

SAINT AMBROSE OF MILAN

SECOND APOLOGY OF THE
PROPHET DAVID

Apologia Altera Prophetæ David

SABBATISMUS

Saint Ambrose of Milan (340–397)
Apologia Altera Prophetæ David · Second Apology of the Prophet David

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[APOLOGIA ALTERA PROPHETAE DAVID.]

IN ALTERAM DAVIDIS APOLOGIAM ADMONITIO.

Hujus libri idem est atque superioris argumentum. In eo quippe ostenditur, quod sacri codices Davidem prodant in geminum crimen incidisse, adulterii scilicet atque homicidii, non esse cur quisquam offendatur. Verumtamen sive styli elegantiam spectes, sive tractandi rationem, et aeconomiam, utrumque opus inter se haud parum dissidere comperies. Enimvero studiose accurateque hoc in tres partes ab Auctore suo divisum fuit. In prima sic disputatur contra Gentiles (Cap. 5, num. 31), ut lapsus conditioni tribuatur, emendatio virtuti; in secunda adversus Judaeos demonstratur ideo lapsum esse sanctum David, ne amplius Judaeorum perfidia claudicaret (Ibid.); in tertia docentur Christiani hac in historia inesse multa mysteria et figuras, quae gratiam quoque promissam jamdudum conciliant (Ibid.). In prima parte Auctor futilem ethnicorum objectionem refellit (Cap. 3, num. 6 et seq.) qua illi deblaterabant vitae innocentiam nequicquam jactari a Christianis, quando eorum principes adulteriis atque homicidiis foedati contaminatique exstitissent; in altera Judaeis, qui Davidem aut Salomonem fuisse verum Messiam astruebant, falsi convictis (Cap. 4, num. 21 et seq.), validam adjicit confutationem (Cap. 4, num. 26 et seq.) haereticorum, qui divinitatem Christi inficientes ipsorummet Judaeorum aequabant vel superabant perfidiam; in postrema denique, ubi quatuor magna mysteria sub hac historia Davidis latentia aperuit (Cap. 7, num. 37 et seq.), prophetae Nathan parabolam explicat (Cap. 11, num. 55 et seq.), quibus demum priorum psalmi quinquagesimi versuum adjungit expositionem (Cap. 12, num. 61 et seq.). Quamvis autem significet Davidem illic pro se loqui ac se ipsum defendere ingenue tamen fatendum est quidquid ibi dicitur extra propositam vagari materiam, ac potissimum in revincendis Arianis atque Manichaeis versari. Caeterum non licet certo pronuntiare quid causae sit, cur integram psalmi non habeamus explanationem; utrum scilicet injuria temporis, an scriptoris negligentia, an denique ipsemet Auctor per vocis debilitatem de qua in hoc opere conqueritur (Cap. 5, num. 28), sermones continuare fuerit prohibitus.

Etenim extra controversiam est lucubrationem hanc sermonibus qui ab eo non semel indicantur (Ibid. et cap. 11, num. 53), constare. Hos ille in Ecclesia diebus (Ibid.) diversis habuit post veteris Testamenti atque Evangelii lectiones (Cap. I, num. 1, et cap. 7, num. 38).

[SECOND APOLOGY FOR THE PROPHET DAVID.]

ADMONITION TO THE SECOND APOLOGY OF DAVID.

This book has the same argument as the preceding one. For in it, it is shown that there is no reason for anyone to be offended by what the sacred codices report, that David fell into a twofold crime, namely, of adultery and of homicide. Nevertheless, whether you consider the elegance of the style, or the method of treatment and its economy, you will find that the two works differ from each other not a little. For indeed, this work was studiously and accurately divided into three parts by its Author. In the first, it is argued against the Gentiles (Chap. 5, no. 31) that the fall is attributed to the human condition, but the amendment to virtue; in the second, it is demonstrated against the Jews that the holy David fell for this reason, that the perfidy of the Jews might no longer waver (*Ibid.*); in the third, Christians are taught that in this story there are many mysteries and figures, which have long since procured the promised grace (*Ibid.*). In the first part, the Author refutes the futile objection of the pagans (Chap. 3, no. 6 et seq.) with which they babbled that innocence of life was vainly boasted of by Christians, when their princes had been foully and contaminatedly stained with adultery and homicide; in the second, having convicted the Jews of falsehood, who asserted that David or Solomon was the true Messiah (Chap. 4, no. 21 et seq.), he adds a strong refutation (Chap. 4, no. 26 et seq.) of the heretics, who, by denying the divinity of Christ, equaled or surpassed the perfidy of the Jews themselves; in the last part, finally, where he has revealed four great mysteries latent under this story of David (Chap. 7, no. 37 et seq.), he explains the parable of the prophet Nathan (Chap. 11, no. 55 et seq.), to which he finally adds an exposition of the first verses of the fiftieth psalm (Chap. 12, no. 61 et seq.). Although he indicates that David speaks there for himself and defends himself, it must nevertheless be frankly confessed that whatever is said there wanders from the proposed subject, and is chiefly concerned with refuting the Arians and Manichaeans. For the rest, it is not possible to pronounce with certainty what the reason is why we do not have a complete explanation of the psalm; whether it be due to the injury of time, or the negligence of a scribe, or finally whether the Author himself was prevented from continuing the sermons by the weakness of voice of which he complains in this work (Chap. 5, no. 28).

For it is beyond controversy that this work consists of sermons, which are indicated by him more than once (*Ibid.* and chap. 11, no. 53). He delivered these on different days in the Church (*Ibid.*) after the readings of the Old Testament and the Gospel (Chap. I, no. 1, and chap. 7, no. 38).

Quo loci non abs re fore putavimus, si lectoris gratia observaremus Auctorem hunc non secus ac ipsum Ambrosium in certis suis operibus voces lectum et lectionem semper usurpare, non vero voces cantatum aut similes: unde forsitam colligi possit lectiones et Evangelia in liturgiis eo tempore cantari nequaquam solita, sed recitari; postquam recitationem populus fidem suam animique obsequium quadam quasi acclamatione testabatur, quod signant illa Auctoris nostri verba, quam pio, inquit, prosecuti estis assensu (Cap. 7, num. 38).

Porro simpliciter Auctorem nostrum dicimus; est enim non levis controversia possitne hoc opus vere adjudicari Ambrosio. Erasmus a quo primo illud publici juris factum est, monuit (Epist. huic operi praefixa) etiamsi huic ipsi Patri ascriberetur in eo quem detexerat manuscripto, minime tamen Ambrosianum videri; sed eidem Auctori tribuendum cujus sunt libri De vocatione gentium. Cui quidem censurae stabiliendae non aliud firmamentum praestruit, nisi styli diversitatem. Namque Auctorem Ambrosianae dictionis asserit esse ita feliciter aemulum, ut dotibus aliquod praecurrat. Nam et explicat dilucidius, et minus a re digreditur, etc. Gillotius e contrario Antistiti nostro patrocinator (Admin. in hoc opus.), munitus consensu manuscriptorum, quos non parvo numero conquisierat, et in quibus utroque Davidis Apologia Mediolanensis Ambrosii titulum ex aequo praeferens, Theodosio Augusto nuncupabatur. Quod vero elocutionis opponebatur discrepantia, idem reponit novum non esse si sanctus Doctor pro re, loco, tempore, personis stylum mutavit. Nihilominus tamen plerique posteriorum criticorum pedibus in Erasmi sententiam discessere, singuli interim novam aliquam rationem adjicientes. Bellarminus autumat (De Script. Eccl.) Ambrosium de scribenda secunda Apologia cogitationem neutiquam fuisse suscepturum; ad haec ab Auctore ejusdem posterioris Apologiae negari adulterium Davidis fuisse verum adulterium et allegorice interpretandum censi, cum Ambrosius in priore Apologia illud peccatum agnoscat re ipsa fuisse admissum. Approbat omnia Bellarmini argumenta Possevinus (Appar. sac.) cum ea tamen exceptione, ut qui ita maluerit, existimet sanctum Doctorem, et vario stylo uti, et plures Davidis Apologias scribere potuisse, non secus ac eundem ipsum plures libros de Interpellatione David scripsisse compertum est. Nicolaus Faber (Epist. ad Front. Duc.) praeter superiores rationes hunc librum ait non Ambrosii, sed Origeniani cujusdam esse, qui Scripturam ad Allegorias transferens lavationem Bethsabeae inficietur (Cap. 8, num. 39). Utriusque autem rationes diluere conatur Theoph. Raynaudus tom. XI, De libris configendis, part. I, Erot. 10, num. 185, quem consule.

In which place we thought it would not be out of place, for the reader's sake, to observe that this Author, no less than Ambrose himself in certain of his works, always uses the words **lectum** (read) and **lectionem** (reading), but not the words **cantatum** (sung) or similar ones: whence it might perhaps be inferred that the lessons and Gospels in the liturgies of that time were by no means accustomed to be sung, but recited; after which recitation the people testified their faith and the obedience of their mind with a kind of acclamation, which is signified by those words of our Author, **with what pious assent**, he says, **you have followed** (Chap. 7, no. 38).

Furthermore, we simply say 'our Author'; for there is no light controversy as to whether this work can truly be adjudicated to Ambrose. Erasmus, by whom it was first made public, warned (in the Epistle prefixed to this work) that although it was ascribed to this very Father in the manuscript he had discovered, it by no means seemed to be by Ambrose; but should be attributed to the same Author to whom the books **On the Calling of the Gentiles** belong. To establish this judgment, he offers no other support than the diversity of style. For he asserts that the Author is **so successful an emulator of the Ambrosian diction, that in some qualities he surpasses it. For he explains more lucidly, and digresses less from the subject, etc.** Gillotius, on the contrary, defends our Bishop (Admin. in hoc opus.), supported by the consensus of manuscripts, which he had collected in no small number, and in which both Apologies of David, bearing equally the title of Ambrose of Milan, were dedicated to the Emperor Theodosius. As for the discrepancy of elocution that was opposed, he replies that it is not new for the holy Doctor to have changed his style according to the matter, place, time, and persons. Nevertheless, most later critics have sided with Erasmus's opinion, each in the meantime adding some new reason. Bellarmine asserts (De Script. Eccl.) that Ambrose would by no means have undertaken the thought of writing a second Apology; moreover, that the Author of this latter Apology denies that David's adultery was a true adultery and thinks it should be interpreted allegorically, whereas Ambrose in the former Apology acknowledges that the sin was committed in reality. Possevinus approves all of Bellarmine's arguments (Appar. sac.) with this exception, however, that whoever prefers may think that the holy Doctor could both use a varied style and write several Apologies of David, just as it is established that he himself wrote several books **On the Interpellation of David**. Nicolaus Faber (Epist. ad Front. Duc.) besides the above reasons, says that this book is not by Ambrose, but by some Origenist, who, transferring Scripture to allegories, denies the washing of Bathsheba (Chap. 8, no. 39). Theophilus Raynaudus, however, tries to refute the reasons of both in vol. XI, **De libris configendis**, part I, Erot. 10, no. 185, whom you should consult.

Hermanus in suo de Ambrosianis operibus iudicio, non pauca quae in priore apologia dicta fuerant, in hac itidem posteriori legi observat; non ergo credibile videri ea repetitione usum fuisse Ambrosium; praeterea sanctum Augustinum laudando Apologiam David numquam eam primam appellare; secundam Sixto Senensi prorsus incognitam; denique ipsius Auctorem, quantum ex haereticis quorum meminit colligere est, haud serius quinto saeculo scriptitasse (In fine Vitae Amb. Gall. script.).

In hac diversitate opinionem nostram ingenue proferemus, liberum unicuique relinquentes ut quam potiore esse duxerit, amplectatur. Id in gratiam Gillotii affirmemus licet, non modo in iis quibus usus est scriptis codicibus, verum etiam in Italiam ex quibus Milleloquium suum Urbinas compilavit, nec non in illis ad quos eundem castigavimus tractatum, Ambrosii inscriptionem reperiri. Sed et Guillelmus a sancto Theodorico in expositione Cantici canticorum abs se ex Ambrosianis sententiis collecta, quam suo loco edituri sumus, Ambrosii secundum Apologiam citat. Verum cum hic Auctor non sit admodum antiqui aevi, ut pote qui vix ante annum 1545 diem obierit, fatendum est nos in manuscriptos ea aetate multo vetustiores non incidisse.

Addi etiam pro Gillotiana sententia potest Auctorem quo de agimus, queri quod per fragilitatem vocis, ut ipse loquitur, omnem seriem non possum explere tractatus (Cap. 5, num. 28). Quam quidem querimoniam in libris quoque de Sacramentis advertere est (Lib. I, cap. 16). Numquid autem ea liceat accommodare Ambrosio nostro? Certe Augustinum de ipso reperimus locutum in haec verba: Quamquam et causa servandae vocis, quae illi facile obtundebatur, etc. (Lib. VI, Confess. cap. 3, num. 3). Sed in promptu succurrit ea responsio non insolitum esse concionatoribus, ut vocis suae accusent fragilitatem. Hinc Basilius Homilia in psalmum primum quaeritur sibi difficilem esse τὴν διακόνιαν τοῦ λόγου διὰ τὴν σύντροφον ἀσθένειαν τῆς φωνῆς ἡμᾶς ἐπιλειπουσῆς.

Quod ad Fabri opinionem attinet, Auctorem e secta Origenistarum fuisse, cum Bethsabeam ante regis palatium lavasse negaverit; respondemus id sane in Uria objici. Manifestum quippe est ipsum locis bene multis (Cap. 2, num. 5, et cap. 3, num. 12, et alibi) totam historiae seriem pro vera admittere; unde si postmodum illam non litterali, sed allegorico sensu accipiendam significet in hoc maxime secutus est beatum Ambrosium, qui non semel in enucleando sensum mysticum historiae veritatem penitus videtur destruere. Lege notam verbis e cap. 8, num. 39, in edit. Rom. revulsis suppositam.

Herman, in his judgment on the Ambrosian works, observes that not a few things that were said in the former apology are also read in this latter one; therefore, it does not seem credible that Ambrose would have used such repetition; moreover, that Saint Augustine, in praising the Apology of David, never calls it the first; that the second was completely unknown to Sixtus of Siena; finally, that its Author, as far as can be gathered from the heretics he mentions, wrote no later than the fifth century (*In fine Vitae Amb. Gall. script.*).

In this diversity, we will frankly state our opinion, leaving it free for each to embrace whichever he considers preferable. We may affirm this in favor of Gillotius, that not only in the written codices he used, but also in the Italian ones from which Urbinas compiled his **Milleloquium**, and also in those to which we have collated the same treatise, the inscription of Ambrose is found. But also William of Saint-Thierry, in his exposition of the Song of Songs collected by him from the sentences of Ambrose, which we are to publish in its place, cites the second Apology of Ambrose. But since this Author is not of a very ancient age, as he died scarcely before the year 1545, it must be confessed that we have not come across manuscripts much older than that age.

It can also be added in favor of Gillotius's opinion that the Author with whom we are concerned complains that **through the fragility of my voice**, as he himself says, **I cannot complete the whole series of the discourse** (Chap. 5, no. 28). This same complaint can also be noted in the books **On the Sacraments** (Book I, chap. 16). But can that be applied to our Ambrose? Certainly, we find Augustine speaking of him in these words: **Although also for the reason of preserving his voice, which was easily weakened in him, etc.** (Book VI, Confess. chap. 3, no. 3). But the answer readily occurs that it is not unusual for preachers to complain of the fragility of their voice. Hence Basil in his **Homily on the first psalm** complains that **the ministry of the word is difficult for him because of the congenital weakness of his voice which fails us**.

As to Faber's opinion, that the Author was from the sect of the Origenists, since he denied that Bathsheba washed before the king's palace; we answer that this is indeed objected in the case of Uriah. For it is manifest that in many places (Chap. 2, no. 5, and chap. 3, no. 12, and elsewhere) he admits the whole series of the history as true; whence if he afterwards signifies that it should be taken not in a literal but in an allegorical sense, in this he especially followed the blessed Ambrose, who more than once, in elucidating the mystical sense, seems to destroy completely the truth of the history. Read the note appended to the words taken from chap. 8, no. 39, in the Roman edition.

At primam tantum Apologiam ab Augustino cognitum urget eruditissimus Theologus. Esto; quid enim incommodi si Ambrosianae lucubrationes in manus Augustini non omnes pervenerint? Neque vero ex silentio Sixti aliud conficias, nisi aut illi cognitum non fuisse hunc librum, aut ipsum de eo sententiam ferre noluisse. Sed nec etiam est quod miretur aliquis si Doctor noster geminam David defensionem scripserit, cum ipse testatum reliquerit a se plures libros de Eliae gestis (Lib. de Elia et Jejun. cap. 3, num. 5), ac de historia Joseph (Lib. de Joseph Patriar. cap. 6, num. 30, et cap. 7, num. 38) compositos esse; cumque etiam nunc binos ejus in Abrahamum libros habeamus, ubi eosdem sacrarum paginarum locos, licet non eodem sensu explicat, multis tamen sententiis quas jam ante calamo exaraverat iteratis.

De styli vero diversitate quam jam initio agnovimus esse manifestam, ut quod sentimus, apertius explicatiusque proferamus; hic Auctor tametsi Ambrosianas locutiones frequens adhibet, alias tamen crebro usurpat quae nihil sapiant Ambrosiani. Hoc autem maxime illic observes, ubi auditores suos blande appellando eorum sibi benevolentiam conciliat. Sed nec illud diffiteri licet non esse moris Ambrosio tam anxie tantaque cum arte suam partiri materiam, ejusque membra subinde auditorum sive lectorum animis ingerere. Huc etiam addi poterat hoc in opere nonnullos Scripturae locos paulo aliter citari, quam in admissis Ambrosii operibus, Auctoremque alicubi (Cap. ult. num. 66) Vulgata versione usum videri.

Quae quidem rationes si habeantur idoneae ut hoc operis Ambrosio adjudicetur, poterit etiam conjici ex iis quae inibi de duabus Christi voluntatibus atque operationibus traduntur (Cap. 7, num. 38, et cap. 12, num. 62, 64, et aliis), Auctorem post exortam Monothelitarum haeresim in vivis egisse. In ea autem sententia clarum est ipsum, quisque ille sit, Ambrosianam Apologiam sibi proposuisse imitandam, et non solum ex ea in opus suum plurima quae amplificata stylo suo accomodavit (Cap. 3), transtulisse; sed etiam ex aliis sancti Doctoris commentationibus, maxime ex eo loco Comment. in Evangelium Lucae, ubi cur e peccatoribus originem ducere Christo placuerit, inquiritur. Et hoc argumentum videretur unum sufficere ad vindicandam Ambrosio secundam illam Apologiam, cum non multo post lectores ad scriptionem quamdam remittat, quam ipse in historiam David elucubraverat; sed ei rationi istuc efficit, quod quae proxime ante memoratam citationem leguntur, in prima reperiuntur Apologia. His igitur causis adducti liberum de Auctore hujus libelli iudicium lectori esse volumus; cumque saltem jus sit in ambiguo, possessionem quae hactenus penes Ambrosium fuit, eidem non putavimus abrogandam.

But the most learned Theologian urges that only the first Apology was known to Augustine. So be it; for what is the harm if not all of Ambrose's works came into the hands of Augustine? Nor should you infer anything else from the silence of Sixtus, except that either this book was not known to him, or he did not wish to pass judgment on it. But neither is there any reason for anyone to be surprised if our Doctor wrote a twofold defense of David, since he himself has left it on record that several books *on the deeds of Elijah* (Book on Elijah and Fasting, chap. 3, no. 5), and *on the history of Joseph* (Book on Joseph the Patriarch, chap. 6, no. 30, and chap. 7, no. 38) were composed by him; and since even now we have two of his books on Abraham, where he explains the same passages of the sacred pages, although not in the same sense, yet repeating many sentences which he had already penned before.

Regarding the diversity of style, which we have already acknowledged at the beginning to be manifest, so that we may state what we feel more openly and explicitly; this Author, although he frequently employs Ambrosian expressions, nevertheless often uses others that have no Ambrosian flavor. You may observe this especially where, by blandly addressing his hearers, he conciliates their goodwill. Nor can it be denied that it is not Ambrose's custom to divide his material so anxiously and with such art, and to impress its parts upon the minds of his hearers or readers from time to time. To this could also be added that in this work some passages of Scripture are cited a little differently than in the accepted works of Ambrose, and that the Author somewhere (Chap. ult. no. 66) seems to have used the Vulgate version.

If these reasons are held to be suitable for adjudicating this work to Ambrose, it can also be conjectured from what is taught therein about the two wills and operations of Christ (Chap. 7, no. 38, and chap. 12, no. 62, 64, and others), that the Author was living after the Monothelite heresy had arisen. In that view, it is clear that he, whoever he may be, proposed to himself the Ambrosian Apology for imitation, and not only transferred from it into his own work many things which he amplified and adapted to his own style (Chap. 3); but also from other commentaries of the holy Doctor, especially from that place in the Commentary on the Gospel of Luke, where it is inquired why it pleased Christ to derive his origin from sinners. And this argument would seem to suffice alone to vindicate that second Apology to Ambrose, since not long after he refers the readers to a certain writing which he himself had elaborated on the history of David; but this is what works against that reason, that what is read immediately before the said citation is found in the first Apology. Moved by these reasons, therefore, we wished the judgment concerning the Author of this little book to be free for the reader; and since the right is at least in doubt, we did not think that the possession which has hitherto been with Ambrose should be taken away from him.

