SAINT JEROME

Commentary on the Psalms

Breviarium in Psalmos

SABBATISMUS

Saint Jerome (347–420)
Breviarium in Psalmos · Commentary on the Psalms

Latin text: public domain.
Translation, alignment and edition © 2026 Inversiones San Juan Diego (Sabbatismus). Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International license (CC BY-SA 4.0).

Sabbatismus is the imprint of the Inversiones San Juan Diego foundation, San Pedro Sula, Honduras.
Set in EB Garamond and Cinzel.
sabbatismus.com

Having at last reviewed all the genuine commentaries of the great Jerome on the entire Scripture, we have intentionally left this place for the Breviary on the Psalms: for this book, although wrongly ascribed to the Holy Father, is nevertheless more outstanding than all other spurious works, and its dignity does not permit it to be relegated to the final volume, nor has it been cast into that place in the editions published thus far. Indeed, this was not only the plan of all editors before us, but also the authority of the supreme pontiff, the most holy Pius V, made it so, as Victorius attests, that this volume on the Psalms should be placed as if doubtful immediately after the genuine writings of Jerome, and before coming to those of others. We also, although we give much greater weight to those rational arguments which deny its authorship to Jerome, nevertheless feel that there is in it some part of Jerome's labor, dispersed here and there, which almost betrays itself by its own light. But the common and more credible opinion is that the author of this Breviary was a compiler of the older Fathers, who, although he drew much from Origen, Hilary, Eusebius, and much from the more recent Eucherius of Lyons, whom he praises in the sixteenth psalm, nevertheless transcribed the greatest part from the commentaries of Jerome—either those on Psalms ten through sixteen, which have perished, or those on other parts of Scripture, where many passages of the Psalms are often explained in foreign places—and adapted it to his own work and talent. So that

you may not doubt this in the least, the stronger arguments must at least be set forth, which Erasmus long ago, then Sixtus of Siena in Book IV of the Bibliotheca Sancta, also Victorius, and Martianay, Dupin, and Tillemont, to omit others, have produced, and which are reduced to roughly these main points.

First, the type of diction and the style, which is like a Lydian stone for distinguishing authors, and also the taste and flavor of the doctrine, are so different from Jerome's that it is more than enough to have glanced over that Breviary with one's eyes, or to have compared it for a moment with the true commentaries of Jerome, to understand at once that it is far beneath the genius of the Holy Father. And indeed, one must be a stranger to the reading of Jerome who does not immediately notice that, contrary to the perpetually maintained custom of the Holy Doctor, the historical sense and the exposition of the letter itself are here neglected, and the author is entirely concerned with allegories and tropological senses concerning Christ and the Church; and that he treats Hebrew and Greek erudition so lightly that, wherever he inserts it, he seems rather to have received it borrowed and verbatim from others, than to have drawn it from himself or from the source. Moreover, it has been observed by Martianay that whenever this author appeals to the Hebrew text, he denotes nothing other by that name than either the Greek version of Aquila or the Latin version of Jerome from the Hebrew. Hence he says in Psalm V

that in Hebrew it is ἐπίβουλον, for [a certain Hebrew word], and in Psalm CXIX ἀρκευθίνοις, or ἀρκευθίναις, for [another Hebrew word], both of which are Aquila's interpretation; just as when he says that *sela* is taken for *semper* (always), which he took from Jerome's version, not from the original text. Finally, this author diverges in every way from Jerome's taste, so much so that, being at times inconsistent with himself, it is an indication that there was not one, but several compilers of this work. To wit, he expounds some psalms in the manner of a commentator, having not unlearnedly added good opinions from other Fathers; others he treats in the manner of a preacher, in a homiletic style of speaking to the people, or in an assembly of brethren; and, what is most abhorrent to the genius and way of life of the Holy Doctor, he often digresses into forms of address, either interrupting to speak to his audience, or concluding his exposition with some prayer poured out to God. He explains the slightly longer one hundred and eighteenth psalm in three homilies; but for the one hundred and eleventh, because he cannot pursue a broader exposition, he pleads the hour. You may find things similar to these, which savor of anything but Jerome's manner of explaining the Scriptures, throughout almost the entire book, lest we now idly repeat them one by one.

Secondly, the author not only advocates for many things foreign to Jerome's views, but also for things entirely contrary to them. Of this kind is, first of all, his interpretation of *cynomyia* in

Psalm 104 as "dog-fly"; Jerome, on the contrary, in Epistle 104 to Sunnias and Fretela, wishes it to be read as *κοινομυῖαν* and renders it as "every kind of fly," or, following the sense of Aquila, who interpreted it as *πάμμικτον*, "a fly of all sorts." In the following Psalm 105, he takes the land of Ham, which Jerome had very eruditely asserted to be Egypt in his *Hebraic Questions on Genesis*, to be Palestine itself, the land which the Hebrews succeeded to after its peoples were destroyed; and what the Holy Doctor teaches in the same *Questions on Genesis* IV, that *Naid*, or *Nod*, should by no means be thought, according to the opinion of the Greeks and Latins, to be the land which Cain inhabited, this author takes it as a proper name of a place. The true Jerome, in Epistle 140 to Cyprian, attributes the eighty-ninth psalm to Moses as its author, and even contends in Book I against Rufinus that the subsequent eleven psalms which have no titles are by the same Moses, and he proves this opinion, which he himself had received from Origen, and this author from Huillus, again in other places, but especially in the preface to Malachi. Conversely, the author of the *Breviarium*, in his lengthy exposition of all the titles, prefers to attribute these also to David, and indicates quite clearly in that whole tattered discussion of uncertain meaning that he was entirely ignorant of that doctrine. You yourself, reader, may find other things similar to these, if you but compare the aforementioned epistles to Sunnias and Fretela, and to Cyprian, and two others—

one to Marcella (34), the other to Principia (65), in which the Holy Father expounded on several psalms—with this Commentator. We ourselves have also occasionally noted some things in the annotations, lest we detain you longer here where we would have to contend with a great number.

But just as we do not conceal the errors which the pseudonymous author makes, so we are displeased that he is sometimes burdened with unjust accusations. Martianay, for example, marks him for ignorance on the grounds that he said of the name Iscariot, "it is doubtful whether it signifies his father or his village," as if he thought the very words "his father" or "his village" were the etymology. But this was not his sense and meaning; rather, while approving the commonly received opinion that the name is composed of two words, so as to mean "a man from Kerioth," he said it was uncertain whether the other part was the name of his father or of his village, or of the land in which he was born. Nor is the other accusation any fairer, concerning that passage in Psalm 115, "Every man is a liar," where the author notes that in Hebrew it has, "Every man, a lie," which is called *chazab*. Martianay, in the manuscripts he used, found *zecam* instead of *chazab*, and he contends that this was written by the commentator himself, so as to accuse him of such great ignorance that he confused the last letter of the word *chazab* with the first of the following word in the Hebrew exemplar, *ma*, and furthermore was mistaken in taking *kaph*

for *beth*, and finally had concocted a word of no meaning. Indeed, it is more credible that those manuscript books are in error, and that all the blame should not be placed on the commentator, who originally wrote correctly, but on the scribes, who afterwards shamefully corrupted a reading unknown to them. And I think this very point will be established from Martianay's own argumentation: for if this author knew Hebrew letters to such an extent that he could consult the archetype and, taking from it, be mistaken in some way, he certainly could not have made so many errors in one little word. Let us grant that with a hasty eye he took *kaph* for *beth*; but he also omitted the first *kaph*, the formative letter of that word; and finally, he rashly supplied a third letter, *mem*, from another word. But it is hardly credible to believe that a man, whom you must assume was not ignorant of handling and reading a Hebrew codex in order to accuse him of this lapse, would have erred with as many hallucinations as there were letters in a three-letter word. Therefore, since the previously published books correctly have *chazab*, this reading must be retained entirely, and the author himself must be thought to have written it thus, not be drawn into slander because of the carelessness of scribes. For those who have dedicated themselves to the study of manuscript codices know how often, and with what monstrous words, Latin scribes deform exotic terms, so that if one were to rely on their fidelity, not even Jerome himself could seem to have known Hebrew or Greek.

Thirdly, arguments are derived from the testimonies of the author himself, and of the true Jerome concerning himself, to prove the fraud of the writing: although, to say openly what I think, those which are commonly brought forward have seemed to me rather weak.

That which moved Victorinus above all others was what the author relates about himself at the beginning of the one hundred and thirty-second psalm, that he had a secular brother, contrary to what is known of Jerome, whose only brother, Paulinian, still quite young, St. Epiphanius ordered to be a presbyter. He strives to remove the difficulty, however, by saying either that Paulinian was not yet a presbyter when Jerome wrote this, or that he had another brother in the world, whom we do not know. But that plainly allegorical passage should have caused him no trouble, where the author calls the world itself, to which he had bid farewell, his secular brother. This is clear from the words themselves: "We have left one brother," he says, "and behold how many we have found!" "My secular brother (what I say of mine, I say of each one's) loves not only me, but my substance."

Martianay had undertaken to bring forward other testimonies, by which he would prove from the author's own words that this commentator had lived in Egypt, and there, in an assembly of monks, had expounded the Psalms that were read or chanted. But when it came to that point, I was content to refer the reader to Psalm 143, in the explanation of which there are indeed some

things that point to a man of a later age than Jerome, but none that indicate an inhabitant of Egypt or Palestine. Hence, that conjecture becomes for us almost more probable than the others, which is taken from Psalm 135, where the author all but openly reveals that he lived as a monk in Britain. For he immediately names it, in order to take an example from some region, to prove that the stars appear everywhere with an equal brilliance of their rays: and this is an indication that he is arguing from the land which he himself and his audience inhabited, as was fitting, to the other regions of the world. "The star," he says, "which is seen in Britain, also appears everywhere." Lest, however, you should think this to be Bede, who immediately comes to mind; but rather another abbot of the Scots during those times, namely the seventh and eighth centuries, who indeed flourished then in great numbers with praise for their learning. During those times, I say, for both the genius of his commentary and the mention of Eucherius of Lyon, who flourished in the middle of the fifth century, proclaim that later age. I could also name one of them by name, and especially St. Columbanus, abbot of Luxeuil, born on the Irish island of the Scots, whose commentaries on the entire Psalter, composed when he was still younger, and indeed before he departed from Britain, are celebrated by Sigebert, the Anonymous of Melk, Trithemius, and others. But there will be a place to speak of him a little later, where we will also present a

sample of the unpublished commentary which we received from his monastery of Bobbio.

Now, those testimonies of Jerome himself concerning himself, which disclaim this work as his, must be brought forward. And that most brilliant one which he has in the chapter on Isaiah 63, which book he composed around the year 410, near the very end of his life, where, when the conversation turned to the eighth and eighty-third Psalms, he confesses most openly that he had not yet expounded them. "The psalms for the winepresses," he says, "the eighth and the eighty-third, are written for a good purpose: concerning which, in their proper places, if life be my companion, the Lord providing, it will be spoken." The remaining time of his life is comprised of more or less a decade: and so he was barely able to put the final hand to his prophetic work, so that he left his commentaries on Jeremiah, which remained, imperfect due to his intervening death. This, however, is the masterstroke: that when he was expounding Jeremiah himself, at the second chapter he promises something similar, namely, that he will discourse more fully in its proper place on the "Gates" which are mentioned in the twenty-third psalm. For from this it is established as clearly as possible that that work was not composed by Jerome, of which he himself, near the very end of his life, relates that he had only intended in his mind to compose some parts —and not the last ones, nor ones previously omitted for specific reasons, nor joined together in any order.

Nevertheless, other no less compelling arguments persuade us of what we proposed at the beginning: that this entire work is often composed from scraps of the true Jerome. Anyone can know this for himself if he compares the passages of the Psalms that the Holy Father interpreted here and there—which for the most part are collected in the index of each volume—with the passages of the Breviary, and notes the long paraphrases, and often discovers not only the same thoughts but also the same words. It is also reasonable to suppose that those seven treatises (*tractatus*) on Psalms ten through sixteen, which he himself includes in the list of his own works in his catalogue, but which have long since been lost—because they are not found separately and distinguished by a sure mark of authenticity—have been inserted here; and that this very fact provided the diligent compiler with an opportunity for embellishing and creating commentaries on the other psalms. Furthermore, the passages which the ancients cite from Jerome on this or that psalm, and which are found expressed in the same words in this Breviary, you could hardly explain in any other way, unless you were certain that a pseudepigraphical book was being interpolated with some things that truly proceeded from the pen of the Holy Doctor. A fragment from the exposition of the ninety-third psalm is recited by a most reliable witness, St. Augustine, a contemporary of Jerome, in his *Commonitorium ad Fortunatianum*, or Epistle 148, being so certain of the authenticity of the Jeromian writing that

he especially presses the authority of so great a name against his adversaries. "Lest I cause greater delays by mentioning many things," he says, "I insert this one thing from St. Jerome." And soon after: "When, therefore, that man most learned in the Scriptures was expounding the psalm where it is said: *Understand therefore, you who are foolish among the people, and you fools, be wise at last. He who planted the ear, shall he not hear? Or he who formed the eye, does he not consider?* among other things." "This passage," he says, "works especially against those who are Anthropomorphites, who say that God has members, which we also have." "For example, God is said to have eyes: *The eyes of the Lord look upon all things*; hands, because He made all things." "And Adam," he says, "heard the sound of the Lord's feet walking in paradise." "They hear these things simply, and refer human weaknesses to the magnificence of God." "But I say that God is wholly eye, wholly hand, wholly foot." "He is wholly eye, because He sees all things." "He is wholly hand, because He works all things." "He is wholly foot, because He is everywhere." "*He who planted the ear, shall he not hear? And he who formed the eyes, does he not consider?*" "He did not say, 'He who planted the ear, therefore He Himself does not have an ear.'" "He did not say, 'Therefore He Himself does not have eyes.'" "But He said: *He who planted the ear, shall he not hear? And he who formed the eyes, does he not consider?*" "He took away the members, He gave the efficiencies." Indeed, you

will not find these words anywhere else in Jerome except in this very Breviary, wrongly ascribed to him, where at that passage of the ninety-third psalm they are described in so many words, that they seem to have been taken almost from that archetype. Although in the general preface it seemed to us that these were taken not from some commentary on the psalms, but from some one of the Holy Doctor's epistles which have been lost, we nevertheless did not doubt that they were Jerome's, with Augustine vouching for their authenticity. Furthermore, there are other things which Servatus Lupus, in his *Collectaneum de tribus Quaestionibus*, cites from this Breviary as being from Jerome, such as that passage in the explanation of the first psalm, which we will examine in its proper place; and others which St. Gregory VII (for the opinion that he, and not St. Gregory the Great to whom it is commonly attributed, is the true author of the commentary on the penitential psalms is more credible) describes from the exposition of the 17th verse of the fiftieth psalm, and attributes to Jerome. These things, if they do not have much weight in establishing the authenticity (*gnesioteta*) of the entire work, certainly do for the sentences they recite, and they also show for how long a span of centuries they have been considered Jeromian.

Finally, that I should perceive many other doctrines, or even words, of Jerome to be in this Breviary, is chiefly brought about by what the Holy Father relates of himself: that in the assembly of the brethren, he had expounded the Psalter

in daily short commentaries. His words on this are very clear in Book I against Rufinus, number 19: "He (Rufinus) is said to find fault with this: that when interpreting the second psalm, for that which we read in Latin, 'embrace discipline,' and which is written in the Hebrew volume as *nescubar*, I had said in my short commentaries, 'Adore the Son.'" "And again, that when translating the entire Psalter into the Roman tongue, as if forgetful of the former exposition, I had put, 'Adore purely': which is obviously contrary to the other, as is clear to all." When he had refuted this objection most eruditely in the following passages, he adds this: "What wrong, therefore, have I done, if I translated an ambiguous word with a different interpretation: and whereas in the short commentaries, where there is freedom for discussion, I had said, 'Adore the Son,' in the text itself, lest I should seem a violent interpreter and give occasion for Jewish calumny, I said, 'Adore purely,' or 'selectly,' etc.?" Therefore, there is no doubt that the Holy Father did produce certain shorter commentaries on the Psalms: for that he does not list them in the catalog of his Works, we have explained the reasons in the general preface, and chief among them is that they were delivered orally (*oretenus fusi*), not committed to writing by him, and thus did not rightly enter into the register of his writings. Indeed, that they were then taken down on paper in some fashion from the mouth of the speaker by one of the listeners, and brought forth to the public, is proven by that cavil of Rufinus, and by the

very context of Jerome's response. It is apparent, however, in many places that the hasty scribes were more concerned with the general sense of the sentences, which they would later rework in their private cells, than with the exact words. For this reason, that still-rough work came into the hands of others, distinguished indeed by Jerome's name, but so disjointed, unskilled, and unformed, that it seemed more like the threads for weaving a work than the work itself: and every scholar thought it permissible for himself to patch it together with some things and then others, and to stuff that patchwork according to his own understanding. Thus I am persuaded, and by this one opinion I think, that the various opinions of learned men can be reconciled, and the cause of the varied exposition, which in some places is worthy of Jerome and in others unworthy, can be discerned. For this is indeed the one reason, and one especially worthy of being weighed by the editors of this book, why so many and such diverse copies of his Breviary exist under Jerome's name. To wit, that first improvisation (*autoschediasma*) of the Holy Father, rashly taken down from his mouth as he was discoursing, interpolators recast in various ways according to their own talent and convenience, and it was published at various times and, as it were, delivered by different midwives.

To grasp the matter properly, it would now be worthwhile to bring to light some of those things which lie hidden in libraries, which we have seen with our own eyes, or, since they

seemed of such importance, have even partially described; for when they disagree with one another, they accuse each other of spuriousness (νοθείας) with the surest of signs. Not long ago, two works became known in print, at least in part, to test the authorship. The first is entitled Expositio Psalmorum (Exposition of the Psalms), from which Martianaeus appended at the end those things which seemed to him to have been omitted by the compiler of the Breviary. He excerpted it, however, from two manuscript codices, one of which his colleague, Dom Franciscus Levacher, diligently collated and described from a manuscript of the monastery of Saint-Pierre de Préaux, while he himself handled the other, the Corbie codex. We found another, most elegant codex in the Ambrosian Library in Milan, bound in a smaller folio and distinguished by the number one hundred and twenty, which presents that same exposition, word for word—as far as could be ascertained by comparing the part that Martianaeus published—ascribed to our Jerome. Before us, a man of immense learning examined that codex and judged that the work should be attributed to Florus, deacon of Lyon. He had this as his principal reason for asserting it: that at the end of the codex, after all the explanations, forty-two verses concerning David are written, in which Florus the supplicant dedicates the book of Psalms to Abbot Floradus. They begin: These hymns the boy harpist with lyric harmonies / Published in Your praise, O good Christ. and end with these: And now farewell, and remember

your Florus without end, / That he himself may be able to be free from his faults.

And indeed, we do not deny that those verses are by Florus of Lyon, for we know that he was wonderfully delighted in composing poems of this kind on the books of Holy Scripture; and we hold the ancient inscription of his name to be a most certain argument for its authenticity (αὐθεντίας). But we contend that the exposition itself, or commentaries, cannot be ascribed to him, neither for that reason nor in any other way, since the context of the verses themselves manifestly reveals that it was composed for the commendation and revision of the book of Psalms itself, and not at all for its exposition. Let it not be tedious to learn the whole matter from these verses, which the author adds after he had digressed into praises of the royal Prophet. Therefore, with constant prayers and perennial song, / May this lyre, Father, resound from your mouth. With which the ancient elders sang, whom the outermost mouths of the Nile / And the wave of the high-sounding sea made tremble. And which, corrupted by the errors of a long age, / the holy Jerome restored to its ancient beauty. By whose genius, furnished with beautiful arrows, / It shines all over with the ruddy gleam of stars [i.e., with obeli and asterisks]. Which a studious hand, with the sweat of much labor, / Restored to their ancient places, at your request. For while the sweet lyre, slippery and tinged with ambrosial liquid, wanders through uncultured hands, it had lost the radiant marks of the tawny metal, and

a dark decay had covered the melodious strings. But yet, polished again according to the Hebrew measure [Ms. reads versus], and at the same time newly adorned by a Greek hand, spreading its honey-sweet voices beyond the stars of heaven, it sounds forth the sacred songs with an angelic tone. Receive this corrected volume with a grateful heart, and, I pray, Father, take care that it may so remain: For no fruit will follow our attempts —we who have substituted good things for the erased faults—unless a vigilant and sagacious scribe, by your zeal, best of Fathers, preserves those things which now stand correct.

You see that Florus here makes no mention of an exposition adorned by himself, but is entirely concerned with proving the diligence of the recently emended codex. But no one, I think, would be persuaded that it could have happened that, if he had also illustrated the Psalms with that commentary, he would have omitted to advise his abbot Flordaus on this matter with at least a word. Indeed, he who exaggerates the praises of the new recension, and of it being perhaps skillfully prepared by another studious hand, would have commended the plan and effort of so great a work to many. Although it is also plainly clear and evident from other arguments that Florus never put his hand to composing commentaries on the Psalms; nor indeed did later writers, who compiled catalogues of the lives of illustrious learned men and of the works of Florus himself, ever make mention of such a labor. Finally, just as with many other things due to the proximity

of the subject matter, so too have we found that the verses of his deacon were taken from elsewhere and joined to that commentary by the one who compiled the codex; for we have seen them placed with better judgment elsewhere, prefixed to the Psalter itself of the so-called Gallican version in one or another Vatican manuscript. Therefore, Florus is not the author of that commentary, but some other later interpolator, whoever he may have been, of the Breviary on the Psalms, who not only caused those explanations which Martianaeus also produced to be circulated, but ordered almost all of them, taken from that source, to migrate into one form after another; and so that he might more securely deceive the faith of his readers, he assumed the persona of Jerome. Not only are the trifles he prefixed in place of prefaces false, but they are also utterly unworthy of Jerome's name. The first is that celebrated epistle to Damasus, "I have read the letters of your apostolate, asking that I should hasten to interpret the Psalter to be sung according to the simplicity of the Septuagint interpreters" (in the codex, "singing the Psalter"), etc., long ago published by Martius, and so teeming with monstrous sentences and words that I cannot cease to wonder that Henschenius, a man otherwise learned, could have taken them for genuine. The rest are of nearly the same chaff: "The Manner of the Psalter." "The Psalter is the resonant cavity of a piece of wood formed in the shape of the letter delta," etc. And what is subjoined: "Because the spirit is not always present to the minds of the

prophets: so that when they do not have it, they may then know that they have it from the Lord, when they did have it." After these follows the genuine preface of the Holy Doctor to the Psalms, which he had again emended according to the Greek exemplar, which begins, "While I was in Rome, I had long ago emended the Psalter," etc. There follows the lengthy exposition of the Psalms itself, for the sake of which we have said these things: "I. The Psalm of David concerning Christ." "Some think that the key of this psalm is to be referred to the person of Christ our Lord, so that this blessed man may be Christ according to his humanity," etc., just as Martianaeus also found in his codex, and which we, after him, will print at the end of the Breviary. After the Psalms, the Canticles are also narrated, then the Lord's Prayer is expounded, where the commentator also reads "supersubstantial" (*supersubstantialem*) bread instead of "daily." The Apostles' Creed and the Catholic Faith of St. Athanasius are also explained in a few words: and in the former, indeed, the article on the "Remission of sins" is omitted, which would seem to indicate a very great antiquity of the Creed (since it does not appear in those which Tertullian, Irenaeus, or Origen recite), unless it is more truly to be thought that it was omitted in this exposition through the carelessness of the scribes. After these things. "Here ends Jerome on the Psalter," and these two verses are added:

May those who read these his writings be mindful of Franciscus, for whom it is a duty to pour forth frequent prayers.

It is of no interest to pursue the rest, since we have already spoken of the little poem of Florus.

Let us return to Martianaeus. To these things which we have said, he added a long preface to the Book of Psalms, which he found in three manuscript copies of the canon of Hebrew truth, and which the distinguished Cotelerius, in his notes to volume III of the *Monumenta Ecclesiae Graecae*, had long ago most truly pronounced to be neither by Jerome, nor by a compiler in the style of Jerome. Indeed, there is no doubt that the whole is transcribed from the *argumenta* of Eusebius of Caesarea on the Psalms, which he calls *Hypotheseis* (Ὑποθίσεις), although the Latin translator, whoever he may have been, seems to have properly understood neither language. We also found a much-emended copy of this Prologue in the Ambrosian Library, in codex I, 6, formerly of St. Columbanus of Bobbio, from which we present it in a more polished form in its proper place, so that nothing may be lacking.

The recent collectors of *Anecdota*, Messrs. Edmund Martene and Ursin Durand, bring forth another interpretation of the Psalms from a manuscript of Anchin, which book, however, presents not Jerome but Hilary of Poitiers as its author.

These same esteemed editors also ascribe a certain part of this work—namely, four treatises on Psalms 15, 31, 41, and 149, which they are the first to publish—to Hilary. They do not deny that

the rest is the work of the Hieronymian excerptor; for, they say, "having taken up the volume of the *Breviarium in Psalmos*, which Erasmus and Marianus Victorius attribute to the holy doctor, we find that the complete expositions attributed to him are reported therein." I will say nothing about their falsely citing Erasmus here as an asserter of the *Breviarium*; but this I would contend: that these four treatises do not have Hilary as their author, just as we know for certain that all the rest falsely claim Jerome.

The arguments for this matter, to be drawn from a reading of the treatises themselves, should be clear to everyone if they are compared with the discourses of Hilary. But let it be enough, in order to maintain my point and to show that the Anchin codex is nothing other than a slightly different copy of the Hieronymian abbreviator, to have briefly examined the reasons they adduce for the authenticity of their treatises.

"These four expositions," they say, "which we find in that codex, not yet published, are missing from the published works of Hilary." "Furthermore, we have observed in them Hilary's method of writing, his style, and a very ancient version of Scripture: and so it seemed not at all inappropriate if we were to attribute them to Hilary."

This line of reasoning was to be pursued differently; for they would hardly conclude correctly if only those four had fallen out of the Hilarian commentary: for when you sew on just enough cloth as is needed to mend a garment, it does not thereby become of the same texture and wool

as the rest of the garment. But now, since many more expositions of Hilary are missing—namely, on fifteen other psalms—all of which are nevertheless in that codex, they argue far too loosely from that lack, and they certainly act according to their own judgment, not according to the reliability of the codex, when, having repudiated all these and the others, they adopt those four.

That whole collection is the work of a pseudonymous author: and the genuine treatises that survive in the Hilarian edition differ immensely from those that are in this collection. But, as for those which they reject, it is manifestly clear that they are the work of the Hieronymian compiler from the *Breviarium*, in which they are transcribed in the very same words: some of them also contain certain things not consistent with the age and genius of Hilary; on the contrary, the four that they accept are both entirely other than and different from those found in the common *Breviarium*, and do not dissent from the style and genius of the bishop of Poitiers. Indeed, this is the very thing that moves us more to think that the contrary conclusion should be drawn from their own arguments. For if a disguised author compiled all the rest of the work, why not also these four treatises themselves, which are indeed a very small part of so long a work? Who could persuade himself that, when he had collected all the other parts from various fragments of the Fathers, he transcribed these verbatim (*autolexei*) from Hilary and wove them into

his patchwork with no change in sentences or words?

Therefore, the inference should have been made in this way instead: If some parts of his commentary, because they manifestly diverge from the times of Hilary, cannot be ascribed to him at all, then there are none that can rightly and deservedly come into the accounting of his writings. Otherwise, not only four homilies, but if there are any others besides that do not dissent from the age of Hilary, they will have to be immediately held as Hilarian, and by that token, even extraneous works which it is doubtful whether the bishop of Poitiers ever produced will suffice. The fact, however, that those four are entirely different from those which the *Breviarium* of the Hieronymian compiler presents, does nothing for Hilary. For indeed, as we have said, there are different copies of that book everywhere, and it is a common feature of such collections of writings that each person, according to his own pleasure, whether about to deliver a speech to the people or to compile for himself a codex of commentaries on the Psalms, would excerpt some treatises from other authors and interpolate them with other testimonies.

So too, the other argument from style is weak and flimsy: for even if we were to grant that it is not in the least inconsistent with the Hilarian style, there are certainly not a few other treatises in the possession of the Hieronymian compiler which no man would attribute to Hilary; yet they do not depart a hair's breadth from the genius

and method of these four. To be sure, just as each treatise writer plundered fragments of other Fathers, so too did they plunder fragments of Hilary: that one translated Origen into his own work, and it is no wonder if in some places they smack of this one or that one.

But let us now proceed to review the other various manuscripts of the proposed Breviary among themselves. In Florence, in the Medicea Laurenziana library, shelf XVIII, a parchment codex, no. 20, previously noted, begins with the one hundred and nineteenth psalm and continues up to the one hundred and forty-fifth, in a rather ancient hand, although at the end a more recent hand has supplied some leaves worn away by age. But an old librarian notes that it indeed contains Jerome's *Exposition on the Psalms*; however, the one who first described the codex gave it this single title: *Commentary on the Psalms of David*. In the same city, in the library of the Fathers of Saint Mark, two very ancient copies bear the name of the Holy Doctor: however, one is inscribed *Commentaries of St. Jerome on the Psalms*; the other, *Breviary of St. Jerome*. It is often called *Exposition of the Psalter*, and under this title manuscripts of a later age are found everywhere, among which we praise one marked with the letter R and no. 42 in the Ambrosian library, which is in Milan. It is also possible to find some with this single inscription, *Jerome on the Psalms*: and we observe such a one in the same place, marked with the letter C and the number one above three hundred. We have also

seen some in Rome, among which a catalog in a Palatine-Vatican manuscript, which is denoted by the number twenty-seven, is memorable for the prerogative of its greater age, and on its first two pages it covers the index of books of some older library, I know not which. Among these: *Saint Jerome on the Psalter from the first psalm up to the 76th, taken from Origen, in one codex*. And, *Of the same, another 26 (read perhaps 74) up to the end*. Also, *Exposition of the Penitential Psalms in one codex*. We have also described many things of this last work from the square manuscript, and that one of proven age and note, formerly of St. Columban of Bobbio, now in the Ambrosian under the letter R and no. 42. The title of that book reads: *Here begin the Psalms, which the blessed Jerome ordained to be sung for penance*. But the various glosses which we then excerpted from published and other unpublished books do not now seem to be of such value that we should offer them to the reader who is a student of Jerome's name. For even in general, if I wished to expound by studiously comparing the innumerable disagreements among the codices, I would neither be doing something worthwhile, nor could I sufficiently accomplish the task itself; for it is certain that in times past a great number of ecclesiastical writers were eager to pluck for themselves and compile such homilies, so that if anyone should hope to be able to assess what each one contributed, it would be as if he wished to drain the sea.

Nevertheless, it seemed a worthy task, and one especially suited to the genius of the learned of this age, to examine more diligently one manuscript which we found to be much more outstanding than all the others, and entirely different from the common versions, and to give the readers some specimen of it, since it was not possible to reproduce the entire work here. There is, therefore, in the so often praised Ambrosian library of Milan, a most ancient book written by pen, which contains, under the name of Jerome, a plainly different and indeed more elegant *Exposition on the Psalms* than those which have been known until now: so that if any other work among the works of the Holy Father has seemed to obtain its place not undeservedly, this one could stand above the others even with dignity. The codex is marked with the letter C and the number one above three hundred, and is of an oblong, as they call it, in-folio format. It once belonged to the monastery of St. Columban of Bobbio, from which the most precious monuments of antiquity of all were brought there. It is written in a character, as antiquarians are pleased to call it, of an older cursive form, and one which closely approaches the shape of the marks that we see today in Egyptian papyri. For this reason, it is often extremely difficult to read, so that much practice is needed to distinguish the characters; and with the letters sometimes worn away by age, it escapes the sharpness of the eyes, so that in more than one place we have deemed it better to suffer a few small gaps than to supply

them from our own invention, if this could not be done safely.

The first sheet, which the scribe used to preface the codex, is written entirely in Latin letters, and these are almost similar to the script of the rest of the codex; but the language it sounds out, a most distinguished man to whom I attribute the highest authority said was unknown, or Old Illyrian. I, if the reader is interested in knowing this, would advise that it is Hebrew: for there are as an indication of this fact, though many others are obliterated, a few words of Hebrew termination and sound that can be read; especially this interpretation which is placed in the margin of the book next to the word *hiruzech*: "our city of strength." Thus, indeed, the words that compose that expression are: *hir*, Heb., "city"; *uz*, Heb., means "strength"; finally, the affix *ch*, Heb., is the pronoun "your." Therefore, you will say, it should have been written in Latin as "city of your strength," not "of ours," to correspond to the Hebrew, which I do not deny; but I believe that the note was added by some scholar not for the sake of explaining that word in Latin, but to indicate that the reading of the Latins was slightly different from it. Whoever he was, he imitated the industry of Origen: for the Hebrew text that Origen transcribed for himself in Greek letters in the Hexapla, this man has rendered in Latin letters; doubtless, each in his own vernacular. Perhaps he even represented in Latin that copy of Origen, not the Hebrew archetype: and this was the reason why the Scripture, violently distorted from Greek

elements not so well suited to the purpose, to Latin ones perhaps less suitable, often does not reproduce the peculiar sounds of the original language, and the modes of aspiration with which it abounds, and other things of that kind, and seems to produce sound without meaning.

But these things are an aside: let us now proceed to describe the commentary itself. We have said that it is attributed to Jerome, for so the inscription of the codex indicates, as do its first folios, which present Jerome's authentic prefaces to the Psalter. The beginning of the book has: *Here begins * the Preface of Jerome * of the Psalms in Christ*; at the end: *Here ends the Prologue of St. Jerome.* Those prefaces are the very ones which the Holy Doctor either sent to Paula in place of letters, or prefixed to the Psalter itself, first when he emended it, and then when he translated it from Hebrew into Latin. Nevertheless, so that we may conceal nothing, in both of those places the name of Jerome was not added by the hand that originally wrote the codex, but by another, although it too is ancient and of similar quality, and with different ink, it seems. Then follows the commentary, from which we have transcribed the explanations of the first and third psalms, and for the most part the fourth, and we present them in order to make a test concerning the author. We have lost the complete exposition of the second psalm, due, I think, to the carelessness of the one to whom we handed over our sheets for transcription; but since we are giving only a certain specimen of his work, that loss will

little hinder either our purpose or the reader's interest. I think this itself will be sufficient for learned men to discern the author, for indeed, if it is to be attributed to Jerome, it is not permissible in any way to suspect it, based on what we have discussed thus far. As for me, unless the conjecture is too bold to be proven by sufficiently good arguments, I would be pleased to ascribe it to St. Columbanus himself, whom we praised above, first abbot of Luxeuil in Burgundy, then of Bobbio in Italy, from whose monastery this book was brought into the library of Milan. The few monuments of his genius which have been published—for most are said to lie hidden in libraries, and especially in that of Fleury—seem to be of the same style and taste as this commentary: the expression of the Scriptures is also the same, as far as it has been possible to understand from the collation of some passages. It is established, indeed, from other authors, and especially from Sigebert, chapter 60, that St. Columbanus was enriched with so great a treasure of wisdom that, while still an adolescent, he wrote a book on the Psalms in a polished style; from which Trithemius, chapter 223, says: "While he was still a youth, he devoted great study to the sacred letters, so much so that he wrote, in an elegant style, one book of commentaries on the entire Psalter." To this, the consideration of his time, namely the sixth century, to the very end of which the holy abbot lived, as attested by Fredegar in his Chronicle and Aimoin in Book III of the Deeds of the Franks, also agrees quite well with the other

circumstances of his writing; finally, the place from which it comes, namely that monastery which St. Columbanus himself founded and long governed, adds much weight to the conjecture. Nevertheless, we do not wish these things to be established as certain, but we leave it to the judgment of the learned men who will read these things to discern the true author.

PSALM THE FIRST. (C,S)*

Some have wished to say that the first psalm was spoken of King Joash, who was raised by Jehoiada the chief priest and, after Athaliah was killed, was substituted into power: because for the entire time in which he was instructed in the law of God by the pontiff, he meditated on it day and night. But those who, in order to exclude the true exposition of the psalms, try to introduce false likenesses drawn from history, are not to be heeded. For how could he (David) have designated as blessed this man, a stranger to all error and to the love of virtue, to whom the books (of Kings) bear no testimony . . . . : in which it is thus said: And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him; but the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed in the high places. By saying, therefore, "all the days wherein Jehoiada the chief priest instructed him, he did that which was right before the Lord," it indicates that in the remaining days, when the teaching of Jehoiada ceased, he departed from it, that is, that he acted in a way that was not

at all in keeping with his initial instruction. It is also related in the same books of Kings that Joash turned away Hazael, king of Syria, from attacking Jerusalem with an offering . . . . which gifts, indeed, he sent having taken them from the temple, gifts which both he himself and the kings of Judah, that is, his ancestors, had previously offered to God, before the deed was indicated: (for it is good for us to approach the recognition of the event through the testimony of the reading): And Joash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria. To this man, therefore, who despoiled the temple of the Lord, and scraped together all the gifts placed within, and sent them to a foreign, impious, and sacrilegious man, who can say that David conferred the pinnacle of beatitude? Such an appropriation of history, therefore, is unsuitable for proof, because it cannot be fitted to the present psalm, in which the man who is spoken of is pronounced blessed by David, being conspicuous for the perfection of every virtue. For at the end of the psalm it is said: Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners, until, shall perish. This saying is fitting for those who can even die perfect, and because of their good conduct have no small confidence before the Lord. But King Joash is not shown by the reading of history to be such

that he might be proven worthy of beatitude. It is, therefore, a moral psalm, which is apparent from what follows, in which the appetite for vices and abstinence from error are discussed, which cannot properly apply to Joash. For as a small child during that time in which he was raised by the pontiff Jehoiada, he could never turn away from evil by his own judgment, nor apply diligent care to the meditation of the Law, since he was led to every study by the will of his guardian. Indeed, the honor and insignia of royal dignity were imposed upon him when he was in his seventh year of age.

There are, therefore, two things that make a person arrive at beatitude: right dogmas, and judgment: that is, that one think piously of God, and . . . . : and a corrected formation, before one lives honestly and holily. Neither kind is sufficient for perfection by itself; rather, the one supplements the other as a companion; but faith holds the first place. Just as in the body the head is more honorable, and the remaining members are counted towards perfection: yet for a human, the addition of the rest, and the joining of the members, is also necessary: similarly, for the consummation of life, it is fitting that both of these concur, namely, faith and life: so that faith, for the same person, is arduous and difficult for perfect comprehension, but easy to keep. The rule of life, however, is easy to understand, and seems exposed to the intellect of all, both in the appetite for good things and in the flight from evil things. The demonstration, however, of no small work

and labor, but sometimes by the merit of one's life, opens an entrance to faith, and conversely, is obstructed from perfect knowledge by sins; for, as if by a certain darkness of conduct, it blocks the sure path and prevents one from cultivating more purely this one part of the divine Scripture of Moses in particular. And for this reason, also in the present psalm, a declaration is made before the teachings of moral discipline; for let us learn, with the Apostle as witness, that vices of character are absent from perfect faith, who says to the Corinthians: I could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, as to little children in Christ: and he adds: for since there are among you, etc., are you not carnal, and do you not walk according to man, when on the contrary Cornelius came to the faith . . . .

Therefore, the theme of the present psalm is of one beseeching the Lord to unlock understanding, and to approach. And if, for the sake of our consideration, it should be necessary to explain some of the matters that arise more broadly, we will not forget that brevity which we promised in the preface. This we will especially observe here in the present psalm, and in all the others, that, reducing every understanding to a summary, we may explain briefly what must be said; since it is not our purpose to pursue all things at length, but to touch summarily upon the meanings of all that is said, so that the first face of the exposition may shine forth for the readers, leaving to them opportunities for greater understanding, if they should wish to add anything, provided it does

not disagree with the interpretation set forth; for this is the perception of true understanding: that we adapt the tenor of the exposition according to the fidelity of the history, and bring forth harmoniously those things which are to be said.

"Blessed is the man, who has not walked in the counsel," unto, "has sat." Sometimes divine Scripture makes a difference between the impious and the sinner: calling the impious one who does not have knowledge of the true God; and the sinner, one who does not keep to the path of the honorable and right. However, although it may signify both with a common term, in the present case it seems to make a distinction, because it wishes to describe who the follower of perfection is, to whom it believes blessedness rightly belongs, either on account of perfect knowledge of the Godhead, or on account of the pursuits of a better life.

When it says, "has not walked, has not stood, has not sat," it signifies the movements of the soul by bodily signs; for when we endeavor to accomplish something, first we are moved to take up the work, then we pause, when the matter begins to be in hand; but we turn to sitting when the business is already prepared. Saint David says this: that he is truly blessed who has neither approached nor entered into the thought of impiety even with the first steps, nor found the affection for a wicked deed, nor is ensnared by any guilty allurement of evil love, which it shows by the name of the chair and of sitting, so that he might be joined to their company, but they infect the

simplicity of others with the poison of their own depravity. For it calls these men pestilent, whose company is clearly diseased.

For it is also characteristic of a pestilence, by passing from one to another, to infect and corrupt the bodies of many. Therefore, by saying "has not walked," it noted the assent of thoughts, by which we are seized by wicked suggestions, and in which one might be pleased to fulfill one's own will. But when it says "has not stood," it indicates that he has never gone forth into the deed to which thought had suggested the mind, which however we fulfill when it is pleasing to plant our step in other works and to halt more often. By the sitting in the chair is signified he who so delights and rests in an evil habit that he is mixed with the rest of the men of the same pursuit with an assent devoid of any shame.

But he who set down the counsels of the impious and the works of sinners, has sufficiently regarded both. For impiety pertains to the agitation of the mind, and the movements of a soul not thinking rightly; but sin is an action already brought to effect. The third thing which he added he subjected to both, that not only are those called pestilent who by thinking evil corrupt others and destroy them by their company, but also those who, by the corruption of association, break the good of their own upright conduct. Not to be mixed with these at all is the mark of one who counsels himself best. And therefore the reading of the present psalm has defined as blessed this man who in all things turns away

from such people. He so watches his own actions that he also turns away from the evil solicitation of others, and he fears lest his own brightness and purity be darkened by the stains of others.

Since in striving for blessedness, it is not sufficient only to withdraw from evil things; clearly it is also necessary to do good things. Below it says: "But his will was in the law of the Lord," unto, "day and night." Not only, it says, does he strive to avoid the company of the wicked, but by assiduous and constant meditation on the law, he learns how it is fitting to form himself. And so that this kind of pursuit, which it strives to commend, may prove fruitful, it introduces a likeness, through which the good and blessed man, as they say, can shine forth to men.

"And he shall be like a tree which is planted by the riversides," unto, "shall prosper." Just as a tree, it says, whose nature is to be green, is also vivified by the benefit of the place in which it has been planted, so that it is defended from dryness by irrigating waters, and by these is full of many fruits; which feels the injuries of neither air, nor place, nor time. For that is what the following indicates, saying: "And whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper"; conspicuous to all, as much for its perpetual greenness as for the abundance of its fruits. So equally will that man be illustrious, who has both abstained from evil things and bound himself with the love of good pursuits, whom no works of sinners may deceive, and the continuous meditation of the law may adorn. ...of the eternal...

"Not so the wicked, not so; but as," unto, "from the face of the earth." With the preceding words, he has provoked all to the pursuit of virtue; with the present words, he deters from vices, and by the comparison of dust he shows how great is the worthlessness of the impious, and how worthy they are deemed of any assent: and so they are easily driven by oncoming evils, and cannot stand, like dust which, on account of its fineness and lightness, is scattered hither and thither by the blasts of the winds.

"Therefore the wicked shall not rise again," unto "of the just." Saying this, he does not deny resurrection to the impious, who certainly, if they did not rise again, would profit from future punishments, which indeed they will not sustain otherwise than restored in the body.

For the punishment of soul and body will be common, just as the commission of sins was common... such is... if we have established to apply no delays for inquiry in open crimes, but to pass sentence of condemnation immediately: so also the impious, rising again for punishment, will not have that delay which is accustomed to be applied by the force of judgment in investigations; that a graver punishment awaits them is indicated by this psalm... by the sentence for their crime they will be thrust into the place due to their merits and to ultimate destruction.

And therefore he did not say absolutely, "they will not rise again," but added, "in judgment": although they will not rise for examination, they will rise so as to immediately receive the

sentence of damnation. And lest perhaps from the common name of resurrection we should also esteem the future expulsion of all to be common, he shows that in the same moment of resurrection there will be a great difference, so that one may be led through it to honor, another sent to punishment.

For it will be precious and rewarding to some, but to others grievous and terrible.

Or he made a difference between the impious and the sinner: and he says that the impious indeed do not rise for judgment, that is, as we said above, they do not come into communication with the sinner; these [do not rise] in the council of the just, that is, so that there may be no communion for them in the reward of the just. Therefore they too will be handed over to punishments, not because they are excluded by their sins from the first, but for doing things which are, without doubt, different from what the first do.

For in this there will be a difference, that the impious indeed will rise not to be examined, but to be immediately assigned to their places; but the sinners, so that they may be joined by no communion with the just.

But this is shown more clearly from what follows: "For the Lord knows the way of the just," that is, He will thoroughly teach by the testimony of remuneration that it is pleasing and acceptable to Him; "and the way of the wicked shall perish." For the impious do not rise for examination for this reason: because the ways of all are contained in the perfect knowledge of God, and from these,

with no delay, their condition and worthy lot will receive them at the resurrection.

A PSALM OF DAVID, WHEN HE FLED FROM THE FACE OF ABSALOM HIS SON.

Absalom, however, which is interpreted as 'father's peace,' signifies Judas the betrayer, from whose face David, that is, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, as it were, fled, when, after the devil had entered his heart, He forsook him by a hidden judgment.

Lord, why are they multiplied. The voice of Christ to the Father for His persecutors, that is, the Jews: and the Church addresses the Lord for [Ms. *per*] all her enemies. Here, however, the Lord Christ [notes] the peoples stirred up against Him, He who had come to them for the sake of salvation. By saying, 'they that trouble me,' He shows that He greatly lamented their blindness, who with obstinate minds rejected Him. Many say. They were so many that even the traitor Judas from among the Jews was added to them. 'Many say': for when 'many' is repeated [Ms. *reperitur*] often, the cruel numerousness of the impious is shown. There is no salvation. This pertains to those voices of the Jews saying: 'He saved others; himself he cannot save.' But you, O Lord. The Word made flesh is the undertaking of man, and of the Church; wherefore the flesh speaks of its glory, and the exaltation of the head, which the almighty Word undertook: With my voice. This the evangelical words declare, where the Son says: 'Father, glorify thy Son,' etc. And He

heard him from his holy mountain, that is, from the most excellent height of Divinity, when He said: 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' I have slept. He comes to the second part, in which he expresses the sleeping and slumber of the passion, and the resurrection of Christ, about which He Himself said: 'I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.' And therefore He arose, because the divine power sustained His human nature. Alternatively: The Church slept through infidelity; but it arose through the illumination of faith. Christ slept in death through the passion, He rose again through the glory of the resurrection. I will not fear thousands. For in the passion of the Savior a great multitude of people surrounded Him, which He feared not in the least: because He foreknew that He would rise again after three days. And His flesh was saved. The Church speaks of Christ her Lord, that is, the body speaks to its head. For when He rose, she herself was saved. Because you have struck. Not only the adversaries, that is, the persecutors of the Savior, but also heretics are struck with blindness of mind, who with the teeth of detraction gnaw at the words of truth. So also the Jews, when they said: 'If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him'; the enemies of Christ's name were struck with confusion; and therefore they were crushed, because they immediately knew that He had risen in glory. Salvation is of the Lord. For eternal life cannot be destroyed, nor can the Savior's salvation be in any way cut off; and

therefore an everlasting blessing follows those who believe in Him.

For the end, in verses, a psalm of David. For here 'end' signifies perfection, not consummation. A psalm refers to work, while a canticle refers to knowledge, or joy.

When I called. Mother Church rejoices that she has been heard by the God of her justice, from whom she has everything that she possesses justly and rightly, of her justice: because she confesses the unity and omnipotence of the Holy Trinity. She says that she is enlarged when confessors are made and martyrs are crowned. Alternatively: From the straits of sadness you have led me into the breadth of joys. Have mercy on me. The pious mother said that mercy should be shown to her, if her prayer for her sons were to be heard. O sons of men, how long, etc. Rightly does Holy Church confess that those were for too long heavy of heart, who after the preaching of the truth chose rather to adore the idols of falsehood, which are vanity and a lie. And they have rightly received such a name, because they have been raised up against the dignity of truth. And know: that is, believe, that Christ, whom the Jews crucified, God the Father has made wonderful in the resurrection and ascension. And the Son himself has heard his Church, whenever they have cried to him: and rightly so, because she has preached him to the peoples to be made wonderful. Be angry. You ought to be angry at past sins, so that you may be able to escape present wickedness: and do not do evil again. Be remorseful, putting

away your wicked thoughts. Before you perpetrate the crimes which you always turn over in your hearts. Be remorseful, that is, unto penance. Indeed, what he called "heart" above, he here named "bed." Sacrifice. Here another matter begins; in which the most clement mother teaches and says: Sacrifice the sacrifice of justice: that is, live rightly, and always offer your clean hearts to the divinity. "And hope in the Lord," so that a happier hope may follow a good life. Many the same, etc., etc.

[NOTE.] These things will have been more than enough to provide a sample of the work, unless perhaps they seem to have been described more extensively than was fitting for incurious men. But to return to the matter at hand, by way of a concluding flourish, I will end this admonition with one more example, from which you may understand how unreliable an authority the author of the *Breviarium* is, who both at times passed himself off as Augustine and pervaded Augustine's own exposition of the psalms. This was noted long ago by the Benedictine editors, that in three manuscripts—namely, the Vatican, the Royal, and the Claremont of the Dominican Fathers, which contain Augustine's treatises on the Psalms—the exposition of the 14th psalm from the author of the *Breviarium*, with very few words changed, is found and placed immediately before the other one, which is truly Augustine's. Indeed, it is transcribed, as in the case of the pseudo-Jerome, from the beginning: "The fourteenth psalm has been read oppor-

tunely, and it has thus come about according to the order," and so on to the end, which is moreover fortified with this subscription: "Here ends the treatise of Aurelius Augustine, bishop, on the 14th psalm." If we had at hand the handwritten codices of other ancient authors who wrote on the Psalms, I have no doubt that similar examples would be found among them, for either this pseudonymous author of the *Breviarium* compiled the writings of all the commentators before him, or he certainly assumed their personas.

BREVIARY ON THE PSALMS. (C,G,S)

PROLOGUE.

Recently, when we were reading together Origen's Psalter, which he called the *Enchiridion*, annotated with concise and necessary interpretations, we both noticed at the same time that he had either touched upon some things lightly or left them entirely untouched, matters about which he had disputed at great length in another work, because he evidently did not think he could conclude a great matter in a brief discourse. Therefore, on account of the friendship that is between us, you have earnestly and diligently requested that I should annotate whatever seemed to me worthy of memory with certain signs rather than with interpretations. And just as those are accustomed to do who depict the locations of lands and cities on a small map and attempt to show the vastest regions in a modest space, so in this vast work of the Psalter, I might,

as if in passing, touch upon some things, so that from the few things I have touched upon, the rest that have been omitted may also be understood as to what force and reason they possess. Not that I think I can say what he passed over, but that I may bring into this narrow little commentary those things which he himself discussed in his volumes or homilies, or which I deem worthy of reading.

The Psalter is Greek, and in Latin is called *organum*, which the Hebrews call NEBEL. It is called a Psalm, because it took its name from the psalter, or from the act of singing to a stringed instrument (*psallendo*). Although David had sung all the psalms, nevertheless all the psalms pertain to the person of Christ, and those that do not appear to have titles among the Hebrews are considered as one psalm. For through the title the meaning of each psalm is understood. What is the title, but a key? So to speak, one does not enter a house except by a key; so also the meaning of each psalm is understood through its key, that is, through its title, in whose person it is sung, whether in the person of Christ, or in the person of the Church, or in the person of the prophet.

Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. Some say that this psalm is, as it were, a preface of the Holy Spirit, and for that reason has no title. Others say that in that it is the first, it has the beginning of its own order, and that it is a pleonasm (*πλεονασμὸν*) and a fault to call it the first, before which there is none. Alternatively: Among the Hebrews, both

the first and the second are one psalm, which is also confirmed in the Acts of the Apostles. Finally, because it had begun with a beatitude, it ends in a beatitude, saying: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Alternatively: Blessed is he who has not thought, not done, not taught evil things. Alternatively: Blessed is he who is not a Jew, a Gentile, a heretic. Alternatively: Tertullian, in his book *On the Spectacles*, asserts that this psalm can be understood both of Joseph, who buried the body of the Lord, and of those who do not attend the spectacles of the pagans.

And hath not stood in the way of sinners. He did not say, "and hath not walked in the way of sinners"; for this is indeed impossible, because no one is without sin, not even if his life were but a single hour. He says no one is without sin; but "hath not stood in the way of sinners" means one who has not persevered in transgression, but through penitence has turned to better things. And hath not sat in the seat of pestilence. For "pestilent ones," the Hebrew has "scorners" (*delusores*), because, of course, a perverse teacher deceives all his disciples. Hence Jeremiah says: "I sat not in the assembly of the mockers" (Jer. 15).

But his will is in the Law of the Lord. To the three he has opposed two, so that he may have the will, and to the will may join also the application. And in His law he will meditate day and night. Meditation on the law consists not only in reading the Scriptures, but also in doing those things which are written. The just man, therefore,

whether he eats, or drinks, or sleeps, doing all things in the name of the Lord, meditates on His law day and night.

And he shall be like a tree that is planted, etc. For 'planted,' Aquila translated 'transplanted.' Now, the tree to which the blessed man is compared, I believe to be wisdom, of which Solomon also speaks: 'She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her' (Proverbs 3). But wisdom is declared by the Apostle to be Christ, the Son of God. 'Christ,' he says, 'the power of God, and the wisdom of God' (1 Cor. 1), that is, he is certainly made conformed to Christ the Son of God, to the body of His glory. Which will give its fruit in its season. For it will give fruit not at any time, but at the prescribed time: namely, when, having conquered the powers and principalities, He will hand over the kingdom to God the Father, conformed to the brightness of His body. That the Lord wished Himself to be called a tree, He says: 'Either make the tree good, and its fruit good' (Matthew 12). As wood, He said thus: 'If they do these things in a green wood, what shall be done in the dry?' (Luke 23).

And his leaf shall not fall. The words of doctrine which profit the nations for salvation, according to that of the Apocalypse: 'And the leaves of this tree for the healing of the nations.' And whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper (Apoc. 22). The Jews think this psalm was spoken of Josiah: because he alone among the profane kings did not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, but followed the law of God. But this which has just

been read, 'and whatsoever he shall do shall prosper,' can be understood not only of Josiah, but of none of the saints, except perhaps in the world to come. Therefore, we understand it better of that man who was assumed and saved by our Savior: not that we testify that He assumed one person and another was the one assumed; but that one and the same Son of God and son of man, who before all ages was always the Word, He Himself afterwards deigned also to assume flesh.

Not so the wicked, not so. That which is said a second time, 'not so,' is not found in the Hebrew volumes: nor even in the Septuagint interpreters themselves. For in reading the copies of Origen in the library of Caesarea, I found it written only once. This is the difference between the impious and the sinner: he who is impious denies God; he who is a sinner confesses and sins. As the just man is compared to a tree, so the impious man is compared to dust. He who is just is compared to a tree of paradise: but he who is impious is compared to dust.

But like the dust, which the wind driveth from the face of the earth. Although dust is of the earth, yet it ceases to be earth. So unfortunate will the impious man be, that he will not even be earthly dust. It seems indeed to have the substance of earth, but it has its own substance: it has nothing solid, but what it has, it has for punishment. It is scattered hither and thither, it is never in one place; wherever the wind has drawn it, there its force is directed. So also the impious man, who

has once denied God, wherever the breath of the devil has drawn him, there he is led by error.

Therefore the ungodly shall not rise again in judgment: Not because they do not rise again, but because they do not rise again in judgment: for they have already been prejudged. Nor sinners in the council of the just. If sinners do not rise in the council of the just, the resurrection of sinners and of the just is different.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the just. The Lord knows nothing else, except what is worthy of His knowledge. For the Lord knoweth them that are his: and if any man know not, he shall not be known (2 Tim. 2). And to sinners it is said: 'Depart from me, you workers of iniquity, I know you not' (Luke 13). But I think the way of the just is He who says: 'I am the way' (John 14). Of whom the prophet also says: 'See what is the good way.' And the way of the wicked shall perish (Jer. 6). How mercifully, not the impious shall perish, but impiety.

PSALM II

Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? It is audacious to wish to interpret this psalm after Peter: indeed, to think anything different about it than what Peter said in the Acts of the Apostles.

The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against his Christ. Not only King Herod, but also those kings stood up against the Lord, whose

kingdoms the devil showed Him in a moment of time.

Let us break their bonds, and cast away, etc. The four preceding verses were spoken either by the angels or by the prophets, wondering why human rashness had risen up against the Son of God. From the fifth verse, however, the Lord Himself responds, exhorting the people of the Gentiles, and all those from the Jews who are to believe in Him, to dissolve the legal bonds and cast off the heavy burden of the Law, which their fathers could not bear, but to follow Him whose yoke is sweet and whose burden is light.

