows the ring of faith and clothes him with the robe of immortality, although the Jewish brother is tormented by the envy of malice, yet for his salvation the symphony of angels sings out in joy.

The prodigal steward, whom the master ordered to be removed from his stewardship, and who, by committing fraud against his master, released a portion to the debtors so that he would have something to live on in the future (Luke 16), this comparison is proposed as an example for us; for if he merited to be praised by his master because, by defrauding him, he provided for his own future from the goods of another, how much more can we please Christ if we show mercy from our own possessions to the needy, by whom we may be received into the eternal tabernacles?

The rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen (Ibid.) signifies the pride of the Jewish people, formerly flourishing in the splendor of empire or the excellence of honor.

The beggar full of sores (Ibid.) represents the Gentile people, humbled by the confession of their sins.

The five brothers of that rich man who was being tormented in the underworld (Ibid.) are understood to be the Jews, who are placed under the five books.

The ten lepers who are cleansed by the Lord (Luke 17) signify heretics, who in their variety of colors have a diversity of schisms, and who are therefore sent to the priests, so that, with all variety of errors wiped away, they may perceive the sacrament of unity.

The unjust judge, who did not fear the Lord, nevertheless heard the widow who persistently pleaded with him (Luke 18), is a similitude by which it is demonstrated how much hope he should have who unceasingly beseeches the Lord, since the frequent insistence of the pleading widow prevailed even upon the ears of an unjust judge. The widow herself, however, can signify the Church, seeking by her perseverance vengeance upon her enemies, the devil, or heretics.

The Pharisee praying in the temple (Ibid.) is the Jewish people, who extol their own merits based on the justifications of the law.

The publican, however (Ibid.), is the gentile people, who, being placed far from God, confess their sins; of these, the one, by being proud, went away humbled, while the other, by confessing, merited to draw near to God, exalted.

The blind man sitting by the wayside (Ibid.) represents the gentile people, who through the grace of Christ merited the clarity of faith.

Zacchaeus (Luke 19) is the gentile people, small in the grace of merits, who nevertheless, being lifted up from earthly acts, contemplates the mystery of Christ through the wood of the Lord's cross.

The nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom (Ibid.), is our Redeemer, who went to the ends of the earth to receive a kingdom among the gentile peoples.

The citizens who did not want him to reign (Ibid.) are understood to be the Jews, who spurned Christ as king.

The servant who, having received one mina, acquired ten (Ibid.), signifies the teachers who, having received the grace of the Gospel, made good use of the ten pronouncements of the Decalogue, and by teaching acquired many in the faith, and therefore, when the Lord comes, they will be praised because they have gained.

But he who from one acquired five (Ibid.), represents those who, by keeping the commandment of God, attain the knowledge of the law, written in the five books of Moses, and by teaching it, they lend it out for the necessary use of salvation.

But he who kept the mina itself in a napkin (Ibid.), shows the one who treated the gift of grace entrusted to him delicately and idly, whence he rightly loses the grace conferred, because through negligence he scorned to preach, so that what he labored for might be increased for him.

The widow who cast two mites into the treasury (Luke 21) represents the faithful soul of him who keeps in the treasury of his heart the fruit of the love of God and neighbor.

The bridegroom (John 2) is Christ, whose nuptials are celebrated with the Church; in this union, water is changed into wine, because believers pass through the grace of baptism to the crown of passion.

The master of the feast (Ibid.) is understood to be Moses, who marvels at the better and holier people gathered by Jesus into the Gospel than that former one led out of Egypt; for the wine running out shows that the grace of the Holy Spirit was taken from the Jews and bestowed upon the gentiles through the apostles.

The Samaritan woman (John 4) is mystically understood as the Synagogue, subject to the five books of the law as if to five husbands, according to the carnal sense; whom the Lord mercifully provokes to draw living water, that is, to perceive the grace of baptism, or the secret understanding of the law.

The adulterous woman, who is presented by the Jews to the Lord to be stoned (John 8), is the Church from the gentiles, which, having previously abandoned God, had committed fornication with idols; the zealous Synagogue wished to kill her, but Christ saves her through the remission of sin, nor does He who knows how to grant pardon to sinners allow her to perish.

Simon the leper (Matthew 26) is the gentile people, who was cleansed by the Redeemer.

The woman who anointed the Lord's head with ointment (*Ibid.*) is the Church, which offers the fragrance of the fruit of her work and faith to the praise of God and the glory of Christ.

That angel at whose descent the water, surrounded by five porticoes, was moved (*John 5*), is Christ, at whose coming the Jewish people, enclosed in the five books, was troubled: for when the angel descended, the water was stirred, and the sick person was healed; when Christ descended from the heavens, that same people was moved at his passion, and the world was healed.

The man blind from birth, whom the Lord, after anointing his eyes, sent to the pool of Siloam to be washed (*John 9*), signifies the human race, vitiated from birth, that is, from the first man, by the darkness of errors, whose eyes the Lord anointed with spittle and mud, because the Word was made flesh. And He commanded his eyes to be washed in the pool, so that, baptized in Christ, he might receive the law of faith and believe in Him who appeared humble in the world.

Lazarus, whom the Lord raised from the tomb after four days, stinking (*John 11*), signifies the world, which the most grievous custom of sin had corrupted, which nevertheless is resurrected on the fourth day of death. For the first day of death is the propagation of death derived from Adam; the second day of death is the transgression of the natural law; the third day of death is the prevarication of the given law; the fourth day of death is the contempt for evangelical preach-

ing, on which day the Lord, regarding His own work, mercifully deigned to resurrect it.

The servant of the high priest, whose right ear was cut off (Matthew 26), is the Israelite people, made a servant on account of their unbelief. He loses his right ear when he passes to the left through a literal understanding, to whom the Lord, in those who believe, restores the hearing of faith and makes him obedient to the evangelical command.

The high priest, who tore his garment at the Lord's passion (Ibid.), indicates the Hebrew people stripped of the priesthood and emptied of a torn kingdom.

Barabbas, who is released to the Jews (Matthew 27), signifies the Antichrist, whom they, in their error, deserved to receive instead of Christ.

Herod and Pilate, who, though they were at odds, were joined in friendship during the Lord's passion (Luke 23), indicate that the two peoples, of the circumcision and of the Gentiles, were at first divided, but who nevertheless were brought into concord in faith through the Lord's passion.

Simon of Cyrene, upon whom they imposed the carrying of the cross (Ibid.), is understood as the people of the Gentiles, who, a stranger to the law, is made obedient to the Gospel, becoming himself the bearer of Christ's cross and the carrier of the faith.

The two thieves (Ibid.) represent the people of the Jews and of the Gentiles: one of whom, an unbeliever, blasphemes Christ hanging on the

cross, while the other, a believer, rebukes the blaspheming Jews.

The four soldiers, who made for themselves four parts from Jesus' garments (Psalm 118:162), prefigured the four parts of the world, which divided for themselves the words of Christ. As it is written: "I will rejoice at thy words, as one that findeth great spoils."

The women who announce the Lord's resurrection to the apostles are understood as the Law and the Prophets, which, like forerunners, preached the glory of Christ's resurrection before it was revealed.

The seven disciples with whom the Lord is described to have dined after His resurrection indicate the seventh rest after the future resurrection, through which all the saints will be satisfied by Christ with the eternal refecton of beatitude. To which satisfaction may Christ lead us. Amen.