SANCTI AMBROSII MEDIOLANENSIS EPISCOPI
 APOLOGIA ALTERA PROPHETAE DAVID. (C,G,S)*
707 CAPUT PRIMUM.

Quosdam offendi posse quod in adulterium inciderit David, et Christus oblatam sibi adulteram absolverit; maxime vero quod idem propheta peccatum evulgaverit suum. Sed, ut David erraverit, Christum errare non potuisse ostenditur; proindeque explodendos eos, qui Dei potentiae, vel providentiae, detrahunt.

1. Fortasse plerosque psalmi titulus offenderit, quem audistis legi; quod venerit ad David Nathan propheta, cum intravit ad Bethsabée: simulque etiam non mediocrem scrupalum movere potuit imperitis Evangelii lectio (Joan. VIII, 11), quae decursa est, in quo advertistis adulteram Christo oblatam, eamdemque sine damnatione dimissam. Nam profecto si quis ea auribus accipiat otiosis, incentivum erroris incurrit, cum leget sancti viri adulterium, et adulterae absolutionem; humano propemodum divinoque lapsus exemplo, quod et homo putaverit adulterium esse faciendum, et Deus censuerit adulterium non esse damnandum. Lubrica igitur ad lapsum via vel veniae, vel concupiscentiae.

2. Accedit illud, quod ipsas faces juvenilis lasciviae videtur accendere; quia adulterium suum non erubuerit, non celaverit: sed quadam divini carminis praedicatione vulgarit. Quid ergo tam impudens, tam improvidus sanctus David fuit, ut ipse suum cantaret opprobrium: maxime cum ipse in alio quoque, qui hodie decursus est, psalmo dixerit: Usquequo peccatores, Domine, usquequo peccatores gloriabuntur (Psal. XCIII, 3)? Alios de peccato gloriari prohibet, et ipse etiam sacrato carmine gloriatur. Quomodo igitur ista distinguimus?

3. Esto tamen, David petulanter erraverit: numquid et Christus erravit, ut putemus eum non rectum habuisse iudicium? Bene ergo quasi ad eos David hodie prophetavit dicens: Intelligite, insipientes, 708 et stulti aliquando sapite (Ibid., 8). Quomodo enim Christus potuit errare? Fas non est, ut hoc veniat in sensus nostros. Qui plantavit aurem non audit: aut qui finxit oculum, non considerat? Qui corripit gentes, non arguet: qui docet hominem scientiam (Ibid., 9 et 10)? Christus ergo interrogare culpam, et accusationem justam audire nescivit? Christus petulantiam potuit approbare?

THE SECOND APOLOGY FOR THE PROPHET DAVID BY SAINT AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN.

(C,G,S)*

CHAPTER I.

That some may be offended because David fell into adultery, and Christ absolved the adulteress presented to Him; but especially because the same prophet published his own sin. But, that though David may have erred, Christ could not have erred, is shown; and therefore that those are to be rejected who detract from the power or providence of God.

1. Perhaps the title of the psalm which you have heard read has offended many: that the prophet Nathan came to David when he went in to Bathsheba. And at the same time, the reading from the Gospel (John 8:11) which was gone through could have raised no small scruple in the inexperienced, in which you noted that an adulteress was brought to Christ, and was dismissed without condemnation. For surely, if anyone receives these things with idle ears, he incurs an incentive to error, when he reads of the adultery of a holy man, and the absolution of an adulteress; having fallen by an example almost both human and divine, because he might think both that adultery is to be committed by man, and that adultery is not to be condemned by God. Therefore, the path to a fall is slippery, whether of pardon or of concupiscence.

2. To this is added that which seems to kindle the very torches of youthful wantonness: that he did not blush for his adultery, nor hide it, but rather publicized it by a kind of proclamation in a divine song. What then? Was the holy David so impudent, so improvident, as to sing of his own disgrace, especially when he himself in another psalm, which was also read today, said: *How long shall the wicked, O Lord, how long shall the wicked glory* (Psalm 93:3)? He forbids others to glory in sin, and he himself glories in a sacred song. How then do we distinguish these things?

3. But grant that David erred wantonly: did Christ also err, that we should think He did not have right judgment? Well, therefore, did David prophesy today as if to them, saying: *Understand, ye senseless, and ye fools, be ye at length wise* (Ibid., 8). For how could Christ have erred? It is not right that this should enter our minds. *He that planted the ear, doth he not hear? Or he that formed the eye, doth he not consider? He that chastiseth the nations, shall he not rebuke: he that teacheth man knowledge* (Ibid., 9 and 10)? Did Christ, then, not know how to question a fault and hear a just accusation? Could Christ have approved of wantonness?

Christus qui corripit gentes, arguendam adulteram non putavit? Christus qui novit uniuscujusque cordis interna, et scientiam docet Legis, aut falli potuit errato, aut contra Legis seriem judicare? Et quomodo ipse dixit: Non veni Legem solvere, sed adimplere (Matth. V, 17)? Christus qui condemnat occulta, potuit dissimulare vulgata? Christus qui fecit tempora, potest nescire tempora? Qui novit cogitationes hominum vanas, non novit etiam criminosas?

4. Et ideo satis illis responsum sit, qui cum creatorem negare non possint, negant tamen potentiam creatoris: qui cum sapientiam fateantur, insipientiam asserunt, objiciendo ei imprudentiam futurorum. De quo possemus latius dicere: sed alius propositus nobis videtur esse tractatus. Et licet diversarum series decursa sit lectionum, in eandem tamen assertionem proficiunt, et maxime psalmi titulus et Evangelica lectio. Sed quamvis conveniat una assertio, tamen juxta ordinem lectionum sit ordo tractatus; et ideo de titulo psalmi prius tractandum videtur.

CAPUT II.

Proposito argumento auctor hic non facile judicandum scribit. Tum quo ordine, et apud quos homines David errantis causam sit defensurus, explicat.

Proposita est historia, quae adulterium habeat et homicidium. Nam ita reperimus in libro scriptum esse Regnorum (II Reg. XI, 2 et seq.); quia David rex cum deambulet in domo sua, lavantem se Uriae vidit uxorem, amavitque illico, et jussit accersiri. Deinde virum ejus innocentem, ut Scriptura inducit, bellatoribus objici jussit acerrimis, ut vi opprimeretur hostili. Haec facta sunt, nec negantur: quomodo igitur defenduntur? Bene admonet Evangelica lectio (Joan. VIII, 11), etiam cum peccatum appareat subreptum; tamen debere esse judicis judicium: ac memorem unumquemque esse oportere suae conditionis et meriti. Saepe enim etiam in judicando majus peccatum iudicii est, quam peccatum ipsius de quo fuerit iudicatum. Nam si praescriptum est a quibusdam sapientibus mundi, ut in judicando caveatur, ne major poena quam culpa sit, idque servatur: quanto magis id servandum videtur, ut unusquisque de alio iudicaturus, de se ipso prius iudicet, nec minora in alio errata condemnet, cum ipse graviora commiserit?

Did Christ, who chastises the nations, not think an adulteress should be rebuked? Could Christ, who knows the inner secrets of each heart and teaches the knowledge of the Law, either have been deceived by error or have judged contrary to the series of the Law? And how did He Himself say: *I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it* (Matt. 5:17)? Could Christ, who condemns secret things, have overlooked public ones? Can Christ, who made the times, be ignorant of the times? Does He who knows the vain thoughts of men not also know the criminal ones?

4. And therefore let this be a sufficient answer to those who, while they cannot deny the creator, yet deny the creator's power: who, while they confess his wisdom, assert his foolishness by charging him with imprudence concerning future things. About which we could speak more at length, but another treatise seems to be proposed to us. And although a series of different readings has been gone through, they nevertheless contribute to the same assertion, and especially the title of the psalm and the Gospel reading. But although one assertion is agreed upon, let the order of the treatise follow the order of the readings; and therefore it seems we should treat of the title of the psalm first.

CHAPTER II.

The argument having been proposed, the author here writes that one should not judge easily. Then he explains in what order, and before which people, he will defend the cause of the erring David.

A story has been set forth, which contains adultery and homicide. For thus we find it written in the book of Kings (2 Kings 11:2 et seq.); that King David, while walking in his house, saw the wife of Uriah bathing, and at once loved her, and ordered her to be summoned. Then he ordered her innocent husband, as Scripture relates, to be exposed to the fiercest warriors, so that he might be overwhelmed by hostile force. These things were done, and they are not denied: how then are they defended? The Gospel reading (John 8:11) well admonishes that, even when a sin appears to have crept in, there must nevertheless be a judge's judgment, and that everyone ought to be mindful of his own condition and merit. For often, even in judging, the sin of the judgment is greater than the sin of the one who has been judged. For if it is prescribed by certain wise men of the world that in judging one should take care that the punishment not be greater than the fault, and this is observed: how much more does it seem that this should be observed, that everyone who is about to judge another should first judge himself, and not condemn lesser faults in another when he himself has committed graver ones?

Quis es igitur tu, qui David sanctum virum iudicas? Gentili dico, Iudaeo dico, Christiano dico; et ideo tripertito mihi distinguendus esse videtur tractatus, unus adversus gentiles, alius adversus Iudaeos, tertius apud Christianos.

CAPUT III.

Gentiles monet, ne tam errantem, quam poenitentem David respiciant, quia sicut illud est hominibus commune, ita hoc rarum in regibus. Tum quam proclive sit vinci libidine, declarat, et adductis sanctorum virorum exemplis confirmat.

6. Primus ergo adversus gentiles mihi sermo est, qui plerumque objectare consueverunt: Ecce quomodo Christiani innocentiam sequuntur, fidem praeferunt, religionem venerantur, castitatem docent, quorum principes et homicidia et adulteria fecisse produntur? Ipse David de cuius genere, ut dicitis, nasci Christus elegit, homicidia sua et adulteria decantavit. Et quales possunt esse discipuli, quorum tales magistri sunt?

7. Quid igitur? Negamus factum, an repudiamus magistrum? Nihil horum. Sed qui speciem objicit, communitatem consideret. Species facti est, communitas naturae. Nihil ergo mirum si intra generalitatem species est. Agnosco enim hominem fuisse David, et nihil mirum: agnosco commune, ut homo peccet. Nec enim nova infirmitas conditionis humanae, magisque mirum videtur si homo peccato careat quam si peccatum aliquod affectet. Igitur peccavit sanctus David, nullo ambiguo vos tenebo, fecit adulterium, commentus est homicidium, et commentus est et peregit. Peccavit quod solent reges; sed poenitentiam gessit et flevit, quod non solent reges. Rogavit veniam, non arrogans potestatis, sed infirmitatis suae conscius; prostratus in terram cilicio se operuit, oblitus imperii, et memor culpae.

8. Quem mihi hujusce modi reperias virum qui in potestate constitutus non magis peccata sua diligit, culpam praedicet, crimina defendat; qui putet sibi quod non decet, non licere: qui se legibus obstringat suis; et quod per justitiam non licet, nec per potestatem licere agnoscat? Non enim solvit potestas justitiam, sed justitia potestatem; nec legibus rex solutus est, sed leges suo solvit exemplo. An fieri potest, ut qui de aliis iudicat, suo ipse sit liber iudicio, et in se suscipiat, in quo et alios astringat?

Who then are you, who judge the holy man David? I speak to the Gentile, I speak to the Jew, I speak to the Christian; and therefore it seems to me that the treatise must be divided into three parts: one against the Gentiles, another against the Jews, and a third for the Christians.

CHAPTER III.

He admonishes the Gentiles not to look so much at David the sinner as at David the penitent, because just as the former is common to men, so the latter is rare in kings. Then he declares how prone one is to be overcome by lust, and confirms it by adducing the examples of holy men.

6. My first discourse, therefore, is against the Gentiles, who are accustomed to object: "Behold how Christians pursue innocence, profess faith, venerate religion, teach chastity, whose leaders are reported to have committed both murders and adulteries?" David himself, from whose lineage, as you say, Christ chose to be born, sang of his own murders and adulteries. And what sort of disciples can there be, whose masters are such as these?

7. What then? Do we deny the deed, or do we repudiate the master? Neither of these. But let him who objects to the particular case consider the general condition. The deed is a particular case, the nature is a general condition. It is no wonder, therefore, if the particular case falls within the general condition. For I acknowledge that David was a man, and it is no wonder: I acknowledge it is common for a man to sin. For the infirmity of the human condition is not new, and it seems more wondrous if a man should be without sin than if he should commit some sin. Therefore, holy David sinned—I will hold you in no ambiguity—he committed adultery, he contrived a murder, and he both contrived and carried it out. He sinned as kings are wont to do; but he did penance and wept, as kings are not wont to do. He asked for pardon, not arrogant in his power, but conscious of his infirmity; prostrate on the ground, he covered himself with sackcloth, forgetful of his empire, and mindful of his guilt.

8. What man of this sort can you find for me who, being established in power, does not rather cherish his sins, proclaim his guilt, and defend his crimes; who thinks that what is not fitting for him is not lawful; who binds himself by his own laws; and who acknowledges that what is not lawful through justice is not lawful through power either? For power does not dissolve justice, but justice dissolves power; nor is the king released from the laws, but he releases the laws by his example. Or can it be that he who judges others should himself be free from judgment, and take upon himself that by which he also binds others?

9. Bonus ergo David, et multo admirabilior qui potestatem vicit, quam qui amorem. Castitas enim corpori nonnumquam defertur, frequenter errori; potestas Deo subditur; et facilius quis se in amore cohibeat, quam in potestate moderetur. Non ergo ignoscis quod minus est, in quo majora miraris. Lubrica enim in omnibus hominibus et prona natura peccandi; lubrica etiam in bonis moribus licentia potestatis, et oblatio facultatis. Non enim distat ira regis ab ira leonis; sed qui stimulat illum et admiscetur, peccat in animam suam. Caveat ergo ne stimulet aliquis potestatem, ne cassibus anima irretita corporeis, vitio se non possit exuere. Non ergo mirum si etiam David specie lapsus est potestatis; sed multo amplius admirandum, quod fidei contemplatione revocatur.

10. Videtis igitur quod potestas haec saecularis frequenter nihil prosit, et plerumque obsit; saepe enim culpa exitus in auctoritate est potestatis. Noli igitur quicumque es rex, de potentia et facultate praesumere; cor enim regis in manu Domini. Noli tibi de populorum subjectione blandiri; quia non salvabitur rex per multitudinem virtutis suae, nec gigas salvus erit in multitudine virtutis suae. Non enim in altis tabernaculorum fastigiis, pretiosoque tectorum culmine, sed super timentibus eum bene placitum est Domino, et his qui sperant super misericordia ejus.

11. Lubricam igitur videmus ad vitia potestatem, nec tamen semper inflexam dixerim; quoniam regali potestate sublimem et David legimus cultus auxisse divinos, et Salomonem templum Deo consecrasse.

12. Nunc illud quod perstrinximus, asseramus, facultatem imperandi, incentivum esse peccandi, et secundum historiae seriem prosequamur. Non adulterasset David alieni jus thori, et foederati pacta conjugii, nisi nudam et lavantem mulierem de domus suae interioribus vidisset. Et ideo bene scriptum est: Non intendas in mulieris speciem: et non concupiscas mulierem (Eccl. II, 5, 28). Ait alibi: Ab omni irreverenti oculo cave (Eccl. XXVI, 14). Nihil de continentiae tuae virtute praesumas. Etenim fornicatio mulieris in extollentia oculorum, et in palpebris illius agnoscetur (Ibid., 12); et ideo causam primo peccati fuge. Nemo enim diu fortis est. Neque fragili tantum, sed omni homini dicitur: Non te vincat concupiscentia formae (Prov. VI, 25); si non vis vinci, non congregiare peccatis, ne de te vitia coronentur; neque capiaris oculis, neque abripiaris palpebris (Ibid.). Vilis tibi mulier videtur ad pretium, sed fortis ad vitium; quia mulier virorum pretiosas animas capit (Ibid.).

9. Good, therefore, was David, and much more admirable for having conquered power than for having conquered love. For chastity is sometimes attributed to the body, often to error; but power is subject to God; and it is easier for one to restrain oneself in love than to moderate oneself in power. Therefore, you do not forgive that which is less, in a man in whom you admire greater things. For the nature of sinning is slippery and prone in all men; slippery also, even in good morals, is the license of power and the opportunity of ability. For the wrath of a king does not differ from the wrath of a lion; but he who provokes him and meddles with him, sins against his own soul. Let everyone therefore be careful not to provoke power, lest the soul, entangled in the snares of the body, be unable to divest itself of vice. It is no wonder, therefore, if even David fell through the appearance of power; but it is much more to be admired that he was called back by the contemplation of faith.

10. You see, therefore, that this secular power frequently avails nothing, and for the most part is a hindrance; for often the outcome of guilt lies in the authority of power. Therefore, whoever you are, O king, do not presume upon your might and ability; for the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord. Do not flatter yourself on the subjection of peoples; because a king shall not be saved by the multitude of his strength, nor shall a giant be safe in the multitude of his strength. For the Lord's good pleasure is not in the high gables of tabernacles, nor in the precious summit of roofs, but in those who fear him, and in those who hope in his mercy.

11. We see, therefore, that power is prone to vices, yet I would not say it is always bent that way; since we read that David, exalted by royal power, increased divine worship, and that Solomon consecrated a temple to God.

12. Now let us assert what we have touched upon, that the ability to command is an incentive to sin, and let us proceed according to the sequence of the story. David would not have violated the right of another's marriage bed, and the pacts of a sworn union, if he had not seen a naked woman washing herself from the inner parts of his house. And therefore it is well written: "Gaze not on a woman's beauty, and do not desire a woman" (Ecclesiasticus 9:5, 8). Elsewhere it says: "Beware of every shameless eye" (Ecclesiasticus 26:11). Presume nothing on the virtue of your continence. For "a woman's fornication is known in the lifting of her eyes, and in her eyelids" (ibid., 12); and therefore, flee first the cause of sin. For no one is strong for long. And not only to the frail, but to every man it is said: "Let not the lust for beauty overcome you" (Proverbs 6:25); if you do not wish to be overcome, do not engage with sins, lest vices be crowned from you; "neither be taken with her eyes, nor be carried away by her eyelids" (ibid.). A woman seems to you cheap in price, but she is strong for vice; because "a woman captures the precious souls of men" (ibid.).

13. Difficile est itaque ut quisquam libidinis irretitus illecebris, immunis evadat. Nec mea tantum hoc sententia difficile judicatur: sed etiam sancti Salomonis Proverbiis impossibile judicatum est, qui suo ductus exemplo ait: Ligabit quis ignem in sinu, vestimenta autem non comburet? Vel ambulabit quis super carbones ignis, pedes autem non comburet (Ibid., 27 et 28)? Cave ergo et tu ne intra sinum tuae mentis ignem libidinis et amorem accendas; ne corporeum vestimentum illo animi consumatur incendio, ac perpetuitatem resurrectionis amittas: vel certe vestigium tuae mentis uratur, si per libidinum faces tibi putaveris esse gradiendum. Nam qui uritur corde, comburitur corpore.

14. Omnibus igitur modis lascivae mulieris vitandus occursum est. Et ideo prudentiam discipulam acquirere tibi, inquit, ut te custodiat ab uxore aliena et fornicaria (Prov. VII, 5); ne te laqueis labiorum suorum teneat obligatum, et crinibus erroris involvat. Itaque unde debeas cavere meretricem propheta te docuit (Ibid., 6), ut a fenestra caveas hujus ingressus. A fenestra enim domus suae intrat. Fenestra ejus est oculus: et ideo ab omni irreverenti oculo cave, ne per fenestram introeat amor, libido penetret. Etenim mulier fornicaria illicit visu amatorem; et nisi petulantem obtutum mentis animique compescas, mors ingreditur per fenestram. Non est desidiosa petulantia meretricis, non otiosa lascivia, quae facit juvenum volare corda; ut propriae mentis nequeant tenere constantiam, et huc atque illuc fervido amore rapiantur. Cave ergo hujuscemodi mulierem (Ibid., 10 et seq.), quae pedibus non quiescit, foris errat, insidiatur per angulos, oculis ligat, verbis illicit, institis lectum intexit suum, et tapetis ab Aegypto stratis; neque enim de cogitatione divina, sed de saeculari illecebra, assumit ornatum: quae merito virum suum dicit absentem, quoniam non potest adultera omnis Christum habere praesentem.

15. Vides igitur quantis rebus etiam sanctorum corda capiuntur; et ideo ne mireris, si etiam sanctus David captus est. Vir quidem magnus, et qui Allophylum immanem corpore, armis quoque bellicis inhorrentem fide vicerit, sed utinam se ipse vicisset, utinam sicut illum adversarium stravit, sic interiorem adversarium suum sternere ac superare potuisset! Gravior est pugna ejus qui intus, quam illius qui foris dimicat.