He who dwells in the heavens will laugh at them. Through examples of human speech, we learn of the dispositions of God: not that He derides anyone, but that we do things worthy of derision. And the Lord will mock them. Mockery is properly expressed with a wrinkled brow and a contracted nose. Far be it from us, therefore, to think this of God in a corporeal sense, which some consider worthy of reprehension even in serious men.

Then He will speak to them in His anger. Concerning the anger of God, Lactantius also wrote a most beautiful book, and Origen himself very frequently argues that it is not so much anger as a necessary correction, like that of a father toward a son, a physician toward a patient, a master toward a disciple. However, it can seem like anger to those who suffer it, not that God corrects while being angry. And in His fury He will trouble them. As in the Epistle to the Romans: 'The wrath of

God,' it says, 'is revealed' (Rom. 1), so that those who understand it is coming may strive to avoid it. So also in the present passage, He kindly does not say, 'He will punish,' but 'He will trouble,' so that he who is troubled may be corrected without punishments.

But I. The voice of Christ. 'I have been appointed king,' is said with respect to His flesh. By Him, God the Father. Upon Zion, that is, upon the Church. Zion is interpreted as 'watchtower of life'. 'His holy mountain,' the mountain is the Church, or Christ Himself, as in that passage: 'And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains.' Preaching the commandment of the Lord (Isa. II). This is the doctrine of the Gospel.

The Lord said to me, 'You are my son; today I have begotten you.' Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Rightly, however, it is said to Him who was born in time:

Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance. As if to say: While the Jews were unwilling to receive you, all the nations will come to you as an inheritance.

You will rule them with a rod of iron. In the harsh discipline of the Romans. Or, by the iron rod, an intolerable discipline, because their hearts were twisted. You will break them like a potter's vessel. A potter's vessel, before it has been hardened into earthenware, if it is broken, can be reshaped. Read Jeremiah (Jer. 19). But if the earthenware is broken once, it can by no means be put back together whole. But what is

impossible for men is possible for God. The potter is Christ; the vessel, man, as in that passage: 'As the vessel is in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, says the Lord' (Ibid. 18). Alternatively: one is broken here for repentance, or on the day of judgment for the fire.

Now, O kings, understand. All you kings of the world, or you holy kings, the apostles, understand these things said above. Be instructed. That is, yourselves, or others. You who judge the earth, the holy Church.

Serve the Lord with fear. He said 'with fear' to take away their pride, because He had called them kings. And rejoice unto Him. So that He might comfort them again, as in that passage: 'Rejoice and exult, with trembling:' so that they might be with trembling, that is, with trembling of the body and fear of the soul.

Embrace discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry. For that which in Greek is said, δράξασθε παιδίας (dràxasthe paidìas), in Hebrew one reads NESCU BAR, which can be interpreted as 'adore the son'. Therefore, it is a most open prophecy about Christ, and the order of the precept is: Adore the Son, lest perhaps the Lord, that is, the Father, become angry. And you perish from the just way. The Lord was angry with the Jews who were unwilling to adore the Son, and they perished from the right way. The just, or right, way is Christ. We are on the way when we fulfill the commandments of God. We perish from the way when we turn away from them.

In a little while, His anger. That is, at the departure of each man. Or, a brief anger on the day of judgment, as in that passage: "For when men shall say, peace and security, then sudden destruction will come upon them" (1 Thess. 5). Blessed are all who trust in Him. Not in men, nor in themselves, but in God. This psalm, as we have said before, ends in a beatitude, from which the preceding one begins, and for this reason they are held as one among the Hebrews.

PSALM III.

A psalm of David, when he fled from the face of Absalom his son.

This psalm is later than many that follow, which seem to pertain to the history of Saul. For David suffered snares from Saul before Absalom took up arms against him. But because his purpose was not so much to relate what he had suffered, as to instruct all men by his example, he therefore placed the second things before the first, so that he might teach the order of temptations. Indeed, we are first corrected for our sins, and afterwards we are tested for our virtue. In David, however, the order of temptations was changed. Under Saul's persecution, he was innocent; under Absalom, he is held most manifestly guilty of the crime, having killed Uriah. Read the title of the fiftieth psalm, and you will understand that according to the order, it is prior to the third.

Lord, why are they multiplied that trouble me? Many are they that rise up against me. This psalm

can pertain both to David, and to Christ, and through him, to all the saints.

He heard me from his holy mountain. I think the holy mountain is the only-begotten Son of God, to whom the peoples will flock in the last days. Isaiah and Micah prophesying this very thing. But it is also understood of the Church, because a city set on a mountain cannot be hidden.

I have slept, and have taken my rest: and I have risen up, because the Lord hath protected me. Like sleep, he says, and its place is persecution.

I will not fear thousands of the people surrounding me. And David can say this of Absalom and his army; and the Lord, of the Jews raging against him and crying out: "Away with him, away with him, crucify him" (John 19).

For you have struck all who oppose me without cause. The Lord strikes, both the vineyards of foreigners with hail, and the Savior, who was made all things for us, is written to have been struck by the Father: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered" (Zech. 13). But for "without cause," "jawbone" is read in the Hebrew, that is, LECHI. And because he had mentioned the jawbone, it is consequently inferred. You have broken the teeth of sinners. Let the friends of history alone answer, therefore, how God strikes the jawbone and breaks the teeth of sinners, who contend against him in the manner of boxers. You have broken the teeth of sinners. The princes of the Jews: the teeth, or heretical teachers, or their words.

Salvation is of the Lord. That is, not from man, but from God. He alone is able, and through him we can pass from death to life. And upon your people. That is, the Christian people. Your blessing. He pours out a blessing upon the people of believers, sending them the Holy Spirit, or in the future when he will say: "Come, you blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25).

PSALM IV.

For the end, in verses, a psalm of David. For the end, that is, in Christ. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes. In verses, that is, in praises. A psalm of David, that is, the praise of Christ.

When I called, the God of my justice heard me. It is unfitting to take this as being about David, who in the preceding psalm was almost killed by his son on account of the murder of Uriah, that he should now dare to say: "The God of my justice heard me." Therefore, the entire psalm is to be referred to Christ, and through Christ to the just. Jacob also spoke something similar to this, saying: "My justice will answer for me tomorrow" (Gen. 30).

In my tribulation you have enlarged me. Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer. Although you have brought me help, and in my tribulation you have enlarged me, yet I am always in need of your mercy.

Why do you love vanity, and seek after lying? Diapsalma. The word SELA, the Seventy inter-

preters, Symmachus, and Theodotion translated as diapsalma. Aquila, however, translated it as semper (always); and I think it is either a sign of some musical sound, or certainly indicates the perpetuity of those things which have been said before, so that wherever SELA, that is, diapsalma, or semper, is placed, we may know that what follows or what has preceded pertains not only to the present time, but to eternity.

What you say in your hearts, be sorry for in your beds. What you sin by thinking in the day, expiate at night through tears.

Offer the sacrifice of justice, and hope in the Lord. Offer justice as a sacrifice to God, and consequently you will hope in the Lord.

The light of your countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us. He upon whose face the light of the Lord is signed, this one with unveiled face contemplates the glory of the Lord. The Lord commanded such a sign to be marked also on the foreheads of those who groan, in the book of the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. 9).

By the fruit of their corn and wine, they are filled. That which is found in many codices, 'and of their oil,' when I consulted the ancient copy of the Psalter of Origen, which had been corrected by his own hand, I found neither in the Hebrew, nor in the other editions, nor among the Septuagint interpreters themselves.

PSALM V.

To the end, for her who obtains the inheritance, a psalm of David. This psalm is composed

concerning the Church which, at the end and consummation of the world, is to obtain the inheritance with all nations believing in Christ. Finally, the prayer is also directed to the Lord from her person.

Receive my words with your ears, O Lord. No one has this confidence except the Church. He who is a sinner has not dared to say: 'Receive my words with your ears, O Lord'; he who is angry and curses has not dared to say: 'Receive my words with your ears, O Lord'; but he wishes that God would close His ears. Understand my cry, etc. A cry in the Scriptures is not of the voice, but of the heart. Finally, it is said to Moses: 'Why do you cry to me?' (Exod. 14), although Moses had not cried out before. Understand my cry. And the Apostle: 'Crying in our hearts, Abba, Father' (Gal. 4). Surely he who cries out, does not cry in the heart, but cries with the tongue. And how does the Apostle say, 'crying in our hearts'? Therefore, when our groaning and conscience pray, God understands this cry. Whence Jeremiah also says: 'Let not the apple of my eye be silent' (Lam. 2). See what he says: 'Let not the apple of my eye be silent': and sometimes the apple of the eye cries out to God. Surely if it cries out, the tongue cries out, not the apple of the eye. But just as we cry in our hearts when we beseech the Lord with a groan, so when we pour out tears to God, at that time the apple of our eye cries out to the Lord. My king, and my God. He has truly dared to say, 'My king and my God,' in whose mortal body sin does not reign. 'My king and my God,' because you

reign in me, and sin does not reign: therefore you are my God. You are my God: because my belly is not my God, because gold is not my God, because lust is not my God. Since you are virtue, and I desire to have virtues, therefore you are my God, that is, my virtue.

In the morning you will hear my voice. Some interpret it more simply, that is, I rise at dawn to pray, and I beseech you. And what is this interpretation, by which it is said that he hears us in the morning, does not hear us in the evening, does not hear us at midnight? But see what it says: As long as I am in the darkness of error, he does not hear me. But when the sun of justice has come into my heart, then he hears me: in the morning you will hear my voice. He did not say, at the third hour, he did not say at the sixth hour, he did not say in full daylight; but see what he says: In the morning, as soon as the shadows have begun to flee, you hear: immediately at the beginning of a good work you hear me, you do not seek its end. For it is mine to will, yours to bring to completion. In the morning I will stand before you. See the order: in the morning, not in the evening, not in darkness, but in the morning. In the morning I will stand before you: I will stand steadfastly, and I will imitate Moses. In the morning I will stand before you: before you I will stand, not others. But when it is morning, and I have stood, and stood before you, then I will be worthy to see you. And I will see. It is understood, 'I will see you'; many read it incorrectly and say, καὶ ἐπόψειμε (and he will see me): but let us know that this is an error;

it is said thus, καὶ ἐπόψομαι (and I will see), that is, 'I will see', so that in this way the order we have described—with the light of virtues dawning in my soul, when I have begun to stand before you, not to sit, not to lie down, but to stand: and you will set my feet upon a rock—then through these steps I will be worthy to see you. For you are a God who does not will iniquity. Therefore you do not hear me in full daylight, but in the morning, because you, God, do not will iniquity. For when I have begun to depart from iniquity, I will immediately be worthy of your hearing.

Nor will the wicked dwell near you. When someone who is evil departs from us, let us rejoice; this happens in us which also happened in the Lord. For see what the Holy Spirit says: 'Nor will the wicked dwell near you,' for what fellowship has light with darkness? what accord has Christ with Belial? Therefore, when some depart from us, let us also say: 'They went out from us, but they were not of us.' For if they had been of us, they would indeed have remained with us (I Joan. XII). It is said to God: 'The wicked will not dwell near you.' For if God is a fire, and a consuming fire, whoever is straw, whoever is wood, flees from the fire, lest he be consumed by the fire. Nor will the unjust remain before your eyes. When it is said, 'nor will they remain,' it is shown that at one time they did remain. But the unjust did at one time remain before the eyes of God: they remained while God was awaiting their repentance; but because they remained unjust, for that reason they did not remain before the eyes of God.

You have hated all who work iniquity. Unhappy is he whom God hates. Who is he whom God hates? He who works iniquity. For if we all sin, and whoever sins is held in hatred by God, therefore we are held in hatred by the Lord. But if we are held in hatred by the Lord, how are we saved by grace? You have hated all who work iniquity. It does not say 'who have worked iniquity,' but 'who work iniquity.' Those who persevere in sin, they are held in hatred by the Lord; but those who have left it off, they are loved by the Lord: You will destroy all who speak lies. I see a new matter. He who works evil is held in hatred: he who lies, perishes. Let us see which is worse, to be held in hatred by the Lord, or to perish. Unhappy indeed is he who is held in hatred by the Lord, but he still lives. But he who speaks a lie and perishes, now ceases to be. Therefore, he who speaks a lie is more unhappy than he who works iniquity, for he who works iniquity is held in hatred, but he who speaks a lie, perishes. For the mouth that lies kills the soul (Sap. I). And how is it written: 'that God may be true, but every man a liar' (Rom. III). But if whoever speaks a lie already perishes and kills his own soul, and we all lie, will we all therefore perish? But this which he says, 'You will destroy all who speak lies,' we can understand both from the following parts of the psalm and from the order itself, that he is speaking of heretics: for he who works iniquity kills only his own soul; but he who is a heretic and speaks a lie, kills as many men as he has led astray.

The Lord will abominate the man of blood and deceit. The man of blood is every heretic; he daily sheds the blood of souls. Rightly did he say "deceitful": he is both a murderer and deceitful.

But I, in the multitude of your mercy, will enter into your house. They in their iniquity go out from your house; I in your mercy will enter into your house, I will enter into your house, which is the Church.

I will worship at the temple, etc. This house is also the temple.

Lord, lead me in your justice. But I desire to enter your house and I wish to enter by your straight way; but since my enemies place continuous scandals in the paths, and for me, who desires to go into your house, they place snares in the journey; for this reason, I ask you to direct my feet even to the end. It is my part to place my feet on your way; it is yours to correct my steps: Because of my enemies, make my way straight in your sight. That is, make your way straight because of my enemies, who lie in wait for me. But what is this way? The reading of the Scriptures, that is, lest I fall in your Scriptures, through which I desire to enter into your Church. For everyone who understands the Scriptures wrongly, falls on the way of God.

For there is no truth in their mouth. The heretics are described, the bloodthirsty and deceitful man is described, whom the Lord will abominate. There is no truth in their mouth. They do not have Christ, the truth, in their mouth, because they do not have him in their heart

either. Their heart is vain. It is better rendered in the Hebrew as ἐπίβουλον (treacherous). For truly the heart of heretics lies in wait for all whom it deceives.

Their throat is an open sepulcher. Unhappy are the heretics, who are whitewashed sepulchers, full of the bones of the dead. Their throat is an open sepulcher. Arius, Eunomius, and the other heretics have tongues like arrows: they have their throats as a sepulcher. Their throat is an open sepulcher. And he rightly said, "open," for whenever someone who is deceived wishes to enter, the heretic is ready and receives him. Heretics never close their mouth, but always open their mouth. With their tongues they acted deceitfully. They held one thing in their heart, they promised another in their speech. They spoke of piety, and concealed impiety. They speak of Christ, and hide the Antichrist. For they know that no one can be persuaded if they bring forth the Antichrist. They bring forth light to hide the darkness, so that through light they may lead to darkness. Judge them, O God. They know you are the judge, they know you regard human affairs. You who will judge in the end, judge also in the present. You who will judge generally, now judge in part. Let those who do not want to feel you as a father, feel you as a judge. Judge them, O God. Why? For what reason? It follows:

Let them fall from their own thoughts. For if in the present you render to them what they deserve, they begin to withdraw from their evil thoughts: as long as they do not feel you as

judge, they do not fear. Let them fall from their own thoughts. He said excellently, "from their own thoughts." For heretics daily change their dogmas. Finally, if an ecclesiastical man learned in the Scriptures should contend against them, and convict them with the holy Scriptures, they immediately seek how they might find another new dogma. They do not seek how they may be saved, but how they may overcome. For this reason he now said. Let them fall from their own thoughts, and have you as their one thought.

According to the multitude of their impieties, cast them out. It does not say from where He should cast them out: whether He should cast them out from heaven, or cast them out from the earth; Scripture does not say from where He should cast them out, but it is a *hyperbaton* and a *hysteron proteron*. Therefore, we should read: According to the multitude of their impieties, cast them out. What it says is this: From their many impieties, on account of Your mercy, cast them out; that is, let them not remain in their many impieties. It can also be interpreted otherwise: Since they have been exceedingly impious and have been unwilling to depart from their thoughts, and they add impieties to impiedades, and daily accumulate them, and have more impieties, for that reason cast them out. From where? From that which obtains the inheritance. You, cast them out from there, so that, since they do not have the faith of the Church, they may not be active within it. For they have provoked you, O Lord. You, O Lord, are sweet by nature, but all

sinners and heretics, by their own fault, turn the nature of Your sweetness into bitterness.

And let all who hope in you rejoice. Let those men perish, and let the people of the Church rejoice. They will rejoice forever. Here, "forever" must not be said of the present age, but of the future. In short, it did not say, "they rejoice in this age," but "they will rejoice"; it is spoken of the future. For here there is sadness, but there, joy. Heretics laugh in the present, but in the future they will mourn. But we mourn in the present, so that we may laugh in the future. They will rejoice forever. What will be the exultation of holy men? And you will dwell in them. Happy will they be who will merit to have Christ as a guest: happy are they who will be the tabernacle of Christ.

And all who love your name will glory in you. Whoever loves God will glory in the Lord. "Who love." It did not say, "who fear," but, "who love." For wherever there is fear, there is not love (*dilectio*). For perfect love casts out fear. For whoever loves the name of the Lord, they will glory. "They will glory." Our blessedness is in the future: everything that is promised is of the future. Let others reign; let others possess; let others glory. We are miserable here, so that we may be happy hereafter. Let us follow Christ our Lord. He who says he believes in Christ ought to walk as He walked. Christ the Son of God came not to be served, but to serve. He came not to command, but to serve. He came not to have His feet washed, but to wash the feet of the disciples. He came not to strike, but to be struck. He did

not give a blow, but received one. He did not crucify, but was crucified. He did not kill others, but He Himself suffered. He was poor, that He might make us rich. He received the blow for us, so that we, when scourged, might not feel pain. Whenever we are struck, let us offer the cheek, let us turn our back, let us imitate Christ. He who is struck imitates Christ; he who strikes, the Antichrist. Why do I say all this? So that in this present age, in what we endure, we may glorify the name of the Lord for Christ's sake. While we speak, while we walk, suddenly we are taken away. I myself who speak to you today, do not know what will become of me tomorrow. If a slight fever should come, where is that voice? Where is that pride? Suddenly it is turned to ash. Why is earth and ash proud? According to the nature of the body, we are earth and ash. You are earth, and to earth you shall go; and yet earth glories against its maker. What follows.

For you will bless the just man. Therefore, blessedness is deferred to the future.

Lord, as with a shield of good will, etc. In the world, the shield is one thing, the crown another; but with God, He Himself is the shield, and He Himself is also the crown. As a shield, He protects; as God, He crowns. He is our shield, and He is also our crown. And for this reason, it says: 'Lord, you have crowned us as with a shield of your good will.' You have protected us with your shield, and your protection was our crown; that is, our crown was your shield, which is to say, our victory. For 'crown' is interpreted as 'victory.' Let us give

thanks to God, and let us beseech Him, that in His good will He Himself may be our shield and our crown, so that we may never depart from Him, that we may follow Him, and say with Jeremiah: 'And following after you, I have not labored, Lord, you have crowned us as with a shield of your good will' (Lamentations 1). By the shield we are protected, and when we have been made perfect, we are crowned.

PSALM VI.

To the end, for the songs for the eighth, a psalm of David. This and the eleventh psalm have the inscription 'for the eighth,' containing the mystery of the resurrection, and of penitence, and thereby of our salvation. In it, the human race asks that we may indeed be corrected and judged by God, but not in His anger and in His fury. It would be tedious to recall more examples concerning the sacrament of this number. Eight souls entered Noah's Ark, who were saved in the flood. The eighth son of Jesse was David, who was both despaired of by his father and chosen by God alone. On the eighth day the firstborn are circumcised, and they cease to be unclean. Zacharias also, the father of John, speaks on the eighth day of his son's circumcision. And after eight or six days (for both are read in different evangelists) the Lord is transfigured on the mountain, so that the number eight might be contained in the number six, just as now in the sixth psalm, the inscription of the ogdoad is placed.

Lord, do not rebuke me in your fury, etc. It is a psalm of penitence, and he does not refuse to be amended and corrected, but to be so in fury and in anger, because he is weak, and his bones are troubled. And sometimes fury comes first, and then anger; but for the most part they are one. However, fury is in the present, anger in the future.

Have mercy on me, Lord. The voice of the Church. Have mercy on me, for I am miserable. And he finds the mercy of God, who confesses himself to be miserable. For I am weak, heal me, Lord. As if to say: I am weak because of sin: heal me, for you are the physician. I am the sick one, you are the physician. I have the infirmity, you have the healing. I am weak through sin, you heal through mercy.

For all my bones are troubled. As if to say: all the virtues, which he called bones, were transgressed, or lost, in the first man. My soul is troubled because of this. Through penitence, that we may be amended.

And you, Lord, how long? It is understood: how long will you not deliver, not correct, not amend my soul which is greatly troubled?

Turn, Lord, and deliver my soul. Unless He first converts our soul, He cannot rescue it from danger. Or this: Lord, you who have turned your face from us, turn and deign to see us, and deliver our soul.

For there is no one in death who is mindful of you. For the dead will not praise you, Lord, but we who are living, because He is not the God of

the dead, but of the living. But in hell, who will confess to you? He put this not as something impossible, but as something rare. For in all God's judgments the saint delights, and praises His judgments.

I have labored in my groaning. Have mercy on me, because I have done these things and those which follow. I will wash my bed every night. He who daily waters his couch with tears, the pomp of lusts cannot creep into his thought. With my tears I will water my couch. What a multitude of tears, that his couch should be watered with tears!

My eye is troubled by fury. Where are the letters of friends? Certainly, this corporeal eye is not troubled there by anger, unless perhaps we are raised to such a frenzy that our countenances and faces are also changed. Therefore, that eye is troubled which, if it should cause scandal, will be plucked out. But he does not say: "My eye is troubled by my anger," but, "by your anger." O God, through whom I fear the punishments prepared for me: my mind is troubled, and the entire ruling part of my heart has trembled. I have grown old among all my enemies. The enemies do not wage new wars against me; my foe is ancient. Alternatively: I cannot attain the youth of that man who is renewed from day to day, because I carry the old man with his vices and concupiscences, my enemies fighting against me.

Depart from me, all you who work iniquity. After he himself has obtained mercy, he teaches or exhorts the others to depart from him. For

he does not wish to have the fellowship of the iniquitous. At the same time, that which we have already said above must also be noted: that he commands not those who have worked iniquity, but those who are working it, to withdraw from him.

Let them be converted and blush exceedingly quickly. He prays not against his enemies, but for his enemies: that they may be converted and blush for their sins; and that they may blush not lightly, but vehemently; and not at some future time, but quickly.

PSALM VII.

A Psalm of David, which he sang to the Lord concerning the words of Cush the son of Jemini.

Many, and especially those who do not have knowledge of the Hebrew language, think that this psalm was sung at that time when Cushai the son of Arach, a friend of David, thwarted the counsel of Ahithophel, and sent messengers to him, that he should not remain any longer in the wilderness, but should flee far away, lest he be crushed by his son. But it must be known that they are vehemently mistaken. First, because the name Cushai is written with the letter *samech*; but here, it is with *sin*. Next, because David, who had commanded Joab and the other leaders of his army, saying: "Spare the young man Absalom" (2 Samuel 18), would never speak of his son's death in this way: "He has conceived sorrow and brought forth iniquity: He has opened a pit

and dug it, and he has fallen into the hole which he made"; especially since, upon hearing of his death, he covered his head and, wailing, would cry out: "My son Absalom, my son Absalom." Finally, because there Cushai, the friend of David, is written as the son of Arach; but here, as the son of Jemini. Therefore, it should be known that Cush is interpreted as "Ethiopian," and that the entire psalm was written against Saul, who was persecuting him, and who himself fell into the pit that he had dug. He calls him an Ethiopian on account of his bloodthirsty, foul, and cruel habits. As for Jemini, it means "family," because it pertains to the tribe of Benjamin, from which Saul was born, as the books of the Kingdoms testify, in which Scripture recounts: "And there was a man of the sons of Benjamin, and his name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of a man of Jemini, a mighty man, and he had a son, and his name was Saul" (1 Samuel 9). Shimei also, who threw stones and dust at David, was of the family of Saul, that is, a Jeminite, as is written in the same books: "There came out a man of the kindred of the house of Saul, and his name was Shimei, the son of Gera" (2 Samuel 17); concerning whom David is later introduced as speaking: "Behold, my son who came forth from my womb seeks my life; how much more now the son of Jemini?" Aquila interpreted this passage thus. "For the ignorance of David, who sang to the Lord concerning the words of the Ethiopian:" Symmachus in this manner: "For the ignorance of

David, which he sang to the Lord concerning the words of Cush the son of Jemini." I have explained all these things at greater length because very learned men have thought that this psalm was composed not against Saul, but against Absalom, which I have shown, for my part, not to be the case.

O Lord my God, in you have I hoped, etc. I have not hoped in my sword; I have not hoped in my own strength; but I have hoped in your help.

Lest at any time he seize my soul like a lion, etc. This is fitting for Saul; it is not fitting for Absalom. For how could he call Absalom a lion, of whom he says: *Spare my boy Absalom*? If there he calls him a boy, and as if a little child and ignorant, how here does he call him a lion? This, for the time being, is according to the history, and there are many things that might be said, and the whole psalm can be interpreted in the person of Saul. But since it is our concern to interpret not only according to the history but also according to the spiritual understanding, we interpret this Chus the Ethiopian as none other than the devil. The question is asked, how is this Chus the son of Jemini: how is the devil, an Ethiopian, the son of the right hand? That he is an Ethiopian is by his own fault; that he is the son of the right hand is because he was created by God. Of him it is rightly said: *Lest at any time he seize my soul like a lion*. Our adversary the devil, like a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may seize.

O Lord my God, if I have done this thing. Behold the prince of this world: *and in me he

finds nothing*. If there is iniquity in my hands. *Because he committed no sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth*.

If I have rendered to them that repaid me evils. Saul was twice delivered into his hands, whom he was unwilling to kill, saying: *I will not touch the Lord's Christ* (1 Samuel 24). This, therefore, is not to repay him evil for evil, who was repaying him evil for good. If, he says, I have rendered evil for evil to my enemies, I shall not rise again; and if I have sought evil for evil, while they repay evil for good. Let me deservedly fall before my enemies empty. In the Hebrew, for 'empty' (inanis), RECAM is written. From this we understand what interpretation is contained in the Gospel: *Whoever says to his brother, 'Raca' and 'Fool'* (Matthew 5).

Let the enemy persecute my soul, etc. The very last enemy of the soul to be destroyed is death. And let him trample my life into the earth. It cannot be trampled, because he has not done the things said above. And let him bring down my glory to the dust. If, he says, I have rendered evil for evil to my enemies, I shall not rise again.

Arise, O Lord, in your anger. Since they have not perceived you through benefits, let them perceive you through wrath. And be exalted in the ends of my enemies. He prays for his enemies, that you may be exalted in the ends of the enemies. When the enemies have ceased to be, then you, O Lord, will be exalted in them.

And arise, O Lord my God, in the precept which you have commanded, etc. This we say;

this we speak as believers. For the persons always change in the Psalms. It would be a great task now if we wished to say in how many, and how many persons change. *Arise, O Lord my God, in the precept which you have commanded*: this we say, for us you suffered, you were crucified; arise, and save us. Therefore arise, so that a great multitude may believe in you. When, therefore, you have arisen, what else do we pray for, but that you return to the Father?

And for her sake return on high. For whose sake? For the congregation of the peoples. That you died, you died for us; that you rose again, you rose again for us; that you ascended to the Father, you ascended for us. *And for her sake return on high*. *No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven*.

Judge me, O Lord, according to my justice, etc.

This David cannot say: this properly befits the Savior, who did not sin.

Let the wickedness of sinners be consumed, and you shall direct the just. My justice cannot be directed until their iniquity, namely that of the Jews, has been filled up.

Unless you are converted, he will brandish his sword. This passage admits of a twofold understanding. For many think it is said of God, as spoken to sinners. And what does it say? *Unless you are converted, he will brandish his sword*: that is, unless you do penance, the Lord will strike you with his sword. But let us see if the consequences can be fitted to the person of the

Lord. *He has bent his bow*, etc. This can be said of God. *And in it he has prepared the vessels of death*. This is difficult: for the Lord does not have vessels of death, but vessels of life. But this too can be understood concerning the person of the Savior. But what follows:

Behold, he has travailed with injustice, etc. This is, so that heretics might be stirred up in contempt of God.

He opened a pit, etc. So that he might destroy them. And he fell into the ditch which he made. For in the pit of death which he had opened, he himself perished first: as it is written of Arius: that is, unless you are converted, unless you do penance, the devil always has his bow ready, he sends forth arrows with which to strike us. For those whose hearts burn with lust, with vices, and with passions: these are conquered by the devil. He has made his arrows for the burning ones. He said beautifully, for the burning ones; he did not say, for those who will burn: that is, who are to be burned by his arrows: but whosoever's hearts he sees burning, those he strikes. For the Apostle says that the devil has fiery darts (Ephesians 6). Behold, he has travailed with injustice, he has conceived sorrow, and has brought forth iniquity. Thus the devil conceives, thus he brings forth, thus he nourishes, thus he exalts. He opened a pit, and dug it, and he has fallen into the ditch that he made. The devil himself is the pit, he himself is the ditch. He opened a pit. But since it cannot hold water, according to Jeremiah, therefore his pit has been turned into a ditch. All

the assemblies of heretics are the devil's ditches. But as to what we passed over above: 'God who searches the hearts and reins, my just help is from God': in the Hebrew it is written thus: 'The just God who searches the hearts and reins': so that what follows may be: 'My help is from God, who saves the upright of heart.' Will he be angry every day? For this, it is better in the Hebrew: 'He threatens every day,' which Aquila also translated. And he says beautifully: 'Threatening and gnashing every day.' For he who, on account of his patience, does not punish sins in this way: as if angry and threatening, he awaits the day of vengeance, so that he may correct the delinquent through fear. Let us follow the order.

His sorrow shall be turned upon his own head, etc. Just as if someone throws a stone high up, and is not careful, and the stone comes upon his head, he is wounded by his own wound: so too the devil is killed by his own pride, is exalted, and falls. Now he wishes to lift up his head, and cannot: for his sorrow will be turned upon his own head, and will press him down. The devil, according to the rule of the Scriptures, is read of in Genesis; he is the snake, he is the serpent, who spoke to Eve: because he clings entirely to the earth. Although other animals walk on the earth (Gen. 3), yet they do not have their whole body lying on the earth: although they have their feet on the earth, yet they have another part of their body upwards. But the devil, that is, the ancient serpent and snake, according to Isaiah is wholly on the earth (Isaiah 14): and has his head and

the rest of his body on the same level. His sorrow shall return upon his own head, and his iniquity shall descend upon his own crown. See what he says: both upon his head, and upon the crown of his head. But when iniquity presses down the head, and presses down the crown, where is the power of the devil? This is the end of the devil. His sorrow shall return upon his own head, and his iniquity shall descend upon his own crown.

I will give praise to the Lord according to his justice. Who has not permitted those who fear him to be scattered. And I will sing to the name of the Lord most high. Who has led us from the laments of sadness into everlasting joys.

To the end, for the winepresses, a psalm of David. Three psalms 'for the winepresses' are prescribed from different men: David, Asaph, the sons of Korah, and they pertain to the mystery of the Church: therefore they hold the eighth and the eightieth number. But the fact that the eightieth, the third and last psalm which is noted 'for the winepresses,' shows this: that the sacrament of the resurrection of the Church is contained in the Trinity.

O Lord, our Lord. The first name of the Lord among the Hebrews has four letters: yod, he, vav, he: which properly sounds as the word for God: and can be read as IAHO, and the Hebrews consider it ἄῤῥητον (*árrēton*), that is, ineffable. The second, however, ADONAI, is common to all, which is often also applied to men. How admirable is your name in all the earth. That you were made man for us, that you died, that

you rose again, has been published among all nations.

Because your magnificence is elevated above the heavens. Because after the resurrection you ascended to the heavens with the triumph of glory.

Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings you have perfected praise. Although through the teaching of the elder Prophets, there are many things that contain the praise of the Lord, nevertheless the Lord Himself declares this verse to be fulfilled in the Gospel, when the children cried out: Hosanna to the son of David (Matt. 21). Because of your enemies. To the confusion of the Jews. That you might destroy the enemy and the avenger, the Heretic, who, while he attacks the Church with his wickedness, nevertheless pretends to defend it.

For I will see the heavens, the works of your fingers. By 'heavens' we understand the holy Scriptures, which were brought forth by the finger of God, that is, by the Holy Spirit. For I will see the heavens, the works of your fingers. He who promises that he will see, does not yet see it as present. 'I will see,' he says. For then I will also know the reason for His work and its course. The pilot sees the ship differently, the physician the sick person differently, the painter the painting differently, than the untrained eyes of the unskilled. 'The moon and the stars which you have founded': The Church, or its doctors.

What is man that you are mindful of him? What merit does man have, that being mindful of

him, you should take on flesh for his redemption. Or the Son of man, that you visit him. The Son of God became the Son of man: that is, the Son of the virgin Mary, who visited the body of our humility, which He deigned to assume.

You have made him a little less than the angels. In the Hebrew, instead of that which is 'from the angels,' who are called MALACHIM, it has 'God,' that is, ELOHIM. The Apostle interprets this passage concerning Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 2). You have crowned him with glory and honor. With glory, when at his descent the lower regions were illumined; with honor, when he conquered death; with a crown, when surrounded by a choir of saints, he returned triumphant from hell. And you have set him over the works, etc. So that they may be subject to him, except for Him who subjected them to him.

You have subjected all things under his feet. When he ascended to the heavens. All sheep and oxen. Holy souls, working the fruit of innocence. Moreover, also the beasts of the field. Men of lesser merit.

The birds of the air. Those who through pride, speak iniquity on high. And the fish of the sea, that pass through the paths of the seas. Those who, through excessive curiosity, not contemplating heavenly things, think that eternal life is to be found amidst the waves of this world.

O Lord our Lord, how admirable is, etc. It begins with beatitude, or with praise, and ends in praise. The Church marvels at this: how the holy ones voluntarily suffer for the name of Christ, or

how we are all redeemed by the Creator of the world.

PSALM IX.

To the end, for the hidden things of the son, a psalm of David. Although Aquila, for 'the hidden things of the son,' has put 'the youth of the son,' yet it should be known that in the Hebrew it is 'for the death of the son.' Finally, Symmachus also translated it in this manner: 'for the victory over the death of the son.' The entire psalm, therefore, pertains through tropology to the sacrament of Christ. Hence the Seventy interpreters also wished to conceal the passion and resurrection of Christ, which was previously unknown to the world, through the word of 'hiding' (*absconsionis*), lest it be easily known by the gentiles at that time. Here, what he said above about this son is not said of that son according to the history of David, that is, Absalom, whose works were not hidden, but manifest and evil against his father; but this is understood of the Only-begotten of God the Father. We know of two advents, the first and the second. In the first advent, He came both manifest and hidden. Manifest in the flesh, and hidden in divinity. And in the second advent, He will come both hidden and manifest. Hidden, because we know neither the day nor the hour. Manifest, because every eye will see Him. And in another way hidden, because we do not know the hidden judgment of God: that is, because the Jews were repudiated, the gentiles were chosen. Alternatively: We see

the saints suffer tribulation, and we do not know whether it is for testing or for correction, so that their glory may grow for the better. We see others suffer tribulation, whose punishment begins here and remains with them in the future. We see others who neither suffer tribulation nor endure injury, but are healthy in body and abound in all temporal joy. Such as these are in danger: for we believe that God does not visit them, because they are not worthy to be visited, so that they may afterwards be punished without end. This entire psalm is sung in the person of the Church through the prophet concerning the Antichrist.

I will give praise to you, O Lord, etc. The voice of the Church. A threefold confession sounds here: that is, of sins, of martyrs, of confessors; an act of thanksgiving, or praise, as in the Gospel: 'I confess to you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth' (Matt. 11), and here a threefold love is understood: that is, 'you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength' (Matt. 22). 'I will tell of all your wonderful works.' How does he say that he will tell of all the wonderful works of God, since no man can either see or comprehend God? For if we wished to tell of all the wonderful works of God, it is impossible. Why can we not? Because in another place he says: 'I will declare all the judgments' (Ps. 18). Man cannot do this either. How can he not? Because the Lord says: 'All things that I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you' (John 15). But why did he not tell of the day of judgment, but said:

'It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has put in his own power' (Acts 2)? But this question is resolved in this, when he added, 'all the judgments,' he later says, 'of your mouth'; as if the prophet or any saint were to say: 'As much as you have taught me, so much will I tell': for if you tell as much as you understand, you tell all the wonderful works of God, although in themselves they are more numerous. Or, 'I will tell of all your wonderful works,' not only that the dead are resurrected, the blind are given sight, or the rest; but also that through you lost souls are restored to unexpected salvation.

I will be glad and exult in you. 'I will be glad,' in hope, and 'I will exult,' in reality: according to that of the Apostle: 'He who glories, let him glory in the Lord' (2 Cor. 10), 'And I will sing to your name, O Most High.' 'I will sing,' I will fulfill by work, 'to your name.' The name of the Father is the Son, the Most High is God Himself. Or, 'I will sing to your name': here is praise with work.

In turning my enemy back. What enemy? That is, the devil: for the Lord said: Get thee behind me, Satan (Mark 8). Before the advent of Christ, the devil was the leader on the path of death: but afterwards, following behind the Church, he is like a dog. Whence it says elsewhere: Thou shalt bruise his head, and he shall lie in wait for thy heel (Genesis 3): that is, the end of each one's life. The woman is the Church, the serpent is the devil. They shall be weakened and shall perish from thy face. The impious, certainly, shall perish from their impiety. Or as he said above in the singular,

so also here in the plural, that is, he includes all his satellites together, who are to perish on the day of judgment. Why shall they be weakened? Because before they were strong on account of our sins: but now the weakness of God has made us strong, and them weak: as the Apostle says: That which is the weakness of God is stronger than men (1 Corinthians 1).

Because thou hast maintained my judgment. The voice of the Church, as if to say: You have openly chosen the Gentiles, and rejected the Jews. When it says, my judgment: here it appears that the Church comes from the Gentiles. And my cause. As if the Church were to say. You have pleaded for me against my adversaries, and you have vindicated me; and you have made my cause good. Thou hast sat upon the throne. Thronus is Greek, in Latin sedes (a seat): because every saint is a seat of God: as he himself says. Heaven is my throne (Isaiah 66). And elsewhere: The soul of the just is the seat of wisdom (Wisdom 7). One of these thrones, that is, Paul, says: Do you seek a proof of Christ who speaks in me (2 Corinthians 13)? Who judgest equity. That is, justice: you have judged my cause justly, O Father, so that you might resurrect me: because they unjustly delivered me to death.

Thou hast rebuked the nations. Through the preachers, to those who used to adore idols, wood and stones. And the impious one has perished. The devil who is adored in those pieces of wood or stones: or, through the Apostolic preaching the nations were rebuked, and it was previously done

by the impious one. Thou hast blotted out their name for ever. That is, their memory. The name of impiety will no longer be remembered in these things: because those who believe in you have received your new name, which will be blessed on earth.

The swords of the enemy have failed unto the end. As if to say: the weapons of the devil, which were the members of sinners, through whom the devil persecuted others, have failed. Or alternatively: The enemies have failed by the sword, as if to say, by the sword which is the word of God, they will fail in the future judgment, when they are to be judged by that same word. And thou hast destroyed their cities. That is, the sinners. As many as are the vices of sinners, so many are the cities, that is, the strongholds, in which the devil reigned: as if to say: They have failed through your preachers.

Their memory has perished with a sound. The sound of their doctrine, or the evils of the heretics, has perished with them. Or 'with a sound,' that is, by the preaching of the Gospel. And the Lord remains for ever. And he [the enemy] and his followers will perish with their tumult, while the Lord, as we have said, and His saints, remain for ages.

He has prepared in judgment, etc. For he has given all judgment to the Son. He has prepared his seat in judgment: that is, the Church: from which he himself will judge the world, which is all the nations. He will judge the peoples in equity. What is equity, this is also justice, that is,

Christ. Or, that is to say, at his second coming, rewards for the just, and for the unjust, hell and punishment.

And the Lord is become a refuge for the poor. Between the poor man and the adversary, that is, the devil, Christ will be the judge: who will judge between the Church and the adversary, that is, the devil. Whence it is also said in the Apocalypse: Who is the accuser of our brethren. Or those poor, who having become poor for his sake, distribute their riches as food for the poor. A helper in opportune times. He is a helper to his Church. In tribulation. When it is opportune, as the Apostle says. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it: lest with sinners we be damned to eternal punishment (1 Corinthians 10).

Let them hope in you. That is, not in themselves, but in you, and not in the concupiscences of the world. Who have known your name. Whether your power, or your magnificence. Or your name: that is, your Son. Wherefore, because of that which follows: For you have not forsaken those who seek you, O Lord. Therefore they hope in you: as that says: If they kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Nevertheless, he permits them to be tempted, but not altogether.

Sing to the Lord. That is, sing to the Lord, preach, fulfill in work. Who dwells in Sion. Sion, a watchtower, that is, Jerusalem, which is, vision of peace: now the Church here is a speculation:

because it speculates about the future judgment of God. But when it comes to the heavenly Jerusalem, there will not then be speculation, but vision. Whence Paul says: We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face (I Cor. XIII). Announce his works among the Gentiles. The voice of the prophet admonishes preachers to preach. Announce his works: that is, preach his commandments. Perhaps they will say: We shall die if we go to the Gentiles: but the prophet adds:

For when he requires their blood. And the Lord: Fear not: for if they kill the body, they cannot kill the soul (Mat. X). The Lord has been mindful: and he has not forgotten the prayer of the poor. As if the prophet were to say: He has not forgotten to avenge your blood. Whence the Lord himself said: And will not God revenge his elect who cry to him day and night (Luke XVIII).

Have mercy on me, O Lord. The voice of the Church: See my humiliation from my enemies: who exalt me from the gates of death, etc. The gates of death are the pursuits of parents, who worshipped various gods of the demons. They were the gates of death, whose doctrine led to death. Otherwise: The gates of death, the doctrine of heretics, from which gates the Church has been exalted: and has been sent into the gates of the daughter of Sion, which are the gates of life. Just as by evil doctrine we understand as it were the gates of death, which lead us to destruction: so also we understand the gates of life to be good

preachers, who by their doctrine lead us to eternal life.

I will rejoice in your salvation. I will rejoice, that is, I will be glad: In your salvation, in your Christ.

The Gentiles are stuck fast in the destruction which they have made. That is, in the evil works which they have done, there they are stuck fast, for which they are to be judged. In this snare which they have hidden, etc. For every one shall fall first into the snare which he prepares for another to fall into.

The Lord shall be known when he executes judgments. He shall be known, that is, at the judgment. In the works of his own hands the sinner is caught. For every sinner carries with him both ropes, and chains, and torments, with which to suffer evils. For it is not necessary for them to be prepared by others from which he may be tormented, when he himself prepares for himself those things which pertain to punishment:

Let the sinners be turned into hell. That is, because they wish to live beyond the end of the world, let them be turned into hell. All the nations that forget God. That is, those who say that God forgets, and has no care for his things, let them be forgotten by the Lord: because they do not speak the truth that God forgets his creatures; for he says:

For there shall not be an end of forgetfulness, etc. For if he defers, he does not take away his help from his saints.

Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail. The voice of the Church sounds against the Antichrist: Arise, to judgment: let not man prevail: that is, the sinful man Antichrist. Let the Gentiles be judged in your sight. In two ways they have already been judged in the prescience of God. Why? Because they do not belong to the Church, but to the Antichrist: for it is said: But he that believes not is already judged (John III).

Appoint, O Lord, a lawgiver over them. That is, the Antichrist, who is the bearer of the law of evil doctrine, as Paul says: They would not receive the truth, but consented to iniquity (I Thess. II).

Let the Gentiles know that they are men. When they have been condemned, then they will know that they have placed their hope in man, and not in God, who alone can save.

Why, O Lord, have you withdrawn far off? Why do you remove your salvation far from us when we are inflamed by the expectation of your coming? Whence the Lord said in the Gospel: Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved (Matth. XXIV). You despise in opportunities, etc. Then they seem to despise, when it is an opportune time for the Church to help, and it does not immediately come to its aid in tribulation. Why? so that it may exercise it according to its will: because the more it differs, the more the Church is expanded in its desire.

While the impious one is proud, etc. While the impious one, the Antichrist, is proud: the poor one is kindled, the Church in tribulation, by the pride of the Antichrist himself. They are caught

in their counsels, etc. For they are bound by their own thoughts, who are against God.

For the sinner is praised in his desires, etc. The sinner is praised by flatterers, and not by the just, then when the sinner praises the sinner, one another, while they praise each other, they kill.

The sinner has provoked the Lord. The Antichrist himself. According to the multitude of his wrath. Because he did not receive the scourges of correction. He will not seek. So that they may adore him as God: that is, he is not worthy to be sought, but to be punished.

There is no God in his sight. Because he does nothing worthy of him. His ways are defiled, etc. For he does not walk by the right way, which is Christ.

Your judgments will be taken away, etc. Because he does not believe that there will be a judgment on him. Of all the enemies, and of the Christians, of course, to prove those who scorn to follow him.

For he said in his heart, etc. For I will always seduce men, so that, persevering in evil, they may resist the will of God. For he said, that is, the Antichrist: what did he say? I will not be moved from generation to generation without evil: that is, I will do so much evil in one nation, that before I come to another nation, they will hear of my fame beforehand and be afraid. Otherwise: I will not be moved from a carnal generation to a spiritual generation: that is, from the earth with the body I will ascend into heaven: without evil, as if to say, without any injury. When he wants to as-

cend to the Mount of Olives, the Lord will kill him with the spirit of his mouth. One of his members, Simon Magus, wanted to ascend to heaven, but he perished.

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. As if to say: He who boasts of his own righteousness as if he were God, is cursed before God. Under his tongue. Under his heart. Labor and sorrow. It is a sorrow to himself, and he tempers the labor and sorrow of others.

He sits in ambush with the rich. That is, the devil lies in wait through his members in whom he presides, and harms others. To kill the innocent. That is, to make the innocent guilty, and to harm himself first.

His eyes. That is, the eyes of the Antichrist. Look upon the poor. That is, upon the Church, which is the body of Christ: he looks to harm, and not to help. He lies in wait in secret, like a lion in his den. The devil can be called both a lion and a dragon. A dragon, when he harms secretly: and a lion, when he persecutes openly. To snatch the poor. That is, the Christian.

To snatch the poor, while he draws him. In his snare he will humble him: he will bow down, and he will fall, etc. He seems to bow down as if to humility, so that he may seem as if he were meek and holy, and when he has bowed down, then he will fall: for while he hopes that he is far from death, then a sudden destruction will come upon him.

For he has said in his heart, God has forgotten: he has turned away his face, so as not to see to

the end. He has forgotten: as if to say: All things are mine as long as the world exists, and God has given them over to oblivion: he has never used them: but they are mine, because I am God.

Arise, O Lord. That is, to judgment. The Church speaks against the Antichrist. And let your hand be exalted. That is, your power: while the Antichrist boasts in such a way of possessing all things without end. Do not forget the poor in the end. While he says that he reigns even to the end. For this reason he says above.

The impious one has provoked God. That is, the Antichrist. For he has said in his heart, God will not require it. The Antichrist says: God does not care about this present time.

You see that you consider labor and sorrow. The prophet speaks to God: Because the Antichrist meditates to harm, you consider it. That you may deliver them into your hands. Those are called the hands of God, who exercise the just vengeance of God upon sinners. For this reason, hands, because through them God is vindicated. Otherwise: That you may deliver them into your hands, that is, into their works: so that they may be worthy to be delivered, who have done unworthy things: because they have delivered themselves to their own miseries, and he has left them to all their own wills.

For to you the poor man is left. That is, the Church. As if to say: It is yours to save. You will be a helper to the orphan. He is called a pupil, who has no father: an orphan, who has neither father nor mother. He is called a pupil, who does not

have the devil for a father, as in the Gospel: Call no man your father upon earth (Matth. XXIII). And who does not have a mother, that is, paganism. As if to say: to this one you will be a helper.

Breaking the arm of the sinner. This pertains to the Antichrist: because the Lord will break his strength. And of the wicked. He is the wicked one. His offense will be sought, and will not be found. That is, he is not worthy to come to amendment. And otherwise: It will not be found that he has sin: but that he is as God who has no sin, as far as he is concerned.

The Lord will reign forever without end. Because then the kingdom with tranquility, as Paul says: When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God and the Father, when God shall be all in all (I Cor. XV). You shall perish, O nations, from his land. Those who have received the Antichrist will perish from the Church, that is, from the Church; with Christ reigning, the nations of crimes will perish from the human body.

The Lord has heard the desire of the poor. That is, the Lord has heard his Church that it may be vindicated. He has heard, so that he may grant them the kingdom of heaven. Your ear has heard the preparation of their heart. That is, your clemency. The ears of the Lord are said to hear, when he deigns to hear: that is, eternal life, which the Church desires, when he has given it to it: so that what it once desired in him, it may at last enjoy in reality.

To judge for the orphan and the humble. For here he speaks in the dative, not the accusative

case: that is, not that he may judge the orphan, but that it may be judged for the orphan and the humble, that they may receive eternal life. So that man may no longer presume to magnify himself upon the earth. So that from this the Antichrist may not be lifted up above the elect of God, nor tempt them: because, being oppressed by the kingdom of the Son of God, he will be no more. Let us also pray the Lord, that he may deign to keep us unharmed from his works: so that, being made orphans by him, knowing Christ the Lord as our father, we may follow him in faith, hold him in our heart, glorify him in our work: for to him with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM X.

To the end, a psalm of David. The tenth psalm is sung against heretics and those who believe wrongly.

In the Lord I trust. The voice of the Church, against heretics, or of Christ against demons. Flee to the mountain like a sparrow. He wants the just man to migrate to the deserts, so that there he may more easily crush him. Or because heretics are deceitful, of whom the prophet says: Woe to those who call sweet bitter, and bitter sweet (Isai. V): therefore they want to seduce the just man to themselves, saying: Flee to us. Who answered them: In the Lord is my hope. How, he says, shall I flee to your mountains, that is, to your pride? But as for what he says, like a sparrow: we often read that the sparrow is put in the place of prudence.

Therefore, these say: Pass over to us as a prudent man, when their prudence is foolish.

For behold, the sinners have bent the bow. That is, the heretics have bent their mouths against the Church, the power of their verbosity. They have prepared their arrows: that is, words. In the quiver, in themselves. For they themselves are the quivers: where they keep hidden empty words, and poisonous sentences which they fabricate from the holy Scriptures. To shoot in the dark the upright of heart. For they never fight in the light, but always in the darkness. Wherefore the just man said: Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet. To shoot in the dark the upright of heart (Psal. CXVIII). So that when they see in the Church any unskilled or simple people, they may entice them with deceitful and hidden snares.

Because what you have perfected, they have destroyed. What is it that you have made? Your Church in unity. Whence he says: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings you have perfected praise (Ps. VIII). Heretics want to destroy this both in themselves and in others, because they divide unity. Otherwise: He whom you perfected, Christ conceived of the Holy Spirit, the Jews killed. But what has the just man done? When heretics slander, and disagree among themselves, the Church responds this in the person of the Church. You disagree among yourselves, but Christ is not silent about you: for he said: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you (John XIV). And otherwise: What has the just

one done? That is, he has redeemed the world, and has given himself for the world.

The Lord is in his holy temple. As if the prophet were to say: Although you, heretics, turn away from the Church, yet the Lord will be in the temple, that is, in the Church. The Apostle says: You are the temple of the living God (II Cor. VI). The Lord is in his holy temple: In the Church which he has presented to himself as holy. The Lord's throne is in heaven. In heaven, that is, in the holy preacher. Whence he said. Heaven is my throne (Isai. LXVI), and the soul of the just, the throne of wisdom in the soul of the just, which meditates on heavenly things.

His eyes look upon the poor man. The eyes of Christ with the look of divinity look upon the Christian people. To what do they look? That is, to help. His eyelids question the children of men. The subtlety of divinity, that is, the hidden judgments of God, in which he questions us: because by this he knows what each one has, because the judgments of God are hidden. Just as Scripture is sometimes obscured, so that we may know our infirmity: again we are lifted up, lest we despair. And in another way: He questions through prosperity and adversity: because by this God proves what each one was. In another way: We see one nation being scourged, and we know for what cause it is scourged: here are manifest judgments. And in another way: We see it being scourged, and we do not know for what cause, and here are hidden judgments, comprehended by the above.

The Lord questions the just and the impious. That is, he proves. But he who loves iniquity, hates his own soul. That is, he loses it.

He will rain snares upon sinners: fire, etc. This was done according to history: when the Lord rained sulfur and fire on Sodom. As the apostle Jude says, it was made an example of eternal fire. He will rain upon sinners. In two ways, heretics also rain down evil doctrine. And just as one rain irrigates fertile and arid land: so also there is one preaching from God, which waters the good land, that is, the saints: and the bad land, the sinners, to whom these things that follow pertain: Fire, desire, sulfur, the rottenness of sins, the spirit of storms, the spirit of the tempest. The spirit of storms indicates the punishment of eternal judgment, and the stripes of sinners, whom the fire burns, the tempest kills. And the prophet says: Around him is a mighty tempest. The portion of their cup (Ps. XL): Why did he say a portion? Because to each one for his part, as if from a cup, that is, he will receive a just vengeance as he has wrought his misery: as the prophet says: God will render to every one according to his works (Ps. LXI, Jerem. XXV).

For the Lord is just, and has loved justice: his countenance has seen equity. For to each one as in a mirror, when he comes into his presence, he will see his iniquity and he himself foresees their iniquity. Or the presence of God has seen the saints to rule. For he loves justice: because he judges each one according to his own work. His countenance has seen equity: so that he may

give rewards to the saints, and punishment to the sinners. May he deign to make us worthy by his calling, and not according to our sins to bring punishments upon us, but according to his great mercy to grant us pardon: for to him with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM XI.

To the end, for the eighth, a psalm of David. This psalm is sung about the passion of Christ. For the eighth, as we have said above.

Save me, O Lord. The voice of Christ to the Father on behalf of the flesh in the passion. For the holy one has failed. Besides you, there is no one left who can save. For truths are diminished from among the children of men. Why did he say truths, when we do not know who is the truth, as he says: I am the way and the truth (John XIV). Just as there are many Churches and one Church, so there are many truths: because the works of many just men, and many who do good. But why are they diminished? Because before the coming of Christ, whether prophets, or patriarchs, of such a good nature, as those who were seen to serve in part dejected, were diminished in many ways: because the head, that is, the truth, who is Christ, had not yet come. The members were diminished, until their head, which is Christ, came.

They have spoken vain things, etc. First Peter, when he said: And if I should have to die with you, I will not deny you. Likewise all the disciples also said (Matth. XXVI): but all these have spoken vain

things, since they could not fulfill what they had proposed. And heretics, evil teachers, who teach perverse doctrine, have spoken vain things every one to his neighbor. Christ the Lord, who speaks these things, is the neighbor of all: who showed mercy, so that by his death he might bind up our wounds. Against whom the Jews were engaged in vain talk. Deceitful lips have spoken in heart and heart. Symmachus thus translated Slippery lips, in the heart is one thing, and he speaks another. Deceitful lips, are called two-tongued, because they speak with two tongues: for they say one thing, and retain another. Thus deceitful lips who have spoken evil from heart to heart: differently from what they conceived in their heart, they brought forth in their mouth in work.

May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips. Does he say this by cursing? No: for it is not the custom of the saints to curse, but by pronouncing what is to come, he said: not by wishing, but by prophesying (John VIII). Who are the deceitful lips? Heretics, and evil preachers. And a bragging tongue. That is, who speak proud things.

Who have said, We will magnify our tongue. That is, who praise themselves in turn, and magnify their works. Our lips are our own. As if to say: We have our teachers from ourselves, not from elsewhere. For they applaud in vain verbosity, saying: We are the children of Abraham, and we have never been slaves to anyone. Who is our Lord? As if to say: We have no Lord, for we know all things.

Because of the misery of the needy, and the groaning of the poor. It is the voice of the Father. Who was miserable, but the human race in the world, which came into that misery in which it groaned in sins? And there was groaning in hell, in those who dwelt in punishments. Now I will arise, says the Lord. That is, I will send my Son who will redeem them, both those who are in misery in the world, and those who dwell in hell. Which was so done: God the Father sent his Son to us miserable ones, that he might deliver us, and that by his poverty we might be made rich.

I will place in my salvation. He said, in salvation, and did not say, what I will place: it is understood, the salvation of the nations. And still what shall I place? Against groaning, joy: and against poverty, spiritual riches. I will act confidently in him. The voice of the Father concerning the Son. As if to say: With confidence I do all things through him: because the divinity has strengthened the humanity: as it is written, he acted freely.