13. It is difficult, therefore, for anyone entangled in the snares of lust to escape unscathed. And this is judged difficult not only in my opinion, but it was even judged impossible in the Proverbs of holy Solomon, who, led by his own example, says: "Can a man bind fire in his bosom, and his garments not be burned?" "Or can a man walk upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" (*ibid.*, 27 and 28). Beware, therefore, lest you too kindle the fire of lust and love within the bosom of your mind; lest the bodily garment be consumed by that fire of the soul, and you lose the perpetuity of the resurrection: or at least lest the footprint of your mind be burned, if you should think you must walk through the torches of lust. For he who is burned in the heart, is burned in the body.

14. Therefore, an encounter with a wanton woman must be avoided in every way. And therefore, he says, "acquire wisdom as your disciple, that it may keep you from the strange and adulterous woman" (Proverbs 7:5); lest she hold you bound by the snares of her lips, and entangle you in the tresses of error. Therefore, the prophet has taught you whence you ought to beware the harlot (*ibid.*, 6), that you should beware of this entrance through the window. For she enters through the window of her house. Her window is the eye: and therefore beware of every shameless eye, lest love enter through the window, and lust penetrate. For the adulterous woman entices a lover by her look; and unless you restrain the wanton gaze of your mind and soul, death enters through the window. The petulance of the harlot is not idle, her wantonness is not at leisure, which makes the hearts of young men fly; so that they cannot keep the constancy of their own mind, and are snatched hither and thither by fervent love. Beware, therefore, of such a woman (*ibid.*, 10 ff.), who is not quiet on her feet, wanders abroad, lies in wait at the corners, binds with her eyes, entices with her words, covers her bed with ribbons and with carpets spread from Egypt; for she takes her adornment not from divine thought, but from worldly allurements: who rightly says her husband is absent, since no adulteress can have Christ present.

15. You see, therefore, by how many things the hearts even of saints are captured; and so do not be surprised if even holy David was captured. A great man indeed, and one who by faith conquered the Philistine, immense in body and bristling with weapons of war; but would that he had conquered himself, would that just as he laid low that adversary, he could have laid low and overcome his own internal adversary! More grievous is the battle of him who fights within than of him who fights without.

16. Sed quid de solo David loquor? Accersamus etiam alios ad tractatum hujusmodi, ne imbecillitatem David magis, unius scilicet hominis putemus; quam corporeae conditionis fuisse infirmitatem. Samson validus et fortis leonem suffocavit, sed amorem suum suffocare non potuit: vincula solvit hostium, sed suarum non solvit nexus cupiditatum; messes incendit alienas, et unius ipse mulieris accensus igniculo messem suae virtutis amisit. Salomon templum Deo condidit, sed utinam corporis sui templum ipse servasset! Verum ad ipsum a quo dicessit, revertatur oratio. Triumphavit David in decem millibus: sed erravit in viginti et amplius millibus; et quia erravit, hominem se esse cognovit, confessus est culpam, veniam deprecatus est dicens ad Dominum: Domine, ne in ira tua arguas me, neque in furore tuo corripas me. Miserere mei, Domine, quoniam infirmus sum (Psal. VI, 2 et 3). Si David infirmus, tu fortis es? Si Salomon lapsus est, tu immobilis? Si Paulus primus peccatorum, tu potes primus esse sanctorum? Ergo si erraverunt justi, erraverunt tamquam homines, sed peccatum suum tamquam justii agnoverunt. Si justii poenae atrocioris exceperunt sententiam, tu quemamodum tibi spem impunitatis proponis, cum Scriptura dicat: Si justus vix salvus fit, peccator et impius ubi parebit (I Pet. IV, 18)?

17. Advertitis ergo, filii, quam plerumque etiam bonum propositum subruat causa moechandi; et ideo causas ipsas primo fugere et vitare debetis. Non vis amore capi? Noli in speciem mulieris intendere, quia oculi tui qui cum viderint alienam, os tuum loquetur perversa, et jaces tamquam in corde maris, et sicut gubernator in magno turbine. Magnam enim faciunt tempestatem multitudines cupiditatum, quae velut quodam in freto corporis navigantem hinc atque inde perturbant, ut gubernator sui animus esse non possit, diem ac noctem caligine amoris ignorans.

18. Oculis igitur excitatur libido, sed ebrietate succenditur. Omnis enim ebriosus et fornicator, pauper fiet. Nec tibi de potentia blandiaris potandi. Noe ebriatus est, et qui non inebriatus est diluvio, inebriatus est vino. Sed ille naturam vini ignorabat, non enim ante potaverat: tu in illo didicisti cavere quid debeas. Lot per somnum deceptus est, et tu si non vis decepti, somnum mentis tuae discute, ne ebrius illudat filius aut filia dormienti. Non pietas illic, sed ebrietas reeditur: nec pater illic, sed dormiens circum-scribitur. Vis non aduri? Noli ad ignem accedere. Vis non praecipitari? Nutantia fuge, praerupta cave, caduca declina et labantia.

16. But why do I speak of David alone? Let us also summon others to a discussion of this kind, lest we think it was the weakness of David, that is, of one man, rather than an infirmity of the bodily condition. Samson, strong and mighty, suffocated a lion, but he could not suffocate his own love: he broke the bonds of his enemies, but he did not break the knots of his own desires; he set fire to the harvests of others, and he himself, kindled by the small fire of one woman, lost the harvest of his own virtue. Solomon built a temple to God, but would that he himself had preserved the temple of his own body! But let the discourse return to him from whom it departed. David triumphed over ten thousands, but he erred in twenty thousand and more; and because he erred, he knew himself to be a man, he confessed his guilt, he begged for pardon, saying to the Lord: "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy indignation, nor chastise me in thy wrath." "Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak" (Psalm 6:2-3). If David is weak, are you strong? If Solomon fell, are you immovable? If Paul is the first of sinners, can you be the first of saints? Therefore, if the just have erred, they have erred as men, but they have acknowledged their sin as just men. If the just have received the sentence of a more atrocious punishment, how do you propose for yourself the hope of impunity, when Scripture says: "If the just man is scarcely saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?" (1 Peter 4:18).

17. You notice therefore, my sons, how often the occasion of adultery undermines even a good resolution; and therefore you ought first to flee and avoid the occasions themselves. Do you not wish to be captured by love? Do not gaze upon the beauty of a woman, because when your eyes see a strange woman, your mouth will speak perverse things, and you will lie as if in the heart of the sea, and like a pilot in a great storm. For the multitudes of desires create a great tempest, which, as if sailing in a certain strait of the body, disturb one from this side and that, so that the soul cannot be its own pilot, being ignorant of day and night in the fog of love.

18. Lust, therefore, is aroused by the eyes, but it is inflamed by drunkenness. For every drunkard and fornicator will become poor. And do not flatter yourself about your power of drinking. Noah was made drunk; and he who was not made drunk by the flood, was made drunk by wine. But he was ignorant of the nature of wine, for he had not drunk it before: you have learned from him what you ought to beware. Lot was deceived in his sleep; and if you do not wish to be deceived, shake off the sleep of your mind, lest a son or daughter mock a drunken sleeper. It is not piety that is returned there, but drunkenness: nor is it a father there, but a sleeper who is taken advantage of. Do you wish not to be burned? Do not go near the fire. Do you wish not to be cast down? Flee tottering things, beware of precipices, avoid things that are falling and slipping.

19. Vides igitur in illis qui iusti esse meruerunt, non alteram fuisse naturam, sed alteram disciplinam. Post primi hominis lapsum, justamque sententiam, cum in uno carnis damnatus sit appetitus, vitium traxit conditio, infecit culpa naturam; sed naturae ipsius vitium fides temperavit, et devotionis intentio mitigavit offensam.

20. Convertimini igitur ad Dominum gentes, scitote quoniam Dominus Deus est: ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos. Scitote quoniam caro sumus et pulvis. Relinquamus ergo quae fecimus, et ipsum nostri veneremur auctorem, qui vitam dedit, peccata donavit, qui solus potest dicere: Ego sum, ego sum, qui deleo iniquitates vestras, et memor non ero (Esai. XLIII, 25). Magnus plane et misericors Deus, qui beneficium confert, nec beneficii munus exprobrat. Miramini quod David regem fecerit, victoremque multarum gentium? Sic servulos suos consuevit evehere. Non avarus munerum, nec beneficii parvus, nec gratiae angustus et frugi; sed opulens largitatis, quos redemit a peccato, auget in praemio. Haec adversum gentiles.

CAPUT IV.

Judaeos perperam credentes David, qui obnoxius fuit peccato, vel Salomonem, cui dicta de Christo non conveniunt, esse Filium Dei, redarguit; et pravam quorundam haereticorum de Filio Dei interpretationem confutat.

21. Sed quoniam tripartitam divisionem tractatus hujus polliciti sumus, unam adversus gentiles, aliam adversus Judaeos, tertiam apud Ecclesiam; nunc contra Judaeos videtur esse tractandum. Quid igitur nobis propositum sit recenseamus. Titulus, inquit, psalmi David intellectus, cum venit ad cum Nathan propheta: cum intravit ad Bethsabée (Ps. L, 1 et 2). Nempe historia haec et adulterum David inducit et homicidam, et hunc vos, Judaei, dicitis esse Dei filium? Sed Deus virtutum est, non criminum. Et de hoc dicit Deus Pater: Thronus ejus sicut dies coeli (Ps. LXXXVIII, 30); qui dolum fecerit, peccata non vicerit? Et quomodo scriptum est: Nemo sine peccato, nisi unus Deus (Luc. XVIII, 19)? Si igitur non potest non esse Deus, qui Dei filius est, utique Dei filius arbiter justitiae est, non obnoxius culpa.

22. Qua autem opinione vel David Dei filium judicatis, vel Salomonem putatis? An quia scriptum est; Deus judicium tuum regi da, et justitiam tuam filio regis (Ps. LXXI, 2); et quia titulus psalmi in Salomonem psalmum LXXI dicit esse compositum? Sed quem Salomonem dicat, advertite. Salomon enim pacificus est, hoc habet interpretatio. Psalmus in eum dicitur, quem vere scimus esse pacis auctorem. Quomodo autem Salomon pacificus?

19. You see, therefore, that in those who have deserved to be just, there was not a different nature, but a different discipline. After the fall of the first man, and the just sentence, when in one man the appetite of the flesh was condemned, the condition contracted vice, guilt infected nature; but faith tempered the vice of nature itself, and the intention of devotion mitigated the offense.

20. Be converted, therefore, to the Lord, O Gentiles, know that the Lord is God: it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves. Know that we are flesh and dust. Let us therefore forsake what we have done, and venerate our author himself, who gave life, who forgave sins, who alone can say: "I am, I am he that blots out your iniquities, and I will not remember them" (Isaiah 43:25). Plainly great and merciful is God, who confers a benefit, and does not reproach the gift of the benefit. Do you wonder that he made David a king, and a victor over many nations? Thus is he accustomed to exalt his little servants. He is not avaricious with gifts, nor sparing of benefit, nor narrow and frugal with grace; but opulent in generosity, he increases in reward those whom he has redeemed from sin. These things against the Gentiles.

CHAPTER IV.

He refutes the Jews, who wrongly believe that David, who was liable to sin, or Solomon, to whom the things said of Christ do not apply, is the Son of God; and he confutes the perverse interpretation of certain heretics concerning the Son of God.

21. But since we have promised a threefold division of this treatise—one against the gentiles, another against the Jews, a third within the Church—it now seems we must treat of the case against the Jews. Let us therefore review what has been set before us. The title, it says, is 'Of understanding, for David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba' (Ps. 50:1-2). Surely this story presents David as both an adulterer and a murderer, and is this the one you, O Jews, say is the Son of God? But God is a God of virtues, not of crimes. And of this one does God the Father say: 'His throne as the days of heaven' (Ps. 88:30); of one who has committed deceit and has not conquered his sins? And how is it written: 'No one is without sin, except God alone' (Luke 18:19)? If, therefore, he who is the Son of God cannot not be God, then surely the Son of God is the arbiter of justice, not liable to fault.

22. By what opinion, then, do you judge either David to be the Son of God, or think it to be Solomon? Is it because it is written: 'Give the king thy judgment, O God, and thy justice to the king's son' (Ps. 71:2); and because the title of Psalm 71 says it was composed for Solomon? But pay attention to which Solomon it speaks of. For Solomon means 'peaceful'; this is its interpretation. The psalm is said of him whom we truly know to be the author of peace. But how was Solomon peaceful?

Non hoc Joab sanguis ostendit, quem inter altaria templi jussit occidi; non Adoniae poena, quem affinitatis regiae reum perculit, nec matris obsecratione ab indignatione revocatus. Quomodo autem in Salomonem David filium existimas convenire quod scriptum est, quia permanebit cum sole et ante lunam, in saecula saeculorum (Ps. LXXI, 5); cum ille brevis vitae adeptus usuram, angustis terminis vivendi spatium transegerit? Quomodo autem de eo dicitur: Dominabitur a mari usque ad mare (Ibid., 8); cum ille intra Syriam constitutus, hoc est, intra unius regionis provinciam, circumscriptos fines habuerit imperii. Solus autem Christus usque in orbis totius terminos suum propagarit imperium? Solus enim iste est, de quo bene psalmi series prophetavit, quia reges Arabum et Saba dona adducent, et adorabunt eum omnes reges terrae: omnes gentes servient ei (Psal. LXXI, 10 et 11). Hunc enim novimus gentibus universis et nationibus imperantem, incircumscripito imperio, interminata potestate. Non ergo Salomon Dei filius.

23. Sed qua ratione eum Dei filium putavistis? An quia sapiens fuit? Sed hic sapientiam postulavit, ut quam non habebat, acciperet: Christus ipse sapientia est, naturaliter in universum habens, quod in rebus humanis Salomon accepit per gratiam. Denique quod accipitur ex tempore, in tempore possidetur. Salomon enim sapientiam nec in principio sui habuit, nec in fine possedit. Neque enim habere se credidit quod poposcit; et postea aversus a Dei cultu, non quasi sapiens, sed quasi insipiens lapsus est, ut offenderet. Offendit in tantum, ut etiam quod meruerat, amitteret. Cur igitur hunc Dei filium credidistis? An quia templum Deo condidit? Sed hinc Dominum et Deum non esse credere debuistis, quia scriptum est: Nisi Dominus aedificaverit sibi domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam (Ps. CXXXVI, 1). In vanum laboravit, qui aedificavit id templum, quod subjectus ignis exussit. An quia David patri ipsius dictum est: Non tu aedificabis mihi domum sed cum tu dormieris, excitabo semen tuum post te; et ipse aedificabit domum nomini meo (II Reg. VII, 12 et 13). Verum ibi quoque templum non corporale, non materiale promittitur, neque enim Deus in manufactis habitat, sed templum est sancta Ecclesia, quae utique non humana, sed coelesti virtute fundatur.

The blood of Joab, whom he ordered to be killed between the altars of the temple, does not show this; nor the punishment of Adonijah, whom he struck down as guilty of aspiring to royal affinity, not even recalled from his indignation by his mother's plea. How, moreover, do you think that what is written applies to Solomon, David's son—that 'he shall continue with the sun, and before the moon, throughout all generations' (Ps. 71:5)—when he, having obtained the use of a short life, passed his span of living within narrow limits? How, moreover, is it said of him: 'He shall rule from sea to sea' (Ibid., 8), when he, established within Syria, that is, within the province of a single region, had circumscribed boundaries to his empire? Has not Christ alone extended his empire to the ends of the whole world? For he alone is the one of whom the series of the psalm has well prophesied, that 'the kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts, and all kings of the earth shall adore him: all nations shall serve him' (Ps. 71:10-11). For we know him as ruling over all gentiles and nations, with an uncircumscribed empire, with unending power. Therefore, Solomon is not the Son of God.

23. But for what reason did you think him to be the Son of God? Was it because he was wise? But this one asked for wisdom, that he might receive what he did not have; Christ is wisdom itself, naturally possessing in its entirety what Solomon received in human affairs through grace. Finally, what is received in time is possessed in time. For Solomon possessed wisdom neither at his beginning nor did he possess it at his end. For he did not believe he had what he asked for; and afterwards, having turned away from the worship of God, he fell not as a wise man, but as a foolish one, so as to give offense. He offended to such a degree that he even lost what he had merited. Why, therefore, did you believe this one to be the Son of God? Was it because he built a temple for God? But from this you should have believed that he was not Lord and God, because it is written: 'Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it' (Ps. 126:1). He labored in vain who built that temple which a subsequent fire consumed. Or was it because it was said to his father David: 'You shall not build me a house... but when you sleep, I will raise up your seed after you; and he shall build a house for my name' (2 Sam. 7:12-13)? But there too, a temple not corporeal, not material is promised, for God does not dwell in things made by hands, but the temple is the holy Church, which is founded not by human, but by heavenly power.

24. Nam si praestantioris licet, sed humanae tamen virtutis opera miremur, multos hujusmodi reperimus, quos cum David et Salomone comparare possumus. Et ideo ubi operis aequalitas est, non est excellentia potestatis. Nec plures possumus dicere Dei filios, cum unum Dei filium legerimus; sed non ex beneficiis suis quae in parentes nostros contulit, facienda est injuria Dei filio. Multi enim praeclari viri: sed per unum Jesum Nave stetit, inquit (Josue X, 13), sol contra Gabaon. Videtis eum ultra David regis processisse virtutem; terrenis enim David, non sideribus imperavit. Videtis etiam solem ministrum esse, non dominum, qui etiam voci servierit humanae. Stetit tamen, quia in Jesu et typum futuri agnoscebat, et nomen. Neque enim in sua virtute Jesus Nave, sed Christi mysterio coelestibus luminibus imperabat; designabatur enim Dei filium in hoc saeculum esse venturum, qui mundani luminis occidentis et jam vergentis in tenebras, virtute divina differret occasum, lucem redderet, inveheret claritatem. Enoch quoque raptus est ad coelum: sed tamen ille raptus est, hic regressus. Raptus est ille, ne malitia mutaret cor ejus; hic ipsam malitiam saeculi hujus abolevit. Elias curru atque equis ascendit ad coelum; Christus autem descendit e coelo, nec curru et equis, ut ille conscendit, quia ille aliter nequivisset; hic autem propria virtute remeavit. Elisaeus in Jordane leprosum lavare praecepit, ut ab omni contagione mundaretur; hic in Jordane totum diluit mundum. Moyses ipse cui crediti sunt populi Judaeorum, aquam divisit; et ille quidem divisit elementa, quia non divisit potentiam Trinitatis; separavit moles aquarum, quia Patrem non separavit a Filio.

25. Videtis quanti viri, et qualium documenta operum dereliquerunt. Quemadmodum igitur quos pares David regi vel Salomoni virtute cognoscitis, conditione impares judicatis, ut Salomonem David filium putetis ad Dei sedere dexteram? Praesertim cum ipse David evidenter de quo dictum esset, expresserit; neque enim de filio suo diceret: Dixit Dominus Domino meo: Sede ad dexteram meam (Ps. CIX, 1). Quomodo enim filium suum Dominum nominaret? Lex prohibet, repugnat religio, abhorret fides ut ad dexteram Dei omnipotentis mortalem hominem loces.

24. For if we admire the works of a more excellent, yet still human, power, we find many of this kind whom we can compare with David and Solomon. And therefore, where there is equality of work, there is no excellence of power. Nor can we speak of many sons of God, when we have read of one Son of God; but no injury must be done to the Son of God on account of the benefits He conferred upon our fathers. For there have been many illustrious men: but through one, Joshua son of Nun, it is said (Josh. 10:13), the sun stood still against Gibeon. You see that he surpassed the power of King David; for David commanded earthly things, not the stars. You see also that the sun is a servant, not a master, which even obeyed a human voice. Yet it stood still, because in Joshua it recognized both a type (*typum*) of the one to come, and the name. For Joshua son of Nun did not command the celestial lights by his own power, but by the mystery of Christ; for it was being signified that the Son of God was to come into this world, who by divine power would postpone the setting of the worldly light as it was setting and already turning to darkness, would restore the light, and would bring in brightness. Enoch also was taken up to heaven: but he was taken up, whereas this one returned. That one was taken up, lest wickedness should change his heart; this one abolished the very wickedness of this world. Elijah ascended to heaven in a chariot and with horses; but Christ descended from heaven, and did not ascend with a chariot and horses, as that one did, because that one could not have done otherwise; but this one returned by his own power. Elisha commanded a leper to wash in the Jordan, that he might be cleansed from all contagion; this one washed the whole world in the Jordan. Moses himself, to whom the peoples of the Jews were entrusted, divided the water; and he indeed divided the elements, because he did not divide the power of the Trinity; he separated the masses of water, because he did not separate the Father from the Son.

25. You see how great were these men, and what proofs of their works they have left behind. How then do you judge those whom you know to be equal in power to King David or Solomon to be unequal in condition, so as to think that Solomon, David's son, sits at the right hand of God? Especially since David himself clearly expressed of whom it was said; for he would not say of his own son: 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand' (Ps. 109:1). For how would he call his own son Lord? The Law forbids it, religion opposes it, faith abhors that you should place a mortal man at the right hand of almighty God.