The words of the Lord are chaste words. It comprehends the doctrine of both Testaments at once. Then they are chaste, if they are preached by good preachers incorruptibly and without corruption. Then this will be: if when they preach they are not provoked by the love of parents, not by the fear of the powerful, not for the sake of present gifts, not for vain honor. Otherwise: Who neither dare to add anything more, nor to diminish either in the old or in the new Testament, but preach faithfully. Silver examined by fire. That

is, proven by the Holy Spirit. They do not prove the divine words: but the Holy Spirit enlightens them, who preach them: as in Isaiah that angel, when he took a stone from the altar, and touched his lips, saying: Behold, I have touched your lips with this, and your iniquity will be taken away, and your sin will be cleansed. By silver, the old Testament: by gold, the new. Thus is the letter and the spiritual understanding, as if gold were produced from silver. Proven for the earth, that is, the Church. Those divine words have been proven by the Holy Spirit, which the Church has received. Otherwise: Proven for the earth, that is; Christ the Lord, who came in that humanity on behalf of the flesh, which he received from Mary, the Lord received as it were the earth. Purged sevenfold. The seven gifts that were in Christ: not that he might be purified, but that they who were to receive those gifts might be purified.

You, O Lord, will preserve us. That is, in faith, the Church asks. And you will keep us from this generation. It comprehends at once the whole crowd of evil ones, heretics, dialecticians, and the rest. From the generation of these the Lord has separated his Church. Whence also in the Gospel: All these things will come upon that whole generation, from the blood of Abel which was shed; or from the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom they killed between the temple and the altar (Matth. XXIII).

The wicked walk round about. When they have transferred us from this present world to the future one, then the wicked walk outside: nor will

they be able to enter with the saints, whom you, according to your greatness, have preserved with your care. The wicked walk round about: because they will not arrive at eternal life. And otherwise: Around them, and it will be said to them. I do not know you: According to your height you have multiplied the children of men. The children of God. According to the multitude according to the abundance of your mercy, because the Church is multiplied, that is, from his piety and mercy: when in the retribution of the future beatitude, receiving your promises, they have been made conformable to the body of your glory, in which to you with the eternal Father, and the Holy Spirit, is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM XII.

To the end, a psalm of David. The twelfth psalm contains the voice of a faithful soul, seeking God.

How long, O Lord, will you forget me unto the end? The voice of the Church. As if to say: How long? Why does it say unto the end? man consists of four elements, fire, air, water, and earth. The earth is lower than these creatures, because the end of creatures is the earth: therefore the Church says: And if I am more vile, most vile as it were earth, how long will you forget me? Not for this reason, because I am the lowest, and the end of the other creatures: not for this reason will you forget me in the end. How long do you turn your face from me, so that I may not have knowledge,

nor the illumination of your thought before the end of this life.

How long shall I put counsels in my soul. I suffer these things, it says, until by spiritual counsel I seek you. Sorrow in my heart through the day. Through that light of your knowledge which I had long lost, I will add sorrow upon the darkness of my sins: that is, I will do penance.

How long will my enemy be exalted over me? As long as I am not converted to you, the devil, who is the enemy of the human race, is raised up against me. How long will my enemy be exalted over me? As if to say: How long does the adversary have dominion over the Church? Unto the end. Look upon me, and hear me, O Lord my God. It is the prayer of the Church, it can be understood of the three persons: Look in tribulation, or in help: and hear in this what I pray.

Enlighten my eyes. That is, the eyes of the heart. Lest I ever sleep in death. We know that a man who is in torment cannot sleep, but he puts sleep for that night. Whence he says above: Death without death, and defect without defect. And the Lord slept in the boat, when he is awakened by the disciples. It is to be noted, that the Lord was sleeping, when the faith of the apostles was wavering. The Lord is awake for each one according to his faith, and is awakened by faith. And if faith is not had, he seems as it were to sleep. Whence he says: Arouse your faith, and then you arouse Christ. Look upon me, and hear me, O Lord my God. Enlighten my eyes, lest I ever sleep in death. For you are the true light that enlightens

every man who comes into this world. For you enlighten the eyes of our heart, lest the sleep of eternal death creep upon us. Lest at any time the enemy say, etc. Lest at any time, that is, in the future judgment, my enemy say, I have prevailed against him: that is, I have seduced him to deceive him. As if to say: If the adversary can find us in the sleep of infidelity, then he prevails over us.

They will exult if I am moved. They whose feet are moved: because they have not stood in the truth of God, if they can remove my feet, that is, my senses, from the catholic faith: then they will exult: that is, they will rejoice, as the Prophet says: But my feet were almost moved: but I hope in your mercy, that I may be stable in faith.

My heart will exult in your salvation: In the Lord Jesus Christ. I will sing to the Lord, that is, I will praise, and I will preach. Who has given good things to me, that is, the subsidies of this present life, by which we subsist: so that, having despised the pomps of the world, I might behold spiritual things with my mind. Otherwise: He has given good things: the virtues of the Church, that is, faith, hope, and charity: and in the future, eternal life. I will sing to your name, O Most High: that is, what I sing and preach, I will fulfill in work. Deservedly, therefore, O Lord Jesus Christ, is it sung to your name, because you are rich in piety, and you grant victory to the just, and you invite sinners to be converted to you: to you be glory and honor with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM XIII.

The thirteenth psalm has no inscription, but pronounces that our redemption will proceed from Sion. And first indeed it speaks against the impious, who, trusting in the riches of the world, are ignorant of God who bestows them.

The fool has said in his heart. For that which is, a fool, in Hebrew NABAL is placed. Whence also Abigail says of her husband Nabal on mount Carmel: Truly according to his name he is a fool (I Reg. XXV). There is none that does good, no, not one. They refer this psalm to the passion of Christ, when all forsook the Lord: so much so that Peter also who was the prince of the apostles denied him. Who have said in their heart, there is no God. They have said in their heart, not in their mouth. Why? Because they did not dare: lest perhaps they should violate the divinities of their own gods. The fool, the Jewish people, has said: who say in their heart, There is no God, Christ is not the Son of God. One of them not only did not hold him for God, but did not even believe him to be a prophet, when he said: If this man were a prophet, he would surely know who and what kind of woman this is that touches him, for she is a sinner (Luke VII). And another: If he is the Son of God, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him (Mark XV).

They are corrupt. From that integrity of a good nature, degenerate. They are become abominable. That is, hateful. In their wills. That is, in their deeds. They are corrupt, and are become

abominable in their wills. For if they had had knowledge of God, they would not have been corrupt and abominable. There is none that does good, no, not one. Unless one has known Christ, who is the only one of the Father, he can by no means be good. There is none that does good, no, not one. Here it appears that this psalm pertains to the passion: because none of the disciples, not even Peter who is the head of the Church: for he also denied him: none of men, because the whole world had declined to the lower part, except for one man, who is Christ.

The Lord looked down from heaven. To give salvation to the human race. Or, from heaven, that is, from the saints. Upon the children of men. Whom he may make his saints. Or, from his holy one. Upon the children of men: that is, upon the human race: That he may see, that is, that he may make his saints to see: through whom he looks, and in whom he dwells. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men: to see if there be any that understands and seeks God. He looks down through the holy souls, which we have often called heaven, to see if there is a wise man, who seeks God with his mind: for with the divine power nothing is hidden.

All have gone astray. The whole human race had gone astray to the lower part. Together they have become useless, both to themselves and to others. All have gone astray, together they have become useless. There is none that does good, no, not one. For he says these things of the gentiles. But because he interposes all, he adds the Jews

to be understood, who often mixed themselves in the wallowing places and idolatries of the gentiles.

Their throat is an open sepulchre. From this verse to the one where he says: There is no fear of God before their eyes, it is not found in the Hebrew codices. It is asked therefore how the Apostle used this testimony in the Epistle which he wrote to the Romans (Rom. III). We answer that the Apostle wove this testimony from Deuteronomy and the Psalter, and other places of the Scriptures.

There they have trembled for fear: this which follows, Where there was no fear: It is not found in the Hebrew volumes.

Their throat is an open sepulchre. Through their seductions they have gathered men into their mouths as into sepulchres. For elsewhere also a similar thing is put: Unless the Lord had been with us, perhaps they would have swallowed us up alive (Ps. CXXIII). With their tongues they acted deceitfully. Corrupting good morals with evil conversations. The venom of asps is under their lips. Because, like asps, so they stop their ears, lest they hear the precepts of the divine Law. For venom is understood as the deceit of iniquitous conversations.

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. The blessing of adulation brings on a curse. For bitterness refers to this: that by thinking evilly of the sweet words of God, they have made them bitter to their own perdition. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: because their doc-

trine harms both themselves and others, and in the future condemns. Their feet are swift to shed blood. They kill both corporally and spiritually, while they desire to pour out Christ, who is the life of the soul, from it.

Contrition and unhappiness are in their ways: contrition of the body, unhappiness of the soul. In their ways, in their works. Sinners are always unhappily crushed in their way. For they have not known the way of peace. Which is Christ the Lord: neither by faith, nor by operation. Why have they not known? Because of this that follows: Because there is no fear of God before their eyes. They have not set God before their senses, in memory and holy fear. There is no fear of God before their eyes. For they do not fear the future judgment, therefore they do not observe his commandments.

Shall not all who work iniquity know, the coming vengeance? As if to say: If they do not know now, they will know in the judgment when he is to come. Who devour my people as they eat bread: the heretics the Christian people. Just as bread runs into all foods, without it one cannot be satisfied, but it is taken with all foods: so also heretics are never satisfied with their iniquities, unless they are satisfied from the people of God, or from the Church, whom they can capture from there. Who devour their people, the ecclesiastical people, as the food of bread: because there is no living bread, except that which comes down from heaven. They have not called upon the Lord. For if they had called, they would certainly have been

saved. Otherwise: They have not called upon God. Why? Because many call, but not upon God, but upon another thing which they desire to have for a God, not God himself.

There they trembled with fear, where there was no fear. And the gentiles fear their own gods, and the powerful Jews themselves, when they said of Christ: If we let him live, the Romans will come, and take away our kingdom and nation. They trembled with fear, where there was no fear: In idols, of course, and in the vain rites of images.

Because the Lord is in the righteous generation. In the Christian people. And he was in the Jews: because from them he took flesh. You have confounded the counsel of the poor man. The Jews did not want to believe in Christ: that is, they did not want to believe in the mystery of his incarnation concerning his coming. Christ is called poor (inops), as Paul says: Because though he was rich, he became poor, that through his poverty he might make us rich (II Cor. VIII). You have confounded the counsel of the poor man: that is, of Christ: not understanding that he proceeded from God when he offered counsel, saying: Repent. Because the Lord is his hope. The Father, certainly, on account of the assumed flesh: because humanity was comforted by divinity.

Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion? Who but God who is in Sion? He gave salvation, Christ himself in the holy Church. Otherwise: Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion? Christ the Lord, whom the inhabitants of that

earthly Sion did not believe. When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of his people. We are already redeemed from that captivity of transgression, but we are still in the captivity of this life. And otherwise: Concerning the part of the Jews: that she herself may be turned from captivity in the time of Elijah and Enoch, as Paul said: When the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in, then all Israel shall be saved. Otherwise: When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of his people, through his own passion. Let Jacob rejoice, and Israel be glad. He is the same Jacob who is also Israel: but here Jacob, and there Israel. Here the supplanter of vices, and there seeing God face to face: when God shall be all in all: who, having left secular things, gazes upon the Lord with his mind. Who may deign to grant to us: that we, having become Jacob in deed, with vices supplanted and being truly Israelites, may deserve to see him with the mind and hold him in the heart, to whom is honor and glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

PSALM XIV.

A Psalm of David.

Opportunely the fourteenth psalm has been read: and according to the order it so happened, that it seems to have been read almost by design, the psalm was read according to the order. I think it was done by the dispensation of God: so that what was profitable for you might be recited

in the order of exposition today. The fourteenth psalm was read, which is prescribed as, A Psalm of David. But our David is Christ, as we have often said. Then we read in Exodus: because on the fourteenth day the lamb is sacrificed (Exod. XII). It is sacrificed on the fourteenth day, when the moon is full, when nothing is lacking of light. See therefore that Christ is not sacrificed, except in perfect and full light. Since therefore on the fourteenth day the lamb is to be sacrificed for you, now the prophet wonders, and asks:

Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? You who wish to dwell in the tabernacle of the Lord, hear what the Lord says: Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? Here we take the tabernacle for eternity, although in other places it may be understood as works: because here in the present tabernacle, which is the Church, many dwell in body and not in faith: because here while we are inferior, we stand as if in a tabernacle, until after victory one arrives at the house. Otherwise: Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? Who, he says, being earthly, can be made the temple of God, and dwell in the city of the living God? Concerning which the Apostle speaks much. Or who shall rest on thy holy hill? Who, he says, shall be worthy to be made conformable to the image of the Son of God (Hebr. XII, Rom. IX), who is often called a mountain? This stone cut out of the mountain without hands: this was made a great mountain, this filled the breadth of the world (Dan. II), in this the souls of the saints rest. In this therefore no one receives rest, except

he who enters without spot, and works justice: who is free from every stain of sin, and shall have kept the precepts of God inviolably. Otherwise: Or who shall rest on thy holy hill? Not first on the mountain, and afterwards in the tabernacle: but first in the tabernacle, and so on the mountain. A tabernacle is not a firm house, a tabernacle has no foundation: but it is changed here and there, and moves with the one migrating: because a tabernacle has no foundation, but is an uncertain house: but a firm house has foundations. The mountain is put for eternal life.

He that enters without spot. That is, without mortal sins, because we cannot be without minor ones. Whence it is said: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Or otherwise: He that enters without spot. See what is commanded. He did not say: he who arrives at the end without spot, but he who is still on the way, and has no spot. Someone may say: I have no spot, I have done no evil. It is not enough for us not to do evil unless we have also done good. Finally it follows: And works justice. He did not say, works chastity, works wisdom, works fortitude. And these virtues are indeed excellent. Wisdom profits us, fortitude profits us, that we may resist persecutions. Then temperance and chastity are necessary for us, lest we lose our souls. Justice alone is a great virtue, and the mother of all. Someone may say: How is justice greater than the other virtues? Other virtues delight the possessor: justice does not delight the possessor, but others. If I am wise, wisdom

delights me: if I am strong, my fortitude delights me: if I shall be chaste, my chastity is my joy. Otherwise justice does not profit the possessors, but other wretched people who do not possess it. Or otherwise: And works justice, that is, keeps the commandments, as that: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments (Matt. XIX).

Who speaks truth in his heart. Many speak truth on their lips, but not in their heart, who seem to say true things, but the heart does not harmonize with the lips. Otherwise: Who speaks truth in his heart, that he may think true things about the Truth, who is Christ: nor mix himself with heretical assertions, which are always found false and empty. Whence Paul said: With the heart one believes unto justice; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. X). Who has not used deceit in his tongue. He has not deceitfully brought forth catholic doctrine to deceive; but what he has spoken with his mouth, he has fulfilled in deed. He acts deceitfully who thinks one thing and says another: as the prophet says: Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile (Psalm XXXIII).

Neither has done evil to his neighbor. He who shows mercy, he himself is the neighbor. Christ the Lord showed mercy, that he might redeem us by his passion: whose doctrine no one may turn into evil, as heretics do. Our neighbor is every Christian man. What you do not want to be done to you, do not do to another. And elsewhere he says: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. And again he says: Depart from evil, and do good.

Some think that a neighbor is a brother, or a neighbor in locality, or a kinsman, or a blood relative. But our Lord teaches in the Gospel in that parable, where a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho: The priest passed by, the Levite passed by, and had no mercy: the Samaritan passed by, and had mercy. And afterwards the Lord asks, and says: Which of these was the neighbor? Immediately it is said, he who did well. And the Lord adds: Go, and do thou likewise (Luke X). Therefore all men are neighbors to us, and we ought to do evil to no one. And has not accepted a reproach, etc. He is never accused by his neighbors as if he were harmful. But those who fear the Lord he glorifies. He does not glorify the rich, nor the powerful, but only those who fear the Lord. And he has not accepted a reproach against his neighbors. He has not accepted the reproach of detraction concerning a brother, if he does not first believe those things before he proves them. As if he should say: He who keeps these things which he said above, he is without spot, and works justice. And he dwells in the tabernacle, and shall rest on thy holy hill, that is, in eternal life.

The malignant one is brought to nothing in his sight. In the sight of that just man, the devil. For in the Church whoever is evil is computed as nothing in the sight of a saint. He is brought to nothing, because with such a saint he is held for nothing: while he was an angel, and became a fugitive; and just as he was made from nothing, after he lost his good things, he was reduced to

nothing. And while he is nothing, the strongest saints do not fear him. But those who fear the Lord he magnifies. The voice of the Church: Those who fear the Lord with a holy fear, the Lord magnifies them. Otherwise for the moral sense: But those who fear the Lord he magnifies. For he knows that God dwells in them, as the Lord says: He who loves you, loves me (John XIV).

He who swears to his neighbor, and does not deceive. This one is already lower from perfection, even if he does good things, because even if he does not deceive on account of an oath, yet they are blamed for that precept by which it is said: Swear not at all, neither by heaven, nor by earth: but let your speech be: Yes, yes: No, no. Because that sentence is for the perfect, not to swear (Matth. V). Because when the soul promises to keep God's precepts, if the neighbor is the body: then it deceives him, if it does not observe that which it promises. Who has not given his money to usury. Although one does not sin in that he receives as much as he gives: yet it is not perfection: because it is said: Break thy bread to the hungry (Isai. LI). And it is more blessed to give, than to receive (Acts X). Until one arrives at these things, he is lower from perfection. Otherwise: The money of the Lord is preaching: many are unwilling to grant it, if they do not receive a price from it. Yet it is permitted to receive food and clothing from preaching itself (as Saint Paul says): to have nothing more from it, as he says: They who preach the Gospel, live by the Gospel (I Cor. IX). And the Lord says: The laborer is worthy

of his meat (Matth. X). But he who would require more, is reputed in usury. Whence Paul says: If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things (I Cor. IX)? As if he should say: It is not a great thing against those spiritual things which we announce to you: But having food, let us be content with these (I Tim. VI). For as visible money is prohibited to be given to usury, lest he who lends should spoil more: so also the word of God, which is great money, should be suggested freely not only to the rich who feed and reward, but also to the indigent and the poor: the Lord thus saying: Freely you have received, freely give (Matth. X). And has not taken rewards against the innocent, so that they do not disturb the judgment of truth, by offering rewards. And otherwise: Lest he be made like Judas: who, having accepted a weight of silver, sold the Innocent. As the prophet says: He who shakes his hands from every bribe, he shall dwell on high (Isai. XXXIII).

He who does these things, shall not be moved forever. All these things ought to be retained allegorically: so also they ought to be kept in morals as they were set forth according to the letter. Which if anyone shall have kept irreproachably, not only shall he be secure from the commotion of the eternal judge, but he shall even deserve to possess the mountain and the celestial tabernacle themselves in Christ Jesus our Lord; to whom is honor and glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

PSALM XV.

The inscription of a title to David himself. The inscription of a title is on tombs and in sepulchres, which hold the bodies of the dead. For which Aquila and Symmachus have put: humble and simple and immaculate: signifying that the psalm properly pertains to Christ saying: Learn from me because I am meek and humble of heart, and gentle (Matth. XI). The psalm, as we have said, retains the voice of our King, which he brings forth in the assumed man, without diminution of the deity sent by the Father. David, that is, Christ himself. This psalm pertains to the passion. There are three titles which are written: one, over the tombs of the dead: another, on the thresholds of the city, or of houses: the third, in the victory of a king. Here therefore he speaks of the title of the victory of a king: just as this one was king, that is Christ, and it was written over his head on the pasch after victory, that is, after the devil was conquered, the human race being redeemed, in three languages: that is, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Whence also Pilate said: What I have written, I have written. And he placed over his head the cause of Christ: This is the King of the Jews (Matth. XXVII).

Preserve me, O Lord, for in thee have I put my trust. The voice of Christ to the Father in the passion, in the person of the assumed man. As if he should say: By the Father, from whom I went out, I shall be guarded in the passion: because thou art my hope. I have said to the Lord, thou art my

God. He shows himself a man in the humility of the flesh, though he is equal in the omnipotence of majesty: because if he had said, thou art my Lord: he would have shown the Son to be lesser, the Father greater. Therefore he said: I have said to the Lord, thou art my God: because in divinity he is equal to the Father. Because thou hast no need of my goods. We read the same line also written in Job. What does it profit, if thou make thy way simple? All the goods therefore which the Lord showed in the flesh according to the form of a servant: do not profit the Father, but the human race. Since thou hast no need of my goods. The voice of Christ. Which are the goods of Christ? That is, the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and our redemption. Or otherwise: The goods are, the heavens and those things which are in them, and the good earth, and those things which are in it, which God created. These the Father did not need after they were made: nor before. Those are not a work for the Father, nor necessary. But for whom?

For the saints who are in his land. For these all these things are necessary. They are in his land, that is, in the Church. He hath made wonderful all his desires among them. Christ through his saints has made wonderful his mysteries: that is: he has magnified them.

Their infirmities were multiplied: afterwards they made haste. The Gentiles from whom I now gather the Church: before their idols were multiplied, they knew God naturally. But after the idols were multiplied, which the Seventy interpreted

as infirmities: leaving them, they returned most quickly to me.

I will not gather their assemblies of blood. Because the religion of the new Testament is spiritual. Neither will I be mindful of their names through my lips. For indeed we are changed in the font: and from sons of men, we are called Sons of God. Neither will I be mindful of their names through my lips. The voice of Christ. Neither will I be mindful of the names of those apostles, which they had before before faith, when they had infidelity. I will not remember those: because as merits increased, new names were added, such as Abraham, such as Sarah, such as Peter, and the rest, because before they were servants of sin, but afterwards friends: as the Lord said: Now I will not call you servants, but friends (John XV). And Saint Paul had been such, when he said: We also were sometime foolish, and incredulous even as others; but we have obtained the mercy of God (Tit. III). And again: But you are washed; but you are sanctified (I Cor. VI).

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance. The voice of Christ to the Father. The inheritance of Christ is the Church, and the Lord is the portion of his body. For the part of the assumed man he says: because he received humanity from ours, and we immortality from his. And of my cup. Why did he say cup? Because through the cup each one receives according to measure: but Christ more than his members: as Paul says: Who is the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. VIII). It is thou who wilt restore my inheritance to me. This

is what is said in the Gospel: No one comes to me, unless my Father has drawn him to himself (John VI). According to history, the inheritance of Christ were the Jews, to whom Christ came. But then it was dissipated, when they crucified him: but it shall be restored in the future, when the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in. Otherwise: God the Father shall restore the inheritance of Christ, when he shall have drawn his elect, the body of the holy Church, to that integrity, so that after the resurrection, having received their bodies, they may live incorrupt and immortal: because they lost that immortality in Adam.

The lines have fallen to me in goodly places. In the best. For the sake of one Israel, he obtained the inheritance of the whole world. Lines are given in an inheritance: because what he said, have fallen to me in goodly places, is the same as if he should say, in the patriarchs, and prophets and apostles: or whomever the Father shall have called, Christ receives with himself. Therefore he said, in goodly places, the saints or apostles.

I will bless the Lord who has given me understanding. The voice of the head with the members. He has given understanding of discerning between good and evil: between sense and letter: between God and neighbor: between light and darkness. I will bless the Lord who has given me understanding. He who is the wisdom of God does not need wisdom itself: but it is to be understood according to that which is said in the Gospel: Jesus increased in age, wisdom, and grace before God and men (Luke II). Moreover

my reins also have corrected me even until night. Night signifies the time of the passion: in which human frailty was instructed by the interior divinity. Moreover my reins also have corrected me even until night. Carnal delights then correct me, when they suggest to me that I should sin, when the flesh is delighted. But unless thou hadst been at my right hand, perhaps I should be weakened.

I set the Lord always in my sight. The Son the Father, the Church Christ. Because he is at my right hand that I be not moved. As if he should say: If thou hadst not been at my right hand, perhaps I should have been moved from faith to infidelity, from good to evil.

Therefore my heart hath been glad, etc. On account of the resurrection I have been glad, because through it the world has been liberated. Otherwise: Therefore my heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced. On account of this, that thou helpest me, my heart is glad, my tongue preaches. Moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope. The voice of Christ. For the person of the body it rests in hope. As if he should say: The Church, which is my flesh, now rests in hope. That is, in the hope of resurrection: so that where the head has preceded, the members may follow.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell. Thou wilt not leave it: because for this reason he descended thither, that he might cast out his elect from there, and bind the devil. The devil before boasted himself in such a way, as if he had all the kingdoms of the world, but now not only could he not hold him, but rather he is held to be

bound by Christ. Neither wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption. How does he say: Thou shalt not give to see corruption: while elsewhere he says: What profit is there in my blood while I go down into corruption (Psal. XXV)? He does not speak of the corruption of the body of Christ in the sepulchre; but of the rest of the saints.

Thou hast made known to me the ways of life. The voice of the head for the body. The ways of life are the commandments of Christ: as it is written: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments (Matt. XIX). Thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance. Then there shall be full joy, when the body of the Church shall have been united in the kingdom of God: that is, when he shall have delivered the kingdom to God his Father: then God shall be all in all. Delights in thy right hand even to the end. The right hand of the Father is the Son. Delight of eternal life in the right hand: that is, in the prosperity which is given to the Son: even to the end: as if he should say, without end: because the end of the law is Christ unto justice to everyone that believeth: because the fullness of the law is charity, and the end of the commandment is charity. Otherwise: Delights in thy right hand even to the end. In that delightful power of thine by which the saints are to reign with thee, which is concluded by no end. Whence we pray them that being by no means disjoined from these, if we do not deserve to be clothed with glory, we may not be excluded from pardon. For to thee is honor and glory with the

eternal Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

PSALM XVI.

The sixteenth psalm contains the prayer of the Lord's person joined to himself the body, which is the Church. A Prayer of David. It is understood for three persons. This prayer is had in four psalms. This psalm is sung from the person of Christ against the Jews: and from the person of the Church against the heretics. The Hebrews explain, that when David sang the psalm, because he said: Hear, O Lord, my justice: on account of that presumption by which he boasted that he was heard for his justice, he would have fallen into crime.

Hear, O Lord, my justice. According to the LXX, God of justice, or God just by nature. For, Hear, O God, my justice: here the person of Christ is given to be understood. Hear, O God, my justice: the voice of Christ in the passion, and the voice of the Church in tribulation. Or the Church calls justice her own, and not her own: because it is her own if she fulfills the commandments of God in deed. Not her own: because it is given by God, not from herself. Hear, O God, my justice: because I was obedient to thee even unto death. Attend to my supplication. There is a difference between prayer (oratio) and supplication (deprecatio). The prayer of the saints is for the devoted, that they may persevere in good. Supplication is for their own sins, or those of others. Of the whole is the supplication.

Give ear to my prayer. That is, in this which I ask, give ear to my prayer. For not the diminution of the deity prays, but the infirmity of the flesh. Not in deceitful lips. But through the purity which is pleasing to thee.

Let my judgment come forth from thy countenance. Not in deceitful lips. As if he should say: Hear my prayer, because I pray with my whole heart: not like those who in deceitful lips, because they speak one thing, and have another in the heart, whether heretics, or Jews. Let my judgment come forth from thy countenance, not in deceitful lips. The voice of Christ to the Father. Because they who have deceitful lips judge me, but do thou judge them in the future. The prophet says this not by wishing, but by pronouncing. This shows what the Lord is about to do in the judgment. Let my eyes see equity. The eyes of Christ, the holy preachers, let them see, that is, understand, equity, that is, equality, so that they may fulfill in deed the justice which they preach.

Thou hast proved my heart, O God, and visited it by night. Also in straits thou hast proved me: because I am sad, and as if in a certain pressure of a dark night. Thou hast proved my heart, O God. The voice of Christ to the Father. Thou hast proved Christ in the passion, and the Church in tribulation. Thou hast examined me by fire. That is, through tribulation itself thou hast confounded my sins. And iniquity was not found in me. That my mouth may not speak the works of men. Of what kind are the works of men? Vanities which they themselves love: or various

businesses, those are the works of men: as the Lord says in the Gospel (Matth. XXI). But if an account is rendered of an idle word: how much more of the works of men, which they speak studiously from that very sense.

Because of the words of thy lips I have kept hard ways. On account of the preaching and on account of those things which are promised in the heavens, I have kept hard ways. How does he say hard here, while in the Gospel it is said: My yoke is sweet, and my burden light (Matt. XI)? It is sweet to those willing: it is hard to those unwilling. Although it seems to be hard to the saints on account of corporal tribulation, yet it is sweet: because they have the hope of eternal life: Or otherwise: Because of the words of thy lips I have kept hard ways. As if he should say: Fearing future punishments, which thou hast threatened to the transgressors of the law, I have exercised myself in hard labors, and have subjected the body to the power of the soul.

Perfect thou my goings in thy paths. Perfect my senses in thy commandments. The voice of the Church. Because it is from God to begin, and it is from God to finish. Goings, senses. That my footsteps be not moved. From those whose feet were moved: that is, whoever have done evil.

I have cried, etc. Why did he say, I have cried? Because he believed through faith: therefore he said, I have cried. Incline thy ear unto me, etc. Christ inclines his ear, when he deigns to hear. He asks through the similitude of an infirm man, who is in bed, that the physician may come, and

heal his infirmities. So also the human race was infirm: when it lay in bed: that is in sin. It asked that the true physician might come, who is Christ in the flesh, and heal its languors.

Make wonderful thy mercies, O Lord, etc. Had they not been made wonderful before? But then he made wonderful his mercies: when through the holy apostles and his saints he healed infirmities.

From them that resist thy right hand. Thou savest from them that resist thy right hand in a threefold way: demons, God: Jews, Christ: heretics, the Church. Keep me, O Lord, as the apple of an eye. The voice of the Church. By the eye is understood the body of the Church, and by the apple the humility of Christ, through whose example we live, and see. This the Church supplicates, that she may be able to observe that humility which Christ taught. Because if the eye is not guarded through the apple, it by no means sees. Because by the eyes preachers are understood, by the apple the spiritual sense. This the body of Christ which is the Church asks, that the sense of the preachers, which is the eye, may be guarded: lest it be snatched away in the infidelity of heretics.

Protect me under the shadow of thy wings. Shadow consists of two things: light and body. By light, divinity: by body, humanity is understood. Whence also it is said to Mary: The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee (Luke I). Under this shadow protect me, that the kite may not snatch

me away. And under the two wings of the Testaments: that is, their doctrines by which one lives, and is guarded, and covered as by a hen: because by the hen is understood the wisdom of God the Father. Because as a hen hides her chicks under her wings on account of kites: so also divine wisdom, and the two wings, which are the two testaments, protect the Church from the kite: that is, from the devil. From the face of the wicked who have afflicted me. The Jews Christ in the passion, and the heretics the Church.

My enemies have surrounded my soul. The Jews Christ in the passion. I said [F. he said] soul, not body: because the devil inside in the soul does not know what man thinks, unless he understands through exterior movements, and in what he sees each one to be delighted, he brings in various suggestions. This pertains to the Church, They have shut up their fat. What is designated by fat, but the malice of the Jews? Which in the old Testament is prohibited to eat fat: because their heart was thickened. Whence he said in the Song of Deuteronomy: The beloved grew fat, and kicked (Deut. XXXII). Why? Because he was thickened with malice, and kicked: because he was unwilling to observe the commandments of God. The Jewish people was beloved by God: because divine manna rained for them: which pertains to us, because we eat Christ. But the Jews despised themselves: that is, they bound themselves in malice. Their mouth hath spoken pride. The mouth of the wicked: because they act against Christ, and against the Church.

They that cast me out have now surrounded me: they have set their eyes to bow down to the earth. When Christ suffered, all the earth trembled, and the stars were darkened, and the rocks were rent. But the Jews set their eyes upon the earth, because they thought him only a man, and did not understand his divinity. Or they set their eyes upon the earth: because they were thinking of earthly acts, but were not meditating on heavenly things.

They have taken me as a lion prepared for the prey, etc. As a lion is prepared for the prey: so the Jews took Christ in the passion. And as a lion's whelp. The lion is the devil: the whelp is his son Antichrist. Or another way. The lion is the devil: and his sons are the Jews. In secret places, in their hearts, as if in the dark. The devil, or his members in whom the devil dwells, are called secret places.

Arise, O Lord, prevent them, etc. The voice of Christ speaks to the divinity, that he may prevent his soul, lest it be snatched away by the prince devil, which he also did. He prevented him, and bound him, and led him down to hell. The devil came to seek something of his own in Christ, but found nothing in him, as he said in the Gospel: The prince of this world cometh, and in me he findeth not anything (John XIV). And the holy Church asks before she is supplanted by the devil, and in his snares, which are the heretics: that our Catholic may come, who is Christ, and subvert the crafts of the enemy, that is, supplant them. Deliver my soul from the wicked one, thy sword from the enemies of thy hand. I pray, deliver

the sword of thy hand from thy enemies, for the enemy received power that he might punish us on account of sins. Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme, says the Apostle (I Tim. I). Deliver my soul from the wicked one. The voice of Christ speaks to God the Father: that is, deliver my soul from the devil. And the voice of the Church asks this of Christ, that she may be delivered from the devil, or from heretics, and from every evil man. Thy sword from the enemies of thy hand. By the sword (frameam) is understood Christ and the Church. The sword of God the Father is the soul of Christ, with which he works just vengeance. The devil is his sword, with which sword he works vengeance in the world.

O Lord, divide them from the few of the earth, etc. The voice of the Church. From the few, from the earth. The Church wishes to be separated from the carnal, and from the cockle, and from the chaff before the day of judgment: but without cause: because she received an answer from God, as the Lord said in the Gospel: Suffer both to grow until the harvest (Matt. XIII): that is, until the day of judgment. Because here the Church is mixed with sinners: she asks for those who are predestined, that they may come, and be separated from those who are not predestined, as it is said: Many are called, but few chosen (Matt. XXII). Supplant those who are in impiety; that they may be amended here, or in the future be supplanted in vengeance. Their belly is filled from thy hidden things. In a threefold way is belly understood

here. Belly is understood as chastity, as Eucherius says. And the belly of the angels was filled with the mysteries of God before they had fallen, and the belly of the Jews with the mysteries of the law, and the belly of the heretics with the mysteries of the Church.

They are full of children. The Jews are full: because they were multiplied in the procreation of children, and in the things of the world. When he says, they are full of swine's flesh (porcina), this designates the uncleanness of the Jews. They have left their remains to their little ones. This is that just vengeance which is due to them. They left their remains to their little ones; that is, when they said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children (Matt. XXVII). And the children of heretics likewise shall have condemnation. Who are their remains? Their own disciples, who have been regenerated from that evil doctrine of theirs. They are full of children, and have left their residues to their little ones. On account of the ambiguity of the word, some think that swine's flesh (porcina) was written for children (filiis), which Symmachus, expressing the Hebrew truth, translated: they shall be filled with children, and shall leave their residues to their little ones. They are full of children, and have left their remains, uncleanness, and iniquity: trampling the pearls of thy words. And they left their remains to their little ones, crying out: His blood be upon us and upon our children.

But as for me, I shall appear before thy sight in justice. The voice of the Church. In justice: that

is, to fulfill thy commandments. I shall appear before thy sight: that is, in thy presence in the future. I shall be satisfied. With heavenly refreshment. When thy glory shall appear. Thy Son, who is salvation, and life, and the glory of all the Saints: because Christ is called both salvation and glory. But I shall appear in justice, death having been conquered. In thy sight I shall be satisfied, ascending into the heavens. When thy glory shall appear, to thy saints and elect who have believed through me: because that which is granted to them is mine. For I am in them, and they are in me with thee. But we, redeemed by thee, Lord Jesus, seeing such great power and piety, suppliantly pray, that being examined by divine fire, we may not be detractors of human works, but stable and fixed in thee, we may continually extol thy glory in work, bring it forth in faith, and praise it with the voice. Amen.

PSALM XVII.

To the end, for the servant of the Lord David: who spoke to the Lord the words of this song, in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. This whole psalm, under the person of David, pertains to Christ. David holds the type of Christ, who is strong of hand, from whose seed is our David, who is Christ. To the servant of the Lord, that is, of God the Father, as the prophet says. It is a great thing for thee to be called my son. For behold I, and my children whom God hath given me. And the prophet Isaiah: A child is

given to us, a son is born to us. Who spoke to the Lord the words of this song. And David according to history sang this song when he was persecuted by enemies, and Christ, who is our head, also sang to the Father in the passion: and the Church in persecution. The Lord delivered him: that is, both David from the persecution of Saul, and God the Father delivered Christ in the passion from the hand of enemies; that is, from the hand of the Jews, and from the hand of Saul. Saul is interpreted as 'petition' (appetitio), because against the will of God they sought him as king. This Saul bore the type of the devil. These enemies are the members of the devil: that is, the Jews who persecuted Christ, and the demons, or their members who persecute the Church.

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. Others say, my fortitude, but strength (virtus) and fortitude are one. This whole psalm, under the person of David, pertains to Christ: who is true fortitude. I will love thee, my strength. The voice of Christ. My strength: that is, the divinity: the strength of the assumed man. And the Church is the strength of Christ, who says: I will love thee, O Lord. If it is the voice of Christ, since they are one, and one is the substance of the divinity, because it is said: One power, one will, one majesty of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: how does he say, I will love thee, O Lord? He is called Father because he has a son, and he is called Son because he has a father. The Holy Spirit is neither Father nor Son, but the love which the Father has in the Son, and the Son in the Father. Whence Paul the

apostle said: Because the charity of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us (Rom. V). The Lord is my firmament. The voice of Christ, and the voice of the Church. Firmament, as the prophet says: a tower of strength from the face of the enemy (Ps. LX). And my refuge. The voice of Christ, and the voice of the Church. The refuge of Christ is in the Father, and the refuge of the Church is in Christ. And my deliverer, in tribulation.

My God, who created me. My helper, from necessities. I will hope in him, in him I will place all hope.

My protector, who protectest or defendest me. And the horn of my salvation. The horn of salvation: because he has strengthened our infirmity. Because before the coming of Christ the Church was weakened by sin, but afterwards strengthened through Christ, as the prophet says: He hath raised up a horn of salvation to us (Luke I). As if he should say: He gave to us a strong kingdom, like that: And he hath made us a kingdom to God his Father (I Thess. II). Not, therefore, in that horn of pride, but in the horn of thy salvation, do I trust to have help. My sustainer (susceptor). Christ was sustained by the Father in humanity, and the Church is sustained in faith.

Praising I will call upon the Lord. The just praise: because he delivered them from all evils, for that which follows: And I shall be saved from my enemies. I called upon the Lord. Christ called upon God the Father. The Church upon Christ. And I shall be saved from my enemies, Christ

from the Jews, and the Church from the heretics. The groans of death surrounded me. The voice of Christ, and the voice of the Church. Those who were groaning in hell surrounded Christ, they who were in hell, and the Church likewise. And the torrents of iniquity troubled me. He calls torrents the waters which pass through. A torrent is that which comes not from a fountain nor from living water, but from rains, or descends from the mountains into the valleys, and goes into the sea. What is meant by torrents, but all the nations, which descend through the mountain of the flesh into this sea? Whence it is written: A generation goeth and a generation cometh (Eccles. I): And otherwise. And the torrents of iniquity troubled me. The crowds of the wicked, which swell like torrents in winter, immediately flowing away. The sorrows of hell surrounded me. In the day of the detractors, who work infernal death. The snares of death prevented me. The enemies prevented Christ in the passion before the vengeance of the cross, with snares of death, which my adversaries were stretching out for me. And in my tribulation I called upon the Lord. Humanity called upon the divinity, and the Church upon Christ: not with the voice of the mouth, but of the heart. And I cried to my God, and he heard my voice from his holy temple. The temple is the Lord's body, where humanity was heard by the divinity, and the Church likewise by Christ. In the temple, in the holy Church. And another way. In my heart which he sanctified: in which holy temple he dwells. And my cry in his sight entered into

his ears. His ears: that is, the power of hearing. Power is strength, by which the saints strongly pray, because it is said: The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away.

The earth was moved, and it trembled. According to history it was done: when Moses received the law on mount Sinai. The earth trembled, which prefigured the passion of Christ, because in the passion of Christ all the earth trembled, when the new law was given to the Christian people. Otherwise: The earth was moved, when they came from infidelity to faith, and the earthly having believed, it was made heaven.

The foundations of the mountains were troubled, and were moved. Here the proud mountains are understood. Their foundations are the demons: as also the foundations of the saints are the prophets and apostles. Whence Saint Paul says: Built upon the foundations of the prophets, and of the apostles: The foundations of the mountains were troubled, and were moved (Ephes. II), the pride of those who trust in this world. Because God was angry with them. That is, with those mountains, or persecutors: dissipating the hope of worldly pleasures.

A smoke ascended in his anger, etc. Smoke is made from two things: from fire and water. By smoke, tears are excited, and by fire compunction of heart is understood, and by tears, water. Coals were kindled by him. What is meant by coals, but the human race of good nature, extinguished through Adam, designated as illuminated through baptism or through penance in

the coming of Christ? Coals are extinguished by water, which is cupidity: and are illuminated by grace, which is the Holy Spirit.

He bowed the heavens and came down. This is what he says in another psalm: He came down like rain upon the fleece (Psalm LXXI): because he showed himself humble to us, and hidden in the form of a servant, and latent. Or another thing: The heavens, the angels were bowed, when Gabriel came to Mary, and Christ descended, and came into the flesh. Or otherwise: The heavens, the holy apostles, or their imitators. They bowed from their height: that is, from contemplation, that they may teach the brute, the infirm in the Church on account of compassion for their neighbors. Or to the married, as Saint Paul says: Let the husband render the debt to the wife, and the wife likewise to the husband (I Cor. VII). And darkness was under his feet. It signifies the invisible substance of God, and the secrets of his judgments. Or another thing: And darkness was under his feet. Darkness: that is, the depth of the Scriptures: which God gave to his feet, which are his saints: that is, to his Church: because in the sense of the saints there is the depth of the Scriptures, and Christ presides over them.

And he ascended upon the Cherubim. That is, upon the fullness of knowledge, Christ ascended with his body above all angels and archangels. Cherubim is interpreted as the 'fullness of knowledge,' which is charity: because the fullness of the law is love, that is charity. Christ ascended upon this, as the Lord himself says in the Gospel:

Greater love than this no man hath, than that a man lay down his life for his friends (John XV). Which Christ so did, who gave his life for his friends. And he flew, etc. According to history, which is first, he flew upon the wings of the winds: because the wind is swifter than all creatures, and the Lord is swifter than the wind, because he penetrates even to the ends of the earth, and disposes all things sweetly. Because he himself is beyond the wind, therefore he is swifter. And as to the moral sense: he wished to signify the soul by the wind. Just as this wind is invisible, so also is the soul. The wind moves the body, and the soul moves the body likewise. But why did he call the soul wind? This is because God breathed into Adam. Not that God the Father is corporeal; but then he breathed, when he gave the soul, as the prophet says: Thou, O Lord, createst every breath (Isai. LVII). By these things we understand that all souls are created by God. And he flew: he flew upon the wings of the winds: that is, the virtues of holy souls, because Christ is swifter than the wind, and lighter than the soul, and more excellent than angels and saints.

He made darkness his covert (latibulum), etc. He called himself a covert in the Scriptures. Round about him was his tabernacle. Christ was in Mary as a bridegroom in his chamber, and the body of Mary as a tabernacle. He says darkness: for the reason that the Incarnation or his Nativity is obscure to us. Dark water in the clouds of the air. The clouds are the prophets: and the water, their doctrine, because the Scriptures of

the prophets are obscure. For as clouds carry rain, and irrigate the arid land, so also the prophets through their doctrine irrigate arid hearts.

At the brightness that was before him the clouds passed. Lightnings, the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The clouds themselves, that is, the prophets, passed from the Jews to the gentiles, the Holy Spirit governing. By lightnings of fire, compunction of heart is understood. Hail, and coals of fire. In the hail, scourges: in the fire, the kindling of charity is shown: by which the hearts of the faithful are moved to the knowledge of God.

And the Lord thundered from heaven. He thundered through his saints: as if from heaven he evangelized through the hearts of the just. And the Highest gave his voice. Through the evangelists he destroyed human malice. The Highest gave his voice: that is, preaching, as the prophet says: The voice of thy thunder in a wheel (Psalm LXXVI), that is, their preaching in the whole world.

And he sent forth his arrows, and scattered them. He sent his holy words as arrows, which preach fully both to the evil and to the good. God rewards the good, if they do them: and he crushes the evil, if they hear, and do not do them. Whence the holy apostle says: To some indeed we are the odor of life unto life, and to others the odor of death unto death (II Cor. II). They are an odor of life to those who hear and do; and an odor of death to those who hear and do not do. Because the preachers do not know who are predestined;

yet they preach confidently. And he multiplied lightnings, and troubled them. Lightnings, miracles, and the brightness of his power. He troubled them. By those miracles of the apostles they were struck with compunction, and they who said to Peter: What shall we do, men and brethren? And he: Do penance, he said: and be baptized every one of you (Acts II).

And the fountains of waters appeared. The fountains are the apostles, as if they were watered with waters from one fountain. From one fountain which is Christ, the apostles were satisfied, as he said in the Gospel. He that shall drink of the water that I will give him shall not thirst for ever (John IV). And otherwise: The fountains of waters are those who through the sacrament of baptism have been made for sinners a fountain of living water springing up into life everlasting. And the foundations of the world were revealed. The prophets and apostles upon whom the foundations of all the Churches are placed. The foundations of the world were revealed, according to history, when in the passion the veil of the temple was rent from the top even to the bottom, and those things which were in the temple appeared. And as to the sense of the letter, the spiritual sense, because that which lay hidden there in figure, was made manifest to all through the mysteries.

At thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the spirit of thy wrath. At thy rebuke, O Lord, when thou saidst: Unless the Son shall make you free, you shall die in your sins (John VIII). At the blast of

the spirit of thy wrath, promising in these things that the kingdom of God is drawing near.

He sent from on high and took me. By calling me. And he took me out of many waters. Of the opposing peoples. Or otherwise: He sent from on high, and took me, and took me out of many waters. God the Father sent his Son, as it is said: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John I). The bridegroom sent to the bride: he joined the true bridegroom to the bride: that is, the flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary. He took me out of many waters: that is, from the multitude of the people, the Church was collected. Many waters, many peoples. He delivered me from my strongest enemies. God the Father delivered Christ from the Jews, and the Church from heretics. And from them that hated me, for they were strengthened over me. The Jews hated the Lord, and heretics the Church. Because they were strengthened over me, as if they were able to conquer. They prevented me. As we said above, before the vengeance of the cross. And the Lord became my protector. God the Father protected his Son, and the Son his Church.

He brought me forth into a broad place. He brought the Church forth from tribulation, as if from narrowness: In a broad place: which is the hope of the future, or the reward of eternal life. He saved me, because he desired me. The voice of the Church, who desired me, that he might present the Church to himself. Because he desired me. By his own will, and not from my merit he called me, as the Apostle says: By grace you are saved

through faith: and this not of yourselves (Ephes. II).

And the Lord will reward me according to my justice, and according to the innocence of my hands he will reward me. But what that justice and innocence of his hands may be: hear what follows: Because, he says, I have kept, so that the ways of God may be kept, and nothing impious concerning him may be felt with the heretics.

Because I have kept the ways of the Lord. That is, his commandments. Nor have I acted impiously from my God. So as to turn praise to an idol.

For all his judgments are always in my sight. There are four judgments of God; two of the present, and two of the future. In the present, the prosperity of the wicked, and the tribulation of the saints. In the future, the reward of the saints, and the condemnation of sinners. The Church adheres to Christ, because Christ did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth. And the Church adheres to Christ, for all his judgments are always in my sight. And his justices I have not put away from me. But I have embraced them.

And I shall be immaculate with him, and I will keep myself from my iniquity. I will persevere in that innocence in which I was called. And I will keep myself from my iniquity: that is, I will not turn back to that iniquity where I was before in infidelity.

And the Lord will reward me according to my justice, and according to the purity of my hands in the sight of his eyes. By the eyes, the aspect

of the divinity is understood: because he himself beholds whatever man works in the commandments of God. In the reward of the blessed, I who consider it through the height of hope.

With the holy you will be holy, with him who is sanctified by you. And with the innocent man, you will be innocent, with him who has not corrupted his life with vices. And with the elect, you will be elect, with him whom you know as foreknown. And with the perverse, you will be subverted, with the heretic, who by understanding wrongly perverts the divine oracles: as the Lord himself speaks elsewhere to the Jews: If you walk perversely before me, I also will walk perverse to you. With the holy you will be holy. You, O Christ, are holy by nature: he whom you have sanctified, by him you are known, because you are holy. The voice of the prophet to Christ: He whom you have made innocent, by him you are known, that you are innocent: because you harm no one, therefore you are innocent. He whom you have chosen, that he may be elect: by him you are known that you are elect, as Paul said: But I may apprehend that in which I am apprehended (Philipp. III). They are called perverse who decline from rectitude to perversity, as the devil, and Judas, and heretics, and all the proud. As often as God makes just vengeance, they rebuke him, when he chooses the poor, and reproves the powerful, when he chose fishermen, such as Peter, and left the noble. This seems to be perverse among the perverse, as the prophet says: The ways of the Lord are right (Ose. XIV), but your ways are perverse.

Because you will save the humble people, as we said above. And the eyes of the proud you will humble. Because you will save the humble people, doing penance, and the eyes of the proud you will humble: because being lifted up with pride, they disdain to do penance.

Because you enlighten my lamp. What is the lamp but the understanding of the soul? As the eyes of the body, if they do not have light from an external lamp, do not see in darkness: so also the understanding of the soul, unless it be enlightened by another, that is by Christ, does not see: as he says in the Gospel: It was the true light, which enlightens every man coming into this world (John 1). O Lord my God, enlighten my darkness. That is, the ignorance of the heart. Whence it is written: If the light that is in you be darkness, how great will that darkness be (Matth. VI)? And the Apostle says: You were once darkness, but now light in the Lord (Ephes. V).

For in you I shall be delivered from temptation. The voice of the Church. Unless I be delivered by God, I am by no means able through myself. And in my God I shall leap over a wall. The Church calls our sins a wall; which we build up, by adding sins to sins. Unless those sins be destroyed by God, we cannot through ourselves pass over to God.

My God, his way is undefiled. An undefiled way: this is his incarnation: because he is not from the seed of man, but conceived of the Holy Spirit. And otherwise: The perfect faith of the Church is called his undefiled way through which

God comes to us. The words of the Lord tried by fire. The words of the Lord, his commandments, in this are pleasing to God: not that they themselves are tried by fire, or that they had been defiled; but they make him who has received them like pure gold, purified by fire. He is the protector of all who hope in him. Those who believe in him. God protects those who fear him with holy fear.

For who is God but the Lord: or who is God but our God? Here the Trinity is understood. By what he said, 'but the Lord,' God the Father is understood. 'But our God': the Son: and the third person, that is, the Holy Spirit: because God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, is one God.

God who has girded me with strength. By a similitude, as a man girds his garments, so that they may not harm his feet, which are the senses: and his hands, which are works. He has girded: that is, that they may restrain the folds of desire, as I said above, lest they be impeded through desire. Or otherwise: God who has girded me with strength: the Holy Spirit who arms us against wicked powers, according to the Apostle: Put on the armor of God, and the sword of the Holy Spirit, that you may be able to resist the devil (Ephes. VI). Let the heretics be silent now, beholding here the Trinity expressed, and let them know the Son, whom they say is less than the Father, first foretold by the prophet, not as if prior, but in no way inferior. And he has made my way immaculate. That is, my faith, lest I be violated by it.

Who has made my feet like the feet of harts. As harts tread upon thorns with their feet, and leap over forests: so the saints tread upon thorns, that is, sins; they leap over forests, that is, infidelity: and they go up even to God, that is, even to the height of charity. Who has made my feet like the feet of harts, for leaping over the impediments of this world. And has set me upon high places. High places, the holy Church is: and Christ upon high places, and high places upon high places: that is, upon the sublime of the Church. He has set me upon high places, he has placed my hope in heavenly things.

Who teaches my hands for battle. My works against the devil the destroyer. Who teaches my hands for battle, for vanquishing crimes. And he made my arms like a brazen bow. A brazen bow: that is, intention; arms, strength: that is, so that they may not fail to act well.

You have given me the protection of your salvation. The voice of the Church to Christ. Of salvation: because he himself is our salvation, as he says: Salvation is of the Lord. You have given me the protection of your salvation: lest I be oppressed by evils. And your right hand has received me. The right hand of the Father is Christ. He has received me, the Church through the incarnation. Your discipline has corrected me unto the end. For whom the Lord loves, he chastises. We are raised up therefore who before had fallen, when we have been smitten by the Lord. And your doctrine itself shall teach me. It is necessary while we are here to be under doctrine. Whence Paul says:

All discipline for the present seems not to be of joy, but of sorrow, but afterwards in the future it yields the most fruit (Hebr. XII).

You have enlarged my steps under me. The sense of the Church: under me, under the power of the Church. You have enlarged my steps under me, in the amplitude of your charity. And my footsteps are not weakened. The footsteps, by the example of the Church, are not weakened by successors: because I have impressed those following me. Hence the voice of Christ after the resurrection.

I will pursue my enemies, and I shall overtake them. The Jews surely, who were unjustly made enemies to him. Or otherwise: I will pursue my enemies, the carnal affections. And I shall overtake them, before I am overtaken by them. And I will not turn back until they fail, etc. I will not turn back from fighting against them: or I will not turn back from this intention until they fail, whether from malice, or from depraved thoughts. I will afflict them in many evils, as we read was already done in the time of Titus. Nor shall they be able to stand, because being iniquitous and proud they had been lifted up. They shall fall under my feet, whether that they may adore, or that they may be trodden upon.

You have girded me with strength for the battle, against death, or its ministers. You have girded me with strength, that is, with fortitude against the devil, or against those aforementioned vices. You have supplanted those rising up

against me under me, those who were being lifted up over my head.

And you have given me the back of my enemies. For they were unwilling to turn their face to me. And you have given me the back of my enemies. My enemies give the back, when they flee, and when they go after me. And you have destroyed them that hated me. All the enemies of the Church: or God destroyed the vices and sins themselves. And you have destroyed them that hated me. For every one is dispersed in his own malice.

They cried, and there was none to save them: to the Lord, and he heard them not. Because they were unworthy of his hearing. They shall cry. Who shall cry? The impious demons, and Jews, and heretics shall cry in the future judgment: and there shall be none to save them: because when God cried to them through the prophets, or through the rest of the Scriptures, they would not hear: therefore they shall cry, and there shall be none to hear them, as Solomon says: I have called, and you refused, I stretched out my hand, and there was none that regarded (Prov. I). You have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my reprehensions. Therefore I also will laugh in your destruction: when that which you feared shall come upon you. I will mock, when sudden calamity shall rush upon you. Then you shall call upon me, and I will not hear.

And I shall beat them small, as the dust before the face of the wind. I shall beat them small, that is, those aforementioned carnal affections I will

bring to nothing. And I shall beat them small, as the dust before the face of the wind: because being dry and without the rain of mercy they were cast out, and they were beaten small in their pride, and dispersed as the dust of the field. As the mire of the streets I will blot them out, in the manner of turbid mire.

Deliver me from the contradictions of the people, you will set me at the head of the nations. The voice of Christ to the Father: You will deliver me from the contradictions of the Jewish people, surely: because while some said, He is true: others on the contrary said, No; but he seduces the crowd. Deliver me from those infidel peoples who contradict me. You deliver from the infidel Jews, and set their head, that is, of the nations.

A people whom I knew not has served me. That is, the nations which knew me not either through faith, or through the law, shall serve me. A people whom I knew not shall serve me. For I was ignorant of them, when they served idols: now believing, they have been made known and serving me. At the hearing of the ear he has obeyed me. They obeyed me with their ears, because they did not see the wonders, nor my corporal presence. Afterwards they heard, and believed. By the imbuing of the preachers the Church received a spiritual ear: by which understanding she may keep the divine precepts.

Alien children. This same thing Isaiah also speaks: Woe to the sinful nation, to alien children, to a people full of sins (Is. I). By an ancient name, the Jews were called the children of God:

but alienated, because they were made the children of the devil. And the same Jews, whose father is the devil: They have lied to me, because they have not stood in the truth even as their father. The alien children have grown old: this is because they did not receive the advent of the new man, they remained in the old man. And they have limped from their paths. They limp: because they believe the Father, and they do not believe the Son. They have one foot, and they have not the other: thence they limp in the letter of the law. The voice of the Church.

The Lord lives. Whom they had shut in the sepulcher under the placing of seals. And blessed be my God, by God the Father. The Lord lives, and blessed be the Lord my God. Did he not live before? But he says this for the sake of the incarnation: as saint Paul says: He who died for a time from the infirmity of the flesh, but lives from the power of God. For now he dies no more, death shall no longer have dominion over him (Rom. VI). And let the God of my salvation be exalted. The voice of the Church to Christ: Because Christ was exalted in the Ascension. Or otherwise: Let the God of my salvation be exalted: In me let him always be high: whose calling is my salvation: lest I think anything vile of him.

God, who gives vengeance to me, by subverting the Jews: or the traitor Judas himself. Or otherwise: God, who gives vengeance to me. The voice of the Church to Christ. God gave to the Church the power of binding and loosing, and of performing discipline; as Peter and Paul had

power, through the Spirit of the Lord: as he said: Behold I have given you power to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy (Luke X). And you have subdued the peoples under me, under the power of the Church, for ruling the unbelieving nations. The Lord my deliverer from the wrathful nations: Christ in the passion from the Jews crying out: Crucify, crucify him; and the Church from heretics, and the soul from all vices, which he called nations.

And from those rising up against me you will exalt me, that is, from persecutors. From the iniquitous man you will deliver me, that is, from the devil, as it was said 'an enemy man has done this.'

Therefore will I give thanks to you among the peoples, O Lord. The Church says: I will praise you among the believers. I will sing a psalm to you among the nations: that is, I will praise, and I will work: Therefore will I give thanks to you among the peoples, O Lord. I will sing a psalm to your name. Because I am among these; I will give thanks to you, Father: and I will sing, the voice of the prophet.

Magnifying the salvation of his king, of Christ the Lord, because he rose again. Or otherwise: the prophet speaks to God the Father; because he works health, and salvation through individuals, because he attracts souls through preaching, so that he may be the salvation of the believers, who believe in the salvation of his king. And showing mercy to his Christ David: That is, to his only-begotten. David is interpreted as strong of hand,

which is Christ. And to his seed even to the end. His seed, these are his saints. The Lord always shows mercy with his saints without end. And showing mercy to his Christ, David and to his seed even for ever, to the mediator Jesus the Lord himself, and to the ecclesiastical people, who believed through his word. May the strongest deliverer himself deign to rescue us from this world, and establish us in the faith through the Gospel, because to him be glory, and empire with the eternal Father, and the Holy Spirit, for all ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM XVIII.

Unto the end, a psalm of David. The psalm contains the voice of the prophet speaking of Christ. This psalm is sung in the person of Christ through the prophet, and in the person of the Church.

The heavens show forth the glory of God, etc. From the creatures consequently the Creator is acknowledged. Otherwise: The heavens show forth the glory of God: The earth cannot show it forth. According to history heaven and earth with the rest of their creatures tell the glory of God, as Paul says: By those things which are made, being understood they are seen (Rom. I): that is, by those who understand being understood they are seen. This heaven is the firmament. Whence he said: And God set a firmament in the midst of the waters, that is, heaven (Genes. I). Otherwise according to the sense: The heavens are the apostles, and what is glory, this is work: and

what is 'they show forth,' this is they announce: because they preach the glory of God. And that we may know that this is the firmament which he also calls heaven in Genesis: And God called the firmament heaven. They announce. Whence also the Lord to the disciples: All things whatsoever I have heard from my Father, I have announced to you (John XV).

Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. He returned like for like, because from the order of times we arrive more at the knowledge of God. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. Yesterday announced today, and today announced tomorrow. According to the sense: the day is Christ. And otherwise, the day is the apostles. As Christ is the day, as he says: I am the light of the world (John VIII): so also the apostles are days, as he says: You are the light of the world (Matth. V). And one day has twelve hours. Whence the Lord himself in the Gospel said: Are there not twelve hours of the day (John XI)? these are understood as the twelve apostles. Night unto night. Night is Judas; to night, the Jews: shows knowledge, that is, when he said: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, hold him (Matth. XXVI). Otherwise: Night, the depth of the Scriptures in the prophets, announces the depth of the Old Testament.

There are no speeches nor languages whose words are not heard. There are no speeches: as if he were to say, tongues: nor languages, because there are many languages of a tongue. Or diver-

sities of words are understood by languages: as if he were to say: There were no speeches which the apostles did not receive in the variety of tongues, and therefore there were no tongues which had not heard the speeches of the apostles: while he says: Their sound has gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world, that is, into all the islands, or ends of the world.

Their sound has gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world, of the apostles namely, and of the gospels.

In the sun he has set his tabernacle. In the Hebrew it is thus: He has set a tabernacle for the sun in them, that is, in the heavens. God has set his tabernacle in the sun, and he himself as a bridegroom coming out of his bridal chamber. In the sun, in the womb of the holy virgin Mary. Mary is interpreted as star of the sea. The light of the sun shines more than that of the stars. The Lord is the sun of justice, as the prophet says: The sun of justice shall arise to you (Malach. IV): which is Christ. This sun enlightened the star, that is, Mary, so that she might be as the sun. Therefore he set his tabernacle in the sun, when he assumed a body from her womb. And he himself as a bridegroom coming out of his bridal chamber. The bridegroom, the Word of the Father, the bride, human flesh: with which he came out of the bridal chamber, that is, from the womb of the Virgin.

He has rejoiced as a giant to run the way. By the sun Christ is mystically understood. He has rejoiced as a giant to run the way. Here

'giant' is placed for the strength of Christ, for the reason that he himself bound the strong devil, and spoiled his vessels (which we were). To run the way: because he had no delays here. How? Born here he came into the passion, rose again and ascended. His going out is from the highest heaven, and his meeting even to the highest point thereof. From the highest heaven, that is, from the Father, which is the principal name: not therefore because he is greater than the Son according to the divinity, but for the name of the Father. From the highest, that is, from eternity is his going out. And his meeting even to the highest point thereof. His meeting, in the co-equality of eternity. Because he ascended to the heavens, he sits at the right hand of the Father, where he was before and always with him. And there is no one who can hide himself from his heat. For there is no one who does not have the seeds of the understanding of God. Nor is there anyone who can hide himself from his heat. There is no one who does not have something of his heat which he had not given him from the many divisions of thanksgivings; as Paul said: To one is given the word of wisdom: to another the word of knowledge (I Cor. XII).

The law of the Lord is unblamable. The law is Christ himself, who came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it (Matth. V). Unblamable: because he had no sin. The law of the Lord is immaculate. He who before had praised God through the creatures: now begins to preach him through the gift of the law. Converting souls, from captivity

into liberty. The testimony of the Lord is faithful. What testimony? except that he said: Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls (Matth. XI)? Faithful, because he does not lie. Giving wisdom to little ones, little ones not in sense, but in humility. Whence it is written: Because you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to little ones (Matth. X).

The justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts. Justices, that is, judgments: Right: because God judges rightly, and by the right they are held right. Rejoicing hearts, the souls of the saints. The commandment of the Lord is bright, the New Testament. Enlightening the eyes, that is, the eyes of the heart.

The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring for ever and ever. Fear with charity: Whence he said: Perfect charity casts out fear (I John IV). Let him fear not with the fear of hell, or with the fear of punishment, but with holy fear: let him so fear, that he may not lose him whom he loves through negligence. The judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves, not by another, but by themselves. For God deceives no one.

More to be desired than gold and many precious stones, beloved above all worldly treasures. And sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, because no precious metal can be compared to the judgments or the wisdom of God: neither gold nor precious stone, nor that which pertains to ornament and clothing: nor honey whence one is fed. With these two things man is clothed and

fed: as Paul: Having food and clothing, with these let us be content (I Tim. III). If you shall be a precious stone and tried as gold, you will merit to understand the judgments and the wisdom of God.

For your servant keeps them, in keeping them there is a great reward. For what reason does he keep them: except that, in keeping them there is a great reward? If you keep, says the Lord, my commandments, you shall abide in my love (John XV). What greater reward than that one be loved by God?

Who understands sins? He who is in sins, that is, in errors, does not understand the judgments of God, nor his own sins: as long as he is in sins. Who understands sins? The third division of praise, in which he teaches the impossibility of the law, by which through the prevarication of the law sin had more appeared in the world, to have been fulfilled by the grace of the Gospel: nor that anyone can be delivered from the filth of thoughts: except through the advent of the Holy Spirit. Who understands sins, except God the searcher of hearts, who also can dismiss them? Cleanse me from my secret faults: and from those of others spare your servant. From secret, that is, past sins, and from those of others, that is, those which are future, and have not yet come to me. Or otherwise: From secret, that is, all things which are in me, and from those of others, sins: because the devil had pride in secret, and was cast out: afterwards he was an alien from Adam, before Adam himself had sinned. But after he consented

to him, they were joined in pride and will, and from one sin the devil made for himself two judgments, that he might be judged doubly, because he killed both himself and another.

If they have not had dominion over me, then shall I be immaculate. If those sins have not had dominion over me, then shall I be immaculate. And I shall be cleansed from the greatest sin, that is, from pride; because pride is the beginning of all sin.

And the words of my mouth shall be such as may please. Then my words shall please you. And the meditation of my heart in your sight always, that is, concerning the remembrance of humility.

O Lord, my helper and my redeemer. Helper in tribulation and in necessities. And my redeemer: because you have redeemed me with your precious blood. You are the helper of the human race: when you make us approach to you. You are the redeemer: because you have redeemed us from destruction by your passion and resurrection, who may you deign to keep us continually walking in your law: because to you with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM XIX.

Unto the end, a psalm of David. The prophet sings this psalm in the person of the Church concerning Christ. The prophet foresaw that Christ would come in the flesh for our redemption, and pray for his enemies. Thence he said: May he hear.

May the Lord hear you in the day of tribulation. In the day of tribulation, he said for the part of the flesh. Some think this psalm was said from the voice of the people speaking to Christ, as to king and priest alike.

May he send you help from the sanctuary. He who had taken the form of a servant, rightly help is imprecated for him as for a man. May he send you help from the sanctuary: that is, from himself, because that divinity was in that very body. And defend you out of Sion: That is, from the Church itself Sion, which is both the Church, and he himself is in the Church.

May the Lord be mindful of all your sacrifice. This is, that he may redeem through his passion. Because Christ himself is king, and priest, and host: because he offered himself in the passion, because he gave his blood for us. May your whole burnt offering be made fat, that is, let it be acceptable to God. A holocaust is a whole burnt offering: because Christ with body and soul ascended the cross. All your victims, is the sacrifice of Christ, whether that which we all offer him by praying: or that because he himself shed his blood for all. And the sense is: Do not suffer anyone to perish, since you have died for all, and may the Father fulfill all your will. Whence he says: I will that as I and you are one, so also these may be one in us (John XVII).

May the Lord grant you according to your heart, that is, whether for the humanity of the flesh of Christ, or for his body, that is, the Church,

he desires that he be heard. And may he confirm all your counsel: that is, the counsel of the Trinity.

We will rejoice in your salvation. The voice of the Church: in the salvation which you gave by suffering. And in the name of the Lord our God we shall be magnified: Not in ourselves, but in him, because in the Church we are gathered in your name.

May the Lord fulfill all your petitions. Up to here he has spoken of the passion, now of the resurrection, and ascension, and reward. There are two petitions of Christ when he says: May the Lord hear you, and fulfill all your petitions. When Christ said to the Father: Glorify me, O Father, with yourself, with the glory which I had before the world was (John XVII). And elsewhere: Holy Father, keep them in your name whom you have given me, that as we are one, so also they may be one (Ibidem). Now I know that the Lord has saved his Christ. Now the prophet speaks to the time when he received the Holy Spirit. Then he knew, that God the Father would save his Son.

And he will hear him from his holy heaven: that is, from himself and from the holy Church. The salvation of his right hand is in powers. In the powers of the holy Church: to whom salvation was made through Christ who is his right hand, that is of God the Father, because the Church has the power of binding and loosing, and of performing discipline. And the Lord: Behold I have given you power to tread upon serpents, and all the powers of the enemy (Luke X). Whence Paul says: What will you? Shall I come to you with a

rod, or in charity (I Cor. IV)? The salvation of his right hand is in powers. In that power by which he rose victor from the lower regions.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses. Chariots and horses are always rebuked in the Egyptians. Let others believe in idols and demons; let us trust in Christ. Or otherwise: Some trust in chariots, and some in horses. By chariots, the pleasure of the world, or the desire of all worldly things is designated; because as wheels, which are unstable, so they themselves in mind run here and there. By horses, the proud, and they themselves are covetous. But we will call upon the name of the Lord our God: not in these things mentioned above, but in the name of the Lord.

They are bound, and have fallen: who are bound with the ropes of vices and are not able to ascend to higher things, but they fall as that: And they went backward, and fell (John XVIII). But we are risen, and are set upright. We are risen from infidelity: we are set upright through faith: because we were crooked in sins.

O Lord, save the king: and hear us in the day that we shall call upon you. Save the king: this is Christ, for the part of the flesh. And hear us. The Church asks that she be heard in an opportune time. O Lord, save the king, and hear us in the day that we shall call upon you. In the Hebrew it is thus written: O Lord, save the king: who may hear us in whatever day we shall call upon you.

PSALM XX.

In your strength, O Lord, the king shall joy. This is the king, for whom also in the former psalm salvation is prayed according to the form of a servant. Christ king of kings, and Lord of lords. And he shall rejoice exceedingly in your salvation: that is in that which you have saved men: your Son who is the Savior, shall rejoice.

You have given him his heart's desire: and have not withheld from him the will of his lips. For now indeed we are not servants, but friends. What he asked has been fulfilled. Just as he and the Father are one, so also we are one in him. Or otherwise: You have granted him the desire of his soul. The Son of God desired to come to redeem the human race. Whence he said: With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I die (Luke 22). And you have not withheld from him the will of his lips. And this is when the Lord said: My peace I give to you: my peace I leave with you (John 14).

For you have prevented him with blessings of sweetness. This is from afar, when Melchizedek blessed Abraham (Gen. 14). And then as many blessings as there were in the patriarchs until the coming of Christ, Christ was blessed in them. For you have prevented him: that is, these blessings of sweetness came before him, before he had tasted the gall offered by the Jews: because those blessings came to him beforehand. He tasted and would not drink (Matt. 27). He tasted, because he took upon himself our death. He would not drink: because on the third day he rose again. He would not drink: that is, he did not remain in death. You

have set on his head a crown of precious stone. The crown of God: the Church is a congregation gathered from various nations. Of which Paul says in the person of the believers: My joy and my crown (Phil. 4).

He asked life of you, and you gave it to him. As man he died, as man he rose again: for God certainly could not ask for life. Length of days for ever and ever. Let the wicked synagogue be silent. Who among men lives for an age, and for ever and ever? David and Solomon reigned no more than forty years each.

Great is his glory in your salvation. That which he himself asked in the Gospel is fulfilled: Father, glorify me with your own self (John 13, 17). Great is his glory in your salvation: as if to say: Great is his glory: it is a great thing for man to be assumed to the right hand of God the Father. Glory and great beauty you shall lay upon him; the glory of the resurrection; beauty, when on the mountain his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as snow (Matt. 17).

For you shall give him a blessing for ever and ever: because every creature blesses him. You shall make him glad with joy with your countenance: that is, he shall be with you always in heaven. You shall make him glad with joy with your countenance. Then you shall make the Son glad with joy, when that multitude of saints shall have been united, and the number restored to him. Christ shall rejoice for those acquired, for whom he suffered.

For the king trusts in the Lord: according to the dispensation of the body: or the man assumed into divinity. And through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved. Neither the humanity of the Son, nor the primitive Church, shall be moved to the end. Up to this point, the prophet has spoken in the person of the Church to God the Father concerning the humanity of Christ: now he speaks to the divinity. Whence he said:

Let your hand be found by all your enemies. Let your enemies find your power, that they may return to good. Let the power of God find those who in humility would not believe in Christ: let it find them in vengeance. Let your right hand find all who hate you. God in his excessive mercy wishes those who hate him to be converted, since he desires to find even his enemies.

You shall make them as an oven of fire in the time of your countenance: in a good sense, so that their sins may be burned away. As an oven burns within, so their conscience shall burn within, because they did not do good works. Lord, in your anger you shall trouble them. And here the clemency of God does not punish, but troubles, so that they may be converted to repentance. Fire shall devour them: their sins by the Holy Spirit. Fire shall devour in the time of the countenance of God, when he shall come to judge the world.

Their fruit you shall destroy from the earth: that is, you shall destroy them, or their works from the holy Church. And fire shall eat them. This is the fire of which the Lord says in the

Gospel: I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I, but that it be kindled (Luke 12)? Of this fire also the two to whom the Savior opened the Scriptures on the way said: Was not our heart burning within us on the way, while he opened to us the Scriptures (Luke 24)? And their seed from among the children of men. Seed, that is, sons who were generated in evil doctrine. From among the children of men: that is, you shall destroy them from the company of the good.

Because they have turned evils upon you. The Jews turned upon Christ what they ought to have received upon themselves through just vengeance, when they said that he was worthy of death, and it is expedient that one man should die rather than the whole nation perish (John 11). They devised a counsel which they could not establish: when they said to Pilate: Sir, we remember that that seducer said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulcher to be guarded until the third day. But he said: You have a guard: go, guard it as you know how. And afterwards they set seals, but the dead could not hold the living one (Matt. 27). He rose again, which they neither wished for nor believed. Then they could not establish the counsel which they devised.

Because you shall make them turn their back. In two ways. Back, because they always desire earthly things: otherwise, back, so that they may fall backwards, or when they look back. In your remnants you shall prepare their face. For remnants, the Hebrew has 'in good things'. Thus this

sense is woven together: That you should make even those who have been purged by torments to be in the likeness of the saints whom you have preserved for yourself from all the world, so that according to the face of the saints, the face of the sinners also may begin to be: that is, that those who were sinners may be such as those who are saints. Or otherwise: In your remnants you shall prepare their face: that is, the prophets, whom their fathers killed. Their remnants, the sons of the Jews who killed the head of the prophets: so that that vengeance which began from the prophets may come upon those who killed the Lord. Otherwise: In your remnants you shall prepare their face: that is, through Elijah and Enoch they are to believe at the end. You shall prepare their face: of those believing in you, like that: That he may convert the hearts of the fathers to the children (Luke 1).

Be exalted, O Lord, in your own strength. The voice of the Church. Be exalted in your strength: that is, demonstrate your power and majesty, because before you came in humility, but now come in majesty. We will sing and praise your power, O Lord. We will sing in the heart: we will praise in work: we announce your powers.

PSALM XXI.

Unto the end, for the morning taking up, a psalm of David. The morning taking up signifies the sacrament of the Lord's resurrection and ascension to the Father. The Hebrews have this inscription differently: For the morning stag

(hind), and by a perverse interpretation they think that the whole twenty-first psalm was composed about Esther, because forsooth by her danger and intercession with the king the Israelite people were delivered from danger. But we understand the stag who kills serpents and consumes poisons to be none other than Christ, as the context of the whole psalm shows.

O God, my God, look upon me: why have you forsaken me? The Lord hanging on the cross used this verse. From which we notice that the whole psalm was chanted by the Lord placed on the cross. But as for what it has in the middle, 'attend to me', it is not found in the Hebrew codices, and the voice of the Lord declares it as added, which also omitted that in the Gospel: as if to say: Why have you forsaken me? Here humanity speaks how it was forsaken in Adam, when the precept was transgressed. Or Christ was forsaken in the passion according to the part of the flesh. Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. Far: here the divinity speaks. The words of my sins: because he counts our sins as his own. For in his salvation there is no sin: but salvation is far from a sinner. Or otherwise: Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. Aquila interpreted this place thus: Far from my salvation are the words of my groaning: Symmachus, the words of my groanings: the fifth and sixth editions: the words of my cry. And the sense according to the other interpreters is: My groanings and efforts by which I always sought to save the people of Israel, are become far from my salvation, which I

desired to bestow upon the people: because they themselves would not receive health. But according to the LXX interpreters this is the sense: This that I pray for salvation, that I complain of being forsaken: I do not speak from my own person, but from the people's, whose sins I myself took upon my body. Whence I say: Far from my salvation are those words which I pour out. For I do not ask salvation so much for myself, who am God, as for the people who need salvation.

I will cry by day, and you will not hear: and by night, and not to foolishness for me. Hanging in the day he is not heard by the Father: by night he rises from the dead as victor. Otherwise: He who is not heard in joy, is heard in tears. Whence he says: Not to foolishness for me, that is, I have not cried in vain. And Aquila translated from the Hebrew saying: And by night, and you shall not be silent: that is, you will hear me: you will answer me: you will do what I prayed for. My God, I will cry by day, and you will not hear, and by night. Christ cried on the cross, and prayed for his own: heard, and not heard. Heard for the predestined: as in the eight thousand, or for those hundred and twenty and five hundred brothers. And not heard: that is for those who were not predestined. Whence the evangelist said: His blood be upon us and upon our children (Matt. 27). Therefore this day is understood for the good, and night for the evil. Or day and night are prosperity and adversity in the Church. The Church is not heard in prosperity, that she may not extol herself, and she is not heard in adversity, that she may be

further cleansed. And not to foolishness for me: that is, the Son co-eternal with the Father knows all things, why he was not heard in the day of the passion, that is, for the sons of death, and in the prosperity and tribulation of his Church.

But you dwell in the holy place: the praise of Israel. The voice of the prophet. You dwell in the holy place, that is, in his own body, or in heaven, or in the Church.

In you our fathers have hoped, O Lord: they have hoped, and you have delivered them. The patriarchs and prophets, or the rest, hoped: and you delivered them: that is, from Egypt or from Babylon. They were not confounded: because you fulfilled what you promised, that is, the land of promise and long life. Otherwise: in you our fathers have hoped, the doctors of the Church. They were not confounded, because you are always their hope.

But I am a worm and no man. He speaks this because of the humility of the assumed body: Isaiah also harmonizing with the same: Fear not, thou worm Jacob (Isa. 41). The reproach of men and the outcast of the people. What greater reproach than that of the cross? And the contempt of the people: that is, the mockery of the Jewish people. Why a worm and no man; while he says in the Gospel: The Son of man is come to redeem that which was lost (Luke 19)? Christ is called both a worm and a man. A worm, as the prophet says: Fear not, thou worm Jacob; and a man, because born of Mary, his birth is likened to a worm: because a worm which is born

in wood has no father, but only a mother. And Christ was born of Mary without the coitus of a man. God made two dwellings, heaven and earth. Heaven is the habitation of angels, and earth the habitation of worms. God made the worm ascend into heaven, and the angel into the earth. Christ through humility ascended above all the angels, and the devil through pride was cast down into the earth. The reproach of men and the outcast of the people: reproach, when the Jews said: Be thou his disciple (John 9): outcast, when they cast him out of the city, and crucified him.

All who saw me laughed me to scorn. It is said for the part of the wicked, as also the Jews themselves said: If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross: or: Hail, king of the Jews (Matt. 27). They have spoken with their lips, and wagged their head. They have spoken with their lips, because what they had in their heart, this they spoke in words. They wagged their head: that is, they left the one head which is Christ, and made for themselves many heads of demons.

He hoped in the Lord, let him deliver him: let him save him, seeing he delights in him. The voice of the prophet speaks concerning the humanity. He hoped in the Lord: that is, the humanity in the divinity. Let him deliver him: that is, from the Jews. Seeing he delights in him: that is, God the Father wished to have such a Son without sin, through whom he might take away the sins of the world, as the prophet says: He has taken our infirmities, and carried our sicknesses (Isa. 53).

For you are he who drew me out of the womb. The voice of the humanity. You drew me out of the womb: that is, from the womb of holy Mary, or from the synagogue, because he was conceived through the prophecy of the prophets, and to the spiritual sense, he was as it were drawn out of the womb. My hope from the breasts of my mother, etc.: that is, Christ did not disdain to suck the breasts of his mother: that is, from the breasts of Mary. Or the breasts of his mother: the law of the synagogue. They are said to have two breasts, because they have the letter and the sense. But they, that is, the Jews, received only one breast: that is, because they observe only the letter of the law. You are my God, depart not from me, in the day of the passion.

For tribulation is near. As he himself said: Rise up, let us go: behold, he is at hand who will betray me (John 14). There is none to help, neither angel nor man, but you, Father.

Many calves have surrounded me: Wanton calves: that is, the Jews, who were wanton and incontinent. Fat bulls have surrounded me. For fat, Symmachus interpreted 'fatted'. In the Hebrew the word Basan is placed, which can also be translated as ignominy: because they have surrounded me. They are called bulls, because of their pride: that is, their leaders Annas and Caiaphas, or the rest. Fat, because of the thickness of their malice.

They opened their mouth upon me. When they said, let him be crucified. Like a lion ravening and roaring. That is, when they were thinking

about him how they might kill him. Ravening, when they seized him with swords and clubs.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are scattered. Thus the Jews wished to extinguish Christ like water, which is drawn up, and scattered, and does not return. All my bones are scattered. The bones of Christ are called the apostles; because as the flesh is strengthened by the bones, so also the body of Christ, which is the Church, is made firm by the apostles or doctors.

My heart is become. The heart of Christ is understood as the Church, before Christ ascended the cross: which seemed to be hard, because few suffered for his name. Whence it is said: For a just man who dies? As melting wax. Because after Christ ascended the cross, afterwards all the saints began to sustain tribulation for him because of the hope of the retribution of the future gift (Rom. 5). In the middle of my belly. That is, in the midst of the Church. My heart is become like melting wax in the midst of my belly. My wisdom, which before was not understood, being kindled by the fire of the passion grew warm, and was received by the Church.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd. A potsherd before it is placed in the fire is weak: after it is placed in the fire, it is strengthened. And Christ after he ascended the gibbet of the cross, strengthened his Church. Therefore it did not wither like grass so as to fall: but as a potsherd so as to be made firm. And my tongue has cleaved to my jaws. That is, the tongues of the apostles became silent at the time of the Passion: although

one spoke, yet by denying not by confessing, that is, Peter. For the disciples keeping my precepts, speak of me in the future. And they have led me into the dust of death. That is, into the incarnation, or into hell, when he led out from there the souls of the saints with him. And they led me into the dust of death. Like the wicked whom the wind has cast away, so they thought I would fall into death: as if I were not able to rise again.

For many dogs have surrounded me. It is proper to dogs to rejoice with their master, and to bark at a thief. Dogs here are understood as the Jews, who barked at Christ, and rejoiced with the thief: that is, Barabbas: when they asked for him, and killed Christ (John 18): For many dogs have surrounded me: not speaking right things, but barking iniquities. The council of the malignant has besieged me. The congregation of the Jews. Many dogs. For dogs the Hebrew has 'chelabim', which Aquila and Theodotion interpreted as hunters. The council of the malignant has besieged me. The Jews besieged: that is, they surrounded Christ.

They have dug my hands and my feet. The past is put for the future. They dug, they fixed nails, and found great fruit: that is, the salvation of the nations. And they have numbered all my bones. Stretched on the cross they beheld his limbs.

But they themselves considered, etc. Saying: He saved others: himself he cannot save (Matt. 27).

They divided my garments among them. Making for each soldier his part. And upon my vesture

they cast lots. Treating of the tunic: Let us not cut it: but let us cast lots for it whose it shall be. Or otherwise: They divided my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast lots. That the four soldiers made four parts, and did not divide the tunic: signified the unity of the Church, that it should not be divided. Heretics wish to divide it, and they cannot.

But you, O Lord, remove not your help to a distance from me. The humanity speaks to the divinity: that he may help him in the time of the Passion. But you, O Lord, remove not your help far from me; but raise me up immediately. Look towards my defense. Lest any part of that voracious hell prevail against me.

Deliver my soul from the sword (framea). Deliver it from the sword or the malice of the Jews. Or deliver my soul from that power, which by seducing slays. And my only one (unicam) from the hand of the dog. Dogs, the Jews. Only one: that is, the soul of Christ. It is called only one, because that soul has no sin, and other souls are cleansed by it. Or the only one, the Church: and from the hand of the dog: from the mouth of hell, which in the manner of a dog greedily devours.

Save me from the lion's mouth. The lion's mouth, the Jewish people: because of the strength of their malice. And my humility from the horns of the unicorns. The unicorn, the Jewish people themselves are understood: because they have one horn, that is, one law: whence they tossed all nations before their prevarication. And my humility from the horns of the unicorns.

From the satellites of Satan: through whom men are singularly exalted in pride. Up to this point he has spoken of the Passion: now he speaks of the resurrection when he says:

I will declare your name to my brethren. The voice of Christ. The brethren are the apostles, after he rose again, as he himself says: Go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, there they shall see me (Matt. 28). In the midst of the Church will I praise you. That is, in the unity of the Church: in the midst of the believing peoples. I will praise you, I will preach you.

You that fear the Lord, praise him. All the saints who fear him with a holy fear, praise him. All you the seed of Jacob, glorify him. That is, the lesser people, the supplanters of vices, glorify him: the seed of the Christians, to whom the elder shall serve (Gen. 25).

Let all the seed of Israel fear him. This is all you who see God, who being reborn through baptism, see God with the mind. For he has not slighted nor despised the supplication of the poor: Mine, who for you was made poor. Or God has not slighted the Christian peoples, but has heard them.

Neither has he turned away his face from me. But he has raised me up from the dead. And when I cried to him, he heard me. Answering: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again (John 12): Christ was heard in the Passion, and the Church in tribulation.

With you is my praise in a great church. That is, with the Father as he said: I and the Father are

one (John 10). With you is my praise in a great church: which is diffused through all the world by belief. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of them that fear him. The vows of Christ, his birth or passion: the vows of the Church, good works. Or let them offer the mystery of my body and blood with those who celebrate these things in his fear.

The poor shall eat and shall be filled. The poor, the apostles, shall eat the body of Christ. They shall praise the Lord that seek him. Knowing by the end and by works, that he himself is the living bread which came down from heaven (John 6).

Their hearts shall live for ever and ever. Their heart is their soul. Without end, because he who shall eat of this bread, the spiritual sense shall live in him for ever.

All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord. That is, the Lord God made the Christian people, that they might remember him, and return from their crooked ways. All the multitude of nations recognize themselves involved in darkness: therefore they draw near that they may be enlightened.

And all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight. Both here they adore, and in the future: because according to the Apostle, to him every knee shall bow (Phil. 2).

For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he shall have dominion over the nations. The kingdom of the devil has fallen, and the kingdom of Christ has come. He ascending into heaven, all things are subjected to him.

All the fat (rich) ones of the earth have eaten and have adored. That is, the apostles or other saints have eaten the body of Christ, as he said above. The rich ones of the earth: that is, in faith, and work, or virtues: knowing that the Lord is sweet. All they that go down to the earth shall fall in his sight. They shall fall prostrate, that is, the sinners in the day of judgment shall be in the sight of God. They descend from the pride of the world: that they may adore in the sense of pure humility.

My soul shall live to him: and my seed shall serve him. The Church, which now lives not to herself, but Christ lives in her. Or otherwise: My soul shall live to him, and my seed shall serve him. The soul of Christ lives to God the Father, and death shall no more have dominion over him (Rom. 8). Or the Church shall live to Christ. My seed, the children of the Church, shall serve him, the people of believers.

A generation to come shall be declared to the Lord. The prophet says: A generation to come, that is, the people of the Gentiles, who were to come before Christ came into the world to believe in him. Or, a generation to come, that is, in the day of judgment all complete brightness. The heavens shall show forth his justice. That is, the apostles or doctors. His justice. That is, his commandments. To a people that shall be born. That is, through the word of preaching. Which the Lord has made. That is, predestined before the ages. To a people that shall be born which the Lord has made. Who coming through faith,

is reborn in Christ through baptism. Who may deign to grant us to have his wounds in our sight, and with Thomas feeling the print of his nails (John 20): or making a continual memory of all the humility of his passion, recollecting with a sigh also that he penetrated hell for our sins, let us always do those things in this earthly body, so that we may deserve to be joined to him in the kingdom. Amen.

PSALM XXII.

A psalm of David.

This psalm contains the voice of the Church praising Christ together.

The Lord rules (shepherds) me: and I shall want nothing. Of this shepherd Ezekiel also speaks: I will set up a shepherd, and my servant David shall feed them (Ezek. 34). Or otherwise: The good shepherd, who laid down his life for me (John 10): he rules me with an equal governance: therefore I lack nothing. Or otherwise: He rules me: the Church speaks trustfully through faith: because before the coming of Christ, the devil ruled the world: but now Christ rules his Church. That which we say: The Lord rules me. The Hebrews say, as is written above: The Lord shepherds me, and I shall want nothing. He who has God, and he who cleaves to God, nothing good is wanting to him, as the prophet says: There is no want to them that fear him (Ps. 33). He has set me in a place of pasture. As if he should say: In the unity of faith, in the unity of the Church. He has

set me in a place of pasture: He has established my hope in future beatitude. For the pasture is understood as future beatitude.

He has brought me up on the water of refreshment. By washing through baptism he has nourished me, or by the doctrine of the patriarchs and prophets, or the apostles. He has converted my soul. To know him: that is, the soul of the Church: because before it had descended to hell through the fault of the first man Adam: but now it is converted to Christ through faith.

He has led me on the paths of justice: that is, on the path of the commandments through the narrow way. For his own name's sake; not for my merit.

For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death: through the obscurities of this world: I will fear no evils, for you are with me. O Lord, I retain you in my heart. Or otherwise: Shadow is made in two ways, that is, from a body, and from a light. Through the body, death is understood: through the shadow, sins and ignorance. And yet, although the Church walks among these things aforesaid, she does not fear: because she has the Lord with her, as he himself said: Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. ult.) Therefore the Church does not fear.

Your rod and your staff, they have comforted me. For whom the Lord loves, he chastises (Prov. 3). By the rod is understood tribulation or the discipline of a father, or the persecution of the Church. And your staff, with which you chastise

spiritual sons. Or by the staff, future support and consolation. They have comforted me. They instructed me by comforting, they did not afflict me by mortifying.

You have prepared a table in my sight, etc. So that I may no longer be fed with milk as a little one, but with solid food: that is, that ruminating the holy Scriptures with a spiritual tooth, I may be able to resist the perverse. You have prepared a table in my sight against them that afflict me. The table, that is, divine Scripture. Just as after labor consolation and refreshment is found at a table, so also the saints through the table, that is, through divine Scripture have consolation and refreshment, that is, hope, faith, and charity. Against them that afflict me. Persecutors of the Church, who are demons, Jews, and heretics. Against all these we find consolation in the sacred Scriptures.

You have anointed my head with oil. By the head, that is, the principal part of the mind, the Church is understood. For the mind is called the head: because just as the members are ruled by the head, so thoughts are disposed by the mind. By oil consolation is understood: because as the body is comforted by oil, so also is the mind of the Church by the consolation of the Scriptures. You have anointed my head with oil: You have gladdened my mind, which is the head of the whole body, with spiritual joy.

And my inebriating cup, how excellent it is! The cup is understood as the word of God. Inebriating, because through preaching a man is

pricked in his mind, when it separates a man, that is, a father from a son: a son from his father: a mother from a daughter, and a daughter from her mother: and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Then it inebriates us, when it does these things. By the cup, a measure is understood: because to each one according to what he deserves, or is able to grasp, thus God divides to him, that is, gives. Or you have inebriated me with a mystic cup, so that I might commit the pleasures of my former life to oblivion.

And your mercy, O Lord, shall follow me. The voice of the Church to Christ. The mercy of God both goes before and follows after. It goes before, through faith: it follows after, in keeping the commandments of God. All the days of my life. As long as I live in this body.

And that I may dwell in the house of the Lord. Here the Church consists as if in a tabernacle. Because just as a tabernacle is moved from place to place: so also the Church is transferred from this tabernacle into a house, that is, into eternal or perpetual life, where the saints shall dwell without end. Unto length of days. For days without end. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days: that is, that I may dwell in the heavenly Jerusalem together with all the saints gathered in me through faith.

PSALM XXIII.

A psalm of David, on the first of the Sabbath.

This psalm contains at times the voice of the prophet speaking concerning the Church.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. When they who savor earthly things shall have been converted. The earth is the Lord's, that is, the whole world: and the fullness thereof, that is, the inhabitants of this world. Or, the earth is the Lord's, that is, the Church: and the fullness thereof, that is, all the saints. The world, and all they that dwell therein. Christ having been glorified, the faith of all nations becomes one Church.

He has founded it upon the seas. By the seas, the fluctuations of this world: because the fluctuations of the age trample and overcome the Church from the beginning. But he has founded, that is, strengthened his Church in faith. Upon the floods of this age he has established it, lest it slip away from them. And he has prepared it upon the rivers. By the rivers are understood the powerful of the age, or the covetous: as Solomon says: All the rivers enter into the sea. So also these powerful ones, although they have great wealth, are never satisfied. Above these rivers is the Church, that she may preach to them: and they who have power may be converted. If they should be unwilling to hear: he has prepared it upon the rivers. Upon the desires of this age he has established it: so that she herself might be superior, clean without spot and wrinkle.

Who ascends into the mountain of David? The voice of the prophet questioning: that is, into the heavenly Jerusalem? Who is placed for charity. Or this mountain for high justice: as that: Go, sell all

that you have, and give to the poor: and you shall have treasure in heaven (Luke 18). Or who shall stand in his holy place? Upon his highest justice: as if he should say, who shall persevere? because many ascend, and do not persevere.

Innocent in hands and clean of heart. Pure in work: because by the hands, works are understood: and clean of heart, that is, in clean speech. Or clean of heart, holy in thought.

Who has not taken his soul in vain. Who has stained it with no dregs of sins after baptism. He has not taken his soul in vain, who performs good works.

Nor has sworn in deceit to his neighbor. He does not swear in deceit to his neighbor, who preaches those things which he thinks, and fulfills them in work. For there are many who swear deceitfully, so that they may deceive their neighbor: which God the Father of lights abhors, as Peter says: You have not lied to men, but to God (Acts 5). Therefore he who shall have kept himself from these stains,

He shall receive a blessing from the Lord: and mercy from God his Savior. From Christ, equal to the Father, by whose death he was saved. Or otherwise: He shall receive a blessing from the Lord. Concerning this one aforesaid it says: He who does not swear in deceit to his neighbor, shall receive a blessing from the Lord, when he shall say: Come, you blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25). And mercy from God his

Savior. He obtains mercy from God, who thinks himself to be miserable.

This is the generation of them that seek the Lord. Above he spoke in the singular: He shall receive a blessing: now in the plural, because the Church is gathered from many persons: and yet it is called one, on account of the unity of faith. This generation, that is, the people of Christians, who lying in darkness, sought the true Lord and Savior.

Of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. That is, the Christian people seeks the face of the God of Jacob. Whence it was said: The elder shall serve the younger (Gen. 25): because he gave the primacy to the one born later. A diapsalma intercedes, so that he may change the person. For the Lord himself now returning to the heavenly kingdoms, is announced. Therefore, as he ascended with the angels, those who went before or accompanied him, cried out to others of their princes:

Lift up your gates, O princes: and be you lifted up, O eternal gates. That is, unlock the heavenly entrances: let the entrance of eternity be open. Or, lift up your gates, O princes: The voice of the good angels, to the evil angels: whose prince is the devil. Your gates, O princes: that is, desire and fear. He well joined desire and fear: because whoever gathers through desire, keeps through fear and malice, so that he may not lose; and he who has fear, and desire, and malice, does not cast out the evil spirit from himself. And be you lifted up, O eternal gates: that is, faith and char-

ity. They are called eternal: because from Adam until Christ they lay in the depths: and therefore they are said to be lifted up. And the King of Glory shall enter in: that is, Christ; because through faith and charity Christ entered into the Church. And the King of Glory shall enter in: Christ the Lord possessing the kingdom of immense brightness. They also being astonished and struck with stupor of mind say:

Who is this King of Glory? The voice of the major demons. As if they should say; We have our king, the devil: who is this King of Glory? Who, he says, is this King of Glory? He who speaks responds: The Lord strong and mighty. The voice of the good angels. He is strong, who bound your strong prince (Mark 3). Strong, when he underwent death: mighty, when he conquered hell. In battle, when having spoiled Tartarus, he led back with him a multitude of captives. He cries out again, and says:

Lift up your gates, O princes, and be you lifted up, O eternal gates. Let the ethereal doors be lifted up: let the leaves of the eternal dwellings be opened. And the King of Glory shall enter in. Because not only after the resurrection did he possess immense brightness: but also that which he had equal with the Father before the world was made. Therefore adoring this unique and singular power of so great glory, they say:

Who is this King of Glory? It is answered to these: The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory. Plural here, hosts (virtues), Christ is understood: because he sits above the nine virtues of the

heavens. Or he says "of hosts" because the Lord is above all the hosts (virtues) of the devil. Or he is called "of hosts" because the devil had nine orders of angels under his domination, whether good or evil. Lift up your gates. The voice of the good angels. Or the voice of the Lord to the good angels. Lift up your gates, that is, because when Adam sinned, the gates of paradise were closed: and a flaming sword was given to the angel Seraphim, that he should guard it. But after Christ came into the world, and wrestled with the devil, he opened hell, and led out with him the souls of the saints: and with the good angels he returned to the heavenly places. Then the gates of paradise, which before had been closed, were opened. Or "eternal gates" the angels are called: through whose guardianship we ascend to the heavenly places. They are said to be lifted up: because before all the souls of the saints descended to hell. But after Christ ascended together with his body above all the virtues of the heavens, afterwards the angels rejoiced: because he led the souls of the saints there with him. Who is this King of Glory? The voice of the angels, who had always been with the Father: as if they should say: We see the Father and the Son always to be together: who is this King of Glory? On the part of the flesh they said: Lift up your gates: The voice of the prophet concerning the Jews, Lift up your gates: that is, pride, and desire, and avarice: because through these three, every man descended to hell. Or lift up your gates, O princes: for which in the Hebrew it is placed: Lift up, O

gates, your heads: let them be carried in a straight journey. He says that a man cannot come to perfect cleanness: and that no one is able to come to perfect cleanness. The eternal gates which he says are lifted up, are faith, charity, and chastity, because through these three Christ enters the Church. Who is this King of Glory? Human frailty responded: Who is this? As if they should say: This is he whom we crucified, and reproached, and held for nothing.

PSALM XXIV.

A psalm of David. The twenty-fourth psalm contains the voice of our mediator sent to the Father: at times it has the cry of the Church supplicating.

To you, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. Here the voice of the Church to Christ is understood. "I have lifted up" he says, that is, I have elevated: because before the Church lay in the vale of tears, or in the depths, before Christ came into the world. In what did it elevate? That is, in hope, faith, and charity, through sanctification, because if wheat lies in the depths, it rots; if it is lifted up on high, it is preserved. So also the soul, if it lies in the rottenness of sins, that is, if it lies in the depths, it rots and perishes. But if it is lifted up on high in these things aforesaid, hope, faith, and charity, it is preserved by God. Or, "to you, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul" through the cross. O my God, in you I trust, is the confession of the Church: In you I trust, not in myself, but in you. Let me not be ashamed: because I do not trust in man: of

whom it is said: Cursed be the man that puts his hope in man (Jer. 17); and: Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord (Ps. 35). Let there be no delay of the resurrection, which would generate reproach among the believers.

Neither let my enemies laugh at me. Who had laughed at me before when I said: I can destroy the temple, and rebuild this in three days (Matt. 26). Neither let my enemies laugh at me: that is, those who trust only in man, because after he has failed, their enemies laugh at him: and the enemies of the Church are demons, heretics, vices and sins. For all they that wait on you: who sustain you: shall not be confounded. Neither here, nor in the future: the Apostles, or those who are about to believe in you through their word.

Let them be confounded that act iniquitously in vain. The prophet says this not by wishing, but by prophesying: Let them be confounded in the day of judgment, who persevere in their malice until the end: those who added that crime perpetrated against me, as to fortify the tomb with seals. Thus far the Lord concerning his Passion: from here the voice of the Church succeeds: which after the Lord's resurrection supplicates to be taught.

Show me your ways, O Lord: and teach me your paths. Those through which one comes into your kingdom, or your ways: that is, your commandments: make known, that is, show me. Teach me your paths. A path is smaller than a way: by a path is understood the strict and narrow way, which leads to life.

Direct me in your truth. The voice of the Church. Direct me, because I am crooked. In your truth: that is, in your Christ: teach me, that we may act in no way perversely. Because you are God my Savior. For by your resurrection my salvation has been conferred upon me. And I have sustained you all the day. That is, for the whole time. They saw me sustain for you through all the time of this life. For I had heard through the voices of the prophets that you were to come into the world. But I sustained through the light of faith, until you should call me.

Remember your tender mercies, O Lord, etc. In which that you might redeem us, you were made man. Or the Christian people speaks: that he might make them upright from his commiseration; as that: Your mercies are many, O Lord; and: Your mercies are from of old (Ps. 118); and: You have promised us your mercies from the beginning of the world (Ibid.).

The sins of my youth and my ignorances do not remember, O Lord. Those which I did in youth, before I proceeded from the house of an iniquitous father. Or the sins of youth, before baptism: and my ignorances, that is, after baptism.

According to your great mercy be mindful of me, O God. That is, not according to merits, but according to your mercy. For immense is your mercy, who call those things that are not as those that are. For your goodness' sake, O Lord. Because you provoke sinners to penance.

The Lord is sweet and upright. Sweet, because he is the bread of life. Sweet, because he promises future rewards. Upright, because he renders to each according to his works. For this he will give a law to them that fail in the way. The law of charity; through which forgiving offenses, we are reconciled to God. To them that fail in the way, to sinners in this life.

He will direct the mild in judgment. He will direct the mild and humble in heart in judgment, that is, he makes a discretion here in the present between body and soul: so that they may correct each other in the ways of God's commandments. Or that which is written above: The sins of my youth and my ignorances do not remember. Both age excuses this one, and ignorance. Whence we understand that he who sins in youth, and is not ignorant, does not have pardon. For the servant who knows the will of his Lord, and does it not: shall be beaten much (Luke 12). All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth: because mercy itself is balanced with equal weights. He will teach the gentle his ways. Mercy and truth: and that they should love each other with all their heart, which is the true way. For so it follows:

All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. Mercy, because he redeemed us: and truth, because he will judge the impious. The Lord is sweet and upright: because God has mercy on him who confesses himself miserable. To them that seek his covenant. He performs mercy to those who seek the New Testament: by which he has reconciled us to God the Father by his blood. And

his testimonies. The prophets and apostles: by whose testimonies the Church is gathered.

For your name's sake, O Lord, you will be propitious to my sin. Not for my merits, but for your mercy. For it is great. Great is my sin. Great, he says, is general sin: which unless God deigns to blot out through baptism, otherwise it will not be washed away.

Who is the man that fears the Lord: he has appointed him a law in the way he has chosen. So that he may be turned aside to those things which he has chosen. The Lord protests a similar thing to this through Moses to the people, saying: Behold today I have set before your eyes fire and water, good and evil, life and death: choose life, and you shall live (Deut. 30).

His soul shall dwell in good things. If he shall have chosen life. And his seed shall inherit the land. Through works of justice, he shall take the inheritance in the region of the living. Or his soul shall dwell in good things: that is, it shall hope in future rewards: and his seed by inheritance shall possess the land. His seed, his works, shall possess the land: that is, eternal life.

The Lord is a firmament to them that fear him. We are weak and feeble: but we are exhorted by him lest we be shaken by the floods of this age. And his testament that it may be made manifest to them. This is the New Testament. The law which announced him veiled through the letter, is made manifest in Christ.

My eyes are ever towards the Lord (Eccl. 2). The eyes of the heart with an intent mind

towards God: of which it is said: The eyes of a wise man are in his head. For he shall pluck my feet out of the snare: that is, my senses from the snare of the devil, by which I was formerly captured through the pleasures of the age.

Look upon me, and have mercy on me. Look, for help: and have mercy, because I am miserable. For I am alone and poor. It pertains to Christ: because Christ alone is without sin: as the prophet says: Who did no sin (Isa. 53). Poor for us, as Paul says: Who being rich, became poor, that through his poverty we might be rich (2 Cor. 8). Or alone (unique), the Christian people. But well he says himself alone (unique), because he is the only-begotten of the Father. Who born poor in the flesh, was made the unique price of the world. For I am alone and poor. So also Elijah remained alone (3 Kings 18): and Jeremiah sat alone and wept, separated from evil men (Jer. 15): Whence also David says elsewhere: He makes to dwell of one manner in a house (Ps. 67).

The troubles of my heart are multiplied. Through the passion. Deliver me from my necessities. My necessities are, that as a man I should die for men, and therefore I may be snatched from you, that I may rise again.

See my humility. Through which I took flesh. And my labor. By which I am subjected to death. Or otherwise. See my humility and my labor. The Church speaks to Christ. Humility, because sinners humble her. Labor, in tribulation. And forgive all my sins. The sins of the people, which I have taken upon myself.

Look upon my enemies: especially the Jews, that they may be confounded. Look upon my enemies, for they are multiplied. The voice of the Church concerning her persecutors. They have hated me with an unjust hatred. It is called an unjust hatred in distinction from a just one. For if they had not hated me, they certainly would not have condemned me to death.

Keep my soul, and deliver me. The Church supplicates to be kept and delivered from all evil. Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon you. Into your hands I commend my spirit. Let me not be confounded, neither here nor in the future, for I have called upon you.

The innocent and the upright have adhered to me. The innocent, who have kept the purity of life from the beginning of their birth. Just as the head adheres to the neck, and the members are contained in the same body: so also the Church through justice has adhered to Christ, and his members are contained in the same body. The innocent, that is, the successors of the apostles, or other holy and upright ones, whose heart was not perverse after strange gods. They adhered to me, as I returned from the lower regions. Since I have waited for you, O Lord. I have fulfilled, O Father, your will.

Deliver me, O God of Israel, from all my tribulations. That death may no longer dominate me: as the Apostle says: Know that Christ rising from the dead, now dies no more, death shall no longer have dominion over him (Rom. 6). It must be known, however, that the humility of the prayer

is to be referred not to the divinity, but to the humility of the assumed flesh. But let us pray to the Lord, that living immaculate, we may deserve to be delivered from infernal angusties. Since I have waited for you, O Lord. Deliver me, O God of Israel. Israel, that is, of the souls seeing God (videns Deum). From all angusties, from all my tribulations.

PSALM XXV.

Unto the end, a Psalm of David. This psalm testifies concerning the man and Christ: and contains the voice of the whole Church perfected in Christ.

Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my innocence. That there may be mercy for me through your judgment: because I walk through the way of innocence. It was said above: Judge me, O Lord. The voice of the Church to Christ. Judge me, not that she asks for a future judgment from God, but a discretion: concerning which we read in another psalm: Judge me, O God, and discern my cause (Ps. 41): that is, that you may not judge me in the future, as other sinners are to be judged. For I have walked in my innocence. The Church speaks on her own part. As if she were to say: I am prepared to live innocently, because the Church has harmed no one, nor does she desire to harm. I have entered, that is, among sinners, where she dwells even unto the end. And hoping in the Lord, I am not weakened. But I am strengthened in faith. I am not weakened, that is, among these

sinners: for this reason, because I hope in you, not in myself.

Prove me, O Lord, and try me. The Church asks to be proved, that she may know herself, and be known as proved by others. Just as Job was proved, that he might know himself, and others might know him: as those kings did who visited him. Prove me, O Lord, in temptations: and try me, lest any sin remain in me. Burn my reins (renes) and my heart. What the reins sound, he signifies in the heart: because your mercy is in the sight of my eyes. Thus he seeks judgment, that he may remember mercy. Burn my reins and my heart. Apply the Holy Spirit to my delights and thoughts: who, burning out both, may make me worthy. Burn, that is, by the fire of the Holy Spirit, concerning which fire he says: I came to send fire upon the earth (Luke 12).

For your mercy is before my eyes. That I may be rebuked by this fire, and not burned up. And I have been well-pleased in your truth. In your Christ: so that I might please not in my lie, but in your truth.

I have not sat in the council of vanity. I have not been joined to those who were conducting a vain council against you, my Christ. I have not sat in the council of vanity, that is, those who always think of earthly things, the Church has not sat in their council. And with them that work iniquity I will not go in. I have not placed my hidden conscience with them.

I have hated the church of the malignant: of the Jews, or of the heretics. And with the impious

I will not sit: I will not enter into a pact with them. And with the impious I will not sit: that is, they not only thought in word, but perfected in work.

I will wash my hands among the innocent. In good works I will wash my hands, which before were filthy with sins. I will wash my hands, that is, my works. He washes through tears, through baptism and penance. And I will encompass your altar, O Lord. I will embrace your sublimities, that I may learn to praise you. Altar, that is, faith. I will encompass, that is, with good works. Every holy person has the altar of the Lord within himself: which is faith.

That I may hear the voice of your praise: and tell of all your wondrous works. That when I have learned, I may explain to others that miracle: how you either suffered or rose again for us. And tell of all your wondrous works, of your praise: that is, whatever good we do is reputed to be from God, and whatever evil we do is from ourselves. The praise of God is perfect, and the praise of men is imperfect.

O Lord, I have loved the beauty of your house, and the place of the habitation of your glory. I have made my mind beautiful, so that it might be a worthy dwelling for you: in which dwelling you may glorify me with your glory. The house of the Lord is the Church. The priests and the habitation of your glory are those in whom God dwells.

Do not lose my soul with the impious. With those who through impiety delivered up the mild one. And my life with men of blood. Who deceitfully lying in wait, poured out your blood.

In whose hands are iniquities. That is, in their works. Their right hand is filled with gifts. He teaches that one must abstain from gifts: blaming those who receive gifts: who, performing iniquity, have thought the gain of this impiety to be some profit: as the traitor Judas himself did. Their right hand is filled with gifts. Of the left they have made for themselves a right hand: because the future life is called the right, and the present life the left. Those for the right had the left: as it is said: There is a gift from the tongue, and there is a gift from the hand, and there is a gift from obsequiousness. From the tongue, praise: that is, human favor. From the hand, from earthly things. From obsequiousness, service unduly paid. But it is better what the prophet says: He that shakes his hands from every gift, he dwells on high (Isa. 33).

But I have walked in my innocence. The Church speaks on the part of the good: through the study of a holy life from prior sins. I have walked, among sinners. Deliver me. From tribulation. And have mercy on me. Because I am miserable.

For my foot has stood in the right way. My sense in Christ: because he himself is the way. For my foot, lest they prevail against me, has stood in the right way: namely that one in which I began to approach you through the way of justice. In the churches I will bless the Lord. He speaks of the unity of the congregation. In the Church, not in hiding places, but in the assemblies of the peoples blessing you. I will preach that love by which

you redeemed me with your blood: washed me in baptism: and filled with celestial bread and sacred banquets, you restored me to the innocence of a better life.

PSALM XXVI.

Unto the end, a Psalm of David before he was anointed. David was anointed three times: once under his father Jesse in Bethlehem (1 Kings 16): second, in Hebron (2 Kings 2): third, when he reigned over all Israel in Jerusalem (2 Kings 5). Seek therefore to which anointing this psalm best corresponds. It should be known, however, that "before he was anointed" is not found in the Hebrew volumes. But of these three anointings, the middle one pertains to this psalm. David holds the figure of Christ: because he also was anointed in baptism, when the Holy Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove. David did not receive the kingdom from the first anointing: so neither did Christ according to the flesh receive the kingdom at the time of the passion, except after he ascended.

The Lord is my illumination and my salvation, whom shall I fear? He dreads to be covered by no darkness, whom the Lord always illuminates and saves. The Lord is my illumination and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The voice of the Church to Christ. In all the psalms are the words of the Holy Spirit. Just as the eyes of the body are illuminated by another light: so also the eyes of our heart are illuminated by the virtue of faith, that is, by

Christ. Whence it is said: Who illuminates every man coming into this world (John 10).

The Lord is the defender of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? For he himself is the faithful protection of the soul: therefore she does not fear the enemy. The defender is he who is also salvation; but nevertheless the defender is called a helper: Of whom shall I be afraid? The Church says: Of no one, neither of the devil, nor of a heretic, nor of a persecutor, while I have him as defender.

While the harmful draw near to me, to eat my flesh. They approach, so that having excited in me my prior sins, they may tear my body with a rabid tooth. Or, while the harmful draw near to me, to eat my flesh, that is, demons or persecutors. Flesh, indeed, that is, the affections of the flesh: because this is their food. And yet flesh is given to them to eat: that is, the bodies of the saints to be persecuted. But the saints have consolation from the Lord, as he says in the Gospel: Fear not them who kill the body: but the soul they cannot kill (Matt. 10).

My enemies who trouble me: they themselves have been weakened and have fallen. Because the Lord is my illumination: my enemies who trouble me, demons, or persecutors: they themselves have been weakened and have fallen. Then they were weakened, when Christ took upon himself our humanity.

If camps should stand against me: my heart shall not fear. For the Lord is a strong warrior, he himself will fight for me. If camps should stand against me: that is, the strength of demons, or of

persecutors. He says "camps", according to that: They have encamped (Num. 33). My heart shall not fear. The Church says this, because of that which the Lord said: Behold I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the age (Matt. last).

If a battle should rise up against me, in this I will hope. And if fights are moved against me, I am confident in these: because God can, who is my hope, turn back the wicked weapons into the mouths of the enemies. If a battle should rise against me. These above-mentioned battles, the fight of demons. I, says the Church, will hope in your help and your defense.

One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek. Some think one charity, or grace, or certainly one petition is said: since ahath, the Hebrew word, absolutely sounds "one" in the neuter gender, and is read: One thing I have asked of the Lord, that is, the Lord himself. This I will seek, that is, the Lord himself.

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. In the house of the Lord, in perpetual life: because although the Church here is called a house: nevertheless not properly, but by name. Whence he says: Blessed are they who dwell in your house, O Lord (Ps. 83).

That I may see the will of the Lord: that is, the love of God: like that: We shall see him as he is (1 John 3), but here through a mirror. One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek. Let us see what is the one petition: That I may dwell, he says, in the house of the Lord all the days of

my life: so that in this mortal life, I may be made a holy temple, in which God may deign to dwell. And that I may visit his temple. To those who, placed on earth, lead a celestial life, I may become a participant. And that I may be protected in his holy temple: that is, that I may have protection from him above-mentioned.