Alius est ille qui sedet ad dexteram, qui corpus suscepit, non qui coepit a corpore; qui ante luciferum genitus est, id est, ante omnium luminum claritatem; quoniam ipse creavit variorum luminum dignitates: nam Salomon utque post luciferum est. Salomon sacerdos non fuit; et ideo dici ei a Domino omnipotente non potuit: Ex utero ante luciferum genui te (Ibid., 3); dici ei non potuit: Tu es sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech (Ibid., 4); maxime cum illo tempore quo Salomon fuit, secundum ordinem Aaron, non secundum ordinem Melchisedech, fuerint sacerdotes. Adhuc enim sacerdotes sanguinem hircorum atque taurorum pro peccatis plebis et erroribus offerebant; postea vero quam Christus advenit, qui semetipsum pro salute obtulit mundi (ut quos taurorum sanguis lavare non poterat, Christi sanguis ablueret) semetipsos coeperunt offerre pro hostiis sacerdotes.

26. Itaque una quaestione Dominus noster Jesus Christus omnium haereticorum ora sepsit, sacrilegia conclusit. Non solum enim Judaeos, sed etiam Photinianos, et Arianos, et Sabellianos hac redarguit quaestione: et ideo nobis (quoniam Judaeos defecisse jam cernimus, et illam execrabilem perfidiam imminutam) jam de Arianis, qui non multum a Judaeis differunt, Photinianisque et Sabellianis aliqua in istius quaestionis tractatu perstringenda sunt. Taceat ergo Photinus, qui Christum David filium, non Dei dicit; et taceat, damnatus voce coelesti. Quomodo enim dicit Christum filium David esse, cum ipse David dixerit in libro Psalmorum: Dixit Dominus Domino meo: sede a dextris meis; donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum (Ps. CIX, 1)? Si David, inquit, Dominum illum vocat, quomodo ejus filius est (Luc. XX, 13 et 14)? Non ergo David filius, sed Dei filius Christus. Taceat etiam Sabellianus; et cum legit Dominum Domino dixisse, intelligat non eundem et ipsum esse, qui dicit, et cui dicitur: nec enim sibi Pater dixit: Sede a dextris meis; nec sibi dixit: Ponam inimicos tuos. Et aliquando intelligant omnes eum Filium esse, qui a dextris sedet. Et hanc distinctionem inter Patrem Filiumque custodiant, ut sit distinctio Patris et Filii, quod alius Pater, alius Filius, quia una in sede, una majestate potiuntur, et sedent, non pro discerniculo dignitatis, nec pro ordine potestatis, sed pro copula charitatis: unam Patris et Filii intelligant potestatem, in quo et Arius conticescat, qui contraria Sabellio erroris urget vestigia. Audiat Dominum Domino dicere, audiat ad dexteram Patris Filium sedere; et desinat de sermone atque ordine hominum divinitati facere quaestionem.

He who sits at the right hand is another, who took on a body, not who began from a body; who was begotten before the morning star, that is, before the brightness of all lights; for he himself created the dignities of the various lights: for Solomon is indeed after the morning star. Solomon was not a priest; and therefore it could not have been said to him by the almighty Lord: 'From the womb before the day star I begot thee' (Ibid., 3); it could not have been said to him: 'Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek' (Ibid., 4); especially since at the time when Solomon lived, the priests were according to the order of Aaron, not according to the order of Melchizedek. For priests still offered the blood of goats and bulls for the sins and errors of the people: but after Christ came, who offered himself for the salvation of the world (so that the blood of Christ might wash those whom the blood of bulls could not wash), priests began to offer themselves as victims.

26. And so, with a single question, our Lord Jesus Christ shut the mouths of all heretics and put an end to their sacrileges. For with this question he refuted not only the Jews, but also the Photinians, the Arians, and the Sabellians: and therefore, for us (since we now see the Jews have failed, and that execrable perfidy is diminished), some things must now be touched upon concerning the Arians, who do not differ much from the Jews, and the Photinians and Sabellians in the treatment of this question. Let Photinus therefore be silent, who says Christ is the son of David, not of God; and let him be silent, condemned by a heavenly voice. For how does he say that Christ is the son of David, when David himself said in the book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord: sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool' (Ps. 109:1)? 'If David,' he says, 'calls him Lord, how is he his son?' (Luke 20:44). Therefore, Christ is not the son of David, but the Son of God. Let Sabellius also be silent; and when he reads that the Lord said to the Lord, let him understand that he who speaks and he to whom it is spoken are not one and the same person: for the Father did not say to himself: 'Sit at my right hand'; nor did he say to himself: 'I will make your enemies...' And let all at last understand that it is the Son who sits at the right hand. And let them maintain this distinction between the Father and the Son, that there be a distinction of Father and Son, in that the Father is one and the Son is another, because they possess one seat, one majesty, and they sit, not for a separation of dignity, nor for an order of power, but for a bond of charity: let them understand one power of the Father and the Son, in which Arius also may be silenced, who follows the opposite tracks of Sabellius's error. Let him hear the Lord speaking to the Lord, let him hear the Son sitting at the right hand of the Father; and let him cease to raise a question for the divinity from the speech and order of men.

Nec argumentetur hic, quia Pater dicit, sede; legimus enim et alibi, etiam sine Patris dicto sedere Filium, sicut scriptum est: Et sedet ad dexteram Dei (Marc. XVI, 20). Et alibi: Amodo videbitis Filium Hominis sedentem ad dexteram Dei (Matth. XXVI, 64). Ipse est enim cui dicitur, sede, qui Filius hominis nominatur: audit quasi homo, sedet quasi Dei filius. Quid hac potest dici praecellentius potestate, quae etiam carnem hominis ad dexteram Dei collocavit; et infirmum illud conditionis humanae, postquam tamen Verbum caro factum est, divinitati copulavit aeternae?

27. Sed quid hoc est? Posteaquam Photinus obmutuit, Arius conticuit, Sabellius vocem perdidit; adhuc tamen haeresim diversa contra Ecclesiam excitantem ora conspicio. Nam ecce Manichaeus et Valentinianus, et omnis derivatio Manichaeorum in eo telo nititur, quo alii sunt perempti; et fidei praejudicium, fidei testificatione molitur. Ait enim detestanda haeresis: Ecce negavit Christus filium se esse David (Luc. XX, 13); et ideo, inquit, credendum est quod non suscepit carnem. Quibus apertissime in ipso principio Evangelii Scriptura respondet, cum dicit: Liber generationis Jesu Christi filii David (Matth. I, 1). Cur igitur aut alibi David filius dicitur, aut alibi David filius denegatur; nisi ut intelligas aliud esse secundum substantiam divinam esse filium, aliud secundum carnis susceptionem? Nam secundum substantiam divinam, Dei Filius est; secundum carnem filius David. Itaque ubi generatio secundum carnem describitur Salvatoris, David filius nominatur: ubi vero plenitudo confessionis exigitur, cum designatur generatio Salvatoris, non vult se David filium, sed Dei nominari; designatio enim majestatis ejus naturam interpretatur. Sed jam redargutis saevorum interpretationibus, ad Ecclesiam sermo vertendus est.

CAPUT V.

Confirmat rationes adversus Judaeos atque gentiles adductas, et sermonem ad Ecclesiam convertit.

Verum quod saepe titulum quinquagesimi psalmi repetimus, non praesumptionis, sed infirmitatis est exemplum. Uno enim die vel per angustias ingenii, vel per fragilitatem vocis omnem seriem non possum explere tractatus. Et ideo quoniam superiori die adversus Judaeos noster sermo directus est, quos quidem eo usque documenta fidei subegerunt, ut Christus in coelesti solio collocaretur: quod utique in hominem non potest convenire. Neque enim alium nisi Dei Filium ad dexteram Dei sedere credibile est.

Nor let him argue here that the Father says, 'sit'; for we read elsewhere that the Son sits even without the Father's word, as it is written: 'And he sits at the right hand of God' (Mark 16:19). And elsewhere: 'Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God' (Matt. 26:64). For he to whom it is said, 'sit,' is the one who is called the Son of Man: he hears as man, he sits as the Son of God. What can be said to be more excellent than this power, which has placed even the flesh of man at the right hand of God; and has joined that infirmity of the human condition, after the Word was made flesh, to the eternal divinity?

27. But what is this? After Photinus has been struck dumb, Arius has fallen silent, and Sabellius has lost his voice, I still see heresy raising its diverse mouths against the Church. For behold, the Manichaeans and the Valentinian, and every offshoot of the Manichaeans, rely on that very weapon by which others were slain; and they contrive a prejudice against the faith by a testimony of the faith. For that detestable heresy says: 'Behold, Christ denied that he was the son of David' (Luke 20:44); and therefore, it says, it must be believed that he did not take on flesh. To whom Scripture responds most openly at the very beginning of the Gospel, when it says: 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David' (Matt. 1:1). Why then is he called the son of David in one place, and denied to be the son of David in another, unless it is so that you may understand that it is one thing to be the son according to the divine substance, and another according to the assumption of the flesh? For according to the divine substance, he is the Son of God; according to the flesh, the son of David. And so, where the generation of the Savior according to the flesh is described, he is named the son of David; but where the fullness of confession is required, when the generation of the Savior is designated, he does not wish to be named the son of David, but of God; for the designation of his majesty interprets his nature. But now that the interpretations of the cruel have been refuted, the discourse must be turned to the Church.

CHAPTER V.

He confirms the arguments brought against the Jews and gentiles, and turns his discourse to the Church.

But the fact that we repeatedly return to the title of the fiftieth psalm is a sign not of presumption, but of weakness. For in a single day, whether through the narrowness of my intellect or the fragility of my voice, I cannot complete the whole series of the discourse. And so, since on the previous day our sermon was directed against the Jews, who have indeed been so overcome by the proofs of the faith that Christ is placed on a celestial throne: which certainly cannot befit a mere man. For it is not credible that anyone other than the Son of God sits at the right hand of God.

Non alius utique nobis sedere ad dexteram Patris nisi Dei Filius, remotis omnibus ambiguis, aestimandus est. Rursus quoniam Scriptura habet: Ex fructu ventris tui ponam super sedem tuam (Ps. CXXXI, 11); idem utique Dei Filius carnem ex Maria suscepisse credendus est, in qua prophetici fructus est ventris: ut vere successionem originis recognoscas, illumque 717 Dei Filium, factum postea filium hominis per susceptionem carnis, in Patris throno coelesti sedere non dubites. Neque enim Christus sedem aliquam regalem hoc habuit in saeculo, ut putes aliam sedem David similem esse promissam; maxime cum ipse dixerit Dominus: Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo (Joan. XVIII, 36).

Conclusi itaque undique, eo perfidiae suae ten tamenta derivant, ut incredibile esse asserant, quod Deus susceperit carnem: qua ratione autem non potuerit suscipere, explicare non possunt. Quaero enim utrum impossibilitatis, an injuriae causa existiment carnem a Deo suscipi nequivisse? Si impossibilitatis, aliquid ergo impossibile Deo: nihil enim est quod facere voluerit, et facere nequiverit. Superest ergo ut aut voluisse, aut noluisse doceatur. Quod autem majus indicium voluntatis, quam quod ipse dixit: Palam apparui non quaerentibus me . . . Expandi manus meas ad populum non credentem, et contradicentem (Esai. LXV, 1 et 2)? Si ergo voluit et potuit, an putamus eum causa injuriae noluisse? Et quam divinitas sui sentit injuriam? Expers enim est contumeliae, neque subjecta nostris est passionibus; neque enim caro vel detrimentum divinitati afferre potuit, vel augmentum.

Qui tamen hoc objiciunt, quod Dei Filius carnem suscipere non potuerit? Si gentiles, qui deos suos (quoniam homines fuisse negare non possunt) humana specie visos esse testantur? An rex eorum, quem illi suis diis omnibus anteponunt, prodigiales formas potuit pro amore suscipere: Christus carnem hominis, quem ad imaginem sui fecit, atque illud praestantissimum opus suum suscipere pro mundi salute non potuit; et pulchrius illis videtur propter adulterium alieni thori, quam propter redemptionem omnium hominum speciem carnis assumptam? Quod si Judaeus hoc objicit, quomodo legit: Ecce virgo accipiet in utero, et pariet filium; et vocabitur nomen ejus Emmanuel (Esai. VII, 14), quod est interpretatum, nobiscum Deus? Quomodo legit: Ecce qui loquebar adsum (Esai. LIII, 6)? Quomodo autem lectum asserit: Ecce sicut panthera . . . et sicut ursus aporiatu occurram eis (Ose. XIII, 7 et 8)? Dei ergo filius carnem suscipere non potuit pro redemptione omnium, cum ipsi negare non possint quod pro nostrorum supplicio peccatorum, affectum quemdam Deus ferinae crudelitatis induerit; ut qui natura pius est et misericors, nostrorum tamen scelerum atrocitate commotus, assumat in nos quamdam saevitiam bestiarum?

Indeed, no other than the Son of God, all ambiguities removed, is to be esteemed as sitting at the right hand of the Father. Again, since Scripture has it: **Of the fruit of thy womb I will set upon thy throne** (Ps. 131:11); the same Son of God is to be believed to have certainly taken flesh from Mary, in whom is the prophetic fruit of the womb: so that you may truly recognize the succession of origin, and not doubt that He, the Son of God, later made the son of man through the assumption of the flesh, sits on the Father's celestial throne. For Christ had no such royal seat in this world that you might think another seat similar to David's was promised; especially since the Lord Himself said: **My kingdom is not of this world** (John 18:36).

Thus, hemmed in on all sides, they direct the arguments of their perfidy to the point of asserting that it is incredible that God should have taken on flesh: but by what reasoning He could not have taken it on, they cannot explain. For I ask whether they think it was for reason of impossibility, or of injury, that flesh could not have been taken on by God? If of impossibility, then something is impossible for God: for there is nothing that He willed to do and was unable to do. It remains, therefore, that it be shown whether He willed it or willed it not. But what greater sign of His will is there than what He Himself said: **I was made manifest to them that asked not for me.... I have spread out my hands to a people that believeth not, and contradicteth** (Isa. 65:1-2)? If, therefore, He willed it and was able, do we think that He willed it not for reason of injury? And what injury does the divinity feel from itself? For it is free from insult, nor is it subject to our passions; for the flesh could bring neither detriment nor increase to the divinity.

Yet who are they who object that the Son of God could not have taken on flesh? Is it the gentiles, who testify that their gods (since they cannot deny they were men) were seen in human form? Or could their king, whom they place before all their gods, take on monstrous forms for the sake of love: and Christ could not, for the salvation of the world, take on the flesh of man, whom He made in His own image, and that most excellent work of His; and does it seem more beautiful to them for a form of flesh to be assumed for the sake of adultery in another's bed, than for the redemption of all men? But if a Jew objects to this, how does he read: **Behold a virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bring forth a son; and his name shall be called Emmanuel** (Isa. 7:14), which is interpreted, God with us? How does he read: **Behold, I who spoke am here** (Isa. 52:6)? And how does he assert what is read: **Behold, like a panther... and like a bear robbed of her young I will meet them** (Hos. 13:7-8)? Therefore, could the Son of God not take on flesh for the redemption of all, when they themselves cannot deny that for the punishment of our sins, God has put on a certain disposition of beastly cruelty; so that He who by nature is pious and merciful, moved nevertheless by the atrocity of our crimes, assumes against us a certain savagery of beasts?

Sed jam quia et superiore die et hodie Judaeis satis responsum arbitror, apud vos mihi, fratres dilectissimi, prophetici facti ratio praestanda est. Etenim cum primum legeretur hic psalmi titulus, quod venerit Nathan ad David, cum intravit ad Bethsabée, diximus plurimos serie historiae hujus confundi: et ideo tractatum ejus assumpsimus tripartitum; divisionemque tractatus 718 ita putavimus esse faciendam, ut apud Gentiles lapsus conditionis non negaretur, correctio erroris astrueretur; apud Judaeos autem ideo lapsum esse sanctum David doceremus, ne amplius Judaeorum perfidia claudicaret, eumque vel Dei filium desinerent credere, quem viderent communi conditione obnoxium fuisse peccato; Christiani vero surgentis Ecclesiae mysteria possint advertere. Tripartita ergo divisio facta est, una secundum naturam, alia secundum fidem, tertia secundum gratiam; nec infirmitas excludit a venia, et fides excusat a culpa, gratiam quoque promissam jam dudum sacramenta conciliant.

CAPUT VI.

Ecclesiam docet, cur David ac plerique alii Dominici generis auctores in errorem labi permissi sint; et ut inde facilius mysteria eruat, historiam homicidii et adulterii ipsius David recenset.

32. Peccaverit David ne totus mundus erraret; peccaverit sibi, ut nobis omnibus emendaret; postremo peccaverit in corpus suum (qui enim fornicatur, in corpus suum peccat) peccaverit in corpus suum, ut in Christi corpore redimeretur: ecce quem vix defendendum putabamus, jam cernimus praedicandum. Quis enim est qui nolit divina magis in se munera, quam humana opera praedicari? Arbitramur enim secundum apostolum (Rom. III, 28) justificari hominem per fidem, sine operibus Legis: justificetur ergo ex fide David, qui per Legem peccatum agnovit, sed peccati veniam per fidem credidit; justificetur David, quia in peccato ejus subrepto Ecclesiae mysteria refulserunt.

33. Dicit aliquis, qua ratione et adulterium et homicidium commiserit Dominici generis auctor electus a Deo? Aliud dico: Talis auctor Dominici fuit corporis eligendus. Quid est enim corporatio, nisi remissio peccatorum? Et ideo exsors peccati esse non potuit, ut divinam gratiam et exemplo praeferret et nuntio. Denique ea dispositione Bethsabée et Thamar inter auctores Dominici generis computantur: quarum altera adulterium fecit, altera commisit incestum.

But now, since I think sufficient answer has been given to the Jews both on the previous day and today, I must render to you, most beloved brethren, an account of the prophetic deed. For when the title of this psalm was first read—that Nathan came to David, when he went in to Bathsheba—we said that many are confused by the sequence of this story: and for that reason we have undertaken a threefold treatment of it; and we thought the division of the discourse should be made in this way, so that among the Gentiles the fall of our condition would not be denied, but the correction of error would be established; among the Jews, however, we would teach that the holy David fell for this reason, that the perfidy of the Jews might no longer waver, and that they might cease to believe him to be the Son of God, whom they saw to have been subject to sin by our common condition; while Christians might advert to the mysteries of the rising Church. A threefold division was therefore made: one according to nature, another according to faith, and a third according to grace; and so weakness does not exclude from pardon, faith excuses from fault, and the sacraments bestow the grace long since promised.

CHAPTER VI.

He teaches the Church why David and many other ancestors of the Lord's lineage were permitted to fall into error; and so that he might more easily draw out the mysteries from it, he recounts the history of David's own homicide and adultery.

32. David sinned, so that the whole world would not err; he sinned for himself, that he might make amends for us all; finally, he sinned against his own body (for he who fornicates, sins against his own body), he sinned against his own body, that he might be redeemed in the body of Christ: behold, he whom we thought scarcely defensible, we now perceive to be worthy of praise. For who is there who would not want the divine gifts in him to be proclaimed more than his human works? For we hold, according to the apostle (Rom. 3:28), that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the Law: let David therefore be justified by faith, who through the Law recognized sin, but believed in the forgiveness of sin through faith; let David be justified, because in his secret sin the mysteries of the Church shone forth.

33. Someone asks, for what reason did an ancestor of the Lord's lineage, chosen by God, commit both adultery and homicide? I say something else: Such an ancestor of the Lord's body had to be chosen. For what is the incarnation (*corporatio*), if not the remission of sins? And for this reason he could not be without sin, so that he might set forth divine grace both by example and by proclamation. Finally, by that arrangement, Bathsheba and Tamar are counted among the ancestors of the Lord's lineage: of whom one committed adultery, the other incest.

Ea dispositione et Achab et Jechonias, sicut Matthaeus Evangelista descripsit (Matth. I, 9 et 11), annumerantur majoribus Christi, ut omnes homines redempturus, beneficium a suis majoribus inchoaret; simul ne qui se subiecit usque ad corporis passionem, nobilitatem captasse immaculatae originis videretur. Hominum enim ista jactantia est, alienam gloriam, non suam quaerere; et tamen inter ipsos homines major virtutis, quam nobilitatis est gratia. Simul edendum exemplum fuit, ut intelligerent omnes majorum probra non posse posteris esse dedecori; quod unusquisque successionis maculam propriae merito possit abolere virtutis. Vides quantos 719 et quam graviter criminosos Dominicae generationis series comprehendat, de quorum origine propter te nasci Christus non erubuit? Et haec si credas, divinae miserationis in te munera sunt, et hoc coelestis insigne est potestatis. Superabundavit enim peccatum, ut superabundaret gratia. Non fuerit igitur David exceptus a culpa, ut esset electus ad gratiam.