For he has hidden me in his tabernacle. In which through faith he may dwell with me: lest the storms of temptations should meet me. The tabernacle of divinity is the humanity of Christ. He hides the Church in his tabernacle: because our head is Christ, and we are his members. He hides the Church therefore with himself, as it is said: For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3). In the day of evils. Are days evil? No, but in our works they are called evil, as Paul says: Because the days are evil (Eph. 5). Concerning these present days he speaks. Because although the head is above, the members nevertheless are still below even unto the end. Because also this I think to be signified, when he was alone on the mountain: the boat in the sea was tossed by the waves, and therefore they stand in need of protection from him (Matt. 8). In the day of evils: in the prosperity of those lying in wait. He protected me in the secret of his tabernacle. In the heart believing unto justice.

He has exalted me upon a rock. He has exalted in Christ through faith. The rock is Christ: as Paul says: But the rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10). He has exalted me upon a rock: In himself, who is a stable rock and most true foundation. And now he

has exalted my head above my enemies. Now, in the present: above enemies, that is, above those above-mentioned, our head has been exalted, which is Christ: above all the enemies of the Church. And now he has exalted my head above my enemies, above carnal movements, which often humbled me, lest I should contemplate celestial things.

I will go round and offer in his tabernacle a host of jubilation. I will go round, that is, I will be exercised in the creatures of God: considering the world believing in Christ. Because he considers the creatures of God: when someone has beheld the heaven and earth, or the sea with its ornaments, he finds what he may offer to God, that is, praise. I will go round, that is, through the four parts of the world I search for the examples of the saints, and there the praise of God is found. And I will offer in his tabernacle a host of vociferation (vociferationis). That for us for a time he sustained humility, I will preach rejoicing: because he is delighted with such hosts. A host of jubilation, that is, of preaching. Jubilus is called that which neither through letters, nor through syllables, nor by words can comprehend the magnitude of the praise of God. A host (hostia) is called that which is divided into parts, and the blood is poured out around the altar, and the host itself is burned outside. A sacrifice is called wine and oil, and a medium animal; and a holocaust, the whole burned, and a victim (victima), before it is killed. Whence Paul: A living host (Rom. 12). I will sing and say a psalm to the Lord. I will sing, I

will preach; I will say a psalm, I will fulfill in work: or I will sing spiritual praises with an expanded mind.

Hear, O Lord, my voice, with which I have cried to you: have mercy on me and hear me. For through the cry of the interior man I pray that you may hear me.

To you my heart has said, my face has sought you out: your face, O Lord, I will seek. Deservedly the heart of the just seeks the countenance of the living God: because he trusts that he can see him. For blessed are the clean in heart: for they shall see God (Matt. 2 [sic, 5]). My face has sought your face, that is, my Church has sought your face: that is, your presence.

Do not turn away your face from me. Elsewhere he says: Turn away your face from my sins (Ps. 50). And this must be prayed for. But here he says: Do not turn away your face; that is, do not dismiss me into my own will: as it was said: God delivered them into a reprobate sense (Rom. 1): that is, he permitted. Do not decline in anger from your servant. If a servant offends an earthly Lord, it is with fear and dread: how much more a man, if he should offend the celestial God? Therefore the Church asks this, that he may rebuke her here, and look upon her. That he may not depart from her with anger, but that she may conduct those things from which she may not decline: but that he may look back with a propitiated face.

Be my helper, O Lord, do not forsake me, nor despise me, O God my salvation. Helper, in the present. Be, pertains as much to the present as to

the future. Do not forsake me: neither here, nor in the future. Nor despise me, O God my salvation. Our salvation is Christ, and the Church asks this that she may not be despised by him: that is, that she may not commit that sin through which she might be despised by God. Do not forsake me: when I crucify my flesh with its vices and concupiscences. Nor despise me, O God my salvation: because even if I am mortal nevertheless, I seek celestial things.

For my father and my mother have forsaken me. The father, the devil: the mother, Babylonia, or gentility, before Christ came into the world, were parents to us. Now our father is God, and our mother the heavenly Jerusalem: as Paul says: Jerusalem which is our mother (Gal. 4). For my father and my mother have forsaken me: but the Lord has taken me up. The kingdom of the world and the cities of this age which begot me, and were promising transitory things, I have left, and taken up by you, I have been forsaken by them. Because my father and my mother have forsaken me. It can also be taken simply of David, because being the least among his brothers, despised by his parents, he was chosen by God through Samuel. In common truth, the love of parents for children is ended by death: the love of God increases in time.

Appoint me a law, O Lord. The law, yourself, because he himself is the law. In your way: that is, in your commandments. What are those commandments? That you should not decline to the right, nor to the left, and not look back, like that:

No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven (Luke 9). And likewise: Be mindful of Lot's wife (Luke 17). And seek the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth. Set me a law, O Lord, in your way: and direct me in the right path. So that I may not decline from the right and the left, but following your commandments, and walking the royal way, I may enter the land of promise. On account of my enemies: carnal movements, demons, heretical persecutors.

Deliver me not over to the souls of them that persecute me. So that their soul may not be satisfied with the adversities which happen to me. For unjust witnesses have risen up against me: and iniquity has lied to itself. They rose up against me, telling a lie: but when I trusted in you, they were destroyed in their lie. For unjust witnesses have risen up against me. Against Christ unjust witnesses rose up, when the Jews said: This man said: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will rebuild it (Matt. 26). Or adversaries speak against the Church. Iniquity has lied to itself: that is, they have lied to themselves, and not to me: because the vice of each one recurs to its own author. And iniquity has lied to itself. Flagitious witnesses, in that they lie against others: they lie to themselves, while they prepare punishments for themselves, thinking that God does not avenge lies.

I believe to see the good things of the Lord, in the land of the living. The voice of the Church. In the land of the living, because we have our pledge

there above, which is Christ. He took from our earth a mortal body, and we from him received hope and faith, and believing through hope and faith, we shall arrive in the land of the living: in which the saints shall take the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. Expect the Lord. That is, even unto the end of the age whatever shall happen to you, sustain it patiently for Christ.

Act manfully. That is, act strongly: as the Angel said to Joshua: Be comforted, and be robust (Josue 1). And let your heart be comforted: that is, your soul. And expect the Lord: that is, sustain the Lord. The prophet here exhorts that faithful one, who has spoken until now, saying: Expect first, that you may be comforted by God against the contests of the world. Expect thereafter, that you may be crowned victor by the same Lord: because he shall not be crowned, except he who has striven lawfully. But let us pray to the Lord, that he himself comforting, by manfully sustaining the storms of the worldly floods, we may expect through faith: until he comes to return those things which he has deigned to promise.

PSALM XXVII.

A Psalm of David himself.

The psalm has the voice of the mediator himself, speaking to the Father in the conflict of the Passion. Moreover, those things which are wished for the enemies: it is not from malice, but the reason of prophecy foretelling: what things are imminent for them for their evils. Or the voice

of the man assumed into divinity: Jesus cried out on the cross, and said: Eli, Eli.

To you, O Lord, have I cried, my God. That you may clarify me with that clarity which I had with you before the world was made: because now I have assumed man. Be not silent to me. But speak: because I have an equal eternity with you. Be not silent to me: that is, do not forsake me. And I shall be like them that go down into the pit (lacum). That is, into the misery of this life: because if the divinity had departed from him, he would have been like us in misery. If you should be silent, I shall be like them that perish: nevertheless if you are silent, you are not known.

Hear the voice of my supplication, while I pray to you. Christ prayed on the cross for the whole world, and for the Jews, and for the apostles. While I lift up my hands to your holy temple. I lift up my hands: that is, I extended them on the cross. To the holy temple: that is, I extended them for this, that I might prepare a temple for you: that is, the body of the Church. And I shall be likened to them that go down into the pit. The pit (lacus) signifies hell: namely the place of those who are held under custody. And elsewhere it is written: Even to the captive woman who was in the pit (Exod. 12). Hear the voice of my supplication, while I pray to you: while I lift up my hands to your holy temple: on the cross namely for the believers, who are to be your temple.

Deliver me not together with sinners. Sinners, the robbers, between whom he was hanging, as the prophet says: And he was reputed among the

wicked (Isa. 53). With them that work iniquity do not lose me. That is, in the day of judgment with these robbers, or other evil ones. It pertains as much to Christ as to the Church, that I may not so perish, taking up death, as the workers of iniquity.

With them that speak peace with their neighbor: but evils, etc. The Jews spoke peace with Christ, saying: Master, we know that you are truthful, and that you have come from God as a master, and teach the way of God in truth (Matt. 22). But evils are in their hearts, when they were questioning him: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not (Mark 12)?

Give them according to their works. They who do not understand you through benefits, let them understand through tortures, so that doing evil, they may not be able to find your good things. The prophet says this not by wishing, but by pronouncing: As if he had said: You are going to give them vengeance in the day of judgment. And according to the wickedness of their inventions, etc. Their efforts are to harm me, and to stretch out the snares of temptations: therefore it is just, that in these they themselves should fail. Render to them their retribution. For they themselves have rendered evils for goods, not understanding you. Because they have not understood the works of the Lord, etc. Let the machines of those which are erected against my Church avail nothing.

Blessed be the Lord. The Father. Because he has heard the voice of my supplication. Answer-

ing before the passion: Both I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again (John 12).

The Lord is my helper. In the passion. And my protector. In death. And in him my heart has hoped. Humanity in divinity. And I have been helped. In tribulation, that I might rise again.

And my flesh has flourished again. The flesh of Christ flourished again in the resurrection. Or, my flesh has flourished again: the apostles flourished again: because after the denial, they came to the faith. My flesh has flourished again, proceeding from the tomb incorrupt. And my flesh has flourished again. For "flesh", Theodotion interpreted "heart". Otherwise: Indeed we have risen with Christ. And of the resurrection it is said: Your bones shall spring up like grass (Isa. 66). And out of my own will I will confess to him. To the Father himself, as that: I confess to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth: because you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to little ones (Matt. 11). And the Church to Christ: like that: Providing for the flock, not by constraint, but voluntarily (1 Pet. 3); and likewise: Voluntarily I will sacrifice to you, and I will confess to your name (Ps. 53). And out of my own will I will confess to him, not out of necessity. I will confess to you through baptism. The Lord is the strength of his people. To the Christian people. And he is the protector of the salvations (salutarium) of his Christ. Whoever is baptized in Christ, is also himself called Christ. It must be known moreover that this psalm also, except for one letter, is written in the Hebrew

volumes according to the order of the letters. Protector, that is, defender. Of the salvations of his Christ he is. He says in the plural: because the divinity guards all the virtues of Christ.

Save your people, O Lord. That is, the Christian people. Or, save your people, O Lord, whom I have redeemed by my death. And bless your inheritance. Which you have gathered into the Church through the mystery of my body and blood. The inheritance of Christ is his Church, of which he said: I will give you the nations for your inheritance (Isa. 2). And rule them, and exalt them forever. Rule them, as if he were to say: You rule, not the devil, nor sin. And exalt them forever: that is, defend them forever, in eternal life. You, O Lord, rule and elevate us: because we are your people, so that in this life to those performing what is pleasing to you, from this mortality into immortality, by you transforming us, we may be exalted: that is, elevated in celestial things, to reign with your saints.

PSALM XXVIII.

Unto the end, a Psalm of David, at the consummation of the tabernacle. When the ark was brought back from the captivity of the Philistines, for which they had many evils, it was left in Shiloh, and David built for it a tabernacle: in which he exhorts the people to offer sacrifices to God (1 Kings 4, 5 et seq.). David most clearly holds the figure of Christ, and the ark the figure of the Church. Just as David brought back the ark from captivity, so also Christ brought back the

ark, that is, the holy Church, from captivity: that is, from the power of the devil. The psalm therefore contains the voice of the prophet speaking concerning the perfection of the Church gathered in this age.

Bring to the Lord, O you sons of God. You who through grace have been called into the adoption of sons. The voice of Christ admonishes the preachers: Bring preaching, and example, or faith and works. Bring to the Lord the offspring of rams. Whom through the Gospel the apostles, the leaders of the flocks, begot. Rams, the apostles are called. Rams have two horns on their head. And the holy apostles had two horns: that is, they preached two testaments. The offspring of rams are the successors of the apostles, whom they begot through the word of preaching. The consummation of the tabernacle, according to the sense, is the perfection of the Church joined together from Jews and Gentiles here in the present.

Bring to the Lord glory and honor. That through your works the eternal God may be glorified through word and example. Whence he says: they were honoring and glorifying. They beget sons, as we have said, through preaching, as Paul said: Through the Gospel I have begotten you (2 Cor. 4). This is the glory and honor of God. Bring to the Lord glory to his name. Let his glorious name through you become known in all things. The name of the Father is the Son: the glory of Christ is the Church. Adore the Lord in his holy court. Expand your heart in perfect sancti-

fication, in which God may dwell: that is, in the Church, or in conscience: where each one ought to adore him.

The voice of the Lord. The preaching of the Lord. Over the waters. Over the peoples. Like that: Many waters, many peoples (Apoc. 17). Or, the voice of the Lord over the waters: that is, in Baptism over Christ, as he says: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased (Matt. 3). Over the waters: because the people who were present there heard the voice. Or, over the waters, as he said to the apostles: Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. last). The God of majesty. The God of power. The Lord thundered over many waters. From the tabernacle of the assumed body, he terribly preached conversion to the peoples, saying: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven will approach (Matt. 3). Just as thunder proceeds from a cloud, so also Christ thundered from a cloud: that is, from his body, when he said: Do penance.

The voice of the Lord in power. Made powerful in the believers, when he said: Lazarus, come forth (John 11). Or in the power by which he speaks in every saint. The voice of the Lord in magnificence. When he is magnified through the works of the saints. Magnificence, expanded in the churches.

The voice of the Lord breaking the cedars. All the sublime, and exalted, or proud are called cedars. He will break them, either through repentance, or on the day of judgment in vengeance.

The cedars, every one of the proud. Behold, the axe is laid to the roots of the trees. Breaking the cedars, humbling the proud. It should be known that the cedar has two meanings, just like the unicorn (unicornis): that is, if on the good side, it shows the just; if on the bad side, it shows sinners and the proud. And the Lord will break the cedars of Lebanon. He will crush its elations through repentance, and he will strike them down while he chooses the ignoble things, so that he may crush and confound the strong.

And he will reduce them to pieces like the calves of Lebanon. Beating their branches and twigs with his heels. For this, the Hebrew has, and the calf of Lebanon. Having cut away pride and petulance, he leads them to the imitation of his humanity, because he was sacrificed like a calf (vitulus). That calf is the fatted one which was killed, that is, Christ for the salvation of the world. Just as a calf breaks tender twigs with its horns, so Christ broke the Jews. Whence he said: Now the axe is laid to the root of the trees (Matt. 3). And the beloved like the son of the unicorns. The beloved Son of God was made, through the assumption of a body, a son of the Jews, and he crushed those who through singular pride were striving to set up their own justice. Christ is the son of the Jews, because he was of their stock according to the flesh. The Jews are called unicorns (unicorns), because of the one law which they had, through which they lifted themselves up in pride.

The voice of the Lord cutting through the flame of fire. John preaching repentance in the desert was quenching all the heat of Gehenna. Cutting through, that is, dividing the raging wrath of the persecutors: when some said, this is Christ, but others said, no, but he seduces the crowd (John 7). He indeed, cutting off this fury, joined the believers to his charity: but the unbelievers he left behind. After the flame comes the sound: so also after the preaching comes persecution. The voice of the Lord cutting through, that is, his help among the persecutors, because he comes to the aid of his saints. Cutting through the flame: that flame of the idol, where the three boys were. Or daily in each one of us, he cuts through the flame of lust through confession and the grace of the Holy Spirit, that is, through the prayer of the priest he makes it cease, just as we read God did through Aaron in the desert (Num. 16). The voice of the Lord shaking the desert. The soul which had been a desert, with vices occupying it before, will be moved at the words of repentance: so that with the vices departing from it, it may become habitable for God. The voice of the Lord shaking the desert. Moving the deserted nations to the faith, in whom no furrow of preaching had been placed for receiving the word of God. Or the nations which were deserted were converted from infidelity to faith, through the word of preaching. And the Lord will move the desert of Kadesh. Then the holy words of the Law will be celebrated in this solitude of the world, which were not understood by the Jews before:

because Kadesh (Cades) is interpreted as Holy. Or otherwise: Commotion of the moth. Well has he compared them to a moth, because just as a moth eats clothes: so their conscience was eating them. It is called commotion of the moth, because he moved them from their depraved conscience to the faith of the Church.

The voice of the Lord preparing the stags. Some want the stags (cervos) to be as it were the overcomers of poisonous tongues in the Church. Stags are preachers. He prepared them when he sent them to preach. Stags pass over and tread upon thorns or serpents: so also preachers pass over the poisons of the devil and the thorns of sins, and flee to higher things: that is, to the contemplative life. And he will reveal the thickets. He opened the obscure things of the divine Scriptures or of the celestial mysteries through the Holy Spirit. Whence in the Gospel those two to whom he himself appeared were saying: Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke on the way, and opened the Scriptures to us? (Luke 24). And in his temple. That is, in the Church. All shall speak glory. They together praise the brightness of God. Or, glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The Lord makes the flood inhabit. God does not possess dry land. At the same time, attend to the force of the word, that he did not say "waters," but "flood" (diluvium): so that he might show the abundance of spiritual grace, as if in the ark of Noah protecting the saints from the waves of this world. And now he inhabits the flood

in the conscience through the abundance of the Holy Spirit, through whom sins are deleted. And the Lord shall sit as king forever. In the churches or in the saints, who have been made his seat, or the humanity of Christ at the right hand of God the Father. Kings, the saints are called, who rule themselves.

The Lord will give strength to his people. That is, the strength of faith. To his people, the Christian people, fighting against the whirlwinds and storms of this world. And he will bless his people in peace. He will bless the Christian people both here and in the future, when he shall say: Come, you blessed of my Father (Matt. 25). In peace, in himself, because he himself is our peace, who made both one (Eph. 2). In himself Christ the Lord, the true peace, blesses us who are the Ecclesiastical people.

PSALM XXIX.

A psalm of a song at the dedication of the house of David.

A psalm of a song, praise with work; the dedication of the house of David is understood as the resurrection of the Savior, in which all the bodies of life are dedicated. David holds the figure of Christ. The house of David, the house of Christ, that is, the humanity, is the house of the divinity. Then he built the house, when he assumed the humanity of the flesh. And then he dedicated it, when he made him rise from the dead. And now the house of David is being built, that is, of Christ: that is, the Church is built even unto the end, but

it is dedicated in the resurrection, when it is to receive immortality. It contains the voice of our Redeemer, who through the resurrection of his body dedicated the Church (which is the mother of all) acquired for his name.

I will exalt you, O Lord, because you have taken me up. Highly I will glorify you, Father: because you have taken me up from death. I will exalt you, O Lord. The voice of Christ to the Father, and the voice of the Church to Christ. I will exalt you, I will praise you. Because you have taken me up, that is, Christ to the right hand of the Father. And Christ took up the Church, when he assumed the humanity of the flesh. Nor did you delight my enemies over me. That they might rejoice in my destruction. How does he say, "nor did you delight my enemies," while both the Jews crucified Christ, and spat upon him, and scourged him, and the persecutors are delighted over the Church when they persecute? But neither were the Jews delighted over Christ: because they could not extinguish him as they wished. But here it is not to be understood concerning men, but concerning demons, because they began to be delighted when they estimated that he was to be led to hell with the thieves: just as he permitted himself to be led into the mountain by the same (Luke 4). But the demons were not delighted, because then he bound both the prince and his subjects: so neither over the Church will they be delighted on the day of judgment, when the saints shall say: "Where, O death, is your sting? where, O death, is your victory?

Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15): that is, in the victory of the saints it has been disrupted.

O Lord my God, I cried to you, and you healed me. O Lord my God. The prayer of Christ, or of the Church. You healed me: you made me rise again, so that the body subject to mortality would not be corrupted by death.

You have recalled my soul from the lower regions: that is, God recalled the soul of Christ with the other souls of the saints from hell. He himself pronounces that he was resuscitated by the Father, as the Apostle says: "He who believes that God raised him from the dead, shall be saved" (Rom. 4). You saved me from those descending into the pit. That is, from the misery of this present life. Or from the pit of hell, where the souls of sinners are: lest like them, I should fall headlong into death. Hence the prophet, discerning so immense a miracle, exults and says:

Sing to the Lord, O you his saints, etc. Because the mention of you has sanctified you by calling you to the knowledge of his name. Sing to the Lord, O you his saints. The prophet exhorts the saints to praise him by whom they have been saved. And confess to the memory of his holiness. Memory, that is, so that you may be mindful of the benefits, how he came to redeem you from sin.

Because wrath is in his indignation, and life in his will. Not that there is wrath or indignation in God, but just vengeance. The indignation of God was when Adam sinned. Wrath is understood as

just vengeance: when he cast him out from paradise. And life in his will, that is, just as through God just vengeance came upon Adam himself: so through him, that is God, life was restored, when he assumed the humanity of the flesh. Because wrath is in his indignation: when he takes vengeance on the impious. And life in his will: so that he who does his will, may remain forever.

In the evening weeping shall linger. When in his passion all things were covered with darkness, the apostles lingered in weeping and groaning. And in the morning, joy. He figured the future glory of the Lord, which pre-flowered in his morning resurrection. In the evening weeping shall linger, and in the morning, joy. Evening is said to be after midday: after midday, Adam heard the voice of the Lord walking in paradise, and he covered himself under the leaves of a tree, being terrified because he had transgressed the covenant. Evening is understood as all this present life, because through the sin of Adam, all groan until the end of the age. Weeping, because man has weeping when he remembers the good things of paradise which he lost in Adam. And in the morning, joy: that is, in the resurrection, when at the same time you shall now restore them to liberty. Or the evening, when Mary and the apostles were weeping in the Passion of the Lord. And in the morning joy, when he rose again, as it was said to the women: Go and announce to my brothers that they should go into Galilee; there they shall see me (Matt. 28). And the women said to the apostles: We have seen the

Lord, and he said these things to us (John 20). In the evening weeping shall linger, and in the morning, joy. This can be taken concerning the time of the Passion, as above, and concerning the resurrection, and the consummation of the age.

But I said in my abundance: I shall not be moved forever. This the redeemed people say: Now being satisfied I suffer no want from you: nor being fixed in you, am I moved. But I said in my abundance: I shall not be moved forever. The voice of Adam in paradise because he thought he would be there without end. And while he had thought thus, and [God] had given him so many good things, he began to think what the cause was why God had commanded him that he should not touch the forbidden fruit. This indeed, he says, I wish to prove. And it happened to him, and he proved it: because he was cast out.

O Lord, in your will you have afforded strength to my beauty. And it is the voice of Adam after he was cast out from paradise for his own fault. Then he knew that the wisdom of light had receded from him: and that he had been placed in the paradise of abundance by God, not by himself. You turned your face from me, and I was troubled. Then God turned his face from Adam, when he sinned. And then he was troubled, when he was cast out from paradise under a curse. And each man [is troubled] when he is troubled by his own sins. Or otherwise; O Lord, in your will, and not from mine: you have afforded to my beauty, to the assumed body: strength, that I might know you. You turned your face from me, when I sinned: and

I was troubled. For I was still ignorant of the light of your truth.

To you, O Lord, I will cry, and to my God I will make supplication. Christ the Lord says this, who intercedes for the redeemed people to the Father. Christ cried on the cross, and the Church in persecution.

What utility is there in my blood, while I descend into corruption? If I shall not have risen again: for because my blood has been poured out, I shall rise and let there be utility: that I may acquire all nations by my resurrection. The humanity of Christ speaks to the Father, as if he had said: There is no utility that I have poured out blood, unless I shall have risen from the dead. Or, what utility is there in my blood, that is, in my race? There is no utility for the Jews: because they do not believe except in a pure man only. Not only did they not believe, but they also opened his side.

Will dust confess to you? The crowd of the impious, which still, like dust, is moved by every wind of doctrine, will not be able to be justified if I do not rise again. If I shall not have risen again, dust will not confess to you. Dust, that is, the impious, or the unfruitful. Or will it announce your truth? That is, your Christ: as if he were to say: If I do not rise again, they do not announce.

The Lord heard, and had mercy on me. The Lord heard, God the Father, and had mercy on me. The voice of Christ, because he made me rise again from the dead. The Lord was made my

helper. My defender, who made me the firstborn of the dead.

You have turned my mourning. When I was saying: My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Into joy for me. When rising I said: Go, announce to my brothers that they should go into Galilee, there they shall see me. But these things, just as they are said by Christ, so also they are said by the Church: whose mourning, with the Lord rising, was turned into joy, and she who thereafter with the Lord himself, and to the Lord himself, now cleansed by the blood of the Lamb, says:

You have rent my sackcloth. The veil of my sins: because sackcloth and haircloth belong to sinners. While therefore he says, "You have rent my sackcloth," and elsewhere he says: I clothed myself with haircloth, and I humbled my soul in fasting (Psalm 4), and indeed Christ did not use that garment. What is the sackcloth of Christ, if not the mortality which he assumed from us? Then that sackcloth was rent, when he rose again, and was made immortal. And although he had sackcloth, yet he did not have the work of sackcloth: that is, sin: concerning which it is written: Who did no sin: neither was guile found in his mouth (Isa. 53). For us, therefore, it is necessary to put on sackcloth and haircloth: because we have had the work of sackcloth, that is, sin. You have girded me with joy. That is, the joy of the resurrection, or the Church in the future: clothing me with the first robe of immortality through your resurrection.

That my glory may sing to you. In those who have believed in the glory of the resurrection. And I may not be pricked. By the stings of sins. Nor Christ: because he had no sin.

O Lord my God, forever I will confess to you. That is, without end I will praise you. In these, as I have already said, I will sing and confess to you: who are gathered in me through my resurrection. For all things which in this psalm are said humbly concerning Christ, are rather to be referred to the assumption of the body, than to the power of the Deity. We also suppliantly pray, that the Lord may turn our mourning into joy, the mass of our crimes being remitted; and by the mystery of his resurrection, may deign to elevate us, gladdened, into heaven: for whom he deigned to descend into hell.

PSALM XXX.

Unto the end, a Psalm of David, etc. The Psalm contains the voice of the Mediator himself at the beginning; then of the people redeemed by his blood, giving thanks, it is interposed from the person of the prophet himself. The Redeemer says therefore to the Father: In you, O Lord, I have hoped, let me not be confounded forever. In you, Father, is the hope of my strengthening, while adversaries insult me like other men, or mock me. Or the voice of the prophet from the person of the Church says, "let me not be confounded": because I rightly confess the end of the Trinity. In you, O Lord, I have hoped. In you, not in me. Let me not be confounded forever: because those

who confess him entirely, will not be confounded either here, or in the future. And in your justice deliver me, and rescue me. From the pit which they have set for my soul. Because unless we be justified by God, through ourselves we cannot be justified. Whence it is written: He who justifies himself, condemns himself (Job 9). Whence also Paul says concerning certain ones: Seeking to establish their own justice, they are not subject to the justice of God (Rom. 10).

Incline your ear to me. The voice of the Church to Christ. Through the ear the kindness of God is understood. Christ inclines his ear, when he deigns to hear. Or then God inclined his ear, when he sent his Word, and heard us in the world; and so much did he incline it, that he wrote our sins with his finger on the ground. Hasten to rescue me. Hasten, that is, hurry: to rescue me. The holy Church wishes to be delivered from the body, as Paul says: I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ (Phil. 1).

Be to me a God protector. The voice of the Church. A God protector. A God defender: because there are many harmful gods who do not profit. Whence Paul says: "There are indeed many gods, and many lords: yet to us there is one God, one faith, one baptism" (1 Cor. 8). Be to me a God protector, as if a neighbor. And a house of refuge, that you may save me. Because the Church, in the storm of persecution, has a refuge in God. That you may save me, from sinners. But the house of refuge is he himself in whom the Father inhabits. Many wish to flee from the presence of God: but

they cannot escape, as the prophet says: "And from your face whither shall I flee?" (Psalm 138). But we, says the Church, together have a refuge in the house: that is, in him who is God.

Since you are my firmament, and my refuge. For sustaining those who rage against me. Or the firmament of faith; "and you are my refuge": he says "my refuge": because the Church has a refuge in Christ, as the prophet says: "Lord, you have been made a refuge for us" (Psalm 89). For your name's sake you will lead me out. That I may make this known to the nations who are to believe. For your name's sake you will be a leader to me: When I do anything good, the name of the Lord is glorified because of this. And you will nourish me. With the saints gradually gathered, lead out your Church, which is founded in me. And you will nourish me. Then he nourished the Church, when he assumed our flesh. Whence also Paul: "For no one hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it" (Eph. 5). And he nourished us, so that we might be strong.

And you will lead me out from the snare which they have hidden for me. A snare is called a capture: because as long as you are in the way, that is, in Christ, you do not fear falling into a snare: snares are placed beside the way. The way is Christ: as he himself said: "I am the way" (John 14). And you if you are in the way, that is in Christ, you do not fear falling into the snare of the devil: because every snare is from him. Since you are my protector: into your hands I commend my spirit. The voice of Christ to the Father in the

Passion: when he commended his soul, and said: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 46). What is commended, is received safe. And he himself said: "I have power to lay down my soul, and I have power to take it up again" (John 20). You are my protector. The voice of the Church. Into your hands I commend my spirit: that is, into your power I commend my soul. This example the Church received from Christ. This also Saint Stephen did: this also the saints pray, when they depart from the body, like that: "To a faithful creator they commend their souls in good deeds." This the Lord, placed on the cross, said, that he commended his spirit into the hands of the Father: soon to take it up again with him resuscitating him. Let the people redeemed by the blood of the Lamb now say: "You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth." Who are the truth and the life: because what God has promised, he does not lie. Just as he promised through his servants the prophets: so also he came, and redeemed us by his blood. Whence also Paul says: "For you were bought with a great price" (1 Cor. 6).

You have hated all observing vanity, pointlessly. He says "pointlessly": not because God hates anyone. Far be it to feel this. But those who love only this present life, and contempt celestial things: hoping vainly in the beatitude of a seducing age, God hates them. Not that hatred, as I said, falls into God: but God is said to hate those who do so: that is, to repudiate them: because God repudiates them.

But I have hoped in you, O Lord. The voice of the Church: Not in me: but in you I have hoped and I hope: expecting your resurrection. I will exult and be glad in your mercy. For what shall I exult, and for what shall I be glad? For that which follows.

Because you have regarded my humility. I will exult in body: I will be glad in mind. Then he regarded it, when he took on flesh: because the Church was contemptible, and captive, and despised. I will exult and be glad in your mercy, for the benefit of such great piety, that you would redeem me by your death: because you have regarded my humility, placed in that hope, through which those things that are not seen, are desired. You have saved my soul from necessities. The necessities of the body are many: that is, to eat, to drink, to sleep, or anything else that must necessarily be done: but the necessity of the soul is altogether one: that is, eternal life. God has saved the soul from its necessity: because he has given it eternal life: which is its necessity. Therefore you have saved from the necessities of perpetual death my soul which was bound to you by charity.

Nor have you enclosed me in the hands of the enemy. They are enclosed in the hands of the enemy, who persevere in their sins. But I, says the Church, will not be enclosed: because I do not wish to persevere in evil things. You have set my feet in a spacious place. You have expanded the unity of the Church in the whole world. How does he say, in a place? Is God local? Both local,

and not local. He is local to those coming to him, and not local, because he is everywhere: but he is found in a place by those seeking purely. Like that: And the place was moved where they were sitting (Acts 4). In a spacious place my feet. The feet, the holy preachers, who carry the word of preaching in the whole world: or into the Church, which by your resurrection you have expanded into the amplitude of liberty.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled. Have mercy on me; as if he were to say: Show mercy on me, for I am troubled. The voice of those who are troubled by any tribulation whatsoever. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled. No longer fearing death, but dreading the pursuit of vices. My eye is troubled in wrath. The Church is troubled by vices and sins, as much its own as those of others. But one must pray, that wrath not be turned into hatred, nor a speck become a beam. Or the eye is troubled about the future judgment. My eye is troubled in wrath, with which I was seeing you in my mind. My soul, with which I was loving you. And my belly. With which I was remembering you. All these things are troubled, on account of prior offenses.

Because it has failed in sorrow. Therefore in sorrow; because the Church cannot correct the wicked; nor separate the wicked from the saints until the end. Whence the Lord said: Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles to be burned (Matt. 13). My life and my years in groans. As

long as he is here in the present life, every man has groaning and weeping: Because my life has failed in sorrow, and my years in groans; as long as I suffer persecution for your name's sake. The present life fails, because my times are, to confess perpetuity.

My strength has been weakened in poverty. The voice of the Church. The Church has been weakened among wicked men, among whom it dwells here in the present life; because there are more sinners, and the saints are few. Or otherwise: My strength has been weakened in poverty. The health of this body, amid the torments of passions. And my bones are troubled. My fortitude, surely. The bones are strong saints; or the bones, the virtues of the Church, or of the saints. They are troubled, by him. Whence he says above according to the apostle: We know that every creature groans together; not only it, but we also groan within ourselves (Rom. 8).

Over all my enemies I have been made a reproach. Who persecute me for your name's sake. I have been made a reproach to my neighbors. The voice of Christ, and the voice of the Church. The Jews said many reproaches to the Lord, and heretics, and persecutors, say to the Church. And to my neighbors greatly. Who will approach to believe. And a fear to my acquaintances. Because my friends, on account of fear of the enemies, have departed far from me. The whole psalm can be understood both concerning David according to history, and concerning the Lord according to prophecy. Exceedingly, and a fear to my ac-

quaintances, that is, the apostles: who feared in the passion. Or the acquaintances, wicked Christians: who say they believe in God, and deny him by their works, and despise the life of the saints. They are called neighbors, through faith; and acquaintances, on account of Christianity.

Those who saw me, fled outside from me. That is, the apostles; who saw Christ being seized in the passion, and, leaving him, they fled. Or the Jews flee the sacraments of the mystery of the Church, that is, the body and blood of Christ. All who saw me, fled outside from me: not understanding my interior hope, for which I suffer; they fled to exterior visible things. I have been cut off like a dead man from the heart. They have forgotten me in their heart, as if I were already dead. I have been cut off like a dead man from the heart. That is, the Jews regarded Christ thus, as a man dead for nothing.

And I have become like a lost vessel. Thus the Jews regarded Christ as a lost vessel; that is, a man dead in his own sin. Thus are the saints among heretics, like a lost man. Because I have heard the slander of many. That is, of Christ from the Jews, and of the Church from the heretics. In the circuit of the inhabitants. That is, in the circuit of Christ, and in the circuit of the Church: whom the aforementioned themselves have surrounded. Because I have heard the slander of many, dwelling in the circuit. They were slandering me, placed in the pilgrimage of this earth: following the circuit of time, and not wanting to return to the eternal fatherland.

While they came together against me; they plotted to take my soul. The persecutors gathered, and made a plan, to take my soul, to consent with them in the crimes of death. To take my soul; that is, the Jews Christ; and the heretics, the Church. They plotted evil counsels, and not good ones. They plotted, to seek and to take away the soul of Christ, the Jews; and the heretics, the soul of the Church.

But I have hoped in you, O Lord; I said: You are my God. Who alone are strong to deliver. Or the voice of the Church. In you I have hoped. In you, not in me. And sinners say: In you I have hoped. But the saints, have both faith and works. Sinners hope in God, and do not fear him. In your hands are my lots. That is, the grace of the Holy Spirit. Not through myself, but from you the action of this life, which is carried on in this world.

Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Lest they prevail against me.

Make your face shine upon your servant. Make shine, that is, see and discern whoever may be better among your saints. And save me in your mercy; O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon you. Let the illumination of your countenance shine upon me; that I may not be confounded, but be saved from these persecutors.

Let the impious be ashamed, and be led down into hell. Let the impious be ashamed, demons, heretics, or who do not believe the resurrection. Let them be ashamed then, when they see those

saints whom they held in contempt, crowned, and themselves condemned. Or who, leaving the true God, adore wood, and venerate stones. Let the deceitful lips be made mute, which speak iniquity against the just: in pride and in abuse. Mocking the crucified, and not knowing the resurrected one. Seeing these things the prophet exclaims, exulting and says:

How great is the multitude of your sweetness, O Lord, which you have hidden for those who fear you! For manifold and abundant is your sweetness, which you have reserved for those who fear your name. Nor have you shown it in these temptations: lest, having received security, we should depart from the way of justice. Or, how great is the multitude of your sweetness, O Lord! that is, how great a glory, how great rewards you have prepared for your Church, that it might always remain with the angels, without end, forever. Which you have hidden for those who fear you; that is, you have hidden the goods of the saints in yourself.

You have perfected it for those who hope in you. You have perfected: as if he were to say, you shall perfect. In the sight of the sons of men. Who were not ashamed to confess what they believe, before kings and powers, as the prophet says: And I spoke of your testimonies in the sight of kings, and I was not confounded (Ps. CXVIII). Which you have hidden for those who fear you: because here, through tribulation, they do not fully receive the reward, but await it in the future. And you have perfected it for those who hope in you.

Hope having been consummated, you rendered back what was awaited in vision. In the sight of the sons of men; who sought human things, and not heavenly ones. Or when they shall go into eternal punishment: but the just into eternal life.

You will hide them in the secret of your face, from the disturbance of men. For the illumination of your countenance will cover them, lest they be disturbed by human malice: in the secret of your countenance, namely, hidden in your justice; that is, in your secret place, as Job—both he himself and all that he had—were hidden in God. From the disturbance of men, from the persecution of sinners.

You will protect them in your tabernacle, from the contradiction of tongues. In the tabernacle of faith, they are veiled from the clamor of evil tongues, who say: Who knows these things? Or who has returned from the dead?

Blessed be the Lord. Whom every creature blesses. How does he say: Blessed be the Lord? Is there any need for him of our blessing? No, but that we may merit to receive a blessing from him. For he has made his mercy wonderful in a fortified city. In the city of Jerusalem, in the middle of the world. It is called a fortified city, because it is made firm or is robust, and all the nations surround it round about. Around the whole diffused Church: there the Lord made his mercy wonderful; for there he was born, there he suffered, there he rose again, and from there he ascended to the heavens, as the prophet says: He has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth (Ps. LXXIII). Or

otherwise: the heavenly Jerusalem, fortified by the congregation of angels and men.

But I said in the excess of my mind. When the Church recalls paradise, how it could have been immortal, and considers how it could have been there; and remembers what it is, and how God spoke to Adam through the angel (Gen. III), and how it saw God with interior eyes: when it considers these things, then the Church is in an excess of mind. But I said in the excess of my mind: I have been cast out from before the sight of your eyes. The people, converted to Christ, say this: I thought, he says, that I had been cast out from the contemplation of your light, and I was terrified, when you permitted me to suffer so much on account of your name; or, I have been cast out from the countenance of your eyes. Adam, when he transgressed the commandment of God, then was cast out from the face of God (Ibid.), both he himself, and we, and all his posterity after him.

Therefore you have heard the voice of my supplication, while I cried to you. Therefore, says the Church, you have heard the voice of my prayer: because I knew where I could have been; and I know where I now am. You have heard the voice of the interior man, praying to you in the splendor of the mind, and you have removed horrible tribulations.

Love the Lord, all his saints; for the Lord will require truth, and will render abundantly to those who act with pride. These being humbled, he will establish his saints in great constancy.

Love the Lord, all his saints. Love, that is, cherish him. For the Lord will require truth, of those who persevere to the end in goodness, as it is said: He who shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved (Matth. XXIV).

Act manfully. That is, immovably. And let your heart be comforted, all you who hope in the Lord. Your heart: that is, your soul, in the Lord always. Act manfully, and let your heart be comforted, all you who hope in the Lord. Guard your purpose strongly and constantly, that you may reap the fruit in Christ. Whom we humbly beseech to instill in our minds the care of loving him, to confess him constantly who suffered for us, that we may deserve to fight manfully against iniquitous pride with the arms of humility.

PSALM 31.

The understanding of David. The understanding of Christ. There is a twofold understanding in this title, especially concerning that Publican and Pharisee who were praying in the temple (Luke 18): because one justified himself; and the other condemned, that is, accused himself. The psalm contains the voice of the prophet, showing that man can be saved not by his own merits, but by the grace of God, if he confesses his sins.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed, immortal, praiseworthy or glorious. But yet no one can be blessed in himself, unless he receives from him who justifies the impious: that is, from God. Whence also Paul says: But to him that believeth

in him who justifieth the impious, his faith is reputed to justice (Rom. 4). Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven: whose sins are washed away by the Lord through confession. In what ways are sins forgiven? In three. They are forgiven through baptism: they are covered by charity, they are not imputed through martyrdom. And whose sins are covered, by charity: according to that: Charity covereth a multitude of sins (James 5). Or, whose sins are covered: that is, that they may be veiled here by penance, lest they be revealed in the judgment.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. He who has been able to diligently purge himself in this world, or through martyrdom. What is covered, is not seen: what is not seen, is not imputed; what is not imputed, will not be punished. Nor is there deceit in his mouth. This is in the mouth of him who confesses himself to be a sinner, like Nathanael. Whence the Lord said: Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile (John 1). And of that publican, of whom we spoke above, who confessed himself to be a sinner saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner (Luke 18). Nor is there deceit in his mouth, but believing God in truth, he retained this in his heart, which he confessed with his mouth.

Because I was silent, all my bones have grown old. I did not bring forth confession unto salvation: therefore all my strength has grown old in the infirmity of the flesh. Because I was silent, all my bones have grown old, while I was crying all the day. I was silent, is the voice of the wicked.

I was silent: that is, their sins are silent, and in confession they are unwilling to speak. My bones have grown old, that is, the virtues which they ought to have had, have grown old through sin. While I was crying: that is, they cry. If they have anything good, they show it through vanity, as that impious Pharisee did, who said: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, adulterers. While I was crying all the day: in the moment of this life.

Because day and night thy hand was heavy upon me. Your power. When I was impious, and a blasphemer: thy hand was heavy upon me: that is, your power: because he who does not amend here, the hand of God is heavy upon them, that is, the power of vengeance on the day of judgment. I am turned in my anguish. In the assiduous tribulation of your scourges. While the thorn is fastened in me. The sting of a sinful conscience. I am turned in my anguish while the thorn is fastened in me: anguish: that is, misery. While the thorn is fastened in me: that is, while the conscience of sin pricks me.

I have made my sin known to you, and my injustices I have not hidden. But I have confessed, and I have laid everything bare. For I know that you quickly forgive sins, when they have been fully disclosed to you, and therefore I have said:

I will confess against myself my injustices to the Lord. For not against the Lord, but against myself have I pronounced these things that I might be justified: I said, I have pronounced against myself my injustices to the Lord, and you

have forgiven the iniquity of my sin. In the person of those who are converted the prophet speaks, like that son who went abroad, and said: I will go to my Father (Luke 15). He said in his heart, where God is seen: And you have forgiven the impiety of my sin. What I had formerly done, you have mercifully indulged.

For this impiety every holy one will pray to you in an opportune time. The opportune time to pray for sins is this life: in which therefore the saints pray: because no one is immune from sins. For this iniquity, or for this remission, as he said above: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Every holy one: that is, through baptism; and he who sins after baptism, it is afterwards forgiven him through penance, or through martyrdom.

Nevertheless, in a flood of many waters they will not come near to him. Many fruits of the floods in the judgment will surround the impious, which will not harm the saints. Nevertheless, in a flood of many waters they will not come near to him. Without tribulations, he says, which are compared as it were to overflowing waters, the saints will not be able to approach God: because he who endures to the end, he will be saved. Or, in a flood of waters: that is, in the variety of the doctrines of heretics: through this they themselves will not approach God.

You are my refuge from the tribulation which has surrounded me. The voice of the Church to Christ. She says this concerning the pressures of this world. My exultation. Because in you I

rejoice. Deliver me from those who surround me. Either from public enemies, or from sins. When he said, my exultation, redeem me from those who surround me: how does he say, Redeem me, when he who is redeemed is in captivity, and those who exult do not need redemption? This pertains to the sense. It is the voice of those who are with God, and they ask for those who are troubled in this captivity.

I will give you understanding, and I will instruct you in this way in which you shall go. What kind of understanding God gives to his Church. That it may understand for what cause a saint is anxious, and makes sinners to prosper. I will give you understanding, and I will instruct you in this way in which you shall go. In the way, namely of this confession I will teach you wisdom, that you may not depart from it. I will make you to understand, and I will teach you in this way in which you shall go. The voice of the Lord speaking is introduced, and teaching, how a man may merit his help, if, that is, keeping the precepts of God he is carried in the right path. And so he says that a man cannot come to the perfection of purity. And although he cannot come to the perfection of purity, yet he should not be carried headlong into vices in the manner of animals. I will fix my eyes upon you. The voice of Christ to the Church. Fix my eyes upon you: that is, the aspect of divinity. I will fix my eyes upon you, that you may remain in the love of my light.

Do not become like the horse, etc. Those who wish to rule themselves not by the will of God,

but by their own motion, and unbridled fall into luxury, these the prophet coerces with terrible words, saying:

With bit and bridle bind their jaws. With the bridle and bit of his moderation, God restrains the superfluous blasphemies of the impious. The horse, untamed: the mule, lazy. This the Church asks of God the Father, that through the bridle, that is, preaching, he may make the gentile people, whom he called horses, to approach him from the broad and spacious way of this world, and the Jewish people, whom he called mules, who are lazy to believe in God, he may make to come to him through the bit, that is, contrition of heart. Who do not approach you. But are removed by pride.

Many are the scourges of sinners. Because there are some sinners, whose scourges are initiated in this life, which they will afterwards have in the future without end: Many are the scourges of sinners: who have been unwilling to do penance. But mercy will surround those who hope in the Lord. That mercy, that they may merit eternal life. Those who have a right hope and faith in God, the mercy of God will surround them, according to that: The Lord has sent his angel round about them that fear him (Ps. 32); and elsewhere: The Lord keeps all who love him (Ps. 144).

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you just. The prophet exhorts the Church to be glad in the hope of eternal life and of regeneration: yet the Church is also glad here in tribulation. And glory, all you

right of heart. As Paul says: He that glories, let him glory in the Lord (1 Cor. 1). They are called right of heart, to whom all the judgments of God are pleasing, and they accuse themselves of their sins, and they always praise God, whether in prosperity, or in adversity: Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you just; and glory, all you right of heart. That your glory may be referred to him, as the Apostle says: He that glories, let him glory in the Lord. Whom we humbly beseech, that with our sins covered by indulgence, and our offenses no longer reckoned, we may deserve to be partakers of the perpetual exultation of the saints.

PSALM 32.

For the end, a Psalm of David. This psalm contains the voice of the prophet exhorting the peoples to God: and admonishing the just in whom they ought to exult.

Rejoice in the Lord, you just. The prophet exhorts the saints to praise God. Rejoice, you just. Elsewhere he says: Be glad, but it is one and the same. Some exult in the things of this world, others in the circus: others in the theater: But you, says the prophet to each saint, exult in the Lord, and not in the prosperities of the world. Praise becomes the upright. He calls them upright, who direct their hearts to the rule of truth: not the iniquitous, as the prophet says: Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil (Isaiah 5).

Give praise to the Lord on the harp. The harp has its hollow part downwards, and it has six strings. The works of the saints are understood by

the harp, which are the six works of mercy. And of those strings some sing well: others murmur. So also the saints, some so, others so. Give praise to the Lord on the harp. In the flesh mortified to vices and concupiscences by the Lord's cross. On the psaltery of ten strings sing to him. In the Decalogue of the commandments. The psaltery has its hollow part upwards: preaching or the commandments are understood in the saints, which come from above. Whence he said: Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of alteration (James 1). Of ten strings, that is, the ten words of the law. Three commandments on one tablet, which pertain to the end of the Trinity, these are; the first: Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one God; the second: You shall not take the name of your God in vain; the third: Observe the sabbath day (Deut. 6). Seven, on the other tablet, pertain to the love of the neighbor.

Sing to him a new song. That is, sing to him a new song: that is, a new life, because a new man has come into the world: he has instituted a new law for us, and a new Church through baptism. Sing to him a new song, because he has risen, because he sits at the right hand of the Father. Sing well to him. He sings well, who fulfills in work what he sings: that is, he preaches. In jubilation. Jubilation is said to be that which can neither by words, nor by syllables, and neither by letters, nor by voice, break forth, or comprehend how much a man ought to praise God. Sing well to him

with a loud voice. Through the jubilation of the priests of old, Jericho, retaining the figure of the world, fell (Josh. 6), now through our prayer, its concupiscences are destroyed.

For the word of the Lord is right. Nor is it curved in any way, but it will prosper in those things to which he directs it. And all his works are in faith. As he says in the Gospel. If you have whole faith, and say to this mountain, Remove yourself and cast yourself into the sea: it will be done (Matt. 17). And whatever you shall ask faithfully: believe that you shall receive, and they will come to you. Because the word of the Lord is right, and all his works are in faith. It is right in the upright. His works are in faith, in the faith of the saints: because what God promises to his saints, he does not lie.

The Lord loves mercy and judgment. How does he say, he loves mercy, when in another place he says: Do not have mercy on the poor in judgment (Exod. 22): that is, not for the sake of the poor nor for the sake of the rich, not for the sake of the near and the far, not for the sake of the known and the unknown, should you decline from a right judgment: but first judge a right judgment, and afterwards let mercy come to the rescue. He loves mercy, because he redeemed us by assuming flesh, and judgment, who discerns between the impious and the just. The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord. The whole world. Or the earth, the holy Church is full of the mercy of God: because as he is everywhere, so is his mercy with him, and is inseparable from him: because

he descended not only to guard the just, but to redeem sinners, that he might save them.

By the word of the Lord the heavens were established. The Word of the Father is the Son. The heavens were established: the holy apostles by him in faith. By the word of the Lord the heavens were established. In that Word, which was in the beginning with God: whether the visible heavens, or the apostles were created. By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and by the spirit of his mouth all their power. The majesty of the Trinity is most clearly declared: the Lord, the Word, the Spirit of the Lord. And by the spirit of his mouth all their power. That is, with the Paraclete cooperating, the powers of these heavens were created. For in the Lord the Father, in the Word the Son; in the spirit of the mouth, the Holy Spirit is declared. And because he says, of his mouth: let him not be believed to be proceeding as if he were lesser. For as the Son is from the Father, and equal to the Father: so also the Holy Spirit is held to be equal to the Father and the Son. Or, by the spirit of his mouth all their power, that is, by the Holy Spirit their powers. Because by the Holy Spirit they had diverse graces: that is, powers. For through ourselves we had nothing good, except through him.

Gathering the waters of the sea as in a bottle. He shows the sea enclosed by the shores. Gathering the waters of the sea as in a bottle. By the waters, he signifies the tribulations of the world, and the persecutions of the saints: because as a man holds waters in a bottle, and when he wills,

he sprinkles them: so the Lord the tribulations of the Church, as Paul says: God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able to bear, but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10). Gathering as in a bottle, in the new man of the Church: the waters of the sea, the peoples of the world, that they may be new wine, as the Lord says, in new bottles (Matt. 9): that is, the Evangelical precept, hidden in the hearts of believers. Laying up the depths in storehouses. O the great power of the Creator, laying up the depths in storehouses: bringing forth the winds from his storehouses! Yet here we understand the depths, the altitude of the celestial mysteries, according to that of the Apostle: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God (Rom. 11)! Or, in storehouses, that is, in the hidden things of God. A treasure, that is, a largess: that is, the depth of the Scriptures. Whence in another place he says: Who brings forth the wind from his storehouses (Ps. 134). For as much as he willed to show us through his servants, so much we were able to understand through ourselves: the very depth of the Scriptures we can in no way.

Let all the earth fear the Lord. Those who are inclined toward earthly things, let them rather worship him, and not the creature. But let all the inhabitants of the world be moved by him. Some think this refers to the future judgment, but it refers more to the following exposition. But let all be moved by him, all who dwell in the world. Let all be moved by God himself; that is, from unbe-

lief to faith. Or all: all creatures come from him, and not as sinners say, that time brings them, and not God: because God has also established the times, and the days, and the years, and even the moments.

Because he spoke, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created. Therefore, let all things fear him: because by him they were either made or created. He spoke: this is through the Son, who is the Word, he spoke: he commanded, by his authority: that is, in an ineffable way.

The Lord scatters the counsels of the nations. According to that: There is no counsel, no prudence, no wisdom, no strength against God (Prov. 12). The Lord scatters the counsels of the nations: namely, of the Jews, who as unbelievers murmur against Christ God. Or he scatters the counsels of those who wished to build a tower; he destroyed it, as in that passage: Come, let us confuse their tongues there (Gen. 11). But he rejects the thoughts of the peoples. That is, the counsels of the Jews, because they could not do those things except insofar as it was predetermined by God. But he rejects the thoughts of the peoples: of the Pharisees and Sadducees, or of the other types of authorities. And he rejects the counsels of the princes. That is, of Annas and Caiaphas, because they were the princes of their priests who held the primacy of this crime. All these with their counsels the Lord destroyed by rising again.

But the counsel of the Lord endures forever. The counsel of the Lord was that he would rise

from the dead, as he also did. This counsel, the Jews, or their princes, could not destroy. The thoughts of his heart from generation to generation. Nothing of them shall diminish, according to that: Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away (Matt. 24).

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. These are those who believe that the Lord created those creatures, which he mentioned above; not that time brings them. Or, blessed is the nation, of the Christians, whose Lord is their God. Because he has chosen to have the Lord as God, having abandoned the idols. The people whom the Lord has chosen for his inheritance. He himself chose the Christian people for his inheritance, as he said in another psalm: I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and for your possession the ends of the earth (Ps. 2); and elsewhere: The Lord is the portion of my inheritance (Ps. 15); and again: My portion is the Lord (Ps. 118). For his inheritance. The Jews having been rejected, we have been called to the inheritance.

From heaven the Lord looked down: he saw all the sons of men. To have mercy on all: because his gaze was never without mercy. Or the Lord looked from heaven: that is, he had mercy on us. Upon the sons of men. The sons of men: the sons of Adam. Or the sons of men, the successors of the apostles.

From his prepared dwelling he looked upon all who inhabit the earth. He who formed their hearts one by one. So that to one the word of wisdom is given, to another the interpretation

of words, to another kinds of tongues, and the rest: which one and the same Spirit works. Or he who formed their hearts through each one. Some falsely refer this passage to that claim, that they think the soul is generated from a soul, and that the souls of all are contained in Adam; because what is said in Greek καταμόνας does not mean one, but each one through many.

He who formed their hearts one by one. He who formed: that is, he made. One by one. By each one he understands all, and at the same time he knows all. Their hearts: their works. He who understands all their works. Because he is the observer who watches day by day the acts of men. He who understands all their works: that is, how each soul has the gift of God, he himself dispenses it.

A king shall not be saved by much power, and a giant shall not be saved in the multitude of his own strength. But by justice, and the help of God. For God also confounded the strength of Goliath by the hand of David his boy. A king is not saved by the multitude of his own power. Why? because elsewhere he says: The Lord is salvation (Ps. 3). Nor will a giant be saved in the multitude of his own strength. A giant is so called for his strength. Nor can he himself be saved by his own strength, as above concerning Goliath and David.

A horse is a vain thing for safety, neither shall he be saved by the abundance of his own strength. Unless God be his rider. A horse is a vain thing for safety. The horse, the human body, is the beast of burden of the soul, therefore it is deceit-

ful. But in the abundance of his own strength, he will not be saved: that is, neither the giant, nor the king.

Behold the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him. The eyes of God, the aspect of divinity. Upon them that fear him, who fear him with a holy fear. For God protects and defends those who hope in him with a celestial inspection. And in them that hope in his mercy. That he may deliver their souls from death. That is, in this they hope in his mercy, that is, of God, that he may deliver their souls from perpetual death. Or from death, that is from the devil.

That he may deliver their souls from death: And may feed them in famine. When others suffer a scarcity of the word of God: these are vivified by it.

But our soul waits for the Lord. That is, it is patient in the Lord. Whatever may befall it, whether good or evil, it endures for the sake of God, as Paul says: All things are pleasing to me (1 Cor. 10). Or, he feeds them in famine: that is, he pastures them. Whence he said: And he fed them for forty years in the desert (Exod. 16). Because whenever men have famine, God feeds his servants: although with earthly food, yet it is more, whence he feeds them with spiritual food: that is, with his doctrine and his word: But our soul waits for the Lord: for he is our helper and our protector. And in him our heart shall rejoice, and in his holy name we have hoped. For we know that no one has hoped in him, and has gone away confounded. For he is our helper and

our protector. This is, because he himself is both the helper and the defender of the Church. And in him our heart shall rejoice. That is, our soul shall rejoice in the hope of the future reward, and the Church shall rejoice in tribulation. And in his holy name we have hoped. The name of the Father is the Son.

Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have hoped in thee. It is the prayer of the Church: yet each one ought to think on this little verse before it is read, that he may say faithfully, as we have hoped in thee, lest his mind be vacant elsewhere. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us: as we have hoped in thee. That you who have washed us by baptism, may confirm us by the infusion of the Holy Spirit, as we see was done in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2). Who may now deign to come into us, that by his light we may be made worthy to become heirs of everlasting glory, Amen.