34. Sed jam mysteria ipsius recenseamus historiae, et ex ipsis Scripturarum fontibus hauriamus; atque ut omnem seriem mysteriorum introspicere possimus, textum ipsius repetamus historiae. Sic enim in libro Regnorum meminimus expressum (II Reg. XI, 2 et seq.), eo quod David cum lavantem vidisset Bethsabee Uriae uxorem, adamarit; deinde domum venire praeceperit, cum absens esset vir mulieris; non multo post maritum ejus reversum esse, nuntium belli, religiosum sane et devotum virum, qui belli tempore non putaverit sibi ingrediendam domum, cum socios bello videret intentos, nec domesticis in tabernaculis, sed in praeliaribus tentoriis excubantes; postea jussu David in bella revocatum, sub ea praeceptione, ut objiceretur adversariis bellatoribus, quo morte viri liberam copiam potiendae mulieris rex haberet. Et hic nonnulla est peccati verecundia, et pudor culpae, quod latebram quaesivit erroris; et injustae necis non auctoritatem sibi jure regiae potestatis assumpsit, sed invidiam declinavit. Culpam fatetur, sed tolerabilior est quae premitur verecundia, quam quae insolentia praedicatur. Mortuus est igitur Urias, bellatoribus objectus, sed postea iidem qui eum peremerunt, jussu David, expugnata urbe, sunt perempti. Haec est historiae series, in qua profunda licet spectare mysteria.

CAPUT VII.

Divino invocato Spiritu, incipit detegere mysteria, quae sub David ac Bethsabee adulterio, nec non sub ipsius partu velabantur.

By that arrangement also Ahab and Jechoniah, as Matthew the Evangelist described (Matt. 1:9 and 11), are numbered among the ancestors of Christ, so that He, who was to redeem all men, might begin the benefit with His own ancestors; at the same time, lest He who subjected Himself even to the passion of the body should seem to have sought the nobility of an immaculate origin. For this is the boast of men, to seek another's glory, not their own; and yet among men themselves, the grace of virtue is greater than that of nobility. At the same time, an example had to be given, so that all might understand that the disgraces of ancestors cannot be a dishonor to their descendants; because each one can abolish the stain of his succession by the merit of his own virtue. Do you see how many and how gravely sinful people the line of the Lord's generation includes, from whose origin Christ did not blush to be born for your sake? And if you believe these things, they are gifts of divine mercy in you, and this is a mark of heavenly power. For sin abounded, that grace might abound all the more. Therefore, David was not excepted from guilt, so that he might be chosen for grace.

34. But now let us review the mysteries of the story itself, and let us draw from the very fountains of the Scriptures; and so that we may be able to look into the whole series of mysteries, let us repeat the text of the story itself. For thus we remember it is expressed in the book of Kingdoms (2 Kings 11:2 ff.), that David, when he had seen Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, bathing, fell in love with her; then he commanded her to come to his house, when the woman's husband was absent; that not long after her husband returned, a messenger of war, a truly religious and devout man, who in time of war did not think he should enter his own house, since he saw his comrades intent on the war, and keeping watch not in domestic dwellings but in military tents; that afterwards, by David's command, he was recalled to the war, under the instruction that he be exposed to the enemy warriors, so that by the man's death the king might have free opportunity to possess the woman. And here there is some shame for the sin, and modesty for the fault, in that he sought a hiding place for his error; and he did not assume for himself the authority for the unjust killing by right of royal power, but shunned the odium. He confesses the fault, but a fault which is suppressed by shame is more tolerable than one which is proclaimed with insolence. Uriah therefore died, exposed to the warriors, but afterwards the same men who killed him, by David's command, after the city was stormed, were themselves killed. This is the sequence of the story, in which one may behold profound mysteries.

CHAPTER VII.

Having invoked the Divine Spirit, he begins to uncover the mysteries that were veiled under the adultery of David and Bathsheba, and also under her childbirth.

35. Et quoniam David non defendendum neque enim meo eget auxilio, sed excusandum recipimus, vel potius praedicandum; ne in tanto mysteriorum profundo vacillem, justum est ut ejus ore utar, cujus utor historia. Utar igitur responsorio Prophetico dicens: Cor mundum crea in me, Deus, et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis (Psal. L, 12). Nemo enim sine Spiritus sancti infusione, tanta divini recessus potest spectare mysteria. Etenim si ille tantus propheta, Spiritus sancti petit sibi munus infundi, quid facere infirmus debeat; cum praesertim etiam Apostolus sanctus populi quoque se putet precibus adjuvari, ut aperiatur ei ostium ad loquendum mysterium verbi. O si mihi ostium illud Christus dignetur aperire! Pulsemus tamen; solet enim exaudire pulsantes, quia ipse dixit: Pulsate, et aperietur vobis (Luc. XI, 9). O si mihi se ipse reseraret, quia Christus est janua: ipse intus, ipse extra, ipse via quae ducit, ipse vita ad quam contendimus pervenire.

36. Veni ergo, Domine Jesu, et aperi nobis fontes tuos, ut bibamus de aqua, quam qui bibit, non sitiet in aeternum (Joan. IV, 13). Vel si de fonte adhuc tuo haurire non possumus, dignare concedere ut de puteo saltem haurire possimus, unde potum Samaritanae illi dubitanti adhuc mulieri polliceris. Et tu quidem de fonte omnibus polliceris, sed dubitantibus, ut illi Samaritanae, fons tuus adhuc altus est puteus. Bibamus et nos aquam coelestium secretorum. Et quoniam ad fontem tuum meruimus pervenire, liceat nobis imaginem saltem mysteriorum videre coelestium.

37. Itaque, nisi fallor, per Prophetam Spiritum sanctum intelligimus; per adulteram autem licet Synagogae fornicationes varias aestimare. Et ideo multo ante cernimus revelatum ex Spiritu sancto, et ex familia Judaeorum (quorum patres, et ex quibus Christus secundum carnem) Dominum Jesum esse generandum (Gen. XLIX, 10), qui quidem quasi Judaeus ex adultera familia natus est, sed quasi immaculatus ex Virgine. Erat sub Lege, erat quasi sub viro familia Judaeorum; abolenda fuit Legis observantia, ut veritas substitueretur et gratia.

38. Habemus unum mysterium: accipite et aliud; ita tamen ut memineritis ex prima conceptione Bethsabée natum esse parvulum qui mortuus est, postea natum esse Salomonem: illum parvulum ex conceptione furtiva; istum vero Salomonem jam ex professione conjugii. Liquet igitur per David intelligi prophetam, per Prophetam populum propheticum, ex quo et ex Synagoga primus ille qui natus est (quoniam degeneraverat a majoribus suis per flagitia formatus, et per vitia concretus populus Judaeorum) ad resurrectionis aeternitatem pervenire non potuit, nec in virum perfectum excrescere; sed in exigua sensuum parvitate, et quadam virtutis defecit infantia.

35. And since we take up David not to defend him—for he does not need my help—but to excuse him, or rather, to praise him; lest I should waver in such a great depth of mysteries, it is right that I use his voice, whose history I use. I will therefore use the Prophetic response, saying: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels* (Psalm 50:12). For no one can behold such great mysteries of the divine recess without the infusion of the Holy Spirit. For if that great prophet asks that the gift of the Holy Spirit be infused into him, what should a weak person do; especially when the holy Apostle also thinks he is aided by the prayers of the people, that a door may be opened for him to speak the mystery of the word. O if only Christ would deign to open that door for me! Let us knock, however; for He is accustomed to hear those who knock, because He Himself said: *Knock, and it will be opened to you* (Luke 11:9). O if only He would reveal Himself to me, for Christ is the gate: He is within, He is without, He is the way that leads, He is the life we strive to reach.

36. Come, therefore, Lord Jesus, and open to us your fountains, that we may drink of the water, of which whoever drinks *will not thirst forever* (John 4:13). Or if we cannot yet draw from your fountain, deign to grant that we may at least draw from the well, from which you promise a drink to that still-doubting Samaritan woman. And you indeed promise to all from the fountain, but for those who doubt, like that Samaritan woman, your fountain is still a deep well. Let us also drink the water of celestial secrets. And since we have been worthy to come to your fountain, let it be permitted to us to see at least the image of the celestial mysteries.

37. And so, if I am not mistaken, by the Prophet we understand the Holy Spirit; by the adulteress, however, one may reckon the various fornications of the Synagogue. And therefore we see revealed long before, from the Holy Spirit and from the family of the Jews (whose are the fathers, and from whom is Christ according to the flesh), that the Lord Jesus was to be generated (Gen. 49:10), who indeed was born as a Jew from an adulterous family, but as immaculate from a Virgin. The family of the Jews was under the Law, it was as if under a husband; the observance of the Law had to be abolished, so that truth and grace might be substituted.

38. We have one mystery: receive also another; yet in such a way that you remember that from the first conception of Bathsheba a little child was born who died, and afterwards Solomon was born: that little child from a furtive conception; but this Solomon from a profession of marriage. It is clear, therefore, that by David is understood the prophet, by the Prophet the prophetic people, from whom and from the Synagogue that first one who was born (since the Jewish people had degenerated from its ancestors, formed by wicked deeds and conceived through vices) could not attain to the eternity of resurrection, nor grow into a perfect man; but failed in the slight smallness of the senses, and in a certain infancy of virtue.

At vero ille qui postea ex legitima conceptus est copula, populus Christianus, ille sapiens atque pacificus, hoc enim Salomonis interpretatione reseratur, ad incanam longaevae resurrectionis aetatem, atque ad regnum illud coeleste pervenit. Per illum autem populum Lex soluta, per istum gratia reformata est.

39. Accipite etiam tertium mysterium. Quod David Hebraei excelsum dicunt, Latini humiliatum interpretantur. Quis est autem vere humiliatus, nisi ille qui non rapinam arbitratus est esse se aequalem Deo: sed formam servi accipiens humiliavit semetipsum, factus obediens usque ad mortem (Philip. II, 6 et seq.)? Hic igitur est qui significatur David, excelsus per naturam, sed humiliatus per misericordiam: sublimis in divinitate, sed mitis in corpore. Itaque ubi humiliatus, ibi obediens. Ex eo enim nascitur obedientia, ex quo humilitas, et in eo desinit. Cum enim obediens dicitur factus usque ad mortem (mors autem non divinitatis, sed corporis fuit) non utique obedientia divinitatis fuit illa, sed corporis; nec humilitas majestatis illa, sed carnis. Itaque quantum ad susceptionem corporis spectat, apostolica lectio in quo Christi fuerit humilitas, declaravit: quod vero ad naturam spectat divinitatis, Evangelica lectione reseratum est: quam pio prosecuti estis assensu, cum audiretis legi, dicente Dei Filio: Ego et Pater unum sumus (Joan. X, 30). 721 Unum enim divinitate sunt Pater et Filius: sed non unum sunt corporis sacramentum, et divinitatis aeternitas. Nec solus tamen Apostolus humiliatum dixit esse Dominum, sed ipse quoque se humilem esse memoravit dicens: Tollite jugum meum, quia leve est; quoniam mitis sum et humilis corde (Matth. XI, 29). Et tamen non sola interpretatione, sed etiam appellatione signatum est; quia scriptum est: Inveni David servum meum, oleo sancto meo unxi eum (Psal. LXXXVIII, 21). Et infra dicit: Pater meus es tu (Ibid. 27); et, Ego dicam illi: Filius meus es tu. Ergo David quem quaerebamus, invenimus: servum quidem specie, sed Dominum veritate.

CAPUT VIII.

Quid domus regia, in qua deambulat David: quid nudatio et lavatio Bethsabée; quidve quod statim nuda visa amata sit, significet.

But he who was afterwards conceived from a legitimate union, the Christian people, that wise and peaceful one—for this is revealed by the interpretation of Solomon—attains to the hoary age of long-lived resurrection, and to that heavenly kingdom. Through the former people the Law was dissolved, through the latter grace was reformed.

39. Receive also a third mystery. What the Hebrews call **excelsus** (exalted), the Latins interpret as **humiliatum** (humbled). But who is truly humbled, except he **who did not consider it robbery to be equal with God: but taking the form of a servant, humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death** (Phil. 2:6 et seq.)? This, therefore, is he who is signified by David, exalted by nature, but humbled by mercy; sublime in divinity, but gentle in body. And so, where he is humbled, there he is obedient. For from that from which humility is born, from that obedience is born, and in that it ends. For when he is said to have been made obedient even unto death (but death was of the body, not of the divinity), that was by no means an obedience of the divinity, but of the body; nor was that a humility of majesty, but of the flesh. And so, as far as it pertains to the assumption of the body, the apostolic reading has declared in what Christ's humility consisted: but as for what pertains to the nature of the divinity, it has been revealed by the Gospel reading, which you followed with pious assent when you heard it read, the Son of God saying: **I and the Father are one** (John 10:30). For the Father and the Son are one in divinity: but the sacrament of the body and the eternity of the divinity are not one. Nor, however, did the Apostle alone say that the Lord was humbled, but He Himself also mentioned that He was humble, saying: **Take my yoke, for it is light; for I am meek and humble of heart** (Matt. 11:29). And yet it is signified not only by interpretation, but also by name; for it is written: **I have found David my servant, with my holy oil I have anointed him** (Psalm 88:21). And below it says: **You are my Father** (Ibid. 27); and, **I will say to him: You are my Son.** Therefore, the David we were seeking, we have found: a servant indeed in appearance, but Lord in truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

What the royal house signifies, in which David walks; what the nudity and washing of Bathsheba; or what it means that she was loved as soon as she was seen naked.

40. Hic ergo David intra domum deambulavit suam. Quae utique domus est Christi, nisi illa de qua dicit: Quia apud Patrem meum multae mansiones sunt (Joan. XIV, 2)? In illa ergo regia situs humanam conditionem nudam vidit, et miseratus adamavit. Erat enim adhuc nuda virtutum, quia per insidias serpentis genitalibus erat naturae suae exuviis destituta. Neque enim verisimile videtur, ut ante domum regis mulier nudaretur, ante domum regis femina se lavaret (II Reg. XI, 2 et seq.): quasi locus lavacro opportuno alius esse non posset. Non quadrat, non congruit, non cum fide convenit: distat a vero, abhorret a sensu. Talem rex, tam petulantem, tam procacem horrere potuit, non amare. An illa, si non viro verecundari, nec regios saltem vereri potuisset aspectus? An illam, priusquam rex videret, nec ministri ejus arcere potuerunt?

41. Ergo si hoc cum fide non potest convenire: quaeramus quae ista sit nuda, videlicet humana conditio, omnibus vestimentis exuta naturae, carens amictu immortalitatis, et innocentiae spoliata velamine. Nudus est enim qui peccato nudatur et culpa. Denique ille primus nostri generis peccator, atque utinam solus, antequam peccaret, nudum se esse non sensit, posteaquam peccavit, nudum se esse vidit; et ideo tegendum foliis putavit, quia nudum se esse cognovit. Factus est igitur ille sibi nudus, posteaquam factus est reus culpae. In illo nudata est omnis humana conditio, per successionem naturae; non solum culpae, sed etiam aerumnae obnoxia. Ergo ille se nudum sensit et vidit: unde ita est omnis nostra conditio, ut qui se nudum putaverit, nudum et videat et sentiat. Denique qui divitias concupiscit, nudus est: qui contemnit, opulentus est. Adeo suus cuique sensus aerumna est, et sua cuique virtus expers injuriae est. Ergo humanam conditionem primo per Legem sibi Christus in 722 conjugium vindicavit, quam repudiavit postea. Unde et ait: Quis liber repudii matris vestrae, quo dimisi eam (Esai. L, 1)? Hoc igitur genere Christus familiam suam nudam vidit, et amavit: amat enim sanctam Christus animam. Denique amabat Jesus Lazarum et Mariam: amabat Christus Ecclesiam suam, quamvis nudam, quamvis nullo adhuc virtutum decore vestitam.

40. Here, therefore, David walked within his house. And what is this house of Christ, if not that of which he says: 'For in my Father's house there are many mansions' (John 14:2)? In that royal abode, therefore, he, being present, saw the naked human condition, and taking pity, fell in love with it. For it was still naked of virtues, because through the snares of the serpent it had been deprived of the native coverings of its nature. For it does not seem plausible that a woman would undress before the king's house, that a female would wash herself before the king's house (2 Kings 11:2 ff.), as if there could be no other place suitable for bathing. It does not fit, it is not suitable, it does not agree with faith: it is far from the truth, it is abhorrent to reason. Such a woman, so wanton, so impudent, the king could have shuddered at, not loved. Or could she, if not ashamed before her husband, at least not have feared the royal gaze? Or could his servants not have kept her away before the king saw her?

41. Therefore, if this cannot be reconciled with faith, let us inquire who this naked one is: namely, the human condition, stripped of all the garments of nature, lacking the cloak of immortality, and despoiled of the veil of innocence. For he is naked who is laid bare by sin and fault. Indeed, that first sinner of our race—and would that he were the only one—did not feel himself to be naked before he sinned; after he sinned, he saw that he was naked, and therefore thought he should be covered with leaves, because he knew himself to be naked. He therefore became naked to himself after he became guilty of fault. In him, all human condition was laid bare, through the succession of nature, subject not only to fault but also to hardship. Therefore, he felt and saw himself naked: whence our whole condition is such that whoever considers himself naked, both sees and feels himself to be naked. Indeed, he who covets riches is naked; he who scorns them is wealthy. To such a degree is each person's own perception a hardship, and each person's own virtue free from harm. Therefore, Christ first claimed the human condition for himself in marriage through the Law, which he later repudiated. Whence he also says: 'Where is the bill of your mother's divorce, with which I have put her away?' (Isaiah 50:1). In this way, therefore, Christ saw his family naked, and loved it: for Christ loves the holy soul. Indeed, Jesus loved Lazarus and Mary; Christ loved his Church, although naked, although not yet clothed with any beauty of virtues.

42. Denique ut sciamus propositae disputationi Scripturarum seriem convenire, discamus Ecclesiam mundam, discamus quaerentem, festinantem et lavantem se ante domum Christi, quando baptizabat Joannes in Jordane dicens: Ego quidem baptizo vos in aqua in poenitentiam: qui autem venit post me, fortior me est, cujus non sum dignus calceamenta portare: ipse vos baptizabit in Spiritu sancto (Matth. III, 11). Ergo quando baptizabatur plebs in poenitentiam, Christum utique domui ejus jam vicina quaerebat, ut perveniret ad gratiam. Quaerebat ergo a Joanne Christum Ecclesia dicens: Annuntia mihi quem dilexit anima mea (Cant. I, 6); ipsum causam desiderii, ipsum causam lavacri sibi esse commemorans, sicut habes: Fusca sum et decora, filia Hierusalem, ut tabernacula Cedar, ut pelles Salomonis (Ibid., 4). Habes causam qua ratione se lavare gestiat, quia fuscam se esse commemorat. Nam quasi interroganti Joanni, qua ratione plebs multa concurrens gestiret lavari, respondit: Fusca sum et decora, filia Hierusalem. Quia fusca est, lavari desiderat; quia decora est, videri nuda non metuit. Nolite, inquit, aspicere me, quia offuscata sum, quia non est intuitus me sol. Ergo fuscatur, quando non videmur a Christo; sed quando videmur, albescimus. Vidit ergo eam ille cui nuda sunt omnia, et interna pectoris occulta esse non possunt; quia scrutator est cordis et renum: nihil huic tectum, nihil est involutum. Vidit Ecclesiam suam nudam, et vidit, et amavit. Vidit nudam dilectam, et quasi filius charitatis adamavit.

43. Videte quemadmodum videat, videte quemadmodum vocet. Non hic adulterii opprobria, sed mysteria castitatis sunt. Tota es, inquit, formosa, amica mea, proxima mea, et reprehensio non est in te. Ades huc a Libano sponsa, ades huc a Libano, transibis et pertransibis a principio fidei (Cant. IV, 7 et 8). Et bene a principio fidei. Ergo ubi fidem habes, adulterium timere non debes; fides enim conjugii est, fraus adulterii. Sed ut adesse possit a Libano, ante praemisit dicens: Exsurge, veni, proxima mea, formosa mea, columba mea, perfecta mea (Cant. II, 10). Proxima, utique fidei desiderio; formosa, decore virtutis; columba, gratia spiritali. Pennae enim columbae deargentatae aeternam illam significant potestatem; et columbae volatus sancti Spiritus praesentiam declaravit. Vocat igitur ad se eam Christus, ut veniat; quoniam spiritalibus jam pretiis dotata veniebat: Quia ecce, inquit, hyems praeteriit, imber abiit, discessit sibi, flores visi sunt in terra (Ibid., 11 et 12). Videte 723 quemadmodum sancta invitetur Ecclesia.

42. Finally, so that we may know that the series of the Scriptures agrees with the proposed argument, let us learn of the Church, clean, seeking, hastening, and washing herself before the house of Christ, when John was baptizing in the Jordan, saying: 'I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost' (Matthew 3:11). Therefore, when the people were being baptized unto repentance, the Church, now near to his house, was certainly seeking Christ, that it might attain to grace. The Church, therefore, was seeking Christ from John, saying: 'Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth' (Canticles 1:6); declaring him to be the cause of her desire, the cause of her washing, as you have it: 'I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon' (Ibid., 4). You have the reason why she is eager to wash herself: because she declares herself to be dark. For, as if in answer to John asking for what reason the great crowd flocking together was eager to be washed, she replied: 'I am black, but comely, O daughter of Jerusalem.' Because she is dark, she desires to be washed; because she is comely, she does not fear to be seen naked. 'Look not upon me,' she says, 'because I am darkened, because the sun has not looked upon me.' Therefore, we are darkened when we are not seen by Christ; but when we are seen, we become white. Therefore, he saw her, to whom all things are naked, and the secrets of the heart cannot be hidden; for he is the searcher of the heart and reins: to him nothing is covered, nothing is wrapped up. He saw his Church naked, and he saw, and he loved. He saw his beloved naked, and as a son of charity, he fell deeply in love.

43. See how he sees, see how he calls. Here are not the reproaches of adultery, but the mysteries of chastity. 'Thou art all fair,' he says, 'my love, my near one, and there is no spot in thee. Come hither from Lebanon, my spouse, come hither from Lebanon, thou shalt pass and shalt pass over from the beginning of faith' (Canticles 4:7-8). And well said, 'from the beginning of faith.' Therefore, where you have faith, you should not fear adultery; for faith belongs to marriage, deceit to adultery. But that she might be able to come from Lebanon, he first sent word, saying: 'Arise, come, my near one, my fair one, my dove, my perfect one' (Canticles 2:10). Near, certainly, by the desire of faith; fair, by the beauty of virtue; a dove, by spiritual grace. For the silvered wings of the dove signify that eternal power; and the flight of the dove declared the presence of the Holy Spirit. Christ, therefore, calls her to himself, that she may come; since she was coming endowed now with spiritual prices: 'For, lo,' he says, 'the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers have appeared in the land' (Ibid., 11-12). See how the holy Church is invited.

Hyems, inquit, discessit sibi, ne hyemem nuda formidet, hyemem non temporis, sed infirmitatis, quae agrum animae fecundum omni flore dispoliat. Est enim hyems non terreni solis, est hyems mentis, quando animo frigus illabitur, quando vapor animi evanescit, quando solvitur vigor sensus, quando nimius humor exundat et mentem gravat, quando interior caliginat aspectus. Et ideo ait Dominus: Videte ne fiat fuga vestra hyeme vel sabbato (Matth. XXIV, 20). Bonum enim ut tunc dies iudicii vel mortis adveniat, cum viget animi blanda temperies, cum coeleste mysterium serena luce resplendet, cum cor nostrum ardet in nobis. Tunc enim Christus est praesens, sicut testantur in Evangelio Ammaon et Cleophas dicentes: Nonne cor nostrum ardens erat in nobis in via, cum aperiret nobis Scripturas (Luc. XXIV, 32)? Viget autem animus quando etiam flos videtur in terris. Quis est iste flos boni odoris, nisi ille qui dixit: Ego flos campi, et liliū convallium (Cant. II, 1)? De quo et in Esaia scriptum est: Et exiet virga de radice Jesse, et virga ex radice ascendet et flos ex virga exiet (Esaï. XI, 1). Radix utique familia Judaeorum est, virga Maria, flos Mariae Christus, qui quando nostra resplendet in terra, et in agro animae redolet, vel in Ecclesia sua vernat, nec frigus possumus timere, nec pluviam vereri, sed exspectare iudicii diem.

44. Et ideo Ecclesia ut hunc florem videret, omni studio festinabat, sicut ipsa testatur dicens: In cubili, in noctibus quaesivi quem dilexit anima mea: quaesivi eum, et non inveni: vocavi eum, et non exaudivit me. Exsurgam itaque, et introibo in domum, in forum, et plateas, et quaeram quem dilexit anima mea (Cant. III, 1 et seq.). Quaesivi, et non inveni eum . . . Invenerunt me custodes qui circumeunt civitatem, me percusserunt, et tulerunt pallium a me (Cant. V, 7). Videtis quemadmodum quaerat quem desiderat invenire, ut non timeat vulnerari. Sed haec vulnera non metuenda sunt, sed optanda; quia vulnera charitatis sunt; sicut ipsa dicit: vulnerata charitate ego sum (Ibid. 8). Bona charitatis vulnera. Denique utiliora vulnera amici, quam voluntaria oscula inimici.

Eamdem materiam prosequitur, ostenditque Ecclesiam Christo, qui velatam Synagogam despexerit, nudam placuisse; tum ejusdem ad illum inquirendum ardorem describit; ac demum Legis solutionem in Uriae nece adumbratam explicat.

'The winter,' he says, 'is gone,' lest being naked she should dread the winter—a winter not of season, but of infirmity, which despoils the fertile field of the soul of every flower. For there is a winter not of the earthly sun, there is a winter of the mind, when coldness glides into the soul, when the warmth of the spirit vanishes, when the vigor of sense is dissolved, when excessive humor abounds and weighs down the mind, when the inner sight grows dark. And therefore the Lord says: 'See that your flight be not in the winter, or on the sabbath' (Matthew 24:20). For it is good that the day of judgment or of death should then arrive when the gentle temper of the soul is strong, when the heavenly mystery shines with a serene light, when our heart burns within us. For then Christ is present, as Ammaon and Cleophas testify in the Gospel, saying: 'Did not our heart burn within us on the way, when he opened to us the Scriptures?' (Luke 24:32). But the soul is vigorous when the flower is also seen in the land. Who is this flower of good odor, but he who said: 'I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys' (Canticles 2:1)? Of whom it is also written in Isaiah: 'And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his root, and a flower shall come forth from the branch' (Isaiah 11:1). The root, of course, is the family of the Jews, the rod is Mary, the flower of Mary is Christ, who, when he shines upon our earth, and is fragrant in the field of the soul, or blossoms in his Church, we can neither fear the cold, nor dread the rain, but await the day of judgment.

44. And therefore the Church, in order to see this flower, hastened with all zeal, as she herself testifies, saying: 'On my bed, in the nights I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, and found him not: I called him, and he did not hear me. 'I will rise therefore, and I will go into the house, into the market, and the streets, and I will seek him whom my soul loveth' (Canticles 3:1 ff.). 'I sought him, and I found him not... The watchmen that go about the city found me, they struck me, and took away my cloak from me' (Canticles 5:7). You see how she seeks him whom she desires to find, so that she does not fear to be wounded. But these wounds are not to be feared, but to be desired; for they are the wounds of charity, as she herself says: 'I am wounded with charity' (Ibid. 8). Good are the wounds of charity. Finally, more useful are the wounds of a friend than the voluntary kisses of an enemy.

He continues on the same subject, and shows that the Church, being naked, was pleasing to Christ, who had scorned the veiled Synagogue; then he describes her ardor in seeking Him; and finally, he explains the dissolution of the Law, prefigured in the death of Uriah.

Merito ergo nuda, quia pallium perdidit: aut fortassis ideo nuda, quia nonnumquam virtutis est opertum non habere pectus, cor non habere velatum. Denique velatam illam, hoc est, Synagogam (II Cor. III, 13 et seq.), quae habebat velamen in lectione veteris Testamenti, quod modo revelatur, quoniam in Christo evacuatur; velatam, inquam, Synagogam Christus despexit et 724 sprexit; unde hodieque velamen super cor Judaeorum est positum. At vero ea quae tota ad Dominum mente convertitur, nuda est atque perspicua. Cum enim quis conversus fuerit ad Dominum, velamen auferetur; ut gloriam Dei speculantes videre possimus. Denique etiam alibi nudam esse virtutis indicium est, quia scriptum est: Exui tunicam meam, quomodo induam eam? Lavi pedes meos, quomodo inquinabo illos (Cant. V, 3)?

Quam igitur tunicam exuerit, et non invenerit quemadmodum induat eam, de Scripturis, si possumus, revelemus. Est enim quaedam tunica corporalis, sunt cupiditatum quaedam intexta velamina; et ideo interdum melius est nudum esse corpore, quam corde velatum. Unde etiam Paulus nos admonet exspoliari multo esse melius quam supervestiri, dicens etiam alibi: Exspoliantes vos veterem hominem cum actibus suis, induite novum qui renovatur in agnitione, secundum imaginem ejus qui creavit eum (Coloss. III, 9 et 10). Ergo quae exspoliata est, et pedes lotos habet; et ideo quae lavit, nescit quemadmodum inquinari possint. Obliviscitur enim per gratiam, quod hauserat per naturam. Magnus igitur hic est justus amor mulieris ante David regiam se lavantis.

Verum non solum lavit, sed etiam vocavit; ut in eodem accepimus libro, dicente sancta Ecclesia: Veni, frater meus, exeamus in agrum, requiescamus in castellis, diluculo surgamus in vineas, videamus si floruit vitis (Cant. VII, 11 et 12). Non solum igitur lavat, sed etiam Christum ad se venire provocat et invitat dicens: Tibi dabo ubera mea (Ibid.). Nec sua tantum, sed etiam nova ac vetera pollicetur, sicut habes: Nova et vetera, frater meus, servavi tibi (Ibid. 13). Et quasi amoris impatiens quaerit adminiculum alicujus, a quo Christus rogetur ut veniat. Videte aestuantem, videte desiderantem: Quis dabit, inquit, te, frater meus, lactantem ubera matris meae (Cant. VIII, 1)? Et qua ratione quaerat, et qua gratia invitet, et quemadmodum possit tenere, demonstrat: quemadmodum foris morantem exspectet, ostendit: et ut domum suam ingrediatur, implorat dicens: Inveniens te foris osculabor te, assumam te, et adducam te in domum matris meae, et in secretum ejus quae concepit me (Ibid. 2).

Rightly, therefore, is she naked, because she has lost her cloak; or perhaps she is naked for this reason, that it is sometimes a mark of virtue not to have a covered breast, not to have a veiled heart. In short, that veiled one, that is, the Synagogue (II Cor. 3:13 ff.), which had a veil in the reading of the Old Testament—which is now revealed, since in Christ it is done away with—the veiled Synagogue, I say, Christ looked down upon and spurned; whence even today a veil is placed over the heart of the Jews. But she who is converted to the Lord with her whole mind is naked and transparent. For when one has been converted to the Lord, the veil will be taken away, so that we may be able to see, as in a mirror, the glory of God. Finally, elsewhere too, being naked is a sign of virtue, for it is written: "I have put off my tunic, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I soil them?" (Song of Songs 5:3).

What tunic, therefore, she has taken off, and has not found how to put it on, let us, if we can, reveal from the Scriptures. For there is a certain bodily tunic, there are certain woven veils of desires; and therefore it is sometimes better to be naked in body than veiled in heart. Whence also Paul admonishes us that it is much better to be stripped than to be clothed over, saying also elsewhere: "Stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds, put on the new, who is renewed in knowledge, according to the image of Him who created him" (Col. 3:9-10). Therefore, she who is stripped has also washed her feet; and therefore she who has washed them does not know how they can be soiled. For she forgets through grace what she had drawn in through nature. Great, therefore, is this righteous love of the woman washing herself before David's palace.

But not only did she wash, she also called; as we have received in the same book, with the holy Church saying: "Come, my brother, let us go forth into the field, let us rest in the villages, let us rise early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine has flourished" (Song of Songs 7:11-12). Therefore, not only does she wash, but she also provokes and invites Christ to come to her, saying: "To you I will give my breasts" (Ibid.). And she promises not only her own things, but also new and old, as you have it: "New and old, my brother, I have kept for you" (Ibid. 13). And as if impatient with love, she seeks the help of someone by whom Christ may be asked to come. Behold her burning, behold her desiring: "Who will give you," she says, "to me, my brother, sucking the breasts of my mother?" (Song of Songs 8:1). And she shows with what reason she seeks, with what grace she invites, and how she can hold him; she shows how she waits for him as he tarries outside; and she implores him to enter her house, saying: "Finding you outside, I will kiss you, I will take you, and I will bring you into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her who conceived me" (Ibid. 2).

Vides quemadmodum nuda sit, quae non potest tectum habere secretum intemeratae utique naturae, secretum intimae conscientiae, non designatum aliqua temeritate vitiorum. Hortus enim clausus est Ecclesia sancta, et immaculata virginitas, quae ideo hanc gratiam meretur a Christo, quia Verbum Dei quaesivit, desideravit, invenit, advigilans ante ostia sapientiae, sicut ipsa dicit: Beatus vir qui audierit me, et homo qui vias meas custodierit, advigilans meis ostiis quotidie, custodiens postes mei introitus. Exitus mei, exitus sunt vitae (Prov. VIII, 34).

Sic Ecclesiae suae Christus speciem concupivit et paravit sibi eam uxorem adsciscere. Sed quia erat sub Lege (sub Lege enim Petrus, Joannes, 725 caeterique apostolici viri), prius nos observantiae corporalis vinculis relaxandos putavit. Quam vis enim Lex religiosa, Lex justa, sicut Urias persona inducitur, qui tam religiosus et castus fuit, ut regressus e bello uxorem non recognosceret, nec intraret ad eam; tamen quia Urias in David, hoc est, viro humili, copulam cognovit Ecclesiae, a Synagogae conjunctione discedens, locum futuris nuptiis praeparavit. Unde et Joannes typum accepit Legis, qui quamvis esset ex Patribus, parari vias Domini nuntiavit et Ecclesiae copulam prophetabat; et ideo occisus inducitur, ut defectum legitimae observationis ostenderet. Lex enim et prophetae usque ad Joannem. Ergo jam Urias occisus est in typo Legis, ut Synagoga Legis laqueis solveretur, quoniam quae sub viro est mulier, vivente viro, ligata est legi; si autem mortuus fuerit vir, soluta est a lege viri. Igitur vivente viro, vocabitur adultera, si juncta fuerit alteri viro; si autem mortuus fuerit vir ejus, liberata est a lege viri: ita ut non sit adultera si fuerit cum alio viro. Ergo non adultera humanae conditioni, quae licet sub Lege fuerit, tamen abolita quodammodo observantia Legis, in gratiam vindicata est.

Legis autem observantiam non Christus abolevit. Unde et Uriam non David occidit, sed occidi a bellatoribus passus est: hoc est, profanari ritum observantiae ex Lege venientis, per incursionem barbarorum et captivitatem Judaeorum passus est Christus. Denique Urias, lux mea dicitur. Quae autem Christi lux, nisi Lex et Evangelium? Si enim crederetis Moysi, crederetis et mihi; de me enim ille scripsit (Joan. V, 46). Quia lux Christi in Lege praecessit, cujus postea in Evangelii gratia quasi in heptamyxo spiritu universa mundi hujus implevit. Hinc ergo Legi carnem sustulit vel Ecclesiam et sibi junxit: cujus Legis lumen populus hostilis imminuit, quando Legis sancta violavit. Imminuta ergo lux Dei est in populo Judaeorum; quia caecitas ex parte in Israel contigit, donec plenitudo gentium intraret, et sic omnis Israel salvus fieret.

You see how naked she is, who cannot have a hidden secret of an undefiled nature, a secret of the inmost conscience, not marked by any rashness of vices. For the holy Church is a garden enclosed, and an immaculate virginity, which therefore merits this grace from Christ, because she sought, desired, and found the Word of God, watching at the gates of wisdom, as she herself says: "Blessed is the man who hears me, and the man who keeps my ways, watching daily at my gates, keeping the posts of my entry." "My goings forth are the goings forth of life" (Prov. 8:34).

Thus Christ desired the beauty of His Church and prepared to take her to Himself as a wife. But because she was under the Law (for under the Law were Peter, John, and the other apostolic men), He first thought that we should be released from the bonds of carnal observance. For although the Law is religious and just, as is represented by the person of Uriah, who was so religious and chaste that on returning from war he would not recognize his wife nor go in to her; nevertheless, because Uriah, in David—that is, in the humble man—recognized the union of the Church, he, departing from conjunction with the Synagogue, prepared a place for the future nuptials. Whence also John received the type of the Law, who, although he was of the Fathers, announced that the ways of the Lord were to be prepared and prophesied the union of the Church; and therefore he is represented as killed, to show the failure of the legal observance. For the Law and the prophets were until John. Therefore, Uriah is now killed in the type of the Law, so that the Synagogue might be freed from the snares of the Law, since a woman who is under a husband is bound by law to her husband while he lives; but if the husband dies, she is loosed from the law of her husband. Therefore, while her husband lives, she will be called an adulteress if she is joined to another man; but if her husband dies, she is freed from the law of her husband, so that she is not an adulteress if she is with another man. Therefore, she is not an adulteress to the human condition, who, although she was under the Law, was nevertheless vindicated into grace when the observance of the Law was in a certain way abolished.

But Christ did not abolish the observance of the Law. Whence also David did not kill Uriah, but allowed him to be killed by the warriors: that is, Christ allowed the rite of observance coming from the Law to be profaned through the invasion of barbarians and the captivity of the Jews. Finally, Uriah is interpreted as "my light." And what is the light of Christ, if not the Law and the Gospel? "For if you believed Moses, you would believe me also; for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Because the light of Christ was prefigured in the Law, and afterwards, in the grace of the Gospel, as with a seven-branched spirit, He filled all things of this world. Hence, therefore, He took from the Law the flesh, or the Church, and joined her to Himself: the light of which Law a hostile people diminished when they violated the holy things of the Law. Therefore, the light of God was diminished among the people of the Jews; because a partial blindness has befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles should come in, and so all Israel should be saved.

CAPUT X.

Renovata attentione, altius mysterium in adulterio Davidico latens, nimirum Verbi divini cum humana natura conjunctionem scrutatur.

Superest adhuc et quartum mysterium, quod, quaeso, placidis accipiatis auribus, et mentem nostram, non verba pendatis; non enim in verbo est regnum Dei, sed in virtute. Adulterium factum est, et homicidium factum. Hoc est quod dictum est ad Prophetam: Sume tibi baculum nucinum (Jerem. I, 11). Et alibi virgam nucinam legimus, per quam intelligimus jus quoddam et summam prophetiae, quae more nucis foris amara in cortice; dura in medio testa, tenera intus est et fructuosa. Etsi igitur in historia amariora auditis, in typo dura cognoscitis; sperate tamen in mysterio fructuosa. Adulterium, inquam, in typo 726 salutis est factum; non enim adulterium omne damnum est. Denique ad Prophetam dictum est: Vade, accipe tibi uxorem fornicariam (Ose. I, 2). Dominus hoc jubet cum ea quae fornicata fuerit, esse conjugium: cujus conjugii, ut supra diximus (Supra, cap. 9 hujus libri), partus est Christus. Namque filio qui ex fornicatione est natus, a Domino nomen impositum est Jezrahel, quod divina est generatio. Si ergo pia illa copula fornicariae, etiam ista utique pia societatis adulterae copula est. Sed illa de Judaeis. De divinis autem non audeo, licet pium, adulterium nominare, ne quem vel sonus sermonis offendant, licet sensus venerationis in promptu sit; quod potest tamen cautius dici, etsi non expressius, ex disparibus copulis contubernium pium factum est, cum Verbum caro factum est. Non sunt enim legitima consortia divinitatis et carnis; nec ut quodam foedere conveniunt naturae, caro animae et anima carni, ita etiam divinitas et caro justis servant quodammodo thori legem. Suscepit carnem Deus, assumpsit animam, per inusitatam nec legitimam incarnationem consortium fecit esse legitimum, ut sit Deus omnia in omnibus.

Denique ut scias esse mysterium, interpretare vocabula. David enim accipis in typo Christi, Bethsabée filia sabbati, aut filia plena, vel puteus dicitur juramenti. Quid igitur expressius, quam quod filia sabbati caro Christi est; quia misit Deus Filium suum factum ex muliere, factum sub Lege? Eadem plena, quia in passione ejus Legis est plenitudo, vel quia plena gratia Spiritus sancti. Jesus enim plenus Spiritu sancto regressus est a Jordane. Eadem etiam puteus juramenti, hoc est, religionis et fidei. Et bene puteus, quia flumina de ventre ejus fluent aquae vivae.

CHAPTER X.

With renewed attention, he scrutinizes a deeper mystery lying hidden in the Davidic adultery, namely, the conjunction of the divine Word with human nature.

There remains yet a fourth mystery, which, I ask, you receive with calm ears, and that you weigh our meaning, not our words; for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Adultery was committed, and murder was committed. This is what was said to the Prophet: "Take for yourself a nut-wood staff" (Jer. 1:11). And elsewhere we read of a nut-wood rod, by which we understand a certain law and the height of prophecy, which, like a nut, is bitter on the outside in its husk, hard in the middle with its shell, but tender and fruitful within. Therefore, although in the historical account you hear bitter things, and in the type you recognize hard things, yet hope for fruitful things in the mystery. The adultery, I say, was committed as a type of salvation; for not every adultery is to be condemned. Finally, it was said to the Prophet: "Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom" (Hos. 1:2). The Lord commands this union with her who had fornicated: the offspring of which union, as we said above (Above, chap. 9 of this book), is Christ. For to the son who was born of fornication, the name Jezreel was given by the Lord, which means "divine generation." If, therefore, that union with the fornicatress was pious, then this union of an adulterous society is also certainly pious. But that concerned the Jews. Concerning divine things, however, I do not dare to name it adultery, although a pious one, lest the very sound of the word offend anyone, even though the sense of veneration is ready at hand; yet it can be said more cautiously, if not more expressly, that a pious union was made from disparate partners when the Word was made flesh. For the unions of divinity and flesh are not legitimate; nor, as by a certain covenant of nature the flesh agrees with the soul and the soul with the flesh, so also do divinity and the flesh of a just man observe, in a way, the law of the marriage bed. God took on flesh, assumed a soul, and through an unusual and not legitimate incarnation, made the union legitimate, so that God might be all in all.