PSALM 33.

A Psalm of David when he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he dismissed him, and he departed.

The change of countenance is shown in the change of words: when he pretended to have been sent by Saul. Or if we wish to understand a true change of countenance, let us know that Abimelech was said for Achish. Nor is there error in the name, since having been partly begotten, he could also be called Abimelech. For Abimelech is interpreted "my father the king." How does it say, he changed his countenance before Abim-

elech? Because in the Book of Kings we read thus, that he fled to Gath, the city of King Achish, in the land of the Philistines (1 Kings 8). Or how did he dare to go there, since he was their enemy, and he himself had previously killed Goliath their prince? For this reason he went there, because of what the women said: Saul has struck his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And afterward the devil entered into Saul through envy, and said: What remains for him, except only to have the kingdom? And David came to King Achish. But afterward Achish sent his messengers to bring David to him, to kill him. And when he found him at the gate of the city, David knew that they wanted to kill him, and compelled by necessity he turned aside to the citadel. By the provident mercy of God, the Holy Spirit fell upon him, and he began to stumble, and he let saliva fall upon his beard. And when they brought him to the king, the king said to them: For what reason have you brought this frenzied and furious man to me? David was a handsome man, and when they seized him, he was drumming at the gate of the city, and was carried in their hands. And when they released him, and he fled, he sang this psalm: which is all commemorated concerning piety, all concerning divine inspection, all concerning restraining the tribulations of the saints. David bears the figure of Christ: Saul the figure of the devil. Abimelech is interpreted "the kingdom of my father." Achish is interpreted "how is it," or "ignorance," or "black." David came to Gath to King Achish, and the Lord came to the

kingdom of his Father: that is, to the kingdom of the Jews. He changed his countenance before Abimelech: that is, before the kingdom of his father. Whence the holy Paul said: Who, being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but took the form of a servant: being made in the likeness of men, and found in appearance as a man: he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death (Phil. 16). Or otherwise: He changed his countenance, that is, into the priesthood. Then he changed, when Melchizedek offered bread and wine (Gen. 14). He changed his countenance: because the more the coming of Christ approached, the more those figures were revealed: because before he offered sacrifices, but afterward it was spiritually fulfilled in the New Testament according to the order of Melchizedek: he did not say according to the order of Aaron, but according to the order of Melchizedek. He was drumming at the gate of the city. A drum is stretched from skin. And the Lord stretched out his hands on the cross. The gates of the city are understood as the beginning of our faith, when we believe in the incarnation of Christ. Through the saliva, the weakness of the flesh which he deigned to assume. That beard, the strength of divinity. He dismissed him and he departed. Christ dismissed the Jews, and came to the Gentiles. Whence it was said: Because you have judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life: from this we shall go to the Gentiles (Acts 13).

I will bless the Lord at all times, etc. When he says "at all times" and "always," he teaches us

neither to succumb in adversity, nor to be exalted in prosperity, but to bear with equanimity both favorable and contrary things: and setting the blessed one before our eyes, in all things that may happen, to bless the name of God. I will bless the Lord at all times. I will bless, that is, I will praise the Lord. At all times: in prosperity and in adversity. David did this, and now the Church does. His praise shall always be in my mouth. In mouth and heart, with attentive mind to praise God always.

In the Lord shall my soul be praised. That is, my life. When the soul, dedicated to this study, has endured the harsh things of the world with an even mind, it is praised by those who are of the Lord. Let the meek hear. That is, the saints. And let them rejoice. Not in earthly things, but in heavenly things; those who do not have a battle of vices in themselves, those who restrain the clod of their body with such a testament. For blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land.

Magnify the Lord with me. Praise the Lord the Father. And let us exalt his name together. As if the prophet were saying: As I love, so also do you. Or, let us exalt his name together: the Son to whom the Father gave the name that is above every name.

I have sought the Lord. The Holy Spirit. And he heard me, and he delivered me from all my tribulations. Consuming the corruption of the flesh: which brought upon me the tribulations of sins, lest I should beseech him more attentively.

Come to the Lord. Believe in him. Come to the Lord, not by place, but by faith, and by work. And be enlightened. That is, understand in your mind: for unless you believe, you will not understand. And your faces shall not be confounded. In the judgment in which the impious will be confounded in condemnation, on the day of judgment.

This poor man cried out. Christ the Lord, who for our sakes became poor, cried out to the Father in his passion. Or, this poor man, that is, David, cried out, when he said: O Lord God, make foolish the counsel of Ahithophel (2 Kings 26). And the Church cries out now. And the Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his tribulations. Raising him from the dead.

The Lord sends his angel round about them that fear him, and will deliver them. That is, he gave them the angel of great counsel. There is no doubt that those who fear the Lord are guarded by angels: as the Lord himself teaches through the Gospel: Amen, amen I say to you: because their angels daily see the face of my Father, who is in heaven (Matt. 18). Therefore, those who have feared God from a purity of heart are fortified by angelic protection.

Taste, etc. Taste is learned through the jaws; sight through the eyes, because it is seen through the eyes. The prophet says, I have tasted. And how I have tasted: thus I have found by faith, by hope, and by good works. Blessed is the man who hopes in him. Why blessed? Because he has him who has all things: that is, God. Therefore taste

is said here, that when one has known God, he may fear him: because as if of taste he has said elsewhere: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ps. 110). But when he has begun to fear, then he keeps the commandments, and then he will know that the Lord is sweet: because he himself is the living bread who gives satiety to this world. Blessed is the man who hopes in him, and not in the uncertainty of riches.

Fear the Lord, all you his saints. You who stand firm in his promises, fear, lest having received security you be deceived. For there is no want to them that fear him. To whom Christ is God, there is no want to them, that is, there is no want of any good to them. Seek the kingdom of God, and his justice, and the rest will be added to you. For the justice of God provides all things.

The rich have wanted and have been hungry: but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good. Many of the world are wealthy, and they lack the glory of God, of whom was also that rich man, before whose gate Lazarus lay: who, being thirsty in torments, because he had not shown mercy, did not deserve to receive a drop. But Lazarus, seeking not purples, but the heavenly kingdoms, deserved to be filled with all good things in the bosom of Abraham (Luke 16).

Come, children, hear me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. It is a prophetic custom to call the disciples children, as Paul does: My little children, of whom I am in labour again, until Christ be formed in you (Gal. 4). He teaches them, that they may be imbued first of all with wisdom: that

is, with the fear of the Lord. Come, children, hear me. Christ calls the Church to come to him, that is, by faith, the saints are called children of God: according to what is said in the Gospel: But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God (John 1). And John says in his Epistle: Now we are the sons of God (1 John 3). I will teach you the fear of the Lord. As in that: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ecclus. 1). And elsewhere he says: From fear is born the compunction of salvation. To this each one ought to come, that he may have the fear of the Lord.

Who is the man that desires life? Eternal life, of course. And desires to see good days? In which he may rejoice with the saints in the kingdom of God. Or the voice of the prophet asking, and another says, I do, and he says: If you wish, then do what follows, and you will see life, that is, you will have eternal life, and good days, that is, eternal days.

Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Keep your tongue, that is, from detraction, or from bitterness: because it is said: Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18). For he who guards his tongue, guards his soul. And elsewhere he says: The guardian of justice, silence and peace (Isa. 23). If any man thinks himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue, this man's religion is vain (James 1). And your lips, that they may not speak deceit: lest you feign one thing with your mouth, and retain another in your heart.

Turn away from evil, and do good. That is, destroy vices and build up virtues. It is of no avail, if you destroy, and do not build. That is, if you destroy vices, and do not build up virtues. As if he were to say: Who is the man, who would wish for life without these things? No one. Because in him there was no good, who destroys no evil. Turn away from evil and do good. All evil things proceed from the instigation of the devil, just as good things from God. Therefore, leave what the devil instigates, and do what Christ commands.

Seek peace and pursue it. According to the Apostle, follow peace and holiness; without which no one sees the kingdom of God (Heb. 12). Or the Jews sought peace, that is, Christ, to kill him, not to imitate him, because to follow is said to be to imitate. Seek peace and follow it, that is, Christ: because he is our peace. Or follow, imitate. Whence it is said in the Gospel: He that will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me (Luke 9). Seek peace and follow it. It is not enough to flee evil, unless you also do good.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the just. For by the inspection of his piety he continually contemplates them. And his ears are unto their prayers. Because they ask for what is just. The eyes of the Lord, that is, the aspect of divinity, are upon the just. And his ears are to their prayers. Whatever the saints ask for that is good, he hears them: because God both hears, and sees us: therefore let us do his will.

But the countenance of the Lord is upon them that do evil things. This psalm runs in the person of the good and in the person of the wicked. For what reason is the countenance of God upon them that do evil? That he may destroy the memory of them from the earth. That is, from the land of the living, as the prophet says: Let them be blotted out of the book of the living (Ps. 86). Here we understand the countenance as fury, which by threatening wrath, destroys the memory of sin from the earth, that he may plant the roots of his benignity (whence he had cut it out). What is said of the ears, eyes, and countenance, is not to be referred to the corporation of the Godhead, but to the power of his majesty.

The just cried, and the Lord heard them, etc. Because they cried out from the integrity of a pure heart. Or the three children cried out in the midst of the flames, and the Lord heard them (Dan. 3). The sons of the Maccabees, or now each saint; and them, and now each one he delivers from all tribulations.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart. He is never far from them who suffer for his sake. He is with them in tribulation: not by place, but by help, because God is not local. And he will save the humble of spirit. That he may bestow on them the kingdoms of heaven. The humble of spirit, that is, the meek, as in that: Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart (Matt. 11). Or that: For blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Many are the tribulations of the just. Therefore he who does not suffer tribulation, is not just. The death of sinners is the worst. The tribulation of the just is ended by death, but the punishments of sinners begin after death. Or, many are the tribulations of the just, and the Lord has delivered them from all these. For they are tempted, that being proved they may be made manifest. But in time their regard will be, when they will judge nations, and will have dominion over peoples.

The Lord keeps all their bones. That is, their virtues. Not one of them shall be broken. Concerning his saints in the future judgment, how does he say, not one of them shall be broken, since many have broken bones, as we read of the holy martyrs? But here bones are understood as the firmament, or the virtues of the soul. The Lord keeps all their bones, not one of them shall be broken. He speaks of the eternity of perpetual life, which they bear through the hope of faith, or the fortitude which they have in God himself to keep: lest in these tribulations they grow lukewarm, or be broken in any way.

The death of sinners is the worst. Because they are both initiated here, and in the future they are tormented without end. And they that have hated the just, shall be guilty. The Jews hated Christ or his testament. They hated the just, that is, Christ, and without cause. They shall be guilty, that is, they shall sin. Or he who now hates the just, that is, each saint, sins.

The Lord has redeemed the souls of his servants. Christ has redeemed us with his precious blood, and now he redeems us every single day. Or, the Lord has redeemed the souls of his servants, from the power of the second death. And he will not forsake all that hope in him.

Those who hope in God, he will not forsake them, neither here nor in the future: but he is with them, according to his promise, even to the consummation of the world. Who may deign to grant us, that his praise may be ever in our mouth: and using his doctrine moderately, neither prosperity may be able to exalt us, nor adversity to cast us down.

PSALM 34.

For the end, a psalm for David himself. For the end, that is, for Christ, as in that: The end of the law is Christ unto justice for everyone that believes (Rom. 10). Or the end, the perfection of Christ. Whence also the apostles said: Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us (John 14). And the Lord: He that sees me, sees also my Father: for I am in the Father, and the Father in me. In this is the perfection of Christ. David is interpreted as strong of hand, or desirable. And the Lord is strong of hand, because he touched the bier, and the young son of the widow arose. Or strong, by whom all things were made. Desirable, because the saints desire so much to see Christ, that they even give their bodies to martyrdom for him. Or the psalm contains the sacrament of the Lord's passion. In which it is to be noted, that

those things which are said in humility, weeping and lamentation, do not suit the divinity, but the assumed flesh. He therefore prays to the Lord the Father, saying:

Judge, O Lord, them that wrong me: overthrow them that fight against me. The Jews and the princes of the priests, who often fighting against the Lord placed in the flesh, wished to harm him. Judge, O Lord, them that wrong me. The voice of Christ in the passion, and the voice of the Church in tribulation. Judge: that is, by a judgment of discretion. Or judge, that is, discern between me and the Jews: between the Church and the persecutors. Overthrow them that fight against me. As if he were to say: You take vengeance for me: as it is said by Saint Paul: Vengeance is mine, and I will repay (Rom. 12). And again, If God is for us, who is against us (Rom. 8)?

Take hold of arms and shield, and rise up to help me. In arms, heavenly aids: in the shield he designates the divine protection, which according to the infirmity of the flesh he asks to be ministered to him. But he also defends and fortifies us with spiritual arms, according to the Apostle: Put you on the armour of God (Eph. 6). The arms of the Lord are the protection of the divinity. What is stronger, what is more beautiful than Christ armed standing for his saints? as Saint Stephen saw, when he said: Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God the Father (Acts 7). To stand, is of one fighting or opposing. You cannot change your

arms: the Lord approaching makes a shield of his arms. And we ought to take up arms, that we may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect.

Draw out the sword (*frameam*) and stop the way against them that persecute me. That the poured out sword of your wrath may fall upon them, and shut them in: lest they be able to wander about for harm. By the sword is understood the Lord's soul: through which God the Father works just vengeance. Or by the sword is understood the soul of each saint: because God through holy souls works vengeance: as he did through Peter concerning Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), and through Elijah concerning the captains of fifty (2 Kings 1). O Lord, say to my soul: I am your salvation. The voice of the Church. Say to my soul, that it may understand you, that you are my God: you are the salvation of my soul. Say to my soul, I am your salvation. From me, he says, it shall be quickened after death.

Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek after my soul, to take it away. When you shall have raised me up, then let these be confounded. Let them be turned back and blush for shame that devise evil against me. Not that they may go forward, but let them be turned backward, that they may perish, that is, the demons, the Jews, or the persecutors of the Church, let them be turned back in the future judgment. Let the Gentiles be confounded and ashamed concerning their idols: let them be confounded concerning their infidelity for the faith of Christ.

Whence Paul says: What fruit therefore had you then in those things, of which you are now ashamed (Rom. 6)? Or, let them turn back, that is, those who have had an evil course: as the Lord says to Peter: Go behind me, Satan (Matt. 16).

Let them become as dust before the face of the wind: and the angel of the Lord pursuing them. That is, with the angel pursuing, let them be dispersed, so that nothing at all, not even a little, be left of them. Dust: light and fruitless men are called so: because as dust before the wind, so are sinners before the divine sentence in the day of judgment. And the angel of the Lord pursuing them. The angel of the Lord, that is, the evil spirit. If evil, why "of the Lord"? If "of the Lord", why evil? "Of the Lord": because the Lord created him, and the Lord has him in his power. Malignant, not by nature, but by his own invention. The devil has the will to harm, but he has not the power to do so, as the prophet says: Hostility through evil angels (Psalm 77); that is, he has as much power as the Lord permits him.

Let their ways become darkness and slippery. Darkness: of ignorance. Slippery: that is, luxury. Because he who is devoted to these in his mind, the devil pursues him. Or otherwise: Let them not know the light of truth, nor stand in a firm station, but let the steps of those be made slippery, who rage in this passion, and let them be afflicted by the angel of the brightness of the Lord.

For they have hidden for me without cause their snare unto destruction. Well said, "their", because what they thought was the Lord's de-

struction, became their own snare. For they have hidden for me without cause destruction. Without cause, that is, without a cause, as much the Jews against Christ, as the persecutors against the Church. They have ensnared themselves in vengeance. Without cause they have upbraided my soul. For their upbraiding had nothing useful.

Let a snare come upon them which they know not. He threatens that destruction which came upon them in the times of Vespasian. Or each sinner is bound with the cords of his own vices in the day of judgment. And let the net which he has hidden catch themselves: and let them fall into that very snare. Into a sudden death indeed, which they themselves were secretly plotting against our Lord, as in that: They have dug a pit before my face, and they are fallen into it (Ps. 56). And likewise he says: The pit which you had prepared for your brother, into it you shall fall (Prov. 26).

But my soul shall rejoice in the Lord. Both Christ in the Father, and the Church in Christ. It shall be delighted over his salvation. When he shall have been raised by him. Or, 'it shall be delighted', that is, it shall rejoice over his salvation. Our salvation is Christ, because in him the Church is delighted: as Solomon says: Who is this that comes up whitened, and leaning upon her brother (Cant. 3)?

All my bones shall say: Lord, who is like you? In the bones, eternity, or fortitude is understood, which is referred to the apostles: so that those to whom the words of the resurrection first seemed

as it were idle tales, now may praise together and say: Who is like you? that is, who like you was able to recall from death? Or bones, the stronger saints, or the virtues of the saints. Who is like you? As if he were to say, No one. In another place he says: O God, who is like you (Psalm 70)? that is, none.

Delivering the poor from the hand of them that were stronger than he. Christ became poor (*inops*) for us, that his poverty might make us rich. From the hand of them that were stronger: that is, from the hand of the Jews, God the Father delivered him. Christ the poor, speaks from the person of his members. The needy and the poor from them that strip him. From the powers of darkness. Whose greatest strength is, that they may be able to strip your poor.

Unjust witnesses rising up have asked me things I knew not. The Gospel calls them false witnesses: the Prophet, unjust. And the false ones whom the Gospel calls, are questioned; but those of whom the prophet speaks, question. Wherefore it is to be understood that the princes of the priests are the unjust witnesses, who asked what they knew not, saying: I adjure you by God, that you tell us if you are the Son of God (Matt. 26). But when he said, I am, they rent their garments, and cried out as if in testimony: You yourselves have heard the blasphemy; what need we any further witnesses? For the testimony was false, that they should say he had blasphemed, who had spoken the truth.

And they repaid me evil for good: to the barrenness of my soul. While I exhibited life, they condemned me to death, and to him promising the fecundity of heavenly goods, they brought penury of life. So did the Jews to Christ: for good they returned evil. To the barrenness of my soul; that is, just as their souls were barren of good, and full of sin: so they wished the soul of Christ to have been.

But as for me, when they were troublesome to me, I was clothed with sackcloth (*cilicio*). These are the arms of the saints. But the whole psalm is in the person of Christ, and through Christ it can be referred to all the saints. I was clothed with sackcloth. And I humbled my soul in fasting. We read of his fasting, we do not read of sackcloth. But by sackcloth, sinners are meant, because it is the garment of penance. I was clothed with sackcloth. As if he were to say: Divinity clothed itself in flesh, and from sin condemned sin. But as for me, when they were troublesome to me, I was clothed with sackcloth, and I humbled my soul in fasting, and my prayer shall be turned into my bosom. For the Lord put on the roughness of the passion, and mourning for the hardness of the people not believing: he celebrated a fast until evening, when in the evening of the world he was offered for the salvation of the world. His prayer was turned into the bosom of the Father, when in nothing was he frustrated by the Father, and the Father granted it not as to a lesser, but to declare the assumed man. Christ fasted not carnally, but spiritually.

Hungering he came to the fig tree: thirsting he came to the fountain. He hungered for the salvation of the human race: he thirsted for the faith of the Church. He hungered in the passion, when all, especially the apostles, denied him, except only the thief confessed on the cross. And my prayer shall be turned into my bosom. That is, he acted in the secret of God the Father. And the saints pray in secret: that is, in the heart, where God is seen, as in the Gospel: When you pray, enter into your chamber, and pray to your Father in secret (Matt. 6). And Hannah prayed in the temple (1 Kings 1).

As if a neighbor, as if our brother. If we take the psalm from the person of David, we take the neighbor to be Saul. If from Christ's, he calls Judas the traitor his neighbor. Or neighbor and brother, Christ to the Jews: because from them he drew his humanity. So did I please (*complacebam*). That is, God the Father: he was brother and neighbor on account of corporeal generation. As one mourning, and sorrowful, so was I humbled. For he mourned when, with an angel strengthening him, drops of his sweat as it were blood fell down to the ground. And he was sorrowful when he said: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (Matt. 26). As one mourning and sorrowful. Christ mourned for our part, as in that: Seeing, he says, the city, he wept over it (Luke 19). So was I humbled: because Christ was humbled in the passion. Or, so did I please: because he pleased the Father through faith and hope.

And they rejoiced against me. The Jews rejoiced when they apprehended Christ, that they might crucify him. And they assembled together. They assembled for this, that they might crucify Christ, not that they might believe. Or they were gathered against me, and assembled, when they had the promise of my betrayal. Scourges (*flagella*) were gathered upon me. They scourged Christ, as he said: You are come out as it were with swords and clubs to me (Matt. 26). And Pilate said: I will let him go amended: that is, I will let him go scourged. And I knew not. It is asked what he knew not. Some think the pain of the wounds which he suffered on the cross. But it is better referred to sins, that he had no consciousness of sins, for which he should be crucified. And I knew not, not that Christ is ignorant of anything: but I knew not, because for that which happened to me, I committed it not. Or they knew not, that God lay hidden under the veil of the flesh.

They were dissipated. From the bond of charity. Nor were they pricked. That they might do penance. They tempted me. In many ways the Jews tempted Christ, as one of them said: Master, which is the first commandment (Matt. 22)? They mocked me with mockery (*subsannaverunt*). Mocking and saying: Hail, king of the Jews (John 19). They gnashed upon me with their teeth. Crying out, Crucify him. By the movements of the body, the movement of the soul is shown. By teeth, malice is understood: because through malice they crucified him, and gnashed with their teeth against him.

Lord, when will you look upon me? The prophet speaks from the person of the Church. As if he were to say: Look upon the iniquity of the evil ones, and discern my justice from them. And you will restore my soul from their malignancy, my only one (*unicam*) from the lions. He calls the persecutors themselves lions, who strived to swallow his soul with their mouth: but by his resurrection they were confounded. Behold, his prayer was turned into his bosom, when his only one, that is, the soul itself was restored whole to the body. And who, you ask, restored it? He himself with the paternal will, who said: I have power to lay down my soul, and I have power to take it up again (John 10). And my only one from the lions. The lion is the Jewish people themselves, on account of the strength of their malice. My only one: because the soul of Christ alone was without sin, according to the prophet: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth (Isa. 53).

I will give thanks to you, Lord, in a great church (*Ecclesia magna*). That is, diffused in the whole world. In a grave people I will praise you. That is, in the Christian people, there I will praise you. It is called grave (*gravi*). Because it is not light to sin: Not light, which the wind will cast away like dust from the face of the earth: but in a grave one, and founded upon a rock, and firmly keeping the precepts. Hence again he records his passion, by which he rather announces to them the judgment of death saying:

Let them not rejoice over me that are my enemies wrongfully. The Jews against Christ, and the persecutors against the Church. Who have hated me without cause (*gratis*), and wink with the eyes. He says this that there may not be a repeated passion: because neither will a repeated redemption come. And they winked with the eyes: because they showed nothing of good in their work.

For they spoke indeed peaceably to me. And it is that: Master, is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not (Matt. 22)? Or when they said: Master, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God in truth (Ibid.). But these peaceable words were full of guile and anger. And in anger they devised guile. So they spoke, but they thought, that they might apprehend him, and bind him: as they did afterwards. In anger they did this, as James says: The anger of man works not the justice of God (James 1). And as he says elsewhere: Be angry and sin not (Psalm 4). Let not the sun go down upon your anger (Eph. 4).

They opened their mouth wide against me. They opened it wide, when they accused him in blasphemies. And, they opened their mouth wide against me: because they not only sinned against me: but they also insulted me, saying: If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him (Matt. 27). They said: Well done, well done (*Euge, euge*). As it says in the Gospel: Well done, good and faithful servant (Luke 19). Or it is the voice of the Jews: as if he were to say: Well, well we see what we

expected, those miracles which you did, that they were nothing. Or they said, well: but deceitfully. Our eyes have seen it. Because you accept not the person of man, nor have you care for anyone.

You have seen, O Lord. Father, their illusions. As if he were to say: You have seen them for judging. Be not silent, O Lord. Do not be silent. He is silent now, and he is not silent: that is, he is not silent in the commandment, he is silent in the judgment. I call you in testimony, when I shall judge the world. Do not depart from me. Because the Father departed not from the Son in the passion. But let me adhere to your right hand, until they be punished with worthy vengeance.

Arise, O Lord, arise. That is, to help. Attend to my judgment. That is, discern between me and the Jews. Attend to my judgment, because the punishment is equal, and the fault is unequal. That is, when he hung with those thieves, because he himself hung innocent. Arise, and attend to my judgment, how the judges condemned me to death. My God, and my Lord in my cause. The voice of humanity to the divinity, speaks for the part of the flesh. Judge me according to your great mercy. Wherefore he said, attend to my judgment, that is, make a distinction between me and them.

Judge me according to your justice, O Lord my God. I judged the adultress, that she might not be condemned; and these judged me innocent, worthy of death, therefore let each one according to his own work deserve judgment. Let them not rejoice over me, my enemies, lest they say in their

hearts: It is well, it is well to our soul (*Euge, euge animae nostrae*); nor let them say: We will devour him. Let not their mouth be opened further to devour me, lest they say, we will devour him. A man devours what he puts in his mouth. But in this he says to devour, because sinners wish to devour those saints: that is, that they may be made one body.

Let them be ashamed and confounded together that congratulate at my evils. That is, the demons, the Jews, the heretics, and the persecutors: who congratulate at my evils, that is, not only those who do them, but also those who consent to those doing them. Let them be clothed with confusion and shame that speak malignant things against me. These aforementioned with eternal confusion. Wherefore he says: Depart from me, you cursed, into eternal fire (Matt. 25). That they who judged me as it were a man, may see God judging. Hence the prophet speaks to the Father.

Let them rejoice and be glad that will my justice. Expecting Christ, who is the justice of the Father. Or, let them rejoice and be glad that will my justice: that is, the saints who will to fulfill the justice of God, let them rejoice and be glad in the reward of eternal life. And let them say: Let the Lord be magnified always: who will the peace of his servant. The Lord himself is our peace: according to the Apostle (Eph. 2). His servant: that is, Christ: who is the servant of God the Father. Wherefore he says: It is a great thing for you to

be called my servant (Isa. 49): for the part of the flesh.

But my tongue also shall meditate on your justice. 'My tongue': these are the saints, who meditate on the commandments of Christ. All the day, your praise. 'All the day': at all times to praise God. But my tongue also shall meditate on your justice: because having died for the life of the people, you were not left in hell (*tartaro*). All the day your praise: because having triumphed over death, you were received into heaven by the Father: with whom to you and to the Holy Spirit be honor and glory. Amen.

PSALM 35.

For the end, a psalm of David the servant of the Lord. This psalm designates the person of the sinner, notes pride, and shows the fountain of eternal light.

The unjust has said within himself, that he would sin. That is, to himself, the unjust, that is, the devil with his satellites. That is, the peoples of the Jews: or to his remaining members he sinned to himself. Nor does anyone else so speak through injustice that he may sin: as he who said: I will set my throne above the stars, and I will be like the Most High (Isa. 14). For iniquity always pierces itself with its own dart; according to that: Son, if you escape evil, you alone shall drain the evils (Prov. 12). Or otherwise: The wicked said that he would sin to himself: that is, he decreed that he ought to sin. There is no fear of God before his eyes. For if he had the fear of God

before his eyes, he would never commit execrable and abominable things. There is no fear of God before his eyes. That is, before the Jewish people: because if they had had the fear of the Lord before the eyes of their heart, they would never have done such great evils.

For he has acted deceitfully in his sight. The devil, and the Jews before the sight of God. Or, he acted deceitfully in his sight, stimulated by the flame of wicked concupiscence. That his iniquity may be found and his hatred. While he desired iniquity against justice, while he cannot take it away, he possessed hatred. But that these following things pertain also to Judas the traitor, the sequence teaches.

The words of his mouth are iniquity and guile. For he said: Hail, Rabbi, and with a kiss betrayed the master to his enemies. Behold the words of his mouth, full of guile and iniquity. The words of his mouth are iniquity, and guile, both in the devil, and in the people of the Jews. He would not understand that he might do well. That is, the devil and his satellites: because it is one thing not to be able, another thing to be unwilling. And Judas saw daily with the apostles Christ working many miracles, but he did not understand. For wisdom entereth not into a malicious soul.

He has devised iniquity on his bed (*cubili*). In the secret of the heart, in which he ought to have been pricked, he devised iniquity, of which we have already made mention above. On his bed, that is, in their heart. He has set himself on every way that is not good. Because he stood

there, therefore he could arrive at no fruit of justice. But evil he has not hated. But he loved it: because they not only did not hate it, but embraced it.

O Lord, your mercy is in heaven. That is, in the holy angels, who were confirmed there, and did not fall. Or, your mercy is in heaven, that is, in the holy Church, O Lord, your mercy is in heaven. Christ the Lord, who having pitied human labors descended from heaven, that he might bind up our wounds. And your truth reaches even to the clouds. Truth is Christ, as in that: I am the way, and the truth (John 14). The clouds are the holy preachers. Whence it is said: I will command my clouds, that they rain no rain upon it (Isa. 1). Because just as clouds carry rain and water the earth: so also holy preachers carry the rain, that is, the doctrine of the Gospel, and water parched hearts. And your truth reaches even to the clouds. From those who will not understand the Scriptures spiritually, it is to be asked of them, how the truth of God is even to the clouds.

Your justice is like the mountains of God. The mountain of God is wisdom; the mountain of God is judgment; the mountain of God is sanctification. There are also many mountains of this kind in which the secrets of God are hidden, which humanity can difficultly investigate, according to the Apostle: "How inscrutable are his judgments, and unsearchable his ways" (Rom. 11)! Or otherwise: "Your justice is like the mountains of God." Your justice: your commandments. The mountains of God: the saints of greater merit, such as

Saint John or the other apostles. Mountains are illuminated first by the sun, and afterwards the valleys. But the mountains, that is, the saints, are not [illuminated] by themselves, but by the sun, that is, by Christ. Whence he said: "The sun of justice shall arise for you" (Mal. 4). And your judgments are like a great abyss. A great abyss: the hidden judgments of God; because he reproves one and takes up another, as he said: "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated" (Mal. 1). Or they are judgments by which either beatitude is brought to the just or punishment to the impious. These are compared to an abyss because they are contemplated in the depths of the New and Old Testament.

"Men and beasts you will save, O Lord." Rational and irrational persons, according to that of the Apostle: "I am a debtor to the wise and to the unwise" (Rom. 1). "How you have multiplied your mercy, O God!" From the beginning indeed your mercy was overflowing; but then it was multiplied when you redeemed us with your own blood.

"But the children of men shall hope in the covering of your wings." Not the offspring of vipers, but those who are perfected in mind according to the image of God hope to be fortified under the defense of your cross. Or, "children of men," that is, children of Christ: because he himself is the Son of Man, and the saints are the children of men. In the protection of your wings, or, "in the covering." The two wings are the two Testaments, because from there the saints are

covered by Christ. "And they shall be inebriated." That is, the children themselves: they shall be inebriated indeed from the "abundance of your house," from the fatness (*pinguedine*) of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Of your house": of the holy Church. Or, "they shall be inebriated" so that, having forgotten their shames, they may be joined to virtues. "From the abundance of your house." From the understanding of Ecclesiastical dogmas. "And you shall make them drink of the torrent of your pleasure." The torrent of God's pleasure is the Holy Spirit, who waters every soul with spiritual streams, that it may exhibit the fruit of holiness.

"For with you, O Lord, is the fountain of life." And you are, and with you is the origin of all goods, and you bestow baptism, through which, having washed away crimes, you grant the eternal way. Or "fountain of life": because the doctrine of God is the life of the soul. "In your light we shall see light." The light of the Father is Christ. In Christ, the light of the Father, we shall see the light of the Holy Spirit. Your light is the Father: doing whose will, you came to enlighten the hidden things of darkness, so that in you, who are the light of the world, we might merit to discern that light in the grace of a pure mind. For thus he says to Philip: "He who sees me, sees also my Father" (John 14). "In his light," that is, in Christ, "we shall see light": that is, the Holy Spirit, who appeared over the apostles in the likeness of enlightening fire (Acts 2). "And in your light we shall see light," that is, we shall be enlightened by

Christ, as he says in the Gospel: "It was the true light which enlightens every man coming into this world" (John 8).

"Extend your mercy to them that know you." Who knew that you would come into the world. Of whom you afterwards say in the Gospel: "Many just men and prophets have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them" (Matt. 11). Not to the proud and the crafty, but to the pure in heart. Or show your mercy to them that know you, that is, those who know you and understand you, to them show your mercy, O Lord. "And your justice to them that are right of heart." Your justice: your commandments. Those who are "right of heart," that is, who do not have a duplicity of heart.

"Let not the foot of pride come to me." Lest, being puffed up with vanity, I fall into the snare of the devil and cannot escape. "And let not the hand of sinners move me": that is, let the works of the wicked not move me from good to evil. Let it not move me so that I be torn away from you.

There have all they fallen who work iniquity. In this pride and vanity against which they ought to have stood, they fell. They were cast out. From the kingdom of God. Nor could they stand. The demons were cast out from heaven, nor could they stand. Heaven could not hold them, because they had already collapsed into the feet of pride. But let us pray to the Lord, that he may instill in us the fear of his name, and customarily bestow mercy from heaven; let him take away from us pride, the enemy of his goods, and turn away

every guile; and let him make us, enlightened by the knowledge of his sacrosanct light, worthy of his kingdom. Amen.

PSALM 36.

A Psalm of David.

The thirty-sixth psalm glorifies the person of the just, notes the unjust; it instructs morals, teaches the goodness of God, and roots out wickedness.

Be not emulous of evildoers (*malignantibus*). Emulation has many interpretations, which ought to be either understood or explained in their place: for here it says, Be not a partaker with the wicked, neither unto zeal nor unto envy, because zeal is anger, according to that which the Lord says through the prophet: "In great indignation I have been zealous for Sion" (Zech. 8). But envy is malice (*livor*), according to that: "I have slain a young man in my malice" (Gen. 4). Neither be envious of them that work iniquity. Do not imitate those who through iniquitous frauds gather riches and seek honor; but attending to God, seek apostolic goodness.

For they shall quickly wither as hay, and as the green herbs shall they quickly fall. Rightly is this carnal glory and worldly power compared to hay (according to Isaiah). "All flesh," he says, "is hay, and all the glory thereof as the flower of hay" (Isa. 40). For the hay has withered, and its flower has fallen. To this sentence the apostle James added: "So also shall the rich man fade away in

his ways" (James 1). By a similar reasoning it is to be thought of the herbs: because not all herbs are suitable for the weak.

Hope in the Lord and do goodness. The divine word speaks to you as to a sick person: that among the other graces which are fruits of the spirit, you may exhibit goodness. Hope in the Lord: have hope always in the Lord. And do goodness: this is, fulfill the commandments. Inhabit the land: the holy Church, or your body. You should dominate the flesh; not the flesh you. And you shall be fed in its riches. In the sacred volumes. If this land exhibits the fruit of holiness, then you also shall rejoice in the riches of God.

Delight in the Lord, and he will give you the petitions of your heart. The heart always seeks wisdom. Therefore if, having admitted these delights, you delight in the Lord, he will give you the treasures of his wisdom, or whatever you shall ask through faith. Whence he said: "Because if two of you shall consent upon earth, concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask of my Father, it shall be done for them" (Matt. 15).

Reveal your way to the Lord. How does he say, "reveal"? Does God not know anything? No, but what you have in your heart, you ought to open to God in speech through your confession. Confess to him your actions; and hope in him always, and he himself will forgive you your sins. And hope in him. That he can remit to the delinquent. And he will do [it]. And what, you say, will he do?

And he will bring forth your justice as the light. To the clarity in which you have believed

in him. Your justice: that is, your works in clarity. And your judgment. By which you have chosen those things which are good. As the noonday. In the full splendor of his grace, which he reveals before his angels. Or by the noonday, the works of the saints are understood.

Be subject to the Lord. Not to sin, but be humble before the Lord. And pray to him. For present and ancient offenses. Whence Paul said: "I desire therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for kings and for all that are in high station" (1 Tim. 2).

Be not emulous in him. Do not be envious of him, as above: "And your judgment as the noonday." For then the just shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and all things shall be clear which are now hidden. Or, "be not emulous in him" who prospers in his way. Let not the brief happiness of the impious terrify you. Cease from anger, and leave fury. Be not emulous so as to do evil. Lay aside anger, lest, suffering iniquitous things, you be compelled to return the same.

Who prospers in his way. Who acts happily in this world. In the man doing injustice. For he precipitates himself by sinning, lest you desire to be with him who works iniquity.

Cease from anger. Which does not work the justice of God (James 1). Leave fury. Which according to Solomon loses even the wise (Prov. 19). Or cease, stop from anger of the mind and fury of the body. Be not emulous so as to be ma-

lignant. Lest by provoking others to wickedness, you yourself be made wicked.

For they that are malignant shall be exterminated. Because they do not have the root of piety. Or they shall be exterminated from the land of the living. But they that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land. That is, the land of promise, which flows with milk and honey.

Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Wait a little, and the sinner shall not be, who shall be taken hence: because he shall be overwhelmed by divine vengeance. And you shall seek his place, and shall not find it. In the future he shall not be: nor shall he receive a place of rest, and you shall seek his place, and shall not find it. If the place of the devil is sin, there will be a time when sin shall not be. But this shall then be, when we shall exult in the abundance of peace.

But the meek shall inherit the land. Whom no storm of fury agitates, nor fire of concupiscence inflames. They shall inherit that land of the living: because the mild and humble shall possess the land: that is, eternal life. And they shall delight in the abundance of peace. They shall delight: That is, they shall rejoice in the abundance of peace: that is, in Christ: when they shall have been joined in the kingdom of Christ, who is our peace.

The sinner shall watch the just. That, a place being found, he may harm him: because through those works of the saints they themselves are tortured and tormented in this present life: that is, in the mind within by the malice and envy which

they have. And he shall gnash upon him with his teeth. With the teeth of wickedness and malice, with which he strives to devour him. Through the movement of the body, as we said, he shows the movement of the soul.

But the Lord shall laugh at him: for he foresees that his day shall come. The day of the vengeance of the wrath of God. Does the Lord laugh at anyone? No, but because they themselves are worthy to be laughed at in vengeance. For he foresees that his day shall come: that is, the Lord knows when his perdition shall come.

The sinners have unsheathed the sword, etc. The sword, or the arrows of sinners, are words of seduction. But the bow or the scabbard is the mind of those from whom they are brought forth. Or, the sinners have unsheathed the sword, that is, the sword of persecutors in persecution. They have bent the bow: that is, their snares against the saints. To deceive the poor and the needy. Not the rich of the world, but the poor of Christ. To slay the upright in heart. That they may kill by seducing those who believe well. Because then the blood of the soul is shed, when anyone is blandly seduced and falls into sin. But these are to be referred to the heretics, against whom we ought to stand strong: so that what the prophet added may come upon them.

Let their sword enter into their own hearts, etc. For every one who speaks against God: or whose mind overflows in the foolish vanity of arrogance: nor attending to the Scriptures spiritually, corrupts them by a vicious interpretation:

he himself slays himself with his own dagger. And just as to the apostles their peace, if the house be unworthy, returns (Matt. 10): so also into the hearts of these the sword is fixed, if it be unsheathed against the innocent. Or, let their sword enter into their own hearts: that is, vengeance into their own souls. And let their bow be broken, their snares.

Better is a little to the just, than the great riches of the wicked. For he feared that which the Lord says in the Gospel: "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Matt. 16). But the "little" which he said is faith. Which although it be compared to a grain of mustard seed, yet it has great virtue. Better is a little to the just, than the great riches of the wicked. Although they be small, they are better: because Solomon said: "Better is a small portion with rest, than a full hand with iniquity" (Eccl. 4).

For the arms of sinners shall be broken. The arms, that is, their strength shall be broken in vengeance, lest they harm the innocent. But the Lord confirms the just. He corroborates the weak things in the faith of those who are conversant.

The Lord knows the ways of the immaculate. That is, their conversation. The Lord knows who are his; but the impure and those who are ignorant of him, he knows not. For every one who is ignorant shall be ignored. And their inheritance shall be for ever. In Christ, who is perpetual and eternal. Or it shall be for ever: that is, in eternal life.

They shall not be confounded in the evil time, etc. The evil time shows the time of judgment: in which, while the just suffer no hunger, it is said of the sinners: "Woe to you that are filled, for you shall hunger" (Luke 6). They shall not be confounded in the evil time. In the time of discussion, which shall be evil for the impious. And in the days of famine they shall be filled; even if they cease to be ministers of the word of God, these also shall be refreshed in Christ, who is the living bread. Or, in the days of famine they shall be filled: that is, when those sinners shall be empty, then the saints shall be filled with the grace of God. Because the sinners shall perish. Because they do not keep the commandments of God, if they have not amended themselves.

But the enemies of the Lord, as soon as they shall be honored. In earthly power. And exalted. In vain glory. Fading away like smoke, they shall fade away. But at the approach of death, all their glory shall waste away like smoke or a mist; because all things quickly pass away.

The sinner shall borrow (*mutabitur*), and shall not pay back. Because he will not restore the money of the Lord with usury. He received a loan from the Lord: that is, the five senses of the body, or riches, and he does not give thanks to God. But the just man shows mercy and lends. That is, he performs mercy both in himself and in others: that is, he discerns those five senses of the body. Or, the just man shows mercy and lends. He received the word, and supplies spiritual things to the spiritual: so that he may gain not only

himself, but others. In this verse, indeed, the pity for the poor is also to be understood.

Because they that bless him shall inherit the land. In which the goods of God are stored. Those who always praise God, they also shall possess the land: that is, they are accustomed to possess both this land, and afterwards they shall possess the land of the living. But they that curse him shall perish. The Lord promising: "I will be an enemy to your enemies, and I will afflict them that afflict you" (Exod. 23).

With the Lord the steps of a man shall be directed. By which he strives to pass over to him. Thus also Rebecca went to inquire not from place to place, but from life to life (Gen. 24); and Moses, the bonds of his feet being loosed, passed over to see the bush (Exod. 3). And you, if you apply your mind that you may pass from death to life, not by the steps of the feet, but by the virtue of the mind, your steps are directed by the Lord. To the Lord the steps of men shall be directed, the senses of each one: as Solomon says: "It is for man to prepare his way, but the Lord will direct his steps" (Prov. 16). And he shall desire his way. That he may come to him, who is the way, the truth, and the life. Or he desires his commandments.

When he shall fall, he shall not be crushed. Why? Because the Lord strengthens his hand. That is, his works. When he shall fall, on account of the infirmity of the flesh: because "seven times the just man falls, and rises again": he shall not be crushed, because the Lord puts his hand under. He immediately pities the one performing

penance. Thus also David and Peter purged their known offense with tears, and were confirmed by the Lord.

I have been young, and am now old, and I have not seen the just forsaken. "Be not," says the Apostle, "made children in your senses, but in malice be children" (1 Cor. 14). Therefore this man from the beginning of his age was a child in malice, but an old man in divine virtue: he understood that never could the just man be forsaken by the Lord, nor his seed seeking the bread of heavenly doctrine: of which he provided the word to the unwise. Nor his seed seeking bread. His seed: his works. Seeking bread: that is, the word of God.

All the day he shows mercy and lends. It is day when each one practices good. This man, therefore, all the days of his life lends out the money of his Lord, not for worldly gains, but to acquire heavenly ones. All the day: at all times. He shows mercy, from God: that is, he who ministers the doctrine of God to others. And his seed shall be in blessing. The works which he has done, or the doctrine which he has taught, shall be blessed by the Lord. But "seed" is also referred to the Christian people, who are enriched in the Church by assiduous blessing. And his seed shall be in blessing, in abundance and glory.

Decline from evil. In work. And do good. What God has commanded. Decline from evil and do good. Decline from evil: from the devil, or from sin; and do good, that is, fulfill the commandments. And inhabit for ever and ever. In the

Church, in the unity of faith, be perpetual with him.

For the Lord loves judgment. Right judgment, by which he discerns the just and the impious.

And he will not forsake his saints. Who have placed their whole hope in him. They shall be preserved for ever. That is, in perpetuity, because they have desired eternal things.

The unjust shall be punished. In vengeance. And the seed of the impious shall perish. The seed of the impious: that is, their works shall be punished with them in torments, and every work of theirs shall be destroyed, because it is iniquitous.

But the just shall possess the land by inheritance. The land of the living. And they shall inhabit it for ever and ever. Upon that which is without end: from which sorrow and groaning have fled.

The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom. That is, Christ: whence it says: "And in his law he shall meditate day and night" (Psalm 1). When it says, "he shall meditate," it signifies the future time, which is understood for acting in the kingdom of God: in which the mouths of the just shall be filled not with the wine of luxury, nor with voluptuous foods, but with the wisdom of God. And his tongue shall speak judgment. When he tells with weight, and not fraudulently, nor with anger, but with just judgment, those things which he feels concerning God. For in him in whom spiritual grace abounds, he searches all things, even the deep things of God.

The law of his God is in his heart. That is, in the mind of the just. Not only in the mouth and tongue, but also in the depth of his heart shall the works of holiness bear fruit, through the law of God. And [his steps] shall not be supplanted. By the adversary. His steps. By which he strives to arrive at God. Or, his steps shall not be supplanted. His senses by the devil, or by sin.

The sinner watches the just, etc. For the people of the Jews gazed upon the just Son of God, and gnashed at him: because he was grievous to them even to behold. So also now the enemy watches each one of us that he may destroy him. But if one resist vigilantly, that which follows will happen.

But the Lord will not leave him in his hands. Certainly in his power. Nor will he damn him when he shall be judged for him. The impious gives judgment that the just may perish, and the Lord does not damn him, because he has kept his law. But he does not condemn that just man in the day of judgment, when he judges the impious.

Wait for the Lord, and keep his ways. Through firm hope and unfailing keeping of the commandments God is expected: therefore we ought not to be confounded in the diverse temptations of the world. Wait for the Lord: Whatever happens to you in prosperity and in adversity, wait patiently: that is, sustain [it]. He will exalt you, that you may take the land by inheritance. Certainly that land of eternal beatitude: in which the just shall be exalted after their finished labors.

When the sinners shall perish, you shall see. Then the just shall see the sinners perish, when they shall receive the fruit of their reward, the Lord granting it.

I have seen the impious exalted, and elevated above the cedars of Lebanon, and I passed by, and lo, he was not. When we shall have passed over the sea of this world, then we shall see that the devil is not, and that his place, sin, appears by no means. The cedar has two interpretations, but in this place its explanation is this: for just as the cedar appears exalted above the high mountains, and often falls by the impulse of winds: so also the impious who, having left God, trusts in the riches of the world: however much he may flourish, however much he may be extolled and elevated, he shall not be found when he shall have migrated from this world. But these things are also referred to Judas the traitor. Or the cedars of Lebanon are the saints on account of the height of their merits, and the priests, by the odor of good work. The impious are above them: because they trample and oppress them. "I passed by, and lo, he was not." Let the apostolic company say this, because I passed over the storm of the passion of Jesus: and he rising again, this man was not here: because he went away and hanged himself with a snare. "I sought him, and his place was not found." But that his place was not found, and his habitation remained desolate, Peter revealed in the Acts of the Apostles, when he substituted Matthias into his order (Acts 1). Or, "I passed by, and lo, he was not: I sought him, and his place

was not found": that is, of the impious himself. "His place was not found": for the great velocity with which they fail.

Keep innocence, and behold equity. If you harm no one: if you are litigious with no one, you shall see Christ: because just as he is the way, the truth, and the life: so also he is understood as equity. "For there are remains (*reliquiae*) for the peaceful man." He who has lived peacefully here, so as to be called a Son of God: his remains, that is, the mortal body, are reserved for the glory of the resurrection, according to that of the Apostle: "This mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15). The remains of the impious shall perish. For "remains," in the Hebrew, it has "the end things" (*novissima*).

But the unjust, etc.; "the remains of the impious shall perish." Their remains are not reserved out of pride, so that they may live for ever: but that they may perish into the punishment of the fire of Gehenna.

But the salvation of the just is from the Lord. Through whom they both take the present life, and wait to obtain the eternal. "But the salvation of the just is from the Lord." He himself is our salvation. And he is their protector in the time of tribulation. "He shall help them," etc. Therefore he shall save them, and he is their protector in the time of tribulation, when they walk through the narrow way which leads to life, full of sorrows and hardships. And the Lord will help them and deliver them from sinners: he will save them, because they have hoped in him, when he leads

them to the perfection of a pure mind. They have merited to come to him because they have hoped in him. For in all straits they have placed their hope in him, who said: "I am God, and besides me there is no other." I will kill and I will make to live: I will strike, and I I will heal" (Deut. 32). Who heals all the infirmities of our minds: and grants us to lift up our hope with all our heart, and bestows that we be placed in himself: so that, being delivered from sins, we may merit, he himself distributing it, to obtain also the reward of eternity.

PSALM 37.

For the end, a Psalm of David in remembrance of the Sabbath day. "Sabbath" is interpreted as "rest": that is, when the saints rest: that is, when the Church rests in that rest of paradise which it lost in Adam. This psalm shows that if infirmity happens to the corporeal fragility, the heavenly medicine should not cease to be sought.

"O Lord, rebuke me not in your fury, nor in your wrath correct me." The whole psalm is from the person of a penitent: but it can be referred to Christ, as also the sixty-eighth. "O Lord, rebuke me not in your fury, nor in your wrath correct me." Wrath is, as we have often said, a commotion of the mind. But fury is an irrational vengeance, with the bitterness of gall. Therefore this man who knows himself a sinner asks to be rebuked not in wrath, but through mercy; nor in fury, but through patience.

"For your arrows are fastened in me." The words of doctrine, which like a dart have pierced my heart, that I might perform penance. "And you have strengthened your hand upon me." So that like a good master you might render the one afflicted by the scourges of correction amended.

"There is no health in my flesh because of the face of your wrath." I have seen the face of your wrath, and not the wrath itself: that is, I have understood through the holy Scriptures how great things you will threaten to sinners, and I have wasted away, asking that that wrath might not descend upon me. "There is no peace for my bones because of the face of my sins." I have indulged no rest, either for my bones or for my members, until I should purge them by repenting.

"For my iniquities are gone over my head." For they have prevailed against me, as follows: "As a heavy burden they are become heavy upon me." For my sin is not light to me, but I recognize that it has imposed a heavy weight of judgment upon me, and has grown above the top of my head. As a great weight, so are my sins upon me.

"My scars (*cicatrices*) have rotted and are corrupted." It is the custom of swine to use mud or dung for good odors, nor do they understand that they wallow in these most filthily. For to me the wounds of sins stink and rot, and I longingly seek the physician. And why, you say, have they rotted? "Because of my foolishness (*insipientiae*)." Because I was unwilling to perform penance. "Because of my foolishness." Through

this they have rotted, namely through my foolishness: as Paul says: "That which is weak of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 2).

"I am become miserable and am bowed down even to the end." Until I should be purged by confessing: because without confusion and sadness sins are not forgiven. "All the day I went sorrowful." Judging myself to be unworthy even to dare to lift my eyes to heaven: but striking my breast, I said: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner."

"For my loins are filled with illusions." He professes himself to be weakened and filled with those illusions by which the devil allures the human race that it may sin. "O God, you have known my foolishness: because my loins are filled with illusions." Let each one consider himself, and understand the titillating pleasure of the body, and then he can say with the apostle Paul: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (Rom. 7)? And that: "For the good which I will, I do not; but the evil which I will not, that I do."

"I am bowed down and humbled exceedingly." To penance. "I roared with the groaning of my heart." Seeking remission with mourning. The groaning of the body is one thing, and the groaning of the heart another. The groaning of the body is to groan on account of earthly things or on account of death. The groaning of the heart is on account of one's own sins, or those of others. But Christ had nothing to groan for, because he did no sin. "And my groaning is not hidden from you." That is, whatever a man has, God knows.

Whatever I have committed, whatever evil I have done, I have opened all to you with groaning: knowing that hidden things are not concealed from you.

"My heart is troubled within me, my strength has left me." Because I am terrified to incur the wrath which I mentioned above. "And the light of my eyes is not with me." Because, having postponed the light of truth, I had fallen into the darkness of sins. For our predecessors taught that the prophet followed the whole order of this psalm from the person of a sinner. Let them feel what they please. But I, from that place where he says: "My friends and my neighbors," even to the end of the psalm: I see my Lord Jesus Christ surrounded by the Jews, suspended on the cross, and rising from hell (*inferno*). Therefore the Lord himself says of his passion:

"My friends and my neighbors have drawn near and stood against me." The Jews are called friends, on account of Abraham. Neighbors, because from their generation he assumed flesh, who drew near to him that he might be apprehended. "My friends and my acquaintances have stood against me." It can also be taken of the disciples, who, terrified by fear in the passion, withdrew from the Lord: in so much that even Peter denied him. Or "they stood," pleading against him.

"And those who were near me stood afar off." The apostles or the remaining disciples, of whom the Evangelist says: "But when they had apprehended him, all his acquaintances were standing

afar off" (Luke 23). "And they used violence who sought my soul." Not his acquaintances, but the Jews used violence: either against Peter, when they said: "For you also are one of them" (Luke 22). Or against James, who, when he was being dragged away, having left behind his linen cloth, fled naked from them (Mark 14). "And they used violence who sought my soul": namely the Jews, as if their strength were their own, and they had not received that very power from God.

"And they who sought evils for me spoke vanities, and studied deceits all the day long." They indeed meditated on many deceits; as when they asked if they ought to give tribute to Caesar or not (Matt. 22): or if a woman caught in adultery should be stoned (John 8). But then they openly bring in deceit when they lead forward false witnesses. Or, "they who inquired after evils for me spoke vanity," when they said: "In Beelzebub he casts out demons" (Luke 11).

"But I, as one deaf, did not hear, and as one dumb, not opening his mouth." I always bore the things they reproached, and I was continually silent. Pilate also manifests this when he says: "Do you not answer me? Do you not know that I have power to release you?" (John 19). "But I, as one dumb, not opening his mouth." And before Pilate the Lord did not speak. And Isaiah speaks of the same: "As a lamb led to the slaughter, not opening his mouth" (Isa. 53).

"And I became as a man not hearing, and not having in his mouth any retorts." For when they smeared me with spittle, beat me with a reed,

and mocked me with bended knee, I answered nothing to them, being unmoved. "And not having in his mouth any retorts." Thus I was silent when accused, as if not having anything I ought to answer for myself. Christ gave an example in all things, that a man ought to bear scourges and correction patiently.

"Since in you, O Lord, I have hoped, you will hear me, O Lord my God": That you may raise me up. Or "you will hear me": that is, see their pride and my humility.

"Because I said, lest at any time my enemies should rejoice over me, and while my feet are moved." The feet of Christ in the passion: or the holy apostles, who ought to have been the feet of Christ: they were moved from faith to unbelief. My feet can be moved from their stability, and my enemies insult me: if, humbled in this death of the cross, I shall not have risen again. "They spoke great things against me." Saying: "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matt. 27).

"But I am ready for scourges." I prepare myself to endure the cross, the lance, the gall, the vinegar, so that through this death I may redeem with my blood the perishing people, because Christ came for this, that he might endure the passion. "And my sorrow is always in my sight." Until I bring forth victory into judgment.

"For I will announce my iniquity, and I will think for my sin." For just as he was subjected to the curse, that he might rescue us from the curse of the law, so also he professes himself a sinner,

who bore our sins, so that by a pious thought and counsel of mercy, he might rescue us from the same. "And I will be solicitous for my sin." The sin of Christ is the sins of the human race: on account of which he is now said to be subject to the Father.

"But my enemies live." Because they were not immediately punished by divine vengeance. "And they are strengthened over me." They are strengthened in the letter of the law: in which they did not understand what was spiritually announced. "And they are multiplied who hate me unjustly." Certainly unjustly and not reasonably: because in this letter, they believed their seed would be multiplied like the stars of heaven.

"Who rendered me evil for good." They gave him vinegar to drink, and gall, who brought the sweetness of eternal life. "They detracted me." Saying: "Others he saved; himself he cannot save" (Luke 23). "Because I followed goodness." That fulfilling the will of the Father, I might undergo death for the life of the people.

"Do not forsake me, O Lord my God: do not depart from me." When I shall have penetrated the depths of hell.

Attend unto my help, O Lord God of my salvation. It is manifest, Lord Jesus, that the Father attended unto you, raising you from the dead on the third day, and setting you at his right hand in the heavenly places above every principality and power: giving you a name which is above every name. Therefore, because the battles of the flesh are grievous, do you, O Lord, attend unto our

help, and be to us salvation in the time of tribulation.

PSALM XXXVIII.

Unto the end, for Idithun, a canticle of David. Idithun is interpreted as "leaping over them." This psalm teaches patience, that man, restraining his mouth, may take heed lest through the folly of words he fall into sin: for the prophet knows that even for idle words an account must be rendered. It also teaches that we should treasure up in this world those things which pertain to the profit of souls.