Finally, that you may know it is a mystery, interpret the names. For you take David as a type of Christ; Bathsheba is called daughter of the sabbath, or full daughter, or well of the oath. What, therefore, is more explicit than that the daughter of the sabbath is the flesh of Christ; because "God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law"? The same is "full," because in his passion is the fullness of the Law, or because she is full of the grace of the Holy Spirit. For Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan. The same is also "well of the oath," that is, of religion and of faith. And rightly a "well," because "rivers of living water will flow from his belly."

Hanc ergo assumens sibi Deus Verbum, copulam fecit esse legitimam; quod mysterium illae nuptiae designarunt, quae sunt in Canticis canticorum, quibus Christo Ecclesia, et spiritui caro nubuit. Et ideo circumcursabat et quaerebat ubique Dei Verbum, quia vulnerata, quia nuda, quia adultera in omnibus, etsi immaculata in Christo, quaerebat caro misera redemptorem.

Hanc sibi Christus junxit, ut immaculatam redderet: hanc sociavit, ut auferret adulterium. Et quia sub Lege erat, moriendum fuit, ut liberaretur a Lege, ut per illam mortem velut quoddam Legis et carnis matrimonium solveretur. Mortua est igitur in Christo caro, ut nos mortificati Legi per corpus Christi, sicut Apostolus dixit (Rom. VII, 4), essemus alterius qui ex mortuis resurrexit, et passiones cupiditatesque carnis, et cogitationes peccatorum quae per Legem erant in membris nostris, in illa morte morentur: nos autem soluti a lege mortis, quasi nova Christi copula, in novitate spiritus resurgeremus.

Et tamen qui Legem in Christi carne solverunt, eamque putaverunt esse violandam, omnes jussu David a bellatoribus interempti sunt. Quo indicio ostenditur id, quod posteriora docuerunt esse signatum, quod eorum qui Christum interfecerunt, 727 nullus evaserit; idque evidentissime revelatur, eos quos ante mortem assumpserat Jesus, sicut Judaeos, perisse parvulos et informes: eos vero quos post mortem adscivit in numerum filiorum, regno esse servatos. Unde juxta hoc mysterium convenit quod primus in Judaeis fuerit partus infirmus; ut postea in Christianis fieret fructus aeternus.

CAPUT XI.

Parabola Nathan proponitur, atque ad sensum moralem, moxque ad allegoricum traducitur.

54. Sed jam ad nuntium transeamus. Nam superioribus diebus tractatus nobis de illo invidioso adulterio et homicidio David prophetae fuit, decursisque mysteriis non solum nihil quod condemnaretur; sed etiam quod laudaretur, invenimus. Nunc tractatus incipit esse de nuntio quem decursi psalmi titulus jam saepe repetitus ostendit. Sic enim est: Psalmus David intellectus, cum venisset ad eum Nathan propheta, cum intrasset ad Bethsabée (Psal. L, 1).

Therefore, by assuming her to himself, God the Word made the union legitimate; a mystery which those nuptials in the Song of Songs designated, by which the Church is wedded to Christ, and the flesh to the spirit. And for this reason the miserable flesh, because it was wounded, because it was naked, because it was adulterous in all things, although immaculate in Christ, ran about and sought the Word of God everywhere, seeking a redeemer.

Christ joined this flesh to himself, to render it immaculate; he associated it with himself, to take away its adultery. And because it was under the Law, it had to die, that it might be freed from the Law, so that through that death the marriage, as it were, of the Law and the flesh might be dissolved. Therefore, the flesh died in Christ, so that we, having been made dead to the Law through the body of Christ, as the Apostle said (Rom. 7:4), might belong to another, who has risen from the dead, and that the passions and desires of the flesh, and the thoughts of sins which were in our members through the Law, might die in that death: while we, freed from the law of death, might rise again in newness of spirit, as by a new union with Christ.

And yet, those who dissolved the Law in Christ's flesh, and thought it should be violated, were all slain by the warriors at David's command. By this sign is shown what later events taught was signified: that of those who killed Christ, none escaped; and this is most evidently revealed, that those whom Jesus had taken to himself before his death, such as the Jews, perished as little and unformed ones: but those whom he adopted into the number of his sons after his death were preserved for the kingdom. Hence, according to this mystery, it is fitting that the first birth among the Jews was weak, so that afterwards among the Christians there might be eternal fruit.

CHAPTER XI.

The parable of Nathan is set forth, and is applied first to the moral sense, and then to the allegorical.

54. But let us now pass on to the messenger. For in previous days we have had a discourse on that hateful adultery and homicide of David the prophet, and having examined the spiritual meanings, we found not only nothing to be condemned, but even something to be praised. Now the discourse begins to be about the messenger, whom the oft-repeated title of the psalm we have examined shows. For so it is: *A psalm of David, for understanding, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba* (Psalm 50:1).

55. Itaque et haec pars historiae retexenda est, quae huiusmodi est. Dives, inquit (II Reg. XII, 1 et seq.), et pauper intra unam erant civitatem. Diviti multa armenta, multae oves; pauperi una ovis, quae de pane et vino pauperis alebatur, et in sinu ejus requiescebat. Venit hospes ad divitem; dives neque de armento suo, neque de gregibus suis aliquid abstulit, sed unam ovem pauperis occidit. Hoc ubi cognovit David: Morietur, inquit, vir ille, et restituet quadruplum. Respondit illi Nathan: Tu es. Deinde aperuit ei coeleste mandatum, dicens mandasse Dominum quod multa illi bona, id est, opes regias, sublato de pastorum numero, contulisset, quodque in eum suam misericordiam profudisset; et ideo quoniam peccato exasperasset Dominum, abducenda ejus omnia, rapienda ab hostibus, depopulandam domum. Tunc ait ille: Peccavi. Et respondit Nathan: Quoniam peccasse te confiteris, remittet tibi Dominus peccatum; sed filius tuus qui natus est ex Bethsabee, morietur. Hoc filio aegrotante, David flevit, humi jacuit, cilicio se operuit, jejunavit: ubi mortuum cognovit, surrexit, lavit, coenavit, alios consolatus est.

56. Videte quam multa. Primo omnium, quod Deus pius et misericors est, et quae nobis adversa contingunt, pro pretio nostri erroris excipimus. Didicimus igitur captivitatem pretium esse peccati; haec enim decernitur poena pro crimine. Deinde illud advertimus quod regum lapsus, poena populorum sit. Sicut enim eorum virtute servamur, ita etiam errore periclitamur. Unde optandum est nobis, ut regem gloriosum atque perfectum habere possimus. Nos ergo qui regem volumus habere perfectum, Dominum nolumus habere perfectum? An vero illi possunt velle hominem esse perfectum, qui Deum nolunt esse perfectum? Illud etiam breviter textus operatur historiae, ut advertamus quam cito veniae spes secuta sit. Non mediocrem autem, quod Nathan denunciavit ei, hoc est, inferior propheta. Gravis enim verecundia pudorque delicti, ab inferiore reprehendi. Videtis quod culpa gratiam minuat. Sciebat Nathan, quod David nesciebat: adeo caligabat animus obumtratus quadam nube vitiorum. Deinde hic est Nathan, qui in superioribus David acceptum Domino prophetavit; ut doletet eodem redarguente peccatum, quo prophetante, meritum fuerat praedicatum.

55. And so this part of the story must also be recounted, which is as follows. A rich man, he says (2 Samuel 12:1 ff.), and a poor man were in one city. The rich man had many herds and many sheep; the poor man had one ewe-lamb, which was fed from the poor man's bread and wine, and rested in his bosom. A guest came to the rich man; the rich man took nothing from his own herd, nor from his own flocks, but killed the poor man's one ewe-lamb. When David learned of this, he said: That man shall die, and he shall restore it fourfold. Nathan answered him: You are the man. Then he revealed to him the heavenly command, saying that the Lord had commanded that He had conferred many good things upon him, that is, royal riches, after raising him from the number of shepherds, and that He had poured out His mercy upon him; and therefore, because he had angered the Lord with his sin, all his possessions were to be taken away, seized by his enemies, and his house laid waste. Then he said: *I have sinned.* And Nathan answered: Because you confess that you have sinned, the Lord will forgive your sin; but your son who was born of Bathsheba will die. When this son fell ill, David wept, lay on the ground, covered himself with sackcloth, and fasted: when he learned he was dead, he arose, washed, ate, and consoled others.

56. See how many things there are. First of all, that God is pious and merciful, and that the adversities that befall us, we receive as the price of our error. We have learned, therefore, that captivity is the price of sin; for this is decreed as the punishment for the crime. Then we note that the fall of kings is the punishment of the people. For just as we are saved by their virtue, so too are we endangered by their error. Hence we should desire that we might have a glorious and perfect king. Shall we, therefore, who wish to have a perfect king, not wish to have a perfect Lord? Or can they truly wish for a man to be perfect, who do not wish for God to be perfect? The text of the story also briefly brings about this effect, that we should note how quickly the hope of pardon followed. It is no small matter, moreover, that Nathan, that is, a lesser prophet, denounced him. For it is a grave shame and disgrace for a fault to be rebuked by an inferior. You see that guilt diminishes grace. Nathan knew what David did not know: so darkened was his mind, overshadowed by a kind of cloud of vices. Furthermore, this is the Nathan who in earlier passages prophesied that David was acceptable to the Lord; so that he might grieve at being reproved for his sin by the same one by whose prophecy his merit had been proclaimed.

57. Sed jam mysterium requiramus. Duo, inquit, viri erant in una civitate, unus dives, et alter pauper (II Reg. XII, 1). Quis est hic dives aut pauper, nisi forte unus populus Judaeorum, et alter populus Christianus? Ille dives in Lege, dives eloquiis Dei sibi creditis, dives prophetiis, dives oraculis; hic vero pauper. Sed nolite hanc refugere paupertatem, quam sequitur regnum coelorum. Scriptum est enim: Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum coelorum (Matth. V, 3). Bona paupertas, quae quod habuerit, non amittit. Bona paupertas, quae si thesauros non habet pecuniae, habet tamen thesauros scientiae atque sapientiae. Nolite, filii, quasi vilem despiciere paupertatem. Iste pauper clamavit, et Dominus exaudivit eum (Psal. XXXIII, 7). Nolite quasi magnis invidere divitiis: Divites eguerunt et esurierunt (Ibid., 11). Sed si vultis habere bona, Dominum quaerite: Inquirentes enim Dominum, non deficient omni bono (Ibid.). Ergo nolite recusare omnem pauperem. Pauper erat Petrus, et quem donaret, nummulum non habebat; sed pretiosiores omni pecunia donabat salutem. Pauper ille erat Lazarus in Evangelio (Luc. XVI, 19 et seq.); sed ille qui ante in ostro dives jacebat et purpura, optabat post exitum vitae, stillante digito pauperis refrigerari. Quamvis ille ostro superbus regio et purpuratis vestibibus vulnera pauperis dives fastidiosus horruerit, tamen in infernis locatus optabat eo loci fuisse quo Lazarus. Quo loco lectio non videtur pecuniarum divitem pauperemque describere; sed eum pauperem qui pro fide et devotione vulnera corporis non horruerit, famem jejuniumque toleraverit.

58. Cum igitur haberet populus Judaeorum in suis gregibus plurimas copias hostiarum; tamen unam oviculam quam populus ille pauper habebat, cripuit, gloriosae illam subjiciens passioni. Vis scire quam ovem? Sicut ovis ad victimam ductus est (Esai., LIII, 7), qui pane pauperis alebatur, et potu pauperis utebatur, et in sinu pauperis dormiebat. Nostri enim utebatur alimentis, in nostri pectoris gremio quiescebat. Nam in Judaeorum sinu quiescere se non posse memoravit dicens: Filius hominis non habet ubi caput suum reclinet (Luc. IX, 58).

59. Et venit hospes, inquit, ad virum illum divitem. Quis est iste hospes, nisi miserabile peccatum? Etenim culpa in hunc mundum tamquam hospes intravit, aliena nostrae et peregrina naturae. Itaque non de suis gregibus hostiam obtulit; sed accepit oviculam pauperis, et occidit illam. Cujus quidem passio licet quibusdam ad sacrificium salutare profecerit; tamen videtur illis sui fuisse furoris alimentum, et cibus culpa, incentivumque peccati. Denique Judas panem accepit a Christo, et tunc magis repletus est diabolo; quia non accepit ex fide, qui tam hospitali Domino proditorem parabat.

57. But let us now seek the spiritual meaning (*mysterium*). *Two men,* he says, *were in one city, one rich, and the other poor* (2 Samuel 12:1). Who is this rich man or this poor man, unless perhaps one is the people of the Jews, and the other the Christian people? The one is rich in the Law, rich in the oracles of God entrusted to him, rich in prophecies, rich in divine utterances; but the other is poor. But do not flee this poverty, which the kingdom of heaven follows. For it is written: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 5:3). Good is the poverty that does not lose what it has had. Good is the poverty that, if it does not have treasures of money, yet has treasures of knowledge and wisdom. Do not, my sons, despise poverty as something worthless. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him* (Psalm 33:7). Do not envy great riches as if they were something great: *The rich have wanted and suffered hunger* (Ibid., 11). But if you wish to have good things, seek the Lord: *For they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good* (Ibid.). Therefore, do not reject every poor man. Peter was poor, and had no coin to give; but he gave salvation, more precious than all money. That Lazarus in the Gospel was poor (Luke 16:19 ff.); but the rich man who before lay in scarlet and purple, wished after the end of his life to be cooled by the dripping finger of the poor man. Although that man, proud in his royal scarlet and purple garments, had shuddered with disgust at the poor man's sores, yet, placed in hell, he wished he had been in the place where Lazarus was. In which passage, the reading does not seem to describe a man rich or poor in money, but him as poor who for the sake of faith and devotion did not shrink from the wounds of the body, and endured hunger and fasting.

58. Therefore, although the people of the Jews had in their flocks a great abundance of victims, yet they snatched away the one little ewe-lamb which that poor people possessed, subjecting it to the glorious passion. Do you wish to know which lamb? *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter* (Isaiah 53:7), he who was fed with the bread of the poor, and partook of the drink of the poor, and slept in the bosom of the poor. For he partook of our nourishment, he rested in the bosom of our heart. For he mentioned that he could not rest in the bosom of the Jews, saying: *The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head* (Luke 9:58).

59. And a guest, it says, came to that rich man. Who is this guest, but wretched sin? For guilt entered this world as a guest, alien and foreign to our nature. And so he did not offer a victim from his own flocks, but took the poor man's little lamb and killed it. Although its passion has indeed profited some unto a saving sacrifice, yet to them it seems to have been the nourishment of their own madness, the food of their guilt, and an incentive to sin. Finally, Judas received bread from Christ, and then was he all the more filled with the devil; because he who was preparing betrayal for so hospitable a Lord did not receive it with faith.

60. Et iratus est David ad illum virum. Diximus quod per Prophetam Judaeorum populus declaratur, et ideo sub hac figura se ipse condemnat. Dignus est morte vir ille qui fecit hoc, et oviculam restituet in quadruplum, hoc est, periturum populum Judaeorum, sed cumulationibus bonis fruiturum populum Christianum; quia praestabilior est praesentibus status qui ex resurrectione debetur.

61. Propositum mihi fuit, ut meminisse dignamini, adversus eos qui homicidium adulteriumque sancti David arguendum putant, qualicumque meo respondere sermone: et ita favore vestrae unanimитatis tractatus nostri cursus evasit: ut praedicandus ore omnium videretur, quem putabamus non posse defendi. Sed quoniam nostro vir sanctus auxilio non indiget, jam ipse vobis pro se loquatur, et factum suum ipsius dicta defendant.

CAPUT XII.

David peccatum suum Deo confitetur, composito psalmo L, cujus hic versus aliquot explicantur; imprimis quae sit magna misericordia, quaeve multitudo miserationum, inquitur; tum docetur, solum Deum iniquitates nostras delere, quae cum latere non possint, exemplo David sunt confitendae. Demum Arianos in Manichaeorum impietatem recidere planum fit.

62. Miserere, inquit, mei, Domine, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam. (Psal. L, 3). Nova, nisi fallor, fratres charissimi, conjunctio ista sermonis, ut magna misericordia diceretur. Non facile alibi lectum memini: et ideo quae sit magna misericordia, non facile dixerimus. Legimus tamen magnam Dei virtutem. Et ideo considerantes quae magna sit virtus, conjicere poterimus, quam misericordiam magnam voluerit designare. Legimus enim in sancto Hieremia: quis es, Domine? Tu fecisti coelum et terram, in magna virtute tua, et brachio excelso (Jerem. XXXII, 17). Virtus ergo magna coelum fecit. Quae est virtus magna; Patris, an Filii? Magna utique Patris virtus est; ipse enim per Filium coelum fecit et terram, sicut habes: In principio fecit Deus coelum et terram (Gen. I, 1). Sed tamen et Filius magna virtus est. Nam cum virtutem Patris Filium legeris (I Cor. I, 24), sicut habes Christum Dei sapientiam atque virtutem, utique cum virtus Patris Filius sit, magna virtus est Filius. Quemadmodum igitur omnipotens denegatur, quem fatemur magnam Dei esse virtutem? Haec igitur magna virtus coelum fecit; quia coelum fecit et Filius, sicut habes: Omnia per ipsum facta sunt (Joan. I, 3).

60. And David was angry with that man. We have said that the people of the Jews are declared through the Prophet, and therefore under this figure, he condemns himself. That man who did this is worthy of death, and he shall restore the little lamb fourfold; this means that the Jewish people will perish, but the Christian people will enjoy more abundant goods, because the state which is owed from the resurrection is more excellent than present things.

61. It was my purpose, as you may deign to remember, to respond with whatever speech I could against those who think the homicide and adultery of holy David should be condemned: and so, by the favor of your unanimity, the course of our discourse has turned out such that he whom we thought could not be defended, seemed worthy to be praised by the mouth of all. But since the holy man does not need our help, let him now speak to you for himself, and let his own words defend his deed.

CHAPTER XII.

David confesses his sin to God, having composed Psalm 50, several verses of which are here explained; first, it is inquired what is great mercy, and what is the multitude of compassions; then it is taught that God alone blots out our iniquities, which, since they cannot be hidden, must be confessed, following the example of David. Finally, it is made plain that the Arians fall back into the impiety of the Manichaeans.

62. "Have mercy on me," he says, "O Lord, according to thy great mercy" (Ps. 50:3). This combination of words, "great mercy," is new, unless I am mistaken, dearest brethren. I do not recall having easily read it elsewhere; and therefore, we cannot easily say what "great mercy" is. We read, however, of the great power of God. And therefore, by considering what great power is, we will be able to conjecture what great mercy he wished to signify. For we read in holy Jeremiah: "Who art thou, Lord? Thou hast made heaven and earth, in thy great power, and with thy outstretched arm" (Jer. 32:17). Great power, therefore, made the heaven. What is this great power; that of the Father, or of the Son? The power of the Father is certainly great; for He Himself made heaven and earth through the Son, as you have it: "In the beginning God made heaven and earth" (Gen. 1:1). But yet the Son is also great power. For since you read that the Son is the power of the Father (1 Cor. 1:24), as you have that Christ is the wisdom and power of God, surely since the Son is the power of the Father, the Son is great power. How then is He denied to be omnipotent, whom we confess to be the great power of God? This great power, therefore, made the heaven; because the Son also made the heaven, as you have it: "All things were made through him" (John 1:3).

Ergo si et Pater fecit et Filius, utique facti unitas operationis indicat unitatem. Non ergo operatio Patris et Filii discrepat. Si autem una operatio, una utique operationis potestas, et majestas una factorum est. Haec de Patre et Filio.

63. Quid ergo silemus de Spiritu, praesertim cum Scriptura nos divina non patiat silere? Dat enim locus opportunissimum testimonium ad sancti Spiritus unitatem cum Patre et Filio 730 comprobendam, ut ejus quoque operationem ab opere Patris et Filii dissociare nequeamus. Legimus enim magnam virtutem Patris esse, quod coelum fecit; magnam virtutem etiam Filium esse, quoniam coelum fecit: nec solum fecit, sed etiam firmavit: Verbo enim Domini coeli firmati sunt (Psal. XXXII, 6). Ergo si et fecisse et firmasse coelum magnae virtutis est, etiam Spiritum sanctum a majestate magnae virtutis separare non possumus; quia scriptum est: Et spiritu oris ejus omnis virtus eorum (Ibid.). Namque cum coelum fieret et terra, superferebatur Spiritus; de quo alibi ait propheta David: Emitte Spiritum tuum, et creabuntur (Psal. CIII, 13). De quo etiam alibi dixit: Quoniam videbo coelos tuos, opera digitorum tuorum (Psal. VIII, 4). Non enim corporalibus digitis Deus coelum fecit et terram; sed Spiritus gratia septiformis, illo videlicet digito de quo habes in Evangelio: Quod si in digito Dei ejicio daemonia (Luc. XI, 20). Hunc enim digitum alibi Spiritum dixit, sicut habes: Quod si in spiritu Dei ejicio daemonia (Matth. XII, 28). Si igitur Spiritus Dei digitus est, quoniam brachium Dei Filius est, utique Spiritus cooperatus Patri et Filio per unitatem operationis coelum fecit et terram. Ideo enim digitum Filius nuncupavit, ut tamquam unius corporis, ita divinitatis exprimeret unitatem. Itaque si magna virtus coelum condidit, utique magna sapientia coelum condidit; quia scriptum est: Omnia in sapientia fecisti (Psal. CIII, 24).