I said, I will keep my ways: that I sin not with my tongue. I know no other way to keep the paths of my life, except not to speak foolish, or diverse, or idle things. By your words, says the Lord, you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned. I said, I will keep my ways: that is, I have determined to guard my works: namely, the five senses of the body. That I sin not with my tongue. I shall not sin, I shall not offend: for he who guards his tongue guards his soul (Prov. XVIII): for death and life are in the hands of the tongue (Isai. XXXII). And likewise: The cultivation of justice is silence and peace (Eccli. XXVIII).

I have set a guard to my mouth. According to that saying: Bind well your silver and your gold, and make a door and a bolt for your mouth. For the guarding of the mouth makes a man blessed: when he does not utter vain things, but such as are worthy of God. When the sinner stood up against me. That is, the devil, who curses and de-

tracts the just, and is the instigator of those who lie in wait for the saints.

I became mute. Lest I should raise a clamor against those who reproached me. I became mute, and I did not open my mouth, because you did it. Therefore I bear it patiently: because I know that you have left me for tribulations for the sake of testing. And I was humbled. To endure their reproaches. And I kept silence from good things. From a good conscience there proceeded to me security: therefore I did not justify myself before men: nor did I make known the good things that were in me: for I know that the Father who sees in secret will repay me. And my sorrow was renewed. For I had not yet come to be a perfect man. For although I bore reproaches with sorrow, I did not yet know how to bless those who cursed me. Or, "my sorrow was renewed." In this the sorrow of Christ is spoken of: because they were not worthy to hear the words of the mystery, as the prophet says: Woe is me, for I kept silence (Isai. VI). Or that saying: I will make your tongue cleave to your palate, for the Lord is one who provokes (Ezech. III).

My heart was trampled within me. The Church speaks. From the recollection of former sins. And in my meditation a fire shall be kindled. What, you ask, were you meditating upon? Namely this: how I might find that fire which would consume sins, which would illumine the mind, which is the Holy Spirit, of whom Cleophas and those who were with him said: Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke to us on

the way, and opened to us the Scriptures (Luc. XXIV)?

I spoke with my tongue. That is, I preached to all men, according to that saying: If you do not announce to the wicked man his iniquity, I will require his blood at your hand (Ezech. III). Make known to me, O Lord, my end. And what is the number of my days? The prophet does not seek to have made known to him the end of this present life: but that end in which, the powers being emptied out and death destroyed, he may be joined to Christ, who is the end of the law. Nor does he wish to know the number of these days, but of those of which the Lord says: In my Father's house there are many mansions (Joan. XIV). And what is the number of my days? That is, a number without number, a day without day, times without time. "Who is it?" He who always is. That I may know what is wanting to me. That is, that you make me understand all good things, so that when I have come to know these, I may know what is still wanting, while dwelling in this world, for the attainment of the palm of blessedness. For Paul was perfect who said: I have fought the good fight: I have finished the course. But now there is wanting to me the crown of justice, which the Lord will render to me (II Tim. IV). But that he speaks these things not of his own days, what follows shows.

"Behold, you have made my days measurable." According to the old man they have been until now: now I desire the new, that which Abraham saw and rejoiced (John 8). In which

elsewhere we are exhorted to rejoice, in which God the Lord has shone upon us. Which shall not be illuminated by the sun, nor by the moon, but shines by a perpetual light from the Lord himself. "And my substance is as nothing before you." Receiving your brightness with a higher mind: I judged my substance as nothing.

"Truly universal vanity is every living man." If he is a sinner, and has flowed in delights, he stands in vanity. If he is just, and desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ, the present life is nonetheless vain to him.

"Truly man passes in the image of God, but he is troubled in vain." Every man was made to the image of God. If therefore he seems to walk in it, and yet is involved in robberies and concupiscences, he is troubled in his action.

"He treasures up, and he knows not for whom he shall gather these things." For often many treasure up and gather many things, which either the sloth of their children overturns, or the fiscus occupies, or strangers pillage. But blessed is he who treasures up there where thieves do not dig through nor steal (Matt. 6), where he may deserve to hear: "As long as you did it to one of these least, you did it to me" (Matt. 25).

"And now what is my expectation, is it not the Lord? and my substance is with you." Having left all things, I will wait for you, O Lord, because the substance of this life is not compared to that eternal beatitude.

"Deliver me from all my iniquities." Past, present, and future. "You have made me a reproach

to the foolish." While I was a sinner, I was made a reproach to the foolish devil, who is both the instigator and the accuser of all crimes. Therefore I desire to be purged in this world, lest he accuse me in your judgment.

"I was dumb and I did not open my mouth, because you did it." When he provoked me with reproaches, wraths, and various insults: thinking that I was made by you, I answered nothing to those things which were brought against me. "Remove your scourges from me." Because I feel myself corrected.

"From the strength of your hand I have fainted." While the hand of vengeance was incumbent, the power of the offense fainted, just as Paul the apostle says: "But when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12). "From rebukes on account of iniquity you have corrected man." Every man is rebuked on account of iniquity, whom the divine majesty does not wish to perish. For he scourges every son whom he receives.

"You have made his soul waste away like a spider." The soul wastes away when the flesh is restrained from luxuries and concupiscences. This is to waste away: to be stupefied concerning former offenses. But he who does those things which are suited to worldly vanity, weaves the webs of a spider, according to Isaiah the prophet (Isa. 59): that is, he is vacant day and night in vain work, and works things not useful, but dissoluble and corruptible, works. But because the prophet says the soul wastes away like a spider: this is to be understood, that it is boiled down by absti-

nence to such subtlety, that it is drawn out after the likeness of those threads: namely so that it contains nothing thick or hard of sin. "Truly every man is troubled in vain." Living in the vanities of this world. But also to him who lives in God, this worldly trouble is vain and useless.

"Hear my prayer, O Lord, and my supplication: give ear to my tears." Because I am a pilgrim from you, and I have a desire to be dissolved and to pass to you.

"Be not silent, for I am a stranger with you, and a pilgrim as all my fathers were." He calls himself a dweller and a pilgrim, like all the saints: because just as they also, while they were in the body, were pilgrims from the Lord.

"Forgive me that I may be refreshed before I go away, and I shall be no more." Forgive here, O Lord, if I have offended in anything: because in hell there is no remission: because neither does confession avail. You who have snatched us from the pilgrimage of this world, may you deign to make us citizens of the saints and members of the household of God the Father, so that being built upon the most firm foundation into a holy temple, we may deserve to be made conformable to the body of your glory. Amen.

PSALM 39.

"Unto the end, a Psalm of David." This psalm in the beginning has the voice of the people called from the Gentiles into the inheritance, and then of the Mediator himself to the Father.

"Waiting, I waited for the Lord": In the promises of the prophets, in which he illuminated me: because the prophet foresaw that Christ would come in the flesh through the Holy Spirit. "And he attended to me": Through the splendor of the Gospels, in which he illuminated me.

"And he heard my prayers." Because he hid himself from the prophets and patriarchs, as he himself afterwards said: "For many prophets and just men have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them" (Luke 10). He himself shines upon me in the New Testament. "And he brought me out of the lake of misery, and out of the pit of dregs." In which I was immersed, when I worshipped dumb idols. Or, "out of the pit of dregs": because I had cleaved to earthly desires.

"He set my feet upon a rock." Upon a rock: that is, upon Christ. "My feet," my senses: as that: "But the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10). In himself, who is the stable rock, he confirmed me: lest I should waver from the impulses of this world. "And he directed my steps." Lest coming to him, I should look behind my back. "And he directed my steps": that is, the senses of good works: he directs those of the Church: because each one by himself is crooked.

"And he put into my mouth a new song." His praise, indeed: because a new man came into the world, he gave a new law to the world. "A hymn to our God": Praise to our God, so that I may no longer sing base and theatrical sounds, but may

delight in the hymns of the living God through the harmony of the New Testament.

"Many shall see." Announced as having come. "And shall fear." Those who understand themselves to be sinners. "And shall hope in the Lord." That their former offenses may be forgiven them.

"Blessed is the man whose hope is the name of the Lord." In which he may be filled with all good things. Happy is that soul which has firm faith and direct hope in Christ. "And he has not looked upon vanities and false madnesses." All things that are in the world, according to Solomon, are vanity (Eccles. 1). But false madnesses are angers, strifes, pillages, and the rest: in which men go mad so that they may sin: which the Apostle says are the works of the flesh (Gal. 5).

"Many things have you done, O Lord my God, your wonderful works, and in your thoughts there is no one who is like you." You showed our fathers many of your wonderful works, which they did not believe. You revealed to them that you were coming in the law, and they did not understand: but we have believed. Up to here is the people of believers: from here the Lord himself to the Father thus began:

"I have announced and spoken." Saying: "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven has drawn near" (Matt. 3). "They are multiplied above number." The Jews in their malice. Or, "above number": that is, sinners are above number, and are outside of number: because they are not worthy to be numbered in the number of the just.

"Sacrifice and oblation you did not desire: but you have perfected ears for me. Holocausts and for sin you have not required." The Apostle clearly declares these things: that, upon the coming of the Lord, the sacrifices of the Jews ceased. It is impossible, he says, that by the blood of goats, or of bulls, sins should be taken away (Heb. 10). Therefore, entering the world, he says: "Host and oblation you did not desire, but you have fitted a body for me. Holocaust and for sin did not please you, unless I should exhibit myself as a sacrifice to you for the offense of the whole world."

"Then I said: Behold, I come. In the head of the book it is written of me." Because you have changed the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Jews, and the sabbaths, and the superstitions of the old Law, for the religion of the spiritual Gospel: therefore I come joyfully into the world, and of me it is written: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1). "Then I said, Behold, I come," so that I may assume flesh in which I may suffer. "In the head of the book it is written of me." The head of the book of the Old Testament takes such a beginning: "In the beginning God made heaven and earth" (Gen. 1): that is, in Christ the Lord. John also, discerning this mystery, thus began his Gospel: "In the beginning," he said, "was the Word, and the Word was God." For he himself, to the Jews asking who he was, answered: "The Principle" (John 8). The head of the book, therefore, understand as the Principle, which is Christ

Jesus, who was announced in this head of the book.

"That I might do your will, O my God, I have desired." For I descended from heaven: not that I might do my own will, but yours, O Father. It is not the will of the flesh, but of the Father: that I may die for the life of men. "And your law in the midst of my heart." Which I have not come to loosen, but to fulfill.

"I have announced your justice in the great Church." I give thanks to you, Savior of the world, that you have made your Church great, called from the four parts of the world by evangelical preaching, gathered by your passion, cleansed by your resurrection. "In the great Church," diffused in the whole world.

"Behold, I will not restrain my lips, O Lord, you know," etc. I was not silent, I spoke nothing in secret, but all your power, that you are just, that you are truthful, that you are merciful, that you are the salvation of all: not only in the Churches of the peoples, but even in the synagogues of the Jews, I incessantly preached. "Behold, I will not restrain my lips." The lips of Christ are the holy ones. He does not restrain them from preaching, just as Saint Paul says: "The word of God is not bound" (2 Tim. 2). "You have known": you know that I did not do it, that is, I did not restrain. "I have not hidden your justice in my heart," this is, your commandments. "I have spoken of your truth and your salvation." The truth and the salvation is Christ: the holy ones preach this. I have not concealed your mercy and your truth from

the great assembly, that is, I have announced it in the whole people.

"But you, O Lord, do not remove your mercies far from me: your mercy and your truth have always received me. Because evils without number have surrounded me." That he asks for the mercy of the Father, that he says he is surrounded by the Jews and that iniquities are multiplied upon him: that having been forsaken by his heart, he again prays for the protection of the Father: all these things are to be referred to the infirmity of the flesh, so that as he is believed to be true God, so also true man. "But you, O Lord, do not remove your mercies far from me." Not far, but near. "Your mercy and your truth have always received me." Mercy makes sins to be forgiven. Truth renders to each one what he has done. "My iniquities have overtaken me, and I was not able to see." That is, the human race is surrounded by original sins, and I was not able to see: because that light of truth had been withdrawn. Whence it is said: "From the earth you shall be blinded, and from the earth you shall be illuminated."

"They are multiplied above the hairs of my head." That is, those very iniquities upon the human race. "My heart has forsaken me." When a man sins, he does not have his heart. Whence David said: "Your servant has found his heart" (2 Sam. 7). Therefore before, when he sinned, he did not have it.

"Let it please you, O Lord, to deliver me, O Lord," the Church asks of Christ: "Let this please you, that you deliver me." "Look toward my

help." Infirmity has the will of impetrating, but it does not have the power.

"Let them be confounded." In wicked thoughts, so that they may perceive those things which are right: either let them amend here, or in the future, "and let them be ashamed." This is, that they may have reverence.

"Let them be turned backward." Those who have had an evil course.

"Let them immediately bear their confusion: who say to me, Aha, aha." He mercifully prays for them to be confounded, so that they may immediately know justice. Let them carry their confusion, who shall not have amended themselves. "Who say to me, Aha, aha." The Church has two enemies, flatteries and blasphemies.

"Let all those that seek your justice rejoice and be glad." This is, faith and works. "And let them say always, The Lord be magnified." Let the people of the saints be magnified. Whence he said: "Let them see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5). "Who love your salvation." That is, your Christ. The prophet says these things of those to whom the Lord himself says through the Gospel: "If you love me, and my words remain in you, whatever you ask shall be done for you" (John 15).

"But I am needy and poor: O God, help me." Christ is needy and poor: though he was rich, he was made needy. He is called needy who has something, and lacks something. And he is called poor, who has nothing. Destitute (inops), that is, without help (sine ope).

Be my helper and my deliverer, O Lord; my God, do not delay. And these things are to be referred to bodily trepidation. For the divinity which was in the assumed man is subject to no passion, but in the same power in which it was, it both remains and will remain, both now and then forever and ever. Amen.

BOOK XL.

To the end, a Psalm of David. The prophet sang this psalm through the Holy Spirit in the person of Christ. The psalm contains the voice of the prophet pronouncing concerning Christ in the beginning: then of the Mediator himself speaking to the Father: which things were especially fulfilled in the Gospels.

Blessed is he who understands concerning the needy and the poor. He who knows that Christ came in the assumed flesh, in which he was made poor and needy for us, this man receives the riches of celestial beatitudes. But the Lord himself was made poor: since he had not where he might lay his head (Luke 9). Needy, since he showed himself to be refreshed in the needy. Blessed is he who understands. Blessed and happy is he who understands concerning the needy and the poor. Christ was made needy and poor for us, that his lack (inopia) might make us rich: Who understands, that is, who understands him to be true God and true man. In the evil day the Lord delivered him. In the day of judgment, in which Christ will condemn the Jews not understanding us. The evil day will be present to you:

if you shall not have understood concerning the needy and the poor.

May the Lord preserve him. Lest he depart from this understanding in the present. And may he quicken him. Persevering in this wisdom, may he transfer him from death into life. And may he make him blessed. With his saints in the kingdom of heaven. On the earth. In the holy Church or in the day of eternity. And may he not deliver him into the hands of his enemies. That is, into the power of the devil, who always exists as an enemy to our belief.

May the Lord bring help to him upon his bed of sorrow. May he bring help to him: that is, may he provide assistance to him. In the bed of sorrow, in the infirmity of the flesh. Or it can be understood of that paralytic, when the Lord said: "Arise, take up your bed" (Matt. 9): because the body which is corrupted burdens the soul, and the earthly dwelling depresses the sense thinking many things (Wis. 9). In the sickness of this body in which the soul rests as if in a little bed, let it be consoled by the help of the Lord's protection. You have turned all his bed in his infirmity. The body, as we have said, which is taken for the bed, you have disturbed in various tribulations, so that having been proven and purged from allurements, you might assume it. Here the prophet changes the order, and brings forth the voice of the Lord's man saying:

I said, O Lord, have mercy on me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against you. Which is sorrowful even unto death: not from original crime, but it

is saddened for the sins of the people. Or, "have mercy on me," the Church says: because there are many who commit sins, but pretend words of excuse. Whence the Church says: I accuse myself for my sins, because I have sinned.

My enemies have spoken evils against me: When shall he die and his name perish? When they saw the blind illuminated, lepers cleansed, Sabbaths dissolved, Lazarus raised, when they said: "Behold, the whole world has gone after him" (John 14): what else could they think, except that this power might be snatched from him by death? For even one of them, Caiaphas by name, although not knowing what he said, said: "It is expedient that one should die for the people, that the whole nation may not perish." When shall he die? This is what is written in the parable of the Gospel, with the husbandmen saying: "This is the heir, come, let us kill him: and the inheritance will be ours, and let his name be remembered no more" (Mark 12).

And if they went in to see, their heart spoke vain things. Entering the praetorium, they spoke from an evil heart, saying: "Everyone who makes himself a king contradicts Caesar" (John 19). Or they entered for this purpose, that they might extinguish the Church and scout it out, just as Paul says: "False brothers who slipped in to scout out our liberty" (Gal. 2). Their heart spoke vain things, with a tongue feigned in love, like that: "Master, we know that you are truthful, and you teach the way of God in truth" (Matt. 22). This is vain. They have gathered iniquity to themselves.

Crying out: "What is that to us? You see to it. His blood be upon us and upon our children."

They went out. Out, with Pilate. And they spoke together. All my enemies whispered against me: they thought evils against me. Bringing in unjust witnesses and seeking to kill me. They whispered against me: that is, they murmured. All my enemies thought evils against me: the aforementioned Jews, or now the heretics against the Church.

They have established an unjust word against me. Saying: "It is not lawful for us to kill anyone, but you take him and crucify him" (John 18). Or when they said: "By Beelzebub he casts out demons" (Luke 11), and they sent false witnesses not only over the living, but even over the dead.

Shall he who sleeps not add that he rise again? Thus they hastened to kill me, as if I were not to rise again after death. This is to say: shall he who is unjustly oppressed by the sleep of death by the unjust not rise? Just as another prophet said: "Shall he who falls not rise again" (Jer. 8)? For a grain of wheat fell, and a copious harvest arose.

For even the man of my peace in whom I hoped, who ate my breads, has magnified a supplanting over me. Most clearly here he denounces Judas the betrayer, just as the Lord himself says in the Gospel: "The one to whom I shall give the dipped bread, he it is" (John 13); and elsewhere: "He shall lift up his heel against me." But what he says, "Who ate": this is, he who took heavenly food, giving life to this world, and distributed it to others, since he was an apostle: he himself

destined this life to death, on account of the price of greed.

But you, O Lord, have mercy on me, and raise me up, and I will repay them. Our Lord was raised up by the Father's power, at whose right hand he sits. Before he rose again, vengeance anticipated Judas, when the debt of destruction strangled him. But what he says, "I will repay him," threatens the future judgment to him.

In this I have known that you have willed me. Raising me up. Because my enemy shall not rejoice over me. The devil: by whose instinct the Jews worked these things: he did not rejoice in retaining him in hell (inferis).

But me you have received because of my innocence, and you have confirmed me in your sight forever. This innocence is greatest, when the just dies for the impious: who did not carry his own sins, but ours. On account of which innocence, and death having been conquered by the Father, he was received into the heavenly places with the assumed flesh.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from eternity and even unto eternity; let it be, let it be (fiat, fiat). For "fiat, fiat," in Hebrew is written "amen, amen," which Aquila translated as "πεπιστομενώς": that is, "truly," or "faithfully." And it is to be known that the first book of the Psalter is finished here. Indeed, the second is from the forty-first up to the seventy-first. The third from the seventy-second up to the eighty-eighth. The fourth from the eighty-ninth up to the one

hundred and fifth. The fifth indeed from the one hundred and sixth up to the end.

BOOK XLI.

To the end, understanding for the sons of Korah, a Psalm. "To the end," in Christ: "understanding": that is, spiritual understanding. "Sons of Korah": that is, sons of Christ, who are believers. The psalm contains the voice of the Church, or of a faithful man desiring God.

As the stag desires the fountains of waters: so my soul desires for you, O God. For first it is to be understood why or how the stag desires the fountains of waters. For it is its custom that, having found a serpent, it draws it in with its nostrils, and after this, burning, it extinguishes its thirst. Therefore the man of the Church, who for a long time lived in poisonous acts, when he perceives himself filled with the filth of fornication and the stench of idolatry: desires to come to Christ, in whom is the fountain of light, so that, washed by baptism, he may receive the gift of remission. For he knows that unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he will not have eternal life (John 3). But even if any of us today, with vices extinguished, is set on fire in the desire of the Lord's contemplation, he himself can say: that "my soul desires for you, O God": that is, having left the world, I desire to pass over to you.

My soul has thirsted for the strong living God. Not for dead idols, but for him who said: "I live, says the Lord: because every knee shall bow to me" (Num. 14). Living, because he himself says:

"As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, and he who believes in me, he also shall live because of me" (John 6). When shall I come and appear before the face of my God? As if he were saying: When will the time be, so that in that glory by which the saints are made conformable to your glory, I may appear with them in brightness? Or, "when shall I come," that is, when will that time be, in which the Church wills to be dissolved from the body and be with Christ? And I will appear before the face of my God: that is, before the sight of divinity, and then we shall see him just as he is.

My tears have been my breads day and night. How can bread be made from tears? It can: because just as the body is satiated by bread, so the soul by tears, because from then on it hopes to have the remission of sins. Weeping and groaning and lamentation were for me, on account of the desire of you. While it is said to me daily: Where is your God? Since pagans point out their gods with a finger, and on account of this they bring reproaches upon me. Whence let them know, that I hold my God hidden in my mind, and through the inner man I inhabit with him.

These things I remembered, and I poured out my soul in me. While remembering this reproach daily sustained, my soul was melted in me, and I wasted away in the treatise: when I could not visibly discern my God either in heaven or earth, but finding him in my mind governing me and directing me in that eternal tabernacle, of which I speak: For I shall pass into the place of the ad-

mirable tabernacle even to the house of God. The tabernacle of God is the Church, which still journeys as a pilgrim from the Lord: through which one comes to the eternal tabernacles, that is, to the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all. In which there are many admirable ones and those powerful in sacred virtues: because built upon the foundation of the apostles, they are held as one house. Into which he enters in mind, who, having left idolatry, already knew the sacraments of baptism, admiring the harmony of the spiritual Song, through the sweetness of eternal delight, he approached the house of God, which is the Holy of Holies. And as if it were said to him: Who led you here? or, how did you come here? or, by what were you delighted, that you might approach here? He responded:

In the voice of exultation and confession, the sound of one feasting. This exultation, confession, and feasting are not fulfilled by musical arts, nor do they begin and pass away; but they are continually celebrated by angelic voices and the concerts of the saints. Which while he, still placed in the world, looked upon in mind: groaning why this habitation is deferred from him, he says to the sad soul:

Why are you sad, O my soul, and why do you disturb me? Because, he says, I have not yet received this sweetness in the present, and my insidiator still watches against me, still he stretches snares for me. And he says: "Hope in the Lord." Sustain through patience. Or, "hope in God." The soul exhorts itself: or the inner man

exhorts the outer. For I will yet confess to him, the salvation of my countenance, and my God. I have already confessed my crimes: then I will confess his praise, through which he saved me from perishing death, or invited me to eternal things.

In myself my soul is disturbed. On account of the remembrance of prior crimes. Therefore I will be mindful of you from the land of Jordan, and the Hermons, from the little mountain. Jordan is taken for baptism: Hermon is interpreted as anathema. Therefore he who was a sinner, who as a stag desired the fountains of waters, was mindful in the humility of penance, and by the washing of baptism washed away old crimes: he anathematized his sins, and did not extol himself as great by glorying, but made himself a little one by repenting.

Abyss calls upon abyss. There are many opinions about the abyss, which will be explained in appropriate places. For here, "abyss calls upon abyss"; when either the Old Testament announces the New; or the New calls the Old into testimony. The Old announces the New, when Moses says: "A prophet for you God will raise up from your brothers" (Deut. 18). But the New calls the Old into testimony: when Paul says: "They drank from the following rock: but the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10). For on account of the depth of understanding, they are called abyss. In the voice of your cataracts. In the voice of the prophets, which announced the coming of the Lord. For they are called cataracts for this reason, because the coming of the Lord in their prophecy was

obscure, nor was it understood by the Jews. For this voice announces the future judgment, either concerning the merits of the blessed, or concerning the punishments of the impious.

All your high things and your waves have passed over me. High and powerful are these threats, through which you threatened the judgment of death: because they do not immediately fall down on account of your immense patience. But they are waves: while those things arrive which were threatened. Therefore he says those things entered over him: since living in mortal desires, beaten by scourges, he was erudite, that the Lord might desire the living.

In the day the Lord has commanded his mercy. Because through that light of the holy Scriptures he promised it. And in the night his song. He showed it to the one placed in tribulations.

With me is my prayer. And not outside me. To the God of my life. That I may deserve to be joined to him free from this world at some time. I will say to God: You are my receiver (susceptor). Although I may be exercised in tribulations: yet I always ask to be protected and defended by you.

Why have you forgotten me? And why have you rejected me? Why do you defer so long, that you do not lead me into that place of the admirable tabernacle? Why do I go sorrowful while the enemy afflicts me? The devil, who stretched many snares for me, or the persecutors of the Church.

While my bones are crushed. While I see the stronger ones of the Church yield to scandals and

various disputes. Or the bones, the virtues of the Church, are as if crushed through those tribulations which the saints sustain. My enemies have reproached me. Either in the martyrs or in other confessors. While it is said to me every single day: Where is your God? When I desired to appease you through penance and affliction of body and soul: my enemies, as if I were doing these things in vain, said: "Where is your God?" not knowing those hidden things which God has prepared for those who love him. Why are you sad, O my soul, and why do you disturb me? Because my desire is prolonged.

Hope in God, for I will yet confess to him the salvation of my countenance and my God. In him let our hope be always attentive: may he himself mitigate all waves: may he himself preserve us in temptations: may he himself satiate our thirst with his contemplation, and quicken us by the salvation of his countenance.

BOOK XLII.

A Psalm of David.

This psalm, although in some verses it signifies the Lord's passion, yet it has the voice of a faithful soul, desiring the light of this world, that is, Christ.

Judge me, O God, and discern my cause from the unholy nation. I expect your judgment, because you are merciful. But you discern me from the chaff among which I groan in this world, desiring to be clothed over: so that what is mortal

may be absorbed by life. But it is also the voice of the Lord, to whom he had first said: "Be holy, because I am holy" (Levit. 20): and they did not fulfill it: Deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man. No one is more unjust and deceitful than he who is the inventor of iniquity and the emulator of holiness: that is, the devil, who entered into the heart of Judas so that he might betray Christ. But even that faithful man whom we mentioned before says these things:

"For you are, O God, my strength." I know that I am weak and fragile: nor do I feel that I have any strength in which I may be delivered, unless you save me. "Why have you rejected me?" Christ is our strength: who then rejects us when we have sinned. "Why do I go sorrowful, while the enemy afflicts me?" I am sorrowful on account of my sins, and therefore I am afflicted in various temptations by the enemy himself, who above was called the unjust man. Whence because the darkness of sins disturbs me, I flee to you as a suppliant, you who are the light of the world.

"Send forth your light and your truth." You are the light, who said: "I am the light of the world" (John 8). You are the truth who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life," who might deign to illuminate us: so that leaving the lie of the devil, we may follow your truth. "They have led me." From the error of sin. "And they have led me into your holy mountain." Into your Church. Into your tabernacle. Into that heavenly Jerusalem, of which another psalm says (Ps. 83): "How beloved are your tabernacles, O Lord!"

"I will go in to the altar of God." My God, where I may no longer offer calves and rams, but present myself as a living host pleasing to him. "To God who gladdens my youth." When the old leaven is purged out, he consoles me as a youth in the new man.

"I will confess to you upon the harp, O God my God." Through the mortification of the flesh: because the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. "Why are you sad, O my soul, and why do you disturb me?" Because I desire to see him in whom I have placed my hope.

"Hope in God, for I will yet confess to him," etc. He confesses him: he asks that his sins be forgiven by him. He calls him the salvation of his countenance: he invokes and adores him. Whom we also, confessing, entreat: that we may deserve to be illuminated by his light, directed by his way, corrected by his truth, enriched by his life. Or, "the salvation of my countenance my God." The salvation of my soul is my God, and the countenance, that is, the aspect of my soul is my God.

PSALM XLIII.

"Unto the end, for the sons of Korah, for understanding." Korah is interpreted as "of Calvary," and the Lord was crucified on Mount Calvary. The sons of Korah are the sons of Christ: they are the holy apostles or martyrs. Whence it was said: "The sons of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them" (Matt. 9). "Understanding": that is, so that we may understand him, who took a beginning ac-

cording to the flesh from time, and was begotten before the ages. Or, it is "understanding": that we may understand concerning the present prosperity of sinners, and concerning the present tribulation of the saints. The Psalm does not teach former deeds, but announces that the Church is reborn in Christ, and provokes the faithful in her to the contest, showing that no one can be crowned unless he has fought lawfully: in which also for the most part the voices of the martyrs are brought forth.

"O God, we have heard with our ears." We have known through the spiritual sense, according to that word of the Lord: "He who has ears for hearing, let him hear" (Luke 8). "And our fathers." The apostles and prophets, by whose preaching we were reborn to life. "They have announced to us the work which you worked in their days, and in the ancient days." The prophets announced those things which were done in their time. The apostles announced those things which they saw you working.

"Your hand has destroyed the nations, and you have planted them." You have destroyed from the Church the burdens of vices, and have planted the ornaments of virtues: that is, just men, who might exhibit the fruit of holiness. "You have afflicted the peoples, and have driven them out." Those who, having left you, were turning aside to idolatry.

"For not in their own sword did they possess the land." But in the meekness of mind: because blessed are the meek, for they themselves shall

inherit the land of the living (Matt. 5). "And their own arm shall not save them: but your right hand, and your arm, and the illumination of your countenance." The right hand of the Father is Christ: as that: "For his right hand has exalted us": that is, the arm: as elsewhere: "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. 53). He himself is also the illumination: as there: "In your light we shall see light" (Ps. 35 [53]). This one therefore was sent by the Father, that he might deliver his own. And why he delivered them, he added: "Because you were well pleased in them." For God wills that as he is well pleased in the Son, so we also may be well-pleasing in him, if we wish to be delivered.

"You are the king himself, my king." Who reigns in me, and not sin. "And my God." By whom I have been acquired. "Who commands the salvations of Jacob." That is, to the Christian people: who, having supplanted the elder, received the command of salvation through the prophetic and apostolic doctrine.

"For in you we shall winnow our enemies with the horn, and in your name we shall despise those rising up in us." Something is winnowed by horns, as Zedekiah, who having made two iron horns said: "Thus you shall winnow all Syria" (3 Kings 21 [1 Kings 22:11]). But our horn is Christ. The same is also the name of the Father, in whom our adversaries are either winnowed or despised.

"For not in my bow will I hope, and my sword will not save me." But your power.

"For you have saved us from those afflicting us." Because I ought not to hope in my own arms; this is the reason, that you have always saved us from the persecutors, and have guarded us without our power and our sword. "For you have saved us from those afflicting us, and have confounded those who hate us." the powers are turned away, which being confounded, we have been delivered by Christ the Lord.

"In God we shall be praised all the day long." Because he himself is our praise and glory. "And in your name we shall confess to you forever." Because from you, Christ, we are called Christians.

"But now you have rejected and confounded us." When he says "now," it shows the present time. Therefore in the present time we are rejected for exercise, so that we may be glorified in eternity. For often also the martyrs in time say: "And you will not go out, O God, in our powers." So that you might strengthen us in the future with perpetual power.

"You have turned us back after our enemies." Thus also the Lord turned Peter back, that he might repair him for the better. Therefore we also ought to be turned back, lest our journey persist in crooked ways. We ought also to have our enemies before us, so that we may know what we ought to beware. Which even if we are turned after Christ like Peter, having him before us, we shall fear nothing further. "And those who hated us, plundered for themselves." For on account of your name they plundered us: while they vexed us in prisons, in scourges, in remaining torments.

But that tribulation did not separate us from your charity.

"You have given us as sheep for food." For as the Lord, led as a sheep to the slaughter, was given as food to the peoples, when he says: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, you will not have life in you" (John 6): so also the saints, as we said above, given in many tribulations, were made fodder for the nations: either when they minister the nourishment of eternal life: or while they satiate their rapacity with their own distresses. "And you have dispersed us among the nations." That for a time they might dominate us.

"You have sold your people without price." Up to now the martyrs have spoken of themselves: now it is said of the people of the Jews, to whom it was said: "In your sins you were sold" (Isa. 50). And therefore without price: because the blood of the Lamb was not shed for them. "And there was no multitude in our exchanges." The merchandise which was sold was cheaper: therefore no exchange was made. For the Lord the people whom he bought, not with gold or silver, but with his precious and own blood he purchased: as the apostle Peter says (1 Peter 1).

"You have made us a reproach to our neighbors: a mockery and a derision to those who are in our circuit." The persecutors are called neighbors on account of worldly cohabitation, who often reproach by mocking, saying: "Let your God come and deliver you from our hands" (2 Chron. 32).

"You have made us as a proverb to the nations." Certainly in your likeness: so that as the

world hated you first, so also it might hate us thereafter. "A shaking of the head among the peoples." For as in your passion those passing by moved their heads, so also they do in your martyrs. But also if anyone now wishes to live piously in you: immediately the unjust blaspheme with derision or shaking of the head.

"All the day long my shame is against me, and the confusion of my face has covered me." The Lord speaks these things in the assumed flesh, who suffers shame for us, is cursed, and is confounded, even unto the very gibbet of the Cross.

"From the voice of the reproacher and the slanderer." When it was said to him: "If you are the Son of God, descend from the cross" (Matt. 27). "From the face of the enemy": of Judas. "And of the pursuer." Of the Jewish people.

"All these things have come upon us, nor have we forgotten you." The martyrs say these things: because all the things which you, Lord Jesus, endured, we also have endured the same, but we have always confessed you. "And we have not acted unjustly in your testament." But we have preached you truly. "And our heart has not withdrawn backward." So that we might follow the fanatic errors from which we departed. "And you have turned aside our paths from your way." Our action is not separated from your justifications.

"For you have humbled us in the place of affliction." In this body, in which we dwell and are afflicted on account of you. "And the shadow of death has covered us." Well does the shadow of death oppress in this world, and not death itself:

because the martyrs, or the remaining saints, even if they are afflicted, and if they are destined for death, yet they live to God, and this death is a shadow to them, and not the truth of death.

"If we have forgotten the name of our God." That is, Christ. "And if we have stretched forth our hands to a strange god." To an idol.

"Shall not God require these things? for he himself knows the secrets of the heart." That God knows the thoughts of men, he himself discloses in the Gospel, saying to the Pharisees: "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" (Luke 5). So also the martyrs say: If anywhere we have exceeded from the ways of God, let him who knows the secrets of the heart inquire.

"For on account of you we are mortified all the day long." In various tribulations we are oppressed on account of you, but we spontaneously offer our necks to those who strike. "We are esteemed as sheep for the slaughter" (Matt. 10). For you had said that you were going to send us as sheep in the midst of wolves (Matt. 8 [Matt. 10:16]): But now because you have been distanced from these temptations, and as if sleeping in a ship, you do not defend us from the tempest, we arouse you, Lord, entreating with suppliant confession.

"Arise, why do you sleep, O Lord? arise and do not reject unto the end." So that you who died for us and rose again might be aroused in the hearts of those who confess you dead and do not believe you have risen, so that finally ceasing to

persecute us, they might not perish unto the end of eternal death.

"Why do you turn away your face?" For God turns away his face for a time, so that he may prove his elect. "You forget our destitution and our tribulation." We suffer destitution, holding the riches of this world for nothing, we desire the heavenly kingdom. For we are troubled when our desire is prolonged.

"For our soul is humbled in the dust." So that we might be inclined by those whom the wind casts forth as dust from the face of the earth. "Our belly has been glued to the earth." As if he were to say: The flesh is weakened, but the sense is attentive in heavenly things.

"Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for your name's sake." Now may we deserve your help in tribulations, so that we may be delivered from these pressures: not on account of our merit, but on account of your name.

PSALM XLIV.

"Unto the end, for those who shall be changed, for the sons of Korah, for understanding, a Song for the beloved." For which in the Hebrew it has: *Lamanasse, al sosannim labne Core mescil sir Jedidoth*: which we translate into Latin: "To the victor for the sons of the lilies of Korah, a most beloved song of instruction." But as for what he says, "for the beloved," the whole psalm refers to Christ: of whom the Father speaks in the Gospel: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 17). Or the psalm contains the

Sacrament of spiritual nuptials: that is, the conjunction of Christ with the Church. It is initiated therefore from the paternal voice.

"My heart has uttered a good word." Not from a corporeal conjunction, but from the heart he brought forth the Word equal to himself through which all things were made: for this Word is good: because what was made in him is life (John 1). "I speak my works to the King." I speak to the Word himself, to the king the son, and all things are perfected.

"My tongue is the pen of a scribe writing swiftly." For as those things which are written are not light nor easy, but useful and salutary: so also the eloquence of God, as if it were written, is thus perfected. Concerning the swiftness indeed, that is, that those things which he has said are not delayed, but are swiftly fulfilled, therefore he says "pen." And to what does the pen pertain? Or how is the pen compared to Christ? Because just as a rock pertains to Christ, a lion, a right hand, a mountain, or other things similar to these: so also the pen pertains, namely because it is a measurer and a scribe. Whence he said in the Prophet: "Arise, and take a pen, and measure the temple and the city" (Ezek. 40). "The pen of a scribe": the scribe himself is Christ. Whence he said in the Gospel: "Every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a householder" (Matt. 13). "Writing swiftly." Because no one writes so quickly as the Lord himself writes in the hearts of the saints. What does he write, unless he bestows

faith, hope, and his charity, the word of preaching?

"Beautiful in form beyond the sons of men." So that he may be understood not as an equal, like another man, but as the Son of God with man, and therefore he is said to be more beautiful beyond other sons of men. But the form of which he speaks is not to be deputed to magnitude, but to decorum. Or how is he "beautiful," when Isaiah says: "We have seen him not having species nor decorum: but as if despised, and humbled, and struck, and scourged by God" (Isa. 53)? The prophet Isaiah says this from the person of the Jews, because they believed the humanity of the flesh to be as if a pure man. But here the prophet speaks according to divinity. Likewise Isaiah the prophet foreknew through the Holy Spirit that humanity from without which the Jews saw: but within they were not able to understand the divinity. "Grace is diffused on your lips." When you cure diseases by a word, when you make the sea to be quiet, when you indicate silence to the winds, when you command the fever to depart, when you call Lazarus and he comes: you interpellate the Father and he hears, and not only hears but also responds: and all things which you speak are perfected by the grace of your lips. The diffusion of grace in the holy Scriptures is the grace of the Holy Spirit, or of Christ. The grace of the Holy Spirit was diffused in baptism in the species of a dove: when it descended on the head, it came into the beard: then into the hem of his garment. Our head is Christ; the

beard, the holy Apostles; the hem of his garment, the holy preachers: as the prophet says: "As the ointment on the head, which descended into the beard of Aaron, and which descended into the hem of his garment" (Ps. 132). "Grace on your lips": because the law was given through Moses, grace and truth were made through Jesus Christ (John 1). "Therefore God has blessed you forever." On account of this grace. For although Christ the Lord has always been blessed in the Father, he is blessed in the assumed flesh: when, the Holy Spirit descending upon him in baptism, the Father says: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3). Or the Father God blessed his Son, and Christ his Church.

"Gird your sword upon your thigh, O most mighty one." The sword about the thigh. Through the sword, the word: through the thigh, the incarnation. A man girds a sword for fighting. But, "gird the sword, most mighty one." As if the prophet were to say: You, O Christ, put on flesh: fight against the devil, and deliver the human race from hell. "Gird with the sword," with the word of preaching, which divided the son from the father: the daughter from the mother, the daughter-in-law from the mother-in-law: "about your thigh," upon the assumed flesh. "Most mighty one," not slothfully, nor lightly, but manfully.

"In your species and your beauty." In holiness and justice: or it pertains to divinity. "Intend prosperously, proceed and reign." If you intend to yourself, things will always be prosperous for

you. "Proceed": that is, come from heaven. "And reign": because the kingdom of the devil was before. Whence we say in the Lord's Prayer: "May your kingdom come in us, and may the kingdom of the devil depart" (Luke 11). "Intend prosperously": see happily. "Proceed," from the bridal chamber of the virginal womb: "and reign," the empire of death having been oppressed.

"On account of truth, and meekness, and justice." Truth, Christ himself: because he himself is the truth. Whence concerning that woman he said to the Jews: "He who among you is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8). Meekness, when he said: "Neither will I condemn you." Justice, when he said: "Go, woman, and sin no more." "On account of truth": by which you fulfilled those things which you had promised through the prophets. "And meekness": because as a sheep you are immolated for the life of the people. "And justice": since not by power, but by humility you snatched man away. "And your right hand shall lead you wonderfully." Power, or virtue. Or power shall lead you, namely yourself, into heaven.

"Your arrows are sharp." Preachings, transfixing the hearts of men. "Sharp," because they penetrate even to the interior of the heart. "Peoples shall fall under you into the hearts of the king's enemies." From the compunction of preaching, they fall into the hearts so that they may not be proud, but humbly believe. Those who had been enemies of the king by not believing, may become

friends by believing. Because those who were enemies of Christ, afterwards were made friends.

"Your seat, O God, is forever and ever." Not temporal, but eternal. Or the seat of God is the holy Church, or the soul: because the soul of the just man is the seat of wisdom. "A rod of direction, the rod of your kingdom." Through the rod, the correction of discipline: because through that rule of truth, the hearts of those which were tortuous are directed.

"You have loved justice and hated iniquity." That is, you have fulfilled the commands of God the Father. And you have hated iniquity, not that hatred falls upon God: but God is said to hate, that is, to repudiate. Iniquity is understood as the devil himself. Or the rod is taken as heavenly discipline: through which he directed our iniquitous tortuosity which he hated, to his own justice. "Therefore God, your God, has anointed you." God, says the Apostle, and Christ: God made him (Heb. 1). "With the oil of gladness beyond your companions." Other kings who preferred a type of him, and were called companions in reigning, were anointed with corruptible oil: but this Son of God was anointed by God the Father with the oil of exultation: that is, of resurrection, ascension, and domination: because Christ was anointed by nature, we through grace: because in him was divinity fully, for in the saints it is given by parts.

"Myrrh and stacte and cassia from your garments." Myrrh is put for burial: stacte is taken against poisons. In cassia man, who is often

called a tree, is demonstrated. Therefore these flowed down from his garments: that is, from the assumed flesh, by which as a garment the divinity surrounded itself. The odor of myrrh dripped when he was handed over to burial. Stacte flowed when, the poison of the serpent being compressed, it extinguished the tartarean fires. And cassia came forth: when in that man through whom he conquered the lower regions, he ascended into the heavens. "From the ivory houses, out of which the daughters of kings have delighted you in your honor." Ivory houses, on account of the magnitude of elephants, we take as ample houses: for ample is the way that leads to perdition (Matt. 7). But ivory, unless it is scraped by files, divided by saws, and perforated by awls, is obscure and horrible: so also the apostles were before they were called and inhabited. But after they were called, cut by saws, scraped by claws, carved by scalpels, ignited by flames: and refined by various punishments, they were made the houses of God: in which Christ himself might deign to inhabit. The martyrs following the examples of these, were made kings of their own bodies. The daughters of these kings are holy souls: who have delighted Christ, by honoring the name of his majesty, and by proclaiming his mercy. "From the ivory houses": from which they have gladdened you. Many through error say "grave" instead of "houses" (*baribus*): because among the Greeks the word *bareon* signifies both.

"The queen stood at your right hand." Because in your kingdom there is nothing on the left. "In clothing gilded with gold." With the ornament of spiritual belief. "Surrounded by variety." Of nations and peoples. The prophet now speaks to the Church herself. The Queen is the Church. Whence it says in the Song of Songs: Who is she that comes up whitened, leaning upon her cousin? She is called Queen because she rules over her vices and sins. "At your right hand." As that: He shall indeed set the sheep at his right hand, when he shall be about to say: Come, you blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world (Matt. 25). "In clothing": that is, not naked, but clothed with a spiritual sense. "Clothed round about with variety." From the seventy-two languages: that is, from the diversity of nations or the giving of thanks.

"Hear, daughter, and see." Believe that you may be cleansed. Daughter, because born again of him. Spouse, because you are joined to him. Or Christ calls his Church daughter through faith. He calls her daughter so that she may be chaste in mind and body. "And incline your ear." Listen humbly and wisely or desire. "And hear," with the ear of the heart, as that: He who has ears for hearing, let him hear (Luke 8). "And see": that is, with the eyes of the heart, by which God is seen, as he says: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. 5). "And forget your people," etc. The companies of demons, or vices, and sins, and the house of your father the devil, who

had first begotten you: because the whole world was placed in the evil one (1 John 5): therefore, "incline your ear."

"Because the king has desired your beauty." Jesus Christ by whom you are ruled, because you were black in the house of your father: but now you are hidden after baptism, or washed of vices, or white by the grace of faith. "Because he himself is the Lord." By whom you have been redeemed. "Your God." Whom now, having left behind the idols, you worship and adore. How does he speak of your appearance and beauty: since the Church was not beautiful, nor fair, who before was fetid and deformed? But afterwards beautiful and fair through the laver of baptism: because the Just One died for the impious, that is, Christ: cleansing her by the laver of his blood, as the Apostle says: Not having spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5). "And the daughters of Tyre shall adore him." Tyre is interpreted as narrowness (*angustia*). Daughters of Tyre, daughters of narrowness. They adore Christ, who are in narrowness. Or the believing souls from the nations. "With gifts the rich of the people shall entreat your face." These, laying up their treasures, seek you from a pure heart: for where their treasures are, there also will be their heart (Matt. 6). The Magi did this, who came with frankincense, and myrrh, and gold: because they adored Christ not only with words, but also with gifts.

"All her glory, the daughter of the king," the faithful soul, "is from within, clothed round about with varieties in golden fringes." Above we

said, with the variety of nations: here, of graces. "All her glory, the daughter of the king, is from within": that is, the elders of the Church, or kings and the powerful: who now have hope, faith, and charity: they themselves have offered from within: that is, in the conscience of the Church. "Clothed round about with variety in golden fringes." Not only in the letter, but also in the spiritual sense, those who enter have offered, or they are filled with a variety of virtues.

"Virgins shall be brought to the king after her, her neighbors." Through the one Church, founded by apostolic institution, many are converted to Christ. "They shall be brought to you in gladness and exultation." Not in the sadness of sin, nor in the tears of penance: but in the gladness of virtues and the exultation of graces. "They shall be brought into the temple of the king." For John saw Jerusalem the holy city descending from heaven, having the clarity of God: but he did not see a temple in it (Rev. 21): the Lord, he said, is its temple. Therefore these virgins shall be brought into this temple: that is, the souls of the saints: so that they may be made conformable to the body of his glory.

"For your fathers, sons are born to you." Your fathers, O Church, were the apostles: because they begot you. But now, because they have departed from the world, you have in their place bishops as sons, who have been created by you. For these also are your fathers: because you are ruled by them. "You shall appoint them princes over all the earth." Christ has appointed his

saints over all peoples. For in the name of God the Gospel has been spread abroad in all the ends of the world: in which the princes of the Church, that is, the bishops, have been appointed.

"They shall be mindful of your name, in all generations." Therefore they shall be mindful: because they never forget, but they shall always preach you, or they shall build in the generations of the saints.

"Therefore shall the peoples confess to you forever, and world without end." On account of their preaching the sins of the people are always confessed to you: they shall tell of your glory, they shall announce your praise.

PSALM 45.

To the end, for the sons of Korah, for the secrets, a Psalm. For the secrets: that is, for the hidden things concerning the vocation of the Gentiles and the reprobation of the Jews. The Psalm teaches us that we ought to place our hope in him, who alone can deliver from tribulation.

"Our God is our refuge and strength: a helper in the tribulations which have found us exceedingly." For the world is full of hardships and pressures: and therefore, although there are other helps of kings, strengths of the powerful, refuges of cities: our fortification is Christ, who can powerfully rescue us from these things.

"Therefore we shall not fear." Because in him we have belief [Mart. wrongly *cruelty*]. "While the earth shall be troubled." The generation of the Jews, who savor earthly things. "And the

mountains shall be transferred into the heart of the sea." Apostolic preachings into the hearts of the Gentiles of this world, as in the Gospel: If you have, he said, faith like a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain: Pass over, and it shall do so (Matt. 17). In the heart of the sea; that is, in Gentility.

"Their waters roared and were troubled." Waters, the peoples: by the motions, demons are understood. Who, now troubled, gave a sound: together with the overthrowers of idols, they either restored them, or wished to prepare death. "The mountains were troubled in his strength." The higher powers of the world.

"The rush of the river gladdens the city of God." After the cults of demons have been overthrown, the washing of baptism, or the irrigation of the Holy Spirit gladdens the soul, the city of God, or the Church, which is the city of God, which, placed upon a mountain, is not hidden (Matt. 5). "The Most High has sanctified his tabernacle." The congregation of the faithful, in which he dwells through faith.

"God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." But she is strengthened, as he says: Fear not, Mary (Luke 1): or the Church in tribulation. "God shall help her early in the morning." By the holy inspection, by which the heart shall merit the world. For blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (Matt. 5).

"The nations were troubled." Of vices and crimes. "And the kingdoms were bowed down." The powers of demons, under the power of

Christ. "They gave their voice." In preachings. "The earth was moved." The nations were astonished in their unbelief: that is, Gentility from infidelity to the faith of Christ.

"The Lord of hosts is with us." Through the assumption of the flesh, he was made a participant for us. Therefore also Emmanuel, that is, God with us. The Lord of hosts, of angels and of men. "God the defender of Jacob." He is the Lord of hosts, who conquered the devil. He is our defender, that he may preserve us forever. Helper, the God of Jacob. Through Jacob, the supplanting of vices.

"Come and see the works of the Lord." Christ calls his Church to faith, or to belief. "See," that is, understand: "the works of the Lord," the powers of the Lord. Or, "the works of the Lord": because, according to Daniel, the stone cut from the mountain without hands, the kingdoms of the world having been crushed, occupied the breadth of all the earth (Dan. 2). "What wonders he has placed upon the earth." For many signs he showed among the peoples, either before his bodily advent, or after it. "Taking away wars even to the ends of the earth." The histories of many relate that all wars ceased at the advent of the Lord. But even now in his Church he daily restrains wars, so that either the heretics or the Jews do not rage. Or *taking away*, removing, *wars*: that is, the fight, because there is always a fight of vices and of sins. "To the ends of the earth," even to the end of the ages. The Lord

takes away this fight from us: for by ourselves we cannot.

"He shall crush the bow." The hidden snares of the wicked. "And he shall break the weapons." Present battles. "And he shall burn the shields with fire." The insane fantasies of diabolical protection, all of which he consumes by that spiritual fire: concerning which he said: I have come to send fire upon the earth: that is, into the Church (Luke 12).

"Be still and see that I am the Lord." I have made, and I will not bear: I have created, and I will sustain: I will redeem you and I will dismiss your sins, says the Lord (Isa. 46). Be still therefore that you may know me, and not be troubled by anything else. "I will be exalted among the nations." Which shall have been converted to belief. "I will be exalted in the earth." If they shall have been turned back to me from the race of the Jews: whom it is manifest do not savor earthly things.

"The Lord of hosts is with us: God is our defender, of Jacob." For he always worthily dwells with those who believe: as he deigned to promise to the apostles after the resurrection, saying: Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the age (Matt. last).

PSALM 46.

To the end, for the sons of Korah, a Psalm. Sons of Korah, sons of the bald one. It is the voice of one mocking. He says this concerning those forty-two boys, who mocked Elisha, and said: Go up, you bald head; go up, you bald head, and he cursed

them in the name of the Lord (2 Kings 2). And two bears came out and devoured them. Elisha holds the figure of Christ, those boys the figure of the Jews, who said: Hail, King of the Jews. Whence Paul says: Do not be made children in senses, but be little ones in malice (1 Cor. 14). The physician came to heal the sick, but the sick killed the physician. By the bears, demons are properly understood, because they devoured their hearts. The Psalm contains an apostolic voice, admonishing that we should rejoice in him alone, by whose blood we have been liberated.

"All nations, clap your hands." The Holy Spirit through the prophet calls all nations to come to the faith. "All nations": that is, the whole world together, "clap your hands." To clap is to praise. For applause is called praise. Rejoice in good works. "Shout to God with the voice of exultation." Confess the Lord with a sublime voice in the heart itself, and exult with every service of the members. He says this on account of the magnitude of the gladness. It is a "voice of exultation": because man cannot comprehend, neither with words, nor with letters, nor with syllables, how much he ought to praise God.

"For God is high and terrible." He who once was provoked by the Jews, the Gentiles having been obtained, ascending the high heavens, was made terrible, residing at the right hand of the Father. "And a great king over all the earth." Not only over the race of the Jews, but over all nations of the earth. Or, "over all the earth," that is, over all the Church, because the Church is called

earth: Christ is over her, because power has been given to him in earth and in heaven. Or of whom the apostles now say:

"He has subdued the peoples under us and the nations under our feet. He has chosen his inheritance for us." They say that the nations and peoples were subdued to them by Christ: whose malice having been trampled down, they made them worthy for the inheritance of Christ. Or the inheritance of Christ is the holy Church. Whence he said in another place: The Lord is the portion of my inheritance (Ps. 15). And we are his, and he is ours: according to that: The Lord is my portion (Ps. 118). "The beauty of Jacob which he loved." For from the beauty of Jacob he chose the apostles, who, descending from his stock, say these things. That he loves him, hear the prophet: Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated (Mal. 1).

"God has ascended in jubilation." For his ascension was made clear, in which a multitude of angels with great jubilation said: Lift up your gates, O princes (Ps. 23): he now returns as victor from battles. "And the Lord with the voice of the trumpet." In which two angels, as it were a trumpet, while he was ascending, cried out to the apostles: This Jesus, who has been taken up from you, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him going into heaven (Acts 1). Or after the victory, by which he conquered the devil, he so ascended. Whence he says in another psalm: Lift up your gates, O princes, and be lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in (Ps. 23). Or as we read in the Acts of the Apostles,

when he ascended from the Mount of Olives: Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven: shall so come in like manner as you have seen him going into heaven (Acts 1).

"Sing praises to our God, sing praises: sing praises to our king, sing praises." Who, having oppressed the dominion of death, carried up to heaven the flesh with which he lay in the tomb.

"For God is king of all the earth." Because he is already known not only in Judea and Jerusalem, but has been declared in all the earth by the light of faith. "Sing praises wisely." So that what you sing according to the letter, you may understand as spoken spiritually.

"The Lord shall reign over all nations." Which he received as an inheritance from the Father. Whence also in another psalm he says: I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession (Ps. 2). Or, the Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens (Ps. 112). "God sits upon his holy seat." At the right hand of the Father. Or the angels, on account of their innocence, are called seats, because they have not sinned. Hence he said: Heaven is my seat (Isa. 66). "God sits upon his holy seat": that is, in the Church. Whence it was said: The soul of the just man is the seat of wisdom (Wisd. 7).

"The princes of the peoples." The apostles. "They are gathered together." For judging. Or, "the princes of the peoples": that is, the elders of the Christians; whose figure the centurion held;

or now those who hold the very faith which Abraham had. Whence it was said: Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 8). "With the God of Abraham." The God of Abraham is the true God, who is the God of the living, with whom the just shall perform judgment. For so also the Lord says in the Gospel: When the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit upon twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). "For the strong gods of the earth are exceedingly exalted." Gods are the saints; as the prophet says: I have said: You are gods and all sons of the Most High (Ps. 81). "They are exceedingly exalted." They are exalted through faith and preaching. Or those who are exalted in pride, and having left heavenly things, have desired earthly things; to whom it is said: You shall die like men: these are to be judged by the God of Abraham, or by his apostles. But let us pray the Lord that, every swelling of pride having been laid aside, we may be so joined to him in this world; that, being separated from the left side in the judgment, there may not be found in us what he might condemn unto punishment; but what by manifold piety he may advance unto a crown.

A PSALM OF A SONG FOR THE SONS OF KORAH, ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE WEEK.

By the psalm, work or preaching is understood. By the song, knowledge and praise. The sons of Korah, the holy apostles, or martyrs. On

the first day of the week, he made light; on the second day, he made the firmament. Light, the angels; the firmament, men. It has something from there in the New Testament. On the first day of the week, Christ the Light rose. Whence he says in the Gospel: He was the true light, which enlightens every man coming into this world (John 1). On the second day of the week, the Church was established in the faith, when the Lord said: And upon this rock I will build my Church (Matt. 16). The whole Psalm dwells upon the holy people, entirely upon the ecclesiastical mysteries.

"Great is the Lord and exceedingly praiseworthy." The voice of the Church. He is called great, not by comparison, but for the magnitude of his glory. As if it were asked, where is he great, where praiseworthy? It responds: "In the city of our God." The holy soul, whose citizens and domestics are understood as good acts. "In his holy mountain." In the assumed body of the Lord's humanity.