64. Didicimus igitur quae magna sit virtus, colligamus nunc quae magna sit misericordia. Si magna virtus coelos fecit, et magna misericordia debet esse de coelo, et magna justitia debet esse de coelo; justitia enim de coelo prospexit, et misericordia venit e coelo. Magna ergo facta misericordia, quia Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis (Joan. I, 14). Ergo magna virtus coelos fecit, magna virtus coelos inclinavit, sicut legimus: Et inclinavit coelos et descendit (Psal. XVII, 10).

Therefore, if both the Father and the Son made it, the unity of the deed certainly indicates a unity of operation (*unitas operationis*). Therefore, the operation of the Father and of the Son does not differ. But if the operation is one, then certainly the power of the operation is one, and the majesty of the makers is one. This much concerning the Father and the Son.

63. Why then are we silent about the Spirit, especially when divine Scripture does not suffer us to be silent? For the passage gives a most opportune testimony for proving the unity of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, so that we cannot dissociate His operation from the work of the Father and the Son. For we read that it is the great power of the Father that He made the heaven; that the Son is also great power, since He made the heaven: and not only did He make it, but He also established it: "For by the word of the Lord were the heavens established" (Ps. 32:6). Therefore, if both to have made and to have established the heaven is a mark of great power, we cannot separate the Holy Spirit either from the majesty of great power; because it is written: "And by the spirit of his mouth all their power" (Ibid.). For when heaven and earth were being made, the Spirit was moving over them; of whom the prophet David says elsewhere: "Send forth thy Spirit, and they shall be created" (Ps. 103:13). Of whom he also said elsewhere: "For I will behold thy heavens, the works of thy fingers" (Ps. 8:4). For God did not make heaven and earth with corporeal fingers, but by the sevenfold grace of the Spirit (*Spiritus gratia septiformis*), that is, by that finger of which you have in the Gospel: "But if I by the finger of God cast out demons" (Luke 11:20). For this finger He elsewhere called the Spirit, as you have it: "But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons" (Matt. 12:28). If, therefore, the Spirit is the finger of God, since the Son is the arm of God, the Spirit certainly cooperated with the Father and the Son through the unity of operation to make heaven and earth. For the Son called Him a finger for this reason, that He might express the unity of the divinity as if of one body. Therefore, if great power founded the heaven, certainly great wisdom founded the heaven; because it is written: "In wisdom hast thou made them all" (Ps. 103:24).

64. We have learned, therefore, what great power is; let us now gather what great mercy is. If great power made the heavens, great mercy must also be from heaven, and great justice must be from heaven; for justice has looked down from heaven, and mercy has come from heaven. Great, therefore, was the mercy shown, because "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Therefore, great power made the heavens, great power bowed the heavens, as we read: "And he bowed the heavens, and came down" (Ps. 17:10).

Quo ostenditur numquam divinitatis suae exsors fuisse Dei Filius, nec cum inter homines versaretur; quoniam etsi suscepit quod non erat, non destitit tamen esse quod erat. Itaque cum dicitur: Et inclinavit coelos, et descendit, non tam videtur de coelo descendisse, quam ipso descendisse cum coelo. Nam cum Pater Filium alloqueretur in terris situm, Angeli ministrarent, non tam mutasse videtur sedem Dei Filius, quam transtulisse. Ergo didicimus magnam esse misericordiam.

65. Itaque si magna misericordia est descendisse de coelo, quae sit multitudo miserationum distinguere atque intelligere debemus. Sequitur enim: Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum dele iniquitatem meam (Psal. L, 3). Non enim idem significat uterque versiculus; sed illud ad Incarnationem refertur, hoc vero quod sequitur, ad eas referendum videtur quas Dei Filius in carne suscepit injurias, quia jejunavit, quia esuriit, quia flevit, quia vapulavit, quia crucifixus, quia mortuus, quia sepultus est. Haec enim carnis, non divinitatis insignia sunt. Et necessarium fuit, ut aerumnarum multitudinem miserationum multitudo depelleret, profutura nobis Dominicae certamine passionis.

66. Non enim sua peccata debebat, quia peccatum nullum fecerat; sed quia peccatum factus est, nostra erant delenda peccata, sicut David dixit: Dele iniquitatem meam. Quid est dele? Videamus hoc verbum; non enim otiosum est. Denique et alibi ait: Ego sum qui deleo iniquitates tuas, et memor non ero (Esai. XLIII, 25). Sunt profecto alte impressa quaedam conscientiae nostrae ulcera delictorum, et quaedam mentium nostrarum animorumque vibices, quae errorum nostrorum obducuntur ulceribus. Habet ergo culpa characteres suos et apices, quibus proditur: quod non ingenio nostro affingimus, sed prophetica auctoritate signamus. Scripta est ergo; et ubi scripta sit vide: In pectore, inquit, cordis tui (Jerem. XVII, 1). Hoc est, ibi scripta est culpae series, ubi etiam forma virtutis; non in tabulis lapideis, sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus. Sed quae bona sunt non atramento scribuntur, sed spiritu Dei vivi: quae autem vitiosa, graphio ferro et ungue adamantino. Talis propemodum scriptura, qualis est poena peccati. Scribitur illa graphio ferro, hoc virga ferrea coercetur, sicut scriptum est: Reges eos in virga ferrea (Psal. II, 9). Alia est illa virga recta, virga regni tui (Psal. XLIV, 7): haec supplicio coercet noxios, illa innoxios gubernat imperio. Ergo scripta est culpa: videamus ubi. Non foris, sed intus in corde tuo et in pectore tuo. Sicut enim prope est verbum in ore tuo, et in corde tuo: sic infidelibus in ipso corde exprimitur figura peccati, et erroris effigies. Intus igitur est culpa, intus et virtus.

By this it is shown that the Son of God was never devoid of His divinity, not even when He moved among men; for although He took on what He was not, He nevertheless did not cease to be what He was. Therefore, when it is said, "And he bowed the heavens, and came down," He seems not so much to have descended from heaven, as to have descended with heaven itself. For when the Father addressed the Son situated on earth, and Angels ministered to Him, the Son of God seems not so much to have changed His seat, as to have transferred it. Therefore, we have learned that the mercy is great.

65. Therefore, if it is great mercy to have descended from heaven, we must distinguish and understand what the multitude of compassions is. For it follows: "And according to the multitude of thy compassions, blot out my iniquity" (Ps. 50:3). For each little verse does not signify the same thing; but the former refers to the Incarnation, while this which follows seems to refer to those injuries which the Son of God underwent in the flesh: that He fasted, that He hungered, that He wept, that He was scourged, that He was crucified, that He died, that He was buried. For these are the marks of the flesh, not of the divinity. And it was necessary that the multitude of compassions should drive away the multitude of afflictions, to our benefit, by the struggle of the Lord's passion.

66. For He was not blotting out His own sins, because He had committed no sin; but because He was made sin, our sins were to be blotted out, as David said: "Blot out my iniquity." What does "blot out" mean? Let us examine this word, for it is not without meaning. Finally, He also says elsewhere: "I am he who blots out your iniquities, and I will not remember" (Isa. 43:25). There are indeed certain wounds of our offenses deeply impressed on our conscience, and certain scars on our minds and souls, which are covered over by the sores of our errors. Guilt, therefore, has its own characters and marks by which it is betrayed: which we do not invent by our own ingenuity, but which we designate by prophetic authority. It is written, therefore; and see where it is written: "On the tablet," he says, "of your heart" (Jer. 17:1). That is, the record of guilt is written there where the form of virtue also is; not on tablets of stone, but on the fleshy tablets of the heart. But the things that are good are not written with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; whereas the things that are vicious are written with an iron pen and a diamond point. The writing is almost of the same kind as the punishment for sin. The one is written with an iron pen, the other is restrained with an iron rod, as it is written: "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9). Different is that "upright rod, the rod of thy kingdom" (Ps. 44:7): this one restrains the guilty with punishment, that one governs the innocent with command. Therefore, guilt is written: let us see where. Not outside, but inside, in your heart and in your breast. For just as "the word is near, in your mouth and in your heart," so for the unfaithful the figure of sin and the image of error is impressed in the heart itself. Within, therefore, is guilt, and within is virtue.

Et ideo Dominus: Sentio, inquit, de me virtutem exisse (Luc., VIII, 46): ut ostenderet quae bona sunt, de interiore procedere, et contra quae mala sunt, de interiore prodire. Non enim quod intrat, inquit, in os, coinquinat hominem; sed quod exit de ore (Matth. XV, 11). De corde enim tuo cogitationes procedunt; et ideo cave ne de corde tuo malae cogitationes prodeant, quae te posteriore tempore arguant et accusent. Non enim Deus testimoniis ad revincendum te argumentisque indiget: tua te ipsa culpa accusat et prodit.

67. Deinde bene in hoc psalmo David dicit: Et delictum meum contra me est semper (Psal. L, 5). Vae enim mihi quod latere cupio, et latere non possum! Quomodo enim latebo, qui inscripta in pectore meo gero meorum indicia delictorum? Nudabitur in illo iudicii die uniuscujusque pectus, testimonium reddente omnibus conscientia sua, et invicem accusantibus cogitationibus, aut etiam defendentibus, in die qua judicabit Dominus occulta hominum. Quis pudor ille, cum prodi omnibus coeperit quod putabamus occultum; cum aperire se coeperit uniuscujusque imago delicti, ut unusquisque sui criminis serie revincatur? Quis pudor cum illum quem despicabilem in hoc saeculo judicabas, videris esse praelatum; illum servum tuum, illum quem juxta saeculi hujus astutias ineptum et inhabilem arbitrabaris, simplicitatis suae divitiis cognoveris honoratum? Ergo dum vivimus, confugiamus ad eum qui potest delere peccatum. Nec vereare quod graphio ferreo 732 scriptum est, et ungue adamantino; hic enim portas ferreas adamantinasque confregit, nec timeas culpam fateri.

68. Confessus est David, agnovit iniquitatem suam, agnovit errorem; et ideo ait: Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego agnosco (Ibid.). David agnoscit, et tu non agnoscis? David fatetur, et tu negas? Paulus se nocentem clamat (I Tim. I, 15), et tu innocentem te asseris? Non est igitur maximus erubescendi locus, quando cum plurimis peccati mixta consortia sunt; si sequamur tamen studium corrigendi. Neque rursus paveas, ne culpa confessio teneatur ad poenam. Bonus enim et misericors Deus non solum culpas ignoscere confitentibus, sed etiam praemia corrigentibus impertire consuevit; si tamen unusquisque sibi donari petat, quod intelligit non latere. Dic ergo iniquitates tuas, ut justificeris (Esai. XLIII, 26). Dei vox ista est volentis ignoscere: Dei vox ista est promittentis, quod tuum velit delere peccatum.

And therefore the Lord says: "I perceive that power has gone out from me" (Luke 8:46), to show that what is good proceeds from within, and conversely, what is evil comes forth from within. "For not what goes into the mouth," He says, "defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth" (Matt. 15:11). For from your heart proceed thoughts; and therefore, beware lest evil thoughts proceed from your heart, which may later convict and accuse you. For God does not need testimonies and arguments to convict you: your own guilt accuses and betrays you.

67. Then David says well in this psalm: "And my sin is always against me" (Ps. 50:5). For woe is me that I desire to hide, and cannot hide! For how shall I hide, who bear the evidence of my offenses inscribed on my breast? On that day of judgment, the breast of each one will be laid bare, with his own conscience bearing witness to all, and his thoughts mutually accusing or even defending him, on the day when the Lord will judge the secret things of men. What shame will that be, when what we thought hidden begins to be betrayed to all; when the image of each one's offense begins to reveal itself, so that each one is convicted by the record of his own crime? What shame, when you see that one whom you judged despicable in this world has been preferred; that your servant, whom according to the cunning of this world you considered foolish and incapable, you recognize as honored for the riches of his simplicity? Therefore, while we live, let us flee to Him who is able to blot out sin. And do not fear that it is written with an iron pen and a diamond point; for He has broken iron and diamond gates, and do not be afraid to confess your guilt.

68. David confessed, he acknowledged his iniquity, he acknowledged his error; and therefore he says: "For I acknowledge my iniquity" (Ibid.). David acknowledges, and you do not acknowledge? David confesses, and you deny? Paul proclaims himself guilty (1 Tim. 1:15), and you assert that you are innocent? There is, therefore, no great cause for shame, when the fellowship of sin is shared with many; if only we pursue the desire for correction. Nor, again, should you be afraid that the confession of guilt will be held for punishment. For the good and merciful God is accustomed not only to forgive the faults of those who confess, but also to bestow rewards on those who amend; if only each one asks to be forgiven for that which he understands cannot be hidden. "Declare therefore your iniquities, that you may be justified" (Isa. 43:26). This is the voice of God, who is willing to forgive: this is the voice of God, who promises that He wishes to blot out your sin.

69. Tibi peccavi, David dicit, et malum coram te feci. Hoc est, etsi homines non vident, sed tu vides; etsi homines me dijudicare non possunt, quia participes delictorum sunt; tu tamen iudex es singulorum, quia expers es delictorum. Quamlibet in corde intimo cogitationes noxiae lateant, coram te tamen sunt, qui potes dicere: Quid cogitatis mala in cordibus vestris (Matth. IX, 4)? Nempe Christus hoc dicit. Qui ergo novit quid in corde sit scriptum, potest delere quidquid in corde conscriptum est. Cui se fateatur noster David non solum in seipso, sed etiam in primo homine peccasse, dum praecepta divina temerantur.

70. Quo licet advertere, fratres dilectissimi, quemadmodum omnes haereses, dum se impugnant, in se recurrant. Itaque Ariani dum Patris et Filii separant potestatem, in eum furiose exitum disputationis incurrunt, ut cum Manichaeis eorum concurrat assertio, illi enim dicunt alterum Deum esse veteris, alterum novi Testamenti. Quam profanam assertionem Ecclesia sancta condemnat, quae unum Deum legit; quia unus Deus Pater ex quo omnia, et nos in ipsum: et unus Dominus Jesus per quem omnia, et nos per ipsum (I Cor., VIII, 6). Utique omnipotens potestas et una Patris et Filii declaratur; ut nec Patrem a novi Testamenti gratia secernamus, nec rursus ab instauratione mundi Filium separemus.

71. Denique consideremus utrum idem Deus utriusque sit eonditor Testamenti. Nempe omnes in primo homine peccavimus, et per naturae successionem, culpa quoque ab uno in omnes transfusa successio, est. In quem ergo peccavi, in Patrem, an in Filium? Utique in cum qui mihi credidit, quod non servando peccavi. Mandatum est homini, ut ab omnibus gustaret quae erant in paradiso, sed lignum scientiae boni et mali non tangeret (Gen., II, 17). Adam ergo in singulis nobis est. In illo enim conditio humana deliquit, quia per unum in omnes pertransivit peccatum. Video summam mihi creditam; video quae praevaricationis aera 733 contraxerim, dum vetita et interdicta degusto. Hinc debeo commissae sortis usuram; quia creditum mandatorum coelestium foenus intemerata fides servare non potuit.

72. Agnovimus creditum, agnoscamus etiam creditorem. Creditoris nempe jus est ut exigit et relaxet; et ideo idem relaxat, qui jus habet exigendi. Cum igitur in Evangelio Christus dixerit mihi: Remissa sunt tibi peccata tua (Luc. V, 20); nonne eundem intelligo dominum sortis, quem arbitrum veniae recognosco? Aut si Pater credidit, et Filius relaxavit, non per unitatem, ut nos dicimus; sed, ut Ariani asserunt, per distantiam potestatis: alius ergo Deus credidit, alius relaxavit? Unde incurrunt, ut Manichaeorum perfidiam non evadant.

69. "Against thee have I sinned," David says, "and done evil in thy sight." That is, even if men do not see, yet you see; even if men cannot judge me, because they are participants in offenses; you, however, are the judge of each one, because you are free from offenses. However much harmful thoughts may lie hidden in the inmost heart, they are nevertheless before you, who can say: "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" (Matt. 9:4). Indeed, Christ says this. He, therefore, who knows what is written in the heart, can blot out whatever is written in the heart. To whom our David confesses that he has sinned not only in himself, but also in the first man, when the divine precepts were violated.

70. From this it is possible to observe, most beloved brethren, how all heresies, while they attack one another, fall back upon themselves. Thus the Arians, while they separate the power of the Father and the Son, furiously run into such an outcome of their disputation that their assertion coincides with that of the Manichaeans, for the latter say that there is one God of the Old Testament, and another of the New. The holy Church condemns this profane assertion, she who reads of one God; because "there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus, through whom are all things, and we through him" (1 Cor. 8:6). Certainly, the omnipotent and one power of the Father and the Son is declared, so that we neither separate the Father from the grace of the New Testament, nor, on the other hand, separate the Son from the foundation of the world.

71. Finally, let us consider whether the same God is the founder of both Testaments. Indeed, we all sinned in the first man, and through the succession of nature, the succession of guilt was also transfused from one to all. Against whom, therefore, did I sin: against the Father, or against the Son? Surely against Him who entrusted something to me, which by not keeping, I sinned. The command was given to man that he should eat of all that was in paradise, but should not touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17). Adam, therefore, is in each one of us. For in him the human condition sinned, because through one man sin passed to all. I see the sum entrusted to me; I see what debts of transgression I have contracted, while I taste what is forbidden and prohibited. Hence I owe the interest on the lot committed to me, because unstained faith could not keep the entrusted loan of the heavenly commandments.

72. We have acknowledged the loan; let us also acknowledge the creditor. For it is the right of the creditor to demand and to release; and therefore, the same one releases who has the right to demand. When, therefore, Christ says to me in the Gospel, "Your sins are forgiven you" (Luke 5:20), do I not understand Him to be the same lord of the principal debt whom I recognize as the arbiter of pardon? Or if the Father lent, and the Son released—not through unity, as we say, but, as the Arians assert, through a distance of power—did one God then lend, and another release? Whence they fall into a position where they cannot escape the perfidy of the Manichaeans.

Deinde unum dicendo bonum Deum, advertant quos laqueos dementiae suae incidunt. Si bonus est, qui credidit, quomodo non est bonus, qui relaxavit? Ergo cum illis partem habeant Ariani, in quorum assertionem perveniunt. Nec mirum si is qui semel deviare coepit a vero, nexibus se alieni erroris involvat.

73. Et ideo una est sententia, quae haereticorum omnium machinas destruat, ut unius potestatis, 734 majestatis atque virtutis Trinitatem esse credamus; et ideo ab eo quod Filius fecit, non separemus Patrem; nec ab eo quod Pater mandavit, Filium segregemus. Ita enim fiet, ut non alterum Deum veteris, alterum novi Testamenti inducamus; sed per unitatem potestatis et Filius in Patre, et Pater intelligatur in Filio; et Filius foeneretur in Patre, et Pater relaxet in Filio. Nam et Pater dimittit peccatum: Filium dimisisse jam diximus.

74. Accipite quia dimittit et Pater. Dimitte, inquit, nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris (Matth. VI, 12). Utique ex persona nostra hoc Filius Patri dicit. Nec ideo dicit, quasi dimittere ipse non possit; sed ideo dicit, ut tu unitatem potestatis intelligas.

75. Denique si auctoritatem quaeris in Filio: Jam vos, inquit, mundi estis propter sermonem quem locutus sum vobis (Joan., XV, 3). Dimittit sermone, dimittit imperio: sed cum ratione dimittit dicens: Vade, et posthac vide ne pecces (Joan. V, 14). Habes auctoritatem, quia vetera donavit: habes iudicium, quia futura praescripsit.

Then, by saying that God is one and good, let them note into what snares of their own madness they fall. If He who lent is good, how is He who released not good? Therefore, let the Arians have their part with those into whose assertion they have fallen. Nor is it any wonder if he who has once begun to deviate from the truth entangles himself in the snares of another's error.

73. And therefore, there is one doctrine that destroys the contrivances of all heretics: that we believe the Trinity to be of one power, majesty, and virtue; and therefore, that we do not separate the Father from what the Son has done, nor segregate the Son from what the Father has commanded. For thus it will come to pass that we do not introduce one God of the Old Testament and another of the New, but through the unity of power, both the Son is understood to be in the Father, and the Father in the Son; and the Son lends in the Father, and the Father releases in the Son. For the Father also forgives sin: we have already said that the Son has forgiven.

74. Understand that the Father also forgives. "Forgive us," He says, "our debts, as we also forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). The Son certainly says this to the Father in our person. Nor does He say this as if He Himself could not forgive; but He says it so that you may understand the unity of power.

75. Finally, if you seek authority in the Son: "Now you," He says, "are clean because of the word which I have spoken to you" (John 15:3). He forgives by His word, He forgives by His command; but He forgives with reason, saying: "Go, and from now on see that you sin no more" (John 5:14). You have His authority, because He has forgiven past things; you have His judgment, because He has prescribed for future things.