"It is founded with the exultation of the whole earth." The earth which before was subject to sins and curses, he occupied by his ascension, and in it he expanded the exultation and joy of his belief. Or the Church was founded, and is, in all the world in faith. "Mount Zion, the sides of the north, the city of the great King." To this mountain, that is, to Christ the Lord, two peoples from Zion have approached: one from the sides of the north, which is from the uncircumcision, the other from the circumcision. Therefore Christ the Lord, who is our peace, took away the wall of

enmity from the midst, and made both one: and placed these peoples through faith in his Church, which is the city of the great King. Or Mount Zion: that is, the holy Church. From the side of the north: because she has been gathered from the wicked. Whence it was said: From the north shall break forth the evils which are upon the earth. This north is the devil, to whom it is said: Come, O north wind, blow through my garden (Song 4): that is, the Church by temptations. Whence the Apostle says: There must be heresies, so that those who are approved may be made manifest among you (1 Cor. 11). Or, the city of the great King: that is, the holy Church.

"God shall be known in her houses when he shall take her up." He took her up by grace. But he is known in her degrees, that is, in the apostles, or the rest of the preachers: through whom the faith of the Church has been announced. For by grace we are saved through faith: and this not of ourselves. It is the gift of God, so that no one may glory of himself. Or, in the houses, that is: in the holy Church. "When he shall take her up," in faith; because before she was among the wicked.

"For behold the kings of the earth were gathered together." The princes of the world, whose kingdom was in the worship of idols and demons. Approaching from the sides of the north, that is, of the devil. Or, they were gathered, and "came together into one," that is, into the unity of the Church. "They came together into one." The supreme cornerstone established in the foundation.

"They, seeing, so wondered." At the glory and power of the Redeemer. Or they wondered at the virtues of the apostles, and were moved from infidelity to faith. "They were troubled and moved, trembling took hold of them." From the conscience of their sins: because it was said: From your fear we have conceived and brought forth the spirit of salvation (Isa. 26).

"There are pains as of a woman in labor: in a vehement spirit." When they began to exercise their bodies through abstinence: in the strongest spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit. "Crushing the ships of Tarshish." Humbling the pride of the nations: because Tarshish, in its beginning, was made proud and excellent by the navigation of merchants. Therefore here they are compared to this fleet, who are carried about in the waves of this world by every wind of luxury and vanity. Those now believing in her say:

"As we have heard." Through the prophets. "So have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God has founded her forever." We have seen in the Gospel, which is the city of powers. We have seen in the Church, which is the city of God founded in that great kingdom.

"We have received, O God, your mercy in the midst of your temple." In your Church we have received the Holy Spirit, as also those first ones upon whom he was poured out in the Acts of the Apostles.

"According to your name, O God, so is your praise unto the ends of the earth." When, having received the Holy Spirit, they spoke in the lan-

guages of all nations. But your praise also dwells always in the breadth of the faithful people. "Your right hand is full of justice." In those who are to be placed on the right side in the judgment.

"Let Mount Zion rejoice." The Church in Christ. "And let the daughters of Judah exult." The souls of those who confess (confessorum): for Judah is interpreted as confession. "Because of your judgments, O Lord." Because they kept them so as to perform penance. Or, "your judgments," the hidden judgments of God: because the Jews were rejected, and the Gentiles were chosen in faith.

"Surround Zion." That is, defend the Church in your belief. "And embrace her." In charity. "Tell in her towers." The praise and glory of Christ. "Tell," that is, preach. The towers, these are the princes of your Church: because a tower is strong and keeps watch on every side. So also the holy and the strong ought to be watchers among the human race.

"Set your hearts in her strength." Do not be separated from the charity which he taught. "Set," that is, understand. In her strength, in her charity: because they ought not only to teach, but also to fulfill in work what they preach. "And distribute her houses." O you, Doctors of the Churches, distribute the degrees of ordinations, canonically and holily; not corrupted by rewards; not deceived by the acceptance of persons through adulation. "That you may tell it in another generation." Not only to those who

believe, but also to those who are to believe. But what, you ask, should we tell?

"Because this is our God forever, and for ages of ages, and he shall rule us for ages." God, because we were made through him. King, because we are ruled by him. For he directed our slippery and crooked steps into himself, who is the way of peace, and the peace of our salvation.

PSALM 48.

"To the end, for the sons of Korah (Core), a Psalm." The sons of Korah (the bald one) are the holy apostles or martyrs. The Holy Spirit sang this psalm through the prophet in the person of the preachers. Or this psalm is thus, in that it teaches that the riches of the world with vain honors are to be despised: the cunning of the serpent is also to be avoided, and it urgently admonishes the whole world to hear the word of God, saying:

"Hear these things, all you nations: perceive with your ears, you who inhabit the world." Understand wisely with spiritual ears, which the Lord chose for hearing. But in the Gospel he requires those of the heart, from which God is heard. "You who inhabit the world," that is, your bodies.

"Both the earth-born and the sons of men; together the rich and the poor." It is to be understood that he calls all the inhabitants of the earth to hear the word of God: namely, so that the divine things, either judgments or mandates, may be hidden from no man. Or together, "the rich

and the poor as one": that is, the servant and the free. Or, "poor": whence he said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5).

"My mouth shall speak wisdom." It shall speak that wisdom which is hidden from the wise of this world, and revealed to little ones, that is, so that the little ones of the Church may know that Christ is the wisdom of the Father; of whom all the prophets speak. Or, "my mouth shall speak wisdom": that is, Christ whom the Church preaches. "And the meditation of my heart prudence." I always meditated in my heart, so that men, leaving stolid vanity, might follow the prudence of Christ.

"I will incline my ear to a parable." Because the prophet knows that Christ the Lord will come into the world, who speaks in a likeness: therefore he prepares himself for hearing, that is, spiritually for understanding. Or I will incline the ear of the heart to humility. "In a parable," that is, in a likeness I will understand. "I will open my proposition upon the psaltery." I propose this, that what that Decalogue foretold, if it be kept, the heavenly kingdoms are bestowed. Or what I proposed in my heart, I will preach in speech and will understand.

"Why shall I fear in the evil day." In the day of judgment. "The iniquity of my heel shall surround me." Because whoever has sinned in the heel, slips. But the iniquity of the heel is also taken as original sin from Adam: as was said to the woman: "I will put enmities between you and

the serpent, and your seed, and her seed" (Gen. 3). "You shall observe," that is, crush his head, and he your heel.

"They who trust in their own strength, and glory in the multitude of their riches." These slip in the heel: because they do not walk through him who is the way, the truth, and the life, or, "they who trust in their own strength: and who glory in the abundance of their riches."

"Brother does not redeem, man shall redeem." If Christ did not redeem, who called himself the brother of the apostles, and by rising became the firstborn of those rising: he shall not redeem Adam, because the first man, having died, did not rise. For our brother Christ is God and man, who redeemed us. Or what Moses did not redeem, Christ redeemed. "He shall not give to God his placation." He who does not act with penance, through which God is placated.

"And the price of the redemption of his soul." He did not perform almsgiving through which sins are blotted out. "He has labored forever." Placed in perpetual torments. "And he shall live unto the end." Because he is not killed, but is always renewed for punishment.

"He shall not see destruction." He does not understand that death is imminent for him. "When you shall see the wise dying." If he shall see a man wise in God depart from this world, he says: What did fasts profit him? what chastity? what alms? Has he not also died? The Jews also, insulting our Redeemer with such a thing, said: "Are you greater than our father Abraham who died, and

the prophets are dead?" (John 8). "Together the unwise and the fool shall perish, and they shall leave their riches to strangers." He is unwise who despises having the knowledge of God: of whom the Apostle says: "Every ignorant man shall be ignored." But he is a fool who hopes in riches and not in God. Both, therefore, lose their riches: because they gather there, where thieves dig up and steal (1 Cor. 14).

"Their sepulchres are their houses forever." "Their tabernacles in generation and generation." This will be a perpetual habitation for them: because they shall not rise so as to have eternal life: but so as to be condemned in punishment.

"They called their names in their lands." For often pagans feasting upon the sepulchres of the dead, and drinking in the name of those who are dead, sing vain things with a certain melody: but it profits nothing for those condemned in hell.

"Man when he was in honor, did not understand." That he was formed to the image of God. "He was compared to senseless beasts, and was made like unto them." Having laid aside the heavenly form, he was made into the likeness of senseless beasts.

"This way of theirs is a stumbling block to them." Because it leads them from judgment to punishment: "And afterwards they shall be well-pleased in their mouth." But confession in hell profits nothing.

"Like sheep they are placed in hell: death shall feed on them." Deservedly are they fed upon by death, who did not wish to have Christ as pastor.

"And the just shall have dominion over them in the morning." In the resurrection. "And their help shall grow old in hell." They had riches, but when they descended into hell, they vanished. "From their glory." Because they did not seek the glory of Christ, who now speaks of himself.

"Nevertheless God will redeem my soul from the hand of hell when he shall receive me." God the man "did not think it robbery to be equal with God: but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." Having also undergone death, being raised by the Father's power, he restored the man who had fallen.

"Be not afraid when a man shall be made rich, and when the glory of his house shall be multiplied," etc. Judas the betrayer was made rich by selling the Master: but he carried nothing of the price he had taken with him when he died. So therefore now each one, the poor being oppressed, is made rich and multiplied. Do not fear; it passes quickly, and he takes nothing with him of those things which he had snatched: the Lord in the Gospels saying thus: "Fool, this night they require your soul from you, and whose shall those things be which you have prepared?" (Luke 13).

"Because his soul shall be blessed in his life." He is blessed by fools because of power: but being overcome by abundance and drink, they bring forth a sentence not concerning one living well,

but concerning one feeding well. But these things do not excuse from punishment. "He will confess to you when you shall have done well to him." Then he gives thanks, when he acquires some gain.

"And he shall enter in even to the generations of his fathers: he shall never see light." He hoped more in riches than in God, like his parents: and therefore it is said of him: "Cast him out into the exterior darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 16).

"Man when he was in honor, did not understand: he was compared to senseless beasts, and was made like unto them." He did not know that all these things had been attributed to him by God: for that reason his foolishness is compared to senseless beasts. But let us pray to the Lord, that he himself may grant us understanding, so that while we cast away those things which are seen, we may merit to attain those things which are not seen.

PSALM 49.

"A Psalm of Asaph." Asaph is interpreted as congregation. The Psalm distinguishes the just from the impious, the heavenly from the earthly, and the holy from the sinners. In which the prophet declares that not he, but the Lord himself has spoken, saying:

"The God of gods, the Lord, has spoken." God in Trinity, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, one God: "God of gods": because he wished believers to be called gods. For "he gave them power to be

made sons of God: to those who believe in his name" (John 1). But he is Lord, in that he has dominion over all who have dominion. And truly he himself who previously spoke in the patriarchs and prophets, he now speaks. And what, you ask, does he speak? "And he has called the earth." Not some part; but hear what he added:

"From the rising of the sun even to the sunset." He left nothing that he would not make worthy of his calling. "From Zion the species of his beauty." Which is the faith and belief which begins from Zion. Whence the Lord in the Gospels: "For it behooved Christ to suffer these things and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that penance and remission of sins be preached in his name unto all nations: beginning from Jerusalem," which is Zion (Luke 24).

"God shall come manifestly." Not hidden. Or, "God shall come manifestly": that is, in the day of judgment, because every man shall see him: as he says in the Apocalypse: "And every eye shall see him" (Apoc. 1). "Our God and he shall not be silent." Because he shall come to judge: according to that: "I have held my peace, shall I always be silent?" (Isa. 42). Now he is silent, yet even if he is silent in judgment, he is not silent in mandate. In the first advent he was silent, because he appeared humble.

"A fire shall burn in his sight." Here a fire is understood to have a double virtue. For it illuminates, and it burns up. Let the just rejoice: because they are illuminated by it. Let the sinners fear, who are to be burned up by it. "And a mighty

tempest round about him." Which scourges and corrects sinners, and sifts the wheat from the chaff. And those whom the fire burns up, the tempest involves. And in another place he says: "He shall purge his floor, and shall gather the wheat into the barn: but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Luke 5).

"And he has called the heaven from above." The apostles or the rest of the saints, who, having despised earthly things, savor those things which are above. "And the earth to discern his people." But he also discerns the earthly, so that when the heavenly are placed on the right, these may be located on the left. Or he shall discern his people, in the future judgment when he shall be about to say: "Go, you cursed, into eternal fire." And to the holy: "Go into eternal life" (Matt. 25).

"Gather together his saints to him." Oh how wonderfully these things agree with the holy Gospel! For the Lord, after the dispensation of the end, hears what he says: "The Son of Man shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great power, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the height of the heavens" (Matt. 24). And here he says: "Gather together all his saints to him." Understand therefore through these things, that there is one disposer of the Old and New Testament.

"Who order his testament upon sacrifices." In whose mercies God is delighted above all sacrifices. Or they "order," preach, and fulfill the New Testament over the Old, because "old things pass

away, and behold all things are made new" (2 Cor. 5).

And the heavens shall announce his justice. The Evangelists, or the law of Moses. "Since God is judge." Who causes the good to be separated from the bad. Or the heavens, the saints: "they shall announce," they shall preach: as that, "The heavens tell the glory of God" (Psalm 18). "His justice," his mandates. "Since God is judge": because he himself is the judge of the living and the dead. And he is our advocate, and he is the judge, and he is our God.

"Hear, my people: and I will speak to you, Israel." The voice of God the Father, speaks to the Jewish people. "Hear, my people." He requires the ear of the heart: whence the prophet says: "I will hear what the Lord God shall speak in me" (Psalm 84). And elsewhere: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord your God is one God" (Deut. 6). Or receive the ears of hearing, so that you may understand, O Israel. "And I will testify to you." If you shall have looked through with a spiritual mind. Or "I will testify to you," that is, through the patriarchs and prophets, as he said: "I am who I am" (Exod. 5). "Since God, your God, I am." I am God by omnipotence; but I am your God through grace: not the mute and deaf idols which you have worshipped until now. Or I am he, who always is himself.

"I will not reprove you in your sacrifices." Because I am delighted with a contrite heart. "But your holocausts are always in my sight." If you shall have directed the odor of right prayer to me, like an incense of sweetness.

"I will not receive calves from your house: nor he-goats from your flocks." For these I have despised: because the blood of the true lamb has been poured out for the sins of my people. Or, "I will not receive calves from your house": that is, the incontinent and the proud. "Nor he-goats from your flocks": he-goats, who are foul in sin.

"Since all the beasts of the woods are mine, the cattle on the mountains and the oxen." Irrational men and those vacant upon various mountains: who ought to be saved by the calling of the Son of God.

"I have known all the birds of the heaven." Whether heretics, or the rich of this world, who are extolled through worldly pride and irrational knowledge. "And the species of the field is with me." Because where I shall wish, an abundance of all things is either diffused or denied. Or "the species of the field is with me": the virtue of the holy Church. The birds of heaven which you offer me, turtledoves and pigeons, I gave to you, and all things live before God before they are made: and in what place they might be, and at what time they might come, both in weight and in measure all things are with God: as he says in the Gospel: "For even the hairs of your head are all numbered" (Luke 12). Or, "birds of heaven," the holy angels.

"If I shall be hungry, I will not tell you." To hunger is of God, not in corruptible foods, but so that one may do his will: as he himself says in the Gospel: "My food is that I may do the will of my Father" (John 4). Therefore Christ keeps silent

about his hunger: because he awaits sinners for penance. "For the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." The whole world. Or, "the world," the holy Church. As if he were to say, that she has been redeemed by his own blood.

"Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of he-goats?" He declares here that the old sacrifices are to be evacuated: and therefore in good morals he requires a sacrifice: saying.

"Offer to God the sacrifice of praise, and pay your vows to the Most High." This is the acceptable sacrifice: this is the fat holocaust: so that God may be praised by the man whom he created, whom he redeemed: to whom also he promises the heavenly kingdom. Or the voice of the prophet admonishes the saints to sacrifice spiritually, and to pay vows, as he says: "In me, O God, are your vows: which I will pay as praises to you."

"Invoke me in the day of your tribulation," etc. We are tempted, so that we may be proved: let us persevere in faith, let us invoke in tribulation: let us magnify him when we shall have been liberated from dangers.

"But to the sinner God has said: why do you tell my justices, and take my testament through your mouth?" Let the doctors or bishops of the Churches hear these things: who cut back the sins of the peoples by preaching. Whence Saint Paul says: "They are manifest who have not sustained the precept of Christ" (1 Tim. 5), that is, they do not fulfill in work what they preach. Whence the Lord said to the apostles: "The things which they

shall say to you, do: but according to their works do not do" (Matt. 23).

"But you have hated discipline, and have cast my words behind you." What you were preaching in the Church, you did not keep in life.

"If you saw a thief, you ran with him, and with adulterers you placed your portion." You ran with a thief, you participated with an adulterer, when you were joined to them either in adulatory praises or in consenting pleasures. What he said above, "you placed your portion," that is, the portion which you ought to have had with God and the angels, you place in hell.

"Your mouth abounded with malice, and your tongue framed deceits." While he was acting badly: you wickedly and deceitfully praised him for acting well. Or, "your tongue framed deceit," that is, Judas against Christ. His mouth abounded with wickedness when he made counsel with the Jews, so that they might crucify him.

"Sitting you spoke against your brother, and against the son of your mother you laid a stumbling block." Christ is called the son: because he proceeded from the synagogue. Or Judas is called the brother of the Lord, as the prophet says: "I will tell your name to my brothers" (Ps. 21). Or otherwise: the brothers, the stronger saints: the sons, the simpler ones. Whence Saint Paul said: "We who are stronger ought to bear the infirmities of the weak brothers" (Rom. 15). "Sitting you spoke against your brother": who was reborn to you in baptism. "And against the son of your mother you laid a stumbling block": whom the

Church of God, like yourself, presented to Christ through faith. "These things you have done, and I was silent." Because I reserved them to be examined in the future judgment. "And I was silent": because I did not immediately take vengeance, but sustained.

"You thought, O wicked one, that I shall be like you." While I do not take vengeance in the present: you thought that those things please me, just as your evils and those of others please you. "I will reprove you." When you shall have been located on the left side of the seat, in the future judgment. "And I will set those things against your face." So that, confounded by these, you may be condemned in perpetual death, that is, through those mandates which you did not keep: or your sins, and those of others, which you left behind you, as that: "Because if you shall not have announced to the wicked man his iniquity, I will require his blood from your hand" (Ezech. 3). Would that in this world we would set our sins before us: and that God would not set them in the judgment before our face: where now not correction, but the judgment of death approaches.

"Understand these things now, you who forget God." The voice of the prophet admonishes each one, so that he may not put the Lord in oblivion, nor his mandates (Job 2). "Lest at any time he snatch you away, and there be none to deliver." "Lest at any time he snatch away," to death or to the day of judgment: whence he said: "And there is none who can rescue from your hand." Or he

snatches away: that is, he precipitates into death those forgetting him, and no one can deliver:

"The sacrifice of praise shall honor me." Because God is honored by every good that the saints do. Whence Paul said: "All things whatsoever you do in word or in work: do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10), as also in the Gospel: "That they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven" (Matt. 5). On account of this he honors me before the angels: because I honored him before men in sacrifices of praise; and he fulfilled what he spoke in the Gospels: "He who shall have confessed me before men, him will I confess before my Father and his angels" (Luke 12). "And there is the way." The way of Christ is through the works of the Saints. "In which I will show him the salvation of God." The salvation of God the Father is the Son. In this sacrifice he indicates the way which leads to life, that is, to Christ. Who may deign to grant us, that, discerned from the chaff, filled with the fruit of sanctification, we may offer him the sacrifice of praise, so that with him illuminating, we may merit to understand the way of our salvation. Amen.

PSALM 50.

"To the end, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him: when he went in to Bathsheba." This fiftieth psalm contains the voice of a penitent person: showing that he who has fallen into crime, by confessing his evils, may return to salvation.

"Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam." I confess immense misery: therefore I ask for great mercy. For he who thinks himself to be miserable because of his sins: with him God works great mercy. For the lesser mercy is here in the present, that is, because when man was not, God created him out of nothing so that he might be, and he rules and governs. Greater mercy is said: when he remunerates that same man whom he created, in the future. "And according to the multitude of your mercies," etc. I flee to your mercies, so that you may pour the theriac (theriacam) of remission into the grave wounds. "Of mercies," he says: because my sins are many, and "your mercies are many" (Ps. 68). Whence the prophet says in another place: "Your mercies are many, O Lord."

"Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." I expect that you wash me in the fountain of mercy: because you do not wish to reserve the wounds of sin for eternity: As if he were to say: You can remit more to me than I understand to ask.

"For I know my iniquity." For I place it before my face. If you pronounce your sins in your confession, God will forgive you. "And my sin is always against me." Because my sins separate from the riches of your goodness. Because I do not hand it over to oblivion, I propose it always before my eyes. For if you place it before you: God does not place it before himself.

"To you only have I sinned, and have done evil before you." For each one offends you when

he has sinned: because you alone are without sin: as the Apostle says: "God is true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3). Or David says: I have sinned, and you alone are without sin, as Isaiah says: "Who did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth" (Isa. 53). Or that: "Who shall convict me of sin" (John 8)? And likewise he says: "The prince of this world comes, and in me he finds not anything" (John 14). "That you may be justified in your words, and may overcome when you are judged." Because you judge a right judgment. On account of us transgressors and sinners he was judged and condemned. Whence it was said: "The Just was judged by the unjust." But he in the future judgment will be the one to judge and condemn others. You are justified, Lord Jesus, in your words: when led to death for the sins of the people, guile was not found in your mouth. You overcame when judged: when the prince of darkness found nothing worthy of death in you. It is the custom of the prophet to speak of things done for things to be done.

"For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me." This verse explains the fall of the whole human race, as in Job: "Neither if he be of one day upon the earth, can he be clean from the filth of sin" (Job 15 and 25). Moreover, he is conceived and born in original sin, which is drawn from Adam, but is purified by baptism through the grace of Christ. Or, "that you may be justified in your words, and may overcome when you are judged." Paul explains this passage more diligently in the Epistle to the

Romans: that although God can discern concerning us by the authority of a judge, he does not do this, but wishes to be judged with us, so that the justice of the judge may appear more clearly (Rom. 3). "In sins did my mother conceive me." An obscure passage and one to be retracted more deeply.

"For behold, you have loved truth." When you rebuked the sinning servant through the prophet, you loved truth. Truth is Christ: because the Father loves his Son, or he loves confession from the mouth of a sinner. "The uncertain and hidden things of your wisdom you have made manifest to me." This is what he says in another place: "Open my eyes, and I will consider the wondrous things of your law" (Ps. 118). It will be uncertain and hidden to me, if you remit such a crime. But it is manifest: when you have deigned to forgive the delinquent. For it belongs to your wisdom, that you first rebuke, and so remit. For also to the Ninevites the wisdom of your piety was hidden, when they said: "Who knows if God will turn from his fury, and we shall not perish" (Jonah 3)? Or God through Nathan the prophet manifested the uncertain and hidden things: that is, he told David, when he said: your sin is forgiven, just as the Ninevites were converted from evil to good through the preaching of Jonah.

"You shall sprinkle me, Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed." For just as earthly hyssop is apt for curing the lungs, that it may avert inflation: so he who is sprinkled with heavenly hyssop: that is, with humility of heart, is purged

from all malice of pride. "You shall wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow." So that because my sins are like scarlet, they may be whitened like snow. You, I say, Lord, are powerful to transfer pitchy sin into milky whiteness: and to convert smoky ebony into the splendor of crystal. Or, "you shall wash me:" that is, through penance and baptism. "And I shall be made whiter than snow," as Isaiah said: "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow" (Isa. 1).

"To my hearing you shall give joy and gladness." When lying in the infirmity of sin, I shall merit to hear: Man, your sins are forgiven you. Or he says "to my hearing": when he said: Nathan, your sin is forgiven. "And the humbled bones shall rejoice." That is, the virtues which before had been humbled by sins. Or the eternity of my hope, which, when I sinned, had been humbled: exults by your indulgence.

"Turn away your face from my sins." Nor look upon them in such a way that they return into your remembrance. "Turn away your face." As if he were to say; see them not, nor remember them. "And blot out all my iniquities." Past, present, and future.

"Create a clean heart in me, O God." By which I may see you. Just as David asked: so also everyone ought to do. "Create a clean heart in me, O God." Therefore he asked, that he might be made clean from sin. "And renew a right spirit within my bowels." By which I may rightly confess you. Or, "a right spirit," for seeing and discerning: as it was right in me before.

"Cast me not away from your face." Like Cain, so that I be made an exile from you. "From your face:" that is, from your presence. "And take not your holy spirit from me:" But by it, sins having been consumed, establish me in your sight. "Take not your holy spirit from me:" that is, the spirit of prophecy.

"Restore to me the joy of your salvation." That exultation of your Christ which I had in him before I sinned. The salvation of God the Father is Christ. As if he were to say: just as before I foresaw through the spirit that Christ would come in the flesh: so now let me do. "And strengthen me with a principal spirit." So that he himself may reign in me: and not vices. But you who read the holy Scripture: understand here the holy Trinity. Or, "strengthen me," in the kingdom. A right spirit: that is, by renewing the Holy Spirit: that is, the spirit of prophecy. A principal spirit, the Father. A right spirit, the Son: a holy spirit, the Holy Spirit.

"I will teach the unjust your ways: and the wicked shall be converted to you." That declining from crooked ways, and doing penance, they may obtain mercy, just as I also obtained mercy from you. "I will teach the unjust your ways: and the wicked shall be converted to you:" that is, I will set myself, so that others may imitate my example.

"Deliver me from blood, O God." From many sins: concerning which Paul also says: because flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15). "O God of my salvation." By whom I am quickened after sin. Because no other can do

this. "And my tongue shall exult in your justice." By which, sin having been punished in me, you have provided mercy. Or my tongue shall preach your commandments.

"Lord, you will open my lips: and my mouth shall announce your praise." If you open my mouth as once you did for Moses: I will proclaim that you are holy, that you are pious, that you are merciful. Or they were closed through sin: neither place, nor time, nor person, nor example could they give: because praise is not beautiful in the mouth of a sinner.

"For if you had desired sacrifice, I would indeed have given it: with burnt offerings you will not be delighted." Let the Jews hear that their sacrifices have ceased: let them also understand God speaking through another prophet: "My soul has hated your sabbaths, burnt offerings, and new moons" (Isa. 1). What then will you, O man, offer? Hear what he added:

"A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, you do not despise." Worthily among the remaining Evangelical beatitudes, this beatitude contains the primacy. "Blessed," he says, "are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5). Who are not inflated in the vanities of the world: but receive from God the breath of life: and pour back the contrition of an anxious heart into him, who was made humble for us. Or many have a contrite heart, but do not have it humbled: because they wail for what they have done: and afterwards they desire to return to that same

thing which they did before: and they do not wish to repent of the past.

"Deal favorably, Lord." That is, make our hope pleasing. "In your good will, with Sion." In which we contemplate you. "And let the walls of Jerusalem be built up." Those fortifications of faith and of that charity which, placed in the Church, we have situated in you.

"Then you will accept the sacrifice of justice, oblations and burnt offerings." When either you offer yourself for us to the Father: or you receive from us praises and thanksgivings. Or, "the walls of Jerusalem," the virtues of the soul, or of the Church. "Then you will accept the sacrifice:" that is, confession from the mouth of a sinner. "Oblation:" that is, praise, "and burnt offerings." "Then they shall lay calves upon your altar." The altar is faith: because whatever you offer, you ought to offer through faith: The calf, praises, or thoughts, or victims, namely, that I may offer myself a living host, holy, pleasing to you. We also, your suppliant servants, pray, Lord Jesus Christ, that by the counsel of piety, for our great crimes, you may bestow immense mercy: and that you prepare for yourself a worthy and acceptable holocaust from us through the contrition of a humbled heart, by slaughtering vices, and by slaying offenses. Amen.

PSALM 51.

"To the end, the understanding of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said: David has come to the house of Ahim-

elech." In the book of Kings, and in the Hebrew Psalter itself, it is written Abimelech: but since the letters beth and caph among the Hebrews are distinguished by a small point (apice): therefore the error crept in more easily. Abimelech is interpreted as "the kingdom of my father." David is interpreted as "strong in hand." "He came into the house of Abimelech": and Christ came into the kingdom of the Jews. By Saul is understood death: by David, life. What is it that death persecutes life: except that from the beginning of the world death always persecutes our life? Because those who love these present things: persecute the holy Church: that is, those who love celestial things. The Psalm contains the voice of the prophet reproaching the sins of the Jewish people: for to them he speaks these things, saying:

"Why do you glory in malice?" Why, opposing divine warnings, do you kill the prophets? "You who are powerful in iniquity." For when increasing with the help of God, you kill his prophets: you have increased this to the heap of malice, so that you delivered the Lord himself to death. Or, "why do you glory in malice?" this is Adam, and the devil: because what God built, they destroyed in themselves: the image of God and of the angels. "You who are powerful in iniquity." Not in goodness, but in iniquity.

"All the day long." All the time of your life in which this malice was propagated even to the shedding of the Lord's blood. "Your tongue has devised injustice." The thought of the wise is conceived in the heart, and brought forth by

the mouth. For in the mouth of fools is their heart. As if he were to say: He did not treat in his heart what he vomits from his mouth: therefore he brought these things to the thought of the tongue. Or here "tongue" is put for "heart": according to that: "You have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of heaven, in the mountain of the testament, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the height of the clouds: I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14). "Like a sharp razor, you have wrought deceit." Deceit is when one thing is done, and another is feigned. And if a razor should pretend to make the splendor of the face, and should wound the cheeks by its stroke, it will work deceit. Because when he says "sharp," he indicated it as crafty in deceit. So also the Jews, whom they ought to have worshipped, not only did not worship the Lord: but striving to overcome him by various deceits, they killed him. Or otherwise: By "razor," persecutors are understood: because a razor cuts hair: but by hair the superfluity of riches is understood. "Like a sharp razor, you have wrought deceit." He works deceit, who circumvents his brother in business. Whence Paul says: "Let no man circumvent or overreach his brother in business: because the Lord is the avenger of all these things" (1 Thess. 4).

"You have loved malice above benignity: iniquity rather than to speak equity." That people loved malice, when they slew him who by his own benignity had come to deliver. But even now

the Jews themselves speak false things concerning him in whom they have not believed.

"You have loved all words of precipitation, O deceitful tongue." For speaking iniquity on high, they precipitate themselves into the snare of damnation. He says "words of precipitation": because they precipitated themselves: as the devil from heaven, as also Adam from paradise. In a "deceitful tongue": because they had one thing in speech, another in the heart.

"Therefore God will destroy you forever: and he will pluck you out, and remove you from your tabernacle: and your root from the land of the living." All these things have been fulfilled in the Jewish people: because they were both destroyed from the letter of the law, and plucked out from the city: and moved from the tabernacle of God. But these things are also understood concerning those who do not believe the tabernacle of the Lord's body: because they shall be exterminated from the fellowship of his clarity, and from the habitation of the blessed seat, or from the land of the living which the saints shall inherit. Or, "God will destroy you forever": this is the memory of the devil. As elsewhere: "That man may not again presume to magnify himself upon the earth" (Ps. 9). Whence the holy Apostle Paul said: "At the end of ages, death the enemy shall be destroyed" (1 Cor. 15): that is, the devil. "He will pluck you out and remove you from your tabernacle, and your root from the land of the living." As death was given in Adam: so it dominates all his children. Whence it was said: "Dust you are, and to

dust you shall go" (Gen. 3). The devil and Adam uprooted themselves: and everyone does so when he sins.

"The just shall see, and shall fear." Lest they should desire such things. "And they shall laugh over him." Concerning the vengeance of his calamity. "They shall see," that is, they shall understand their punishment: "and they shall fear," as the holy Paul says: "See lest you also be tempted" (Gal. 6). Or, "they shall fear:" that is, they shall not know their end. Whence it was said: "Man knows not his end" (Eccl. 9). Furthermore, "And they shall laugh over him." There are two times: A time of weeping, and a time of laughing. Here the saints have a time of weeping, and in the future a time of laughing. "And they shall say: behold the man that made not God his helper: but trusted in the abundance of his riches: and prevailed in his vanity." Therefore this vengeance descended upon him. Or he says it concerning that rich man, who was tortured in hell, because he had received good things in his life (Luke 16): and concerning that other to whom he says: "Fool, this night they require your soul from you: and whose shall those things be which you have prepared" (Luke 12)? So is he who treasures up for himself, and is not rich toward God. Is it perhaps evil to have riches, provided that they be held from a just source: and thanks be returned to God, who gave them? No, but it is evil to place hope in riches: since in another psalm he says: "If riches abound, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. 61). It is permitted to have riches for

necessity, and it is not permitted to possess them out of love. For both Abraham and the remaining good men had riches: but they did not place their hope in riches.

"But I, as a fruitful olive tree in the house." The prophet compares himself to a fruitful olive tree through the fatness of wisdom: so that situated in the Church of God, living in the allegory of the law, he may bring forth Evangelical fruits. For there is one God, the author of the Old and New Testament. "A fruitful olive tree" is the holy Church: as that: "Their storehouses full, flowing out" (Ps. 143). Here in a good sense. Likewise an olive tree not fruitful: as the prophet says: "The Lord called your name, at the voice of a great speech a fire has kindled in it: and its groves are burnt" (Jer. 11). And that: "A fruitful olive tree, fair, fruitful, beautiful" (Ibid.); but you are turned into a wild olive (oleastrum). Likewise in a good sense he says: "But you, when you were a wild olive, were grafted into the good olive tree" (Rom. 11): that is, into the faith of the patriarchs. "I have hoped in the mercy of God forever, and for ages of ages." Because it is not the capacity of human fragility, that anyone should become safe through himself, but through the mercy of God.

"I will confess to you forever because you have done it." Praying that in this age, which you created by your word, I may merit confession, and that it may be bestowed by your accustomed clemency. "And I will wait on your name: for it is good in the sight of your saints." That name blessed before all ages, which returns to

the saints their due reward. Which the prophet, thirsting, asks for: so that in the sight of his eternal beatitude he may receive his lot. Who may deign to grant us, that being free from all deceit, cleansed from all iniquity, having confessed the Son of God equal to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, we may merit to be planted like a fruitful olive tree in the celestial Jerusalem.

PSALM 52.

"To the end, for Amalek, understanding to David himself." Amalek is interpreted as "grieving," or "travailing": the body of Christ is understood. And the Lord grieved for our sins: because he was a true body, and he travailed with sons. And the Church, the body of Christ, grieves for her own sins, and those of others, and travailed with sons through the word of preaching: as that: "Through the Gospel I have begotten you" (1 Cor. 4). This psalm contains the voice of the prophet reproaching sinners and the impious. "The fool said in his heart: there is no God." The fool said, the Jewish people, or the devil, "there is no God." As if he were to say, Christ is not the Son of God.

"They are corrupted." From the law of good nature. "They are become abominable." That is, they are become hateful. "In their iniquities." That is, in their desires. Since fools have not dared to deny God with their mouth, yet in their heart they say that he is not: in which evil they become horrible and abominable to God. "There is none that does good: no, not so much as one." Not concerning all, but concerning all those only who

deny God, the prophet says: because sometimes they speak good things: yet they never do them.

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that understand, or seek after God." That is, that he might find those whom he might choose: as he once did in the prophets and patriarchs: and having found them, he might claim them as his own foster-child. To look forth and to see belongs to one who is ignorant and seeking. Does God perhaps ignore anything? No, but the heavens are holy: as the prophet says: "The heavens show forth the glory of God" (Ps. 18). And elsewhere according to the Apostle: "But our conversation is in heaven" (Phil. 3): because the Holy Spirit makes the saints love and cherish God, and the Holy Spirit himself is God. God looks forth through his saints, because he preaches and speaks through them, as the Lord says: "For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you" (Matt. 10).

"They are all gone aside, they are become unprofitable together." These fools, because they did not seek God: "all have gone aside" into passions: "they are become unprofitable together." He is called unprofitable who does not work anything good: whence he says in the Gospel: "Take the talent from him, and cast the unprofitable servant into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25). They are unprofitable to themselves who do not wish to fulfill the commandments of God. "There is none that does good: no, not so much as one."

For none of these fulfills the will of the heavenly Father.

"Shall not all they know that work iniquity: who devour my people as a piece of bread?" They have not called upon God. For they know that they act impiously, and not only do they not amend, but they even devour the people of God with the teeth of their malice: and they despise calling upon God. "There have they trembled with fear, where there was no fear." They feared dead idols and images: who ought to have feared God.

"For God has scattered the bones of them that please men." For God shall crush the hope of their eternity, who in his contumely have pleased themselves more than him. Those pleasing themselves were confounded, that is, those who please men, and not God. "They are confounded, because God has despised them." Deservedly is he despised by God who has left God: and he who leaves him is worthily confounded by him as unknown, the Apostle saying: "He that is ignorant shall be ignored" (2 Cor. 14).

"Who shall give out of Zion the salvation of Israel?" Out of Zion, as the prophet says, "the law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2). "Who shall give?" God the Father gave his Son in Zion: that is, in the holy Church. "The salvation of Israel." Our Savior (salutare) is Christ. Who shall give but the Lord in his coming, through whom we behold the glory of eternity? "When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of his people." He also, the captivity of

vices having been turned away, raised us up into the liberty of virtues. Concerning which captivity he says: Already they are redeemed from the sin of Adam; but yet we are still held in captivity, because there is not integral liberty, because while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord. And likewise he says: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (2 Cor. 2)? "The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7). But in the day of judgment when the enemy death shall be destroyed, then there shall be true redemption. "Jacob shall exult, and Israel shall rejoice." The Christian people hears both: who is Jacob, while he supplants the Jewish people and receives his blessing, and Israel, while he beholds God with the eyes of faith. Therefore we also as suppliants pray to God that, turning aside from superfluous loquacity, he himself instructing us, we may understand that all things consist in his dominion, who may deign, the captivity of vices having been taken away, to raise us up into the liberty of virtues.

PSALM 53.

"Unto the end, in hymns, understanding to David, when the Ziphites come, and say to Saul: Is not David hidden with us in the cave of Ziph?" Ziph is a village, and from it they are called Ziphites. Ziphites are interpreted as "flourishing," that is, sinners, who are as it were flourishing and green in the present life, as the prophet says: "All flesh is grass, and all its glory as the flower of the field" (Isa. 40), because that which

is dry is reserved for the fire. These are deputed to punishment: the saints to the kingdom. As the grass today seems to be as it were green, until the heat comes: so sinners, because they seem to flourish, in the day of judgment shall wither, and the saints who here seem as it were arid and dry, then shall be flourishing and green. Whence it was said: "The just shall flourish like the palm tree" (Ps. 91). David was hidden in the lower part of the earth: and the Lord in the womb of holy Mary, and in one nation of the Jews, and the divinity in the flesh of Christ. This psalm is recognized to contain the prayer of the Dominical man, receiving the form of a servant, and approaching the passion in the form of a servant.

"Save me, O God, in your name." He asks these things from the Father, that he might show the infirmity of the flesh. "In your name:" that is, in that name of humility which is salvation. "And judge me in your strength." He wishes himself to be judged, that they might ascend to that honorable name of majesty by the divinity. It was humility when he came from heaven into the womb, from the womb into the manger, and sustained many things, that is, buffets, spittings, and the rest. It was strength (virtus) when he rose again and ascended into the heavens on the fortieth day, and on the fiftieth day the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles, and they preached the doctrine of the Gospel in the whole world. Whence it was said: "And he gave him a name which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven,

on earth, and under the earth: and every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2). And because he died for a time from the infirmity of the flesh, he lives from the power of God. And likewise the Apostle says: "I estimated myself to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (2 Cor. 2). Or, "judge me." The voice of the Church asks for discretion.

"Hear, O God, my prayer." And this he asks, that he may merit to be heard by God. For he alone knew how to pray constantly, and not to be ignorant as a man what he might ask: according to that of the Apostle: "For what we should pray for as we ought, we know not" (Rom. 8). "With your ears perceive the words of my mouth." The voice of the Church. The ears of the Lord are spoken of when he deigns to hear.

"For strangers have risen up against me." These are the Jews, who while they were the peculiar people of God, made themselves strangers from him through transgression: not in knowledge, but in life and works. Whence he says: "The children of strangers have lied to me" (Ps. 17). And if children, how strangers? They were of one tribe: but they were strangers because they wished to take away the life of him who had come to vivify them. "And the strong have sought my soul." Herod and the princes of the priests having worldly strength. And the Lord says: "You should not have any power over me, unless it were given you from above" (John 19). So also the heretical persecutors over the holy Church. "They

have not set God before their sight." They did not understand that the divinity lay hidden under the bodily person. The interjected diapsalma changes the prayer: so that it shows that he who was first praying as a man has obtained the effect of the prayer. And therefore he added:

"For behold God helps me." Because the Lord descended into death. "And the Lord is the upholder of my soul." To return it quickly. Or God the Father upheld his Son, and Christ his Church in faith. "Turn back the evils upon my enemies, and in your truth scatter them." Those who did not understand me through their malice, let them be scattered in your truth: as we now see done. For they are scattered in regions. He says "truth:" because he is true, that is, he will render to each one according to his works. "Scatter them," in the day of judgment and in your just vengeance: that is, the devil and his members.

"I will freely sacrifice to you." Well said, "freely": because of his own will the priest himself and the host offered himself to the Father for the sins of the people, so that this sacrifice might grant life to the world. "I will freely sacrifice to you." The voice of the Church. He says "freely," that is, not of necessity or constrained, but freely, according to that: "Providing for the flock not by constraint, but spontaneously" (1 Pet. 5). "And I will confess to your name, for it is good." I have confessed in the world: because I descended from heaven, not to do my own will, but yours because it is good (John 6). "I will confess:" that is, I will praise your name: this is good.

"For you have delivered me out of all trouble: and my eye has looked down upon my enemies." Because he poured out a pure prayer in the beginning of the psalm: therefore as God foreseeing all things, he pronounces himself rescued from tribulations and his enemies looked down upon by the paternal inspection: namely so that you may understand him to reign by that power, because after the resurrection he returned as victor to the stars. Whom we as suppliants pray that, saved by his help from enemies, rescued from worldly tribulations, we may follow that very head of ours, the Lord Jesus Christ whom we look up to in the heavens, in mind and in work.

PSALM 54.

"Unto the end, in hymns, understanding to David." "Unto the end," in Christ: as that: "For the end of the law is Christ, unto justice to every one that believes" (Rom. 10). "Unto the end" is always understood concerning Christ. Whence also the holy apostles said: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us" (John 14). You cannot fulfill the law, unless it be fulfilled by him. All holy Scripture is concerning him. "In hymns," that is, in praises: As there are songs of the world, so also are there songs of the Church: whence the praise of God is sung: and it is the consolation of the saints: because it was said: "Then shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father: equal to the angels" (Matt. 13). The psalm contains the voice of the Mediator, who though he was God, took the servile form for our liberty.

"Hear, O God, my prayer, and despise not my supplication: be attentive to me, and hear me." This triple supplication is shown for this reason: that the first, the God-man remaining in the servile state, emits from the consciousness of holiness. The second, because he knows himself just, he asks that obedience be not despised. The third, on account of the infirmity of the flesh, he prays that he be attended to. By which reason understand, O man: that unless you pray with a pure conscience, you shall not be heard by God at all.

"I am grieved in my exercise." Which I undertook for the life of the world: because exercise is always carried out for useful and necessary things. "I am troubled by the voice of the enemy." Who reproached me as a Samaritan, and having a devil, when I was God before the ages. Or the voice of the Church. The Church has two enemies. One openly, and one secretly. One she ought to love, and the other to hate. To love the neighbor, as that: "Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you" (Luke 6): And the other to despise and hate: that is, the devil who comes secretly through suggestions and delights. "And from the tribulation of the sinner." Who always aimed the snares of tribulations at me. On account of this God troubles sinners; either that they may be amended, or that through them he may correct the good.

"For they have turned iniquities upon me." The people indeed turns to iniquity, which brings forth a lie against the neighbor. Or the Jews

against the Lord, as they said: "In Beelzebub the prince of devils he casts out devils" (Matt. 12): "And in anger they were troublesome to me." Persecuting me in their envy. "And in anger they were troublesome." Troublesome, that is, savage. "In anger," mote (festuca), beam (trabs), hatred. Anger troubles; the beam blinds: as that: "My eye is troubled through anger" (Ps. 6).

"My heart is troubled within me." According to the man, but it was strengthened by divine power. For also an angel, says the Evangelist, approaching, strengthened him (Luke 22). "And the fear of death is fallen upon me." Fear of the soul, and trembling of the body. "Fear and trembling are come upon me." Indeed he himself said: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death" (Mark 14). "Darkness has covered me." Evil men are called darkness, who persecute the Church, and who cover it in hatred, because he who hates his brother is in darkness. "And darkness has covered me:" but because I was the light, they did not comprehend me.

"And I said: Who will give me wings like a dove? and I will fly and be at rest." I did not expect the highest flight of evading death from any other but from myself. I have the power of laying down my soul, and I have the power of taking it up again: that from darkness I may return to the celestial things. Moreover, in the dove he designates the spiritual nature, as was shown in baptism. The dove is a simple animal without gall, and foreign to the malice of gall: because it signifies the kiss of charity of the soul: because

the Church has two wings, that is, two precepts of charity: namely, the love of God and of the neighbor.

"Lo, I have gone far off flying." From the Jews. For salvation is far from sinners. "And I stayed in the wilderness." With the unbelieving Gentiles, whom I made to flourish by my coming. Concerning whom another prophet says: "Let the desert rejoice and flourish" (Isa. 35). "Lo, I have gone far off flying, and I stayed in the wilderness." The dove flies from human conversation, and the saints fly from the company of men, not bodily, but spiritually, that is, in conscience, because they think how they ought to defend themselves against the suggestions of the devil or of heretics.

"I waited for him that saved me from pusillanimity of spirit and a storm." He waits, being placed in the body, not only for the salvation of the father, that he may be rescued from diverse storms: but also, that he may receive vengeance upon his enemies. It follows: "Cast down, O Lord, and divide their tongues." Someone is often cast down into water. Therefore let these be so submerged as in the flood, and let them be scattered with divided tongues, as was done in the building of the tower. But why these things are done, he added: "For I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city." Iniquity, when they did not believe. Contradiction, when they reproach, contradicting: "Is not this the son of Joseph the carpenter" (Mark 6)? And many other things.

"Day and night." That is, at all times. "Day," when he taught the crowds, and they did not

believe. "Night," when he suffered, and they blasphemed. Therefore their city, that is, Jerusalem, was so surrounded and filled that its iniquity overflowed above the walls.

"And usury and deceit have not failed from its streets." For all things which are prohibited in the law grew to a heap of increasing sin. For usuries are prohibited from being taken in the law (Deut. 23). Usury is to receive more than you give. Whence the prophet says: "I have not lent on usury, nor has any one lent to me on usury" (Jer. 15). And, "If you wish that it be forgiven to you, forgive" (Matt. 6).

"For if my enemy had reviled me, I would indeed have borne it, and if he that hated me had spoken great things against me: I would perhaps have hidden myself from him." Not only concerning the passion does the Lord complain here, but also concerning the disciple the traitor. For we read in the Gospels that he hid himself from the Jews (John 8). But from Judas he did not hide himself: but he even admitted him to the holy banquet, as follows:

"But you, a man of one mind." Who were joined with the other apostles. "My guide." Sent with the others to preach. "And my familiar." Because you had known through the mystery of the law that I was to come. "My guide and my familiar." The voice of Christ concerning Judas. He says "of one mind:" because he seemed to others as if good. He says "guide," on account of the fact that he betrayed Christ, he was the guide

of death. "Familiar," when he sent them two by two before his face into the preaching (Luke 10).

"Who didst take sweet meats together with me." You were frequently refreshed with the commandments of life and the will of the father. For food is sweet, to do the will of the Father, as that: "He who dips his hand with me in the dish, he shall lift up his heel against me" (Matt. 26). Or the sweet food, that is, the body and blood of Christ: which he himself received unworthily. "We walked in the house of God with consent." For he often went with the Lord himself into the temple of Solomon with the consent of preaching.

"Let death come upon them, and let them go down alive into hell." To show the greater grief of his heart according to the man: therefore as if in a curse he predicted the things that were to come upon them. "Let death come upon them, and let them go down alive into hell." This was done concerning Dathan, and Korah, and Abiram, and together came the fire and they were dead, and the earth swallowed them alive (Num. 16).

"For there is wickedness in their dwellings in the midst of them." For indeed both in work and in thought, they are full of wickedness.

"But I have cried to the Lord, and the Lord will save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon." Evening when he underwent the passion, morning when he rose again: noon, when with all the clarity of his strength fulfilled, he ascended into the heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father.

"I will tell and announce, and he will hear my voice." "He shall redeem my soul in peace, from them that draw near to me." He tells namely: that the father quickly heard him: that he rescued him from the tribulations of death: that he delivered his soul in peace from his enemies, who had drawn near to him for the sake of bringing about death. Or, "I will tell," as it were lesser things, "and I will announce," as it were greater things. "He delivered my soul in peace." "In peace," that is, in himself, as Paul said: "He is our peace, who has made both one" (Eph. 2). "From them that draw near to me." They draw near in body, not in life nor in merit. "Because among many they were with me." Among many, but not in few. In many indeed, that is, in baptism, and in faith not feigned. In few they are not, that is, in firm faith, and hope, and charity. "Among many," believers, "they were with me," and they did not believe.

"God shall hear." Me blessing, not them reviling. "God shall hear:" his saints. "And he shall humble them." That is, the proud. "Who is before the ages." The Father indeed, whom they did not know to remain in me: because he is before the ages, and remains forever. He who took beginning from Mary, was begotten before the ages.

"For there is no change to them." From evil to good: they are not changed, they are not transferred according to the Gospel from death into life. "And they have not feared God." Therefore the cause descended to vengeance, as follows: "He has stretched forth his hand in repaying." Because when it had been stretched forth to

them for help: they did not receive it. "They have not feared God:" therefore they did not turn aside from evil to good: because they did not know. "And he has stretched forth his hand, in repaying them." "He has stretched forth his hand," as the prophet says: "All the day long have I spread my hands to a people not believing and contradicting me" (Isa. 65): therefore because he does not believe my works and my power. "In repaying them," that is, in vengeance in the day of judgment: especially since I said to Abraham: "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22), that is, in Christ, and in another place: "And I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession" (Ps. 2). Christ through the New Testament acquired his inheritance.

"They have defiled his covenant." Because they did not understand the Lord Jesus promised by the heraldry of holy men. "And they are divided from the wrath of his countenance." From spiritual providence, their contemplation is divided: therefore their portion is set with the unbelievers. After their reproach, the discourse is directed to Judas, saying: "And his heart drew near," so that, being filled by the devil, he might betray Christ. "They have defiled his covenant, and they are divided from the wrath of his countenance," that is, the heretics, who wished to defile the covenant of God, shall be divided on the day of judgment when they receive the sentence of damnation: "Go, you cursed, into eternal fire" (Matt. 25). "And his heart drew near." His

will: because what they understand of the Scriptures, they turn to evil, because they do not believe rightly concerning the faith of the Trinity. Whence it is said: "There must be heresies, that they who are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11).

"His words are made softer than oil, and they are darts." When he says, "they are made soft": he speaks of many, although he had previously spoken of one. Therefore understand the devil to be named, and Judas, who made his words smoother than oil when he said: "Hail, Rabbi," and kissed him (Matt. 26). Refusing such oil, so that being placed in tribulations we may seek God's help, God himself taught us by his example, saying:

"Cast your care upon the Lord, and he shall nourish you." That being brought up by him, you may strongly resist enemies. "He shall not suffer the just to fluctuate forever." For if you are just, he does not suffer you to be exhausted by the wicked waves. He who fluctuates is in the sea. By the sea, this world is understood: in which the saints fluctuate.

"But you, O God, shall bring them down into the pit of destruction." So that those who would not drink from the fountain of living water may be plunged into the pit of destruction. "In the pit of destruction": that is, into hell, a just vengeance upon them.

"Men of blood and deceitful." Who are the shedders of the blood of our Redeemer. "They shall not halve their days": Not only did they not

fulfill the days of eternity, but they did not even deserve to reach half of its time. For in a small space of time they were slaughtered by enemies in the Lord's vengeance.

"But I will hope in you, O Lord." That my days may be found full. And we suppliantly pray that, being heard by you, O Lord: not anointed with the oil of sin, nourished by you, liberated by you from the waves of this world, we may deserve to obtain length of days from you for our good deeds. Amen.

PSALM 55

Unto the end, for the people that is made far from the saints: David in the inscription of the title, when the foreigners held him in Gath. In the Hebrew it has it thus: "For the silent dove of the distances, of David, humble and perfect, when the Philistines held him in Gath." The silent dove, and David humble and perfect, is shown to be Christ in his passion.

"Have mercy on me, O God, for man has trodden me under foot: all the day long fighting he has afflicted me." In "man" and "one fighting," he shows the intrusion of the devil or of the remaining spiritual wickednesses: by whose instigation the Lord suffered. In "day," however, he shows the corporeal age. "Have mercy on me, O Lord." As if he were to say: "Work mercy in me." "Because man has trodden me under foot," that is, Christ was trodden under foot by the Jews in the passion, and the Church by persecutors. One man is spoken of for many, and many are spoken of for

one. One: that is, for the unity of malice. There are two cities in the world: Babylon and Jerusalem. By Babylon the wicked are understood, who persecute the saints: so also Jerusalem, that is, the chosen soul, does not cease to pray for enemies. "All the day long fighting he has afflicted me." All the day, in the whole time of the battle.

"My enemies have trodden me under foot." The Jews indeed. "All the day." From the time of the assumed flesh. "From the height of the day I will fear." This has two senses here. One, as if the Church were to say in praying: "I will not fear the height of the proud." Another by affirming: "I will fear the height": that is, the height of the divinity: because he who does not fear acts presumptuously. "Because many are fighting against me." They shall fear from the height of the day: because they have placed their hopes not in God, but in transitory things.

"But I will hope in you: in God I will praise my words." Because I trust in his help and protection, as the Lord said: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me, the Father" (John 7). How much more we, who have received all things from him, and have received him: ought always to praise him!

"In God I will hope, I will not fear what man can do to me." Confirmed in him, I will not fear the battles which the adversary moves against me, because it is said: "If they kill the body: yet they cannot kill the soul" (Matt. 10).

"All the day long they detested my words against me." When they said, "This is not a

prophet, but he deceives the crowd" (John 7). "All their counsels were for evil." For they were turned to evil for them: when divine vengeance scourged them after the crimes of the Lord's passion. "All their counsels were for evil": the Jews against Christ, and sinners against the saints.

"They shall dwell." Unanimously. "And they shall hide." The snares of their wickedness. "They shall watch my heel." That they might be able to supplant me, as they wished: either in the coin of the tribute (Luke 20): or in the woman caught in adultery (John 8). "They shall watch my heel." The Jews [watch] the end of Christ, and sinners the end of the Church: because "seven times in a day the just man falls, and rises again" (Prov. 24). Or, "they shall watch my heel": as was said of that woman, and the serpent (Gen. 3). By the head, the beginning of evil suggestion, and by the heel, the end of life. Or the heretics in any discourse whatever, seek to watch the end.

"As they have waited for my soul." That they might accuse him, caught in his words, before the princes. "For nothing shall you save them." For they are saved for nothing, since they are not changed to glory, but are transferred to punishments. "For nothing shall you save them": because Christ did not do that for which he endured, but the Jews sought to kill him. "In your anger you shall break the peoples in pieces." Because they have struck against the rock of offense and the stone of stumbling. After this vengeance the prophet, rejoicing, foreseeing the future, sings.

"O God, I have declared my life to you." For you are my life, and that of all the people, you who are to come for the redemption of the world. Each one ought to declare by confession: as Paul did: when he said: "Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy: because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim. 1). And likewise he said: "And I live, now not I: but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2). "You have set my tears in your sight, as also in your promise." "Then shall my enemies be turned back." Your promises were that, with enemies turned behind the back, you would transfer old tears into new joys: and reward me with your glory along with the rest of the saints. "You have set my tears in your sight": that is, you have heard and seen. "As in your promise." God promised good things to his saints: but nevertheless he says: "Declare your iniquities first, that you may be justified." "Then shall my enemies be turned back." The Church says this by way of desiring, that those who run to hell may be converted to God (Isa. 43, according to the LXX).

"In whatever day I shall call upon you: behold, I have known that you are my God." For in every necessity you, O God, are present: granting mercy to your own. "In whatever day I shall call upon you," that is, either in prosperity or in adversity: "And I have known that you are my God." The voice of the Church. Some know through the creature of heaven and earth: as Saint Paul says: "By the things that are made, being understood, they are perceived" (Rom. 1). And others through

God, who inspires into their souls: as he said to Thomas: "Put in your finger here, and put your hand into my side, and know the places of the nails, and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20). And he, remembering, says: "My Lord and my God."

"In God I will praise the Word, and in the Lord I will praise the speech: in God I will hope, I will not fear what man can do to me." The prophet praises again that Word, or speech, which was in the beginning with the Father: because hoping in him, he does not fear the threats of the adversary, saying:

"In me, O God, are your vows: which I will render as praises to you." These are the vows of the prophet, that he may celebrate the Lord's praise: as he says elsewhere: "Offer to God the sacrifice of praise" (Ps. 49). And why he should do this, he added:

"Because you have delivered my soul from death." The second [death] indeed. "My eyes from tears." Lest it should now be necessary to bewail sins, as that: "God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes" on the day of judgment (Rev. 7): because it is said: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5). "My feet from falling." Lest they should slip any further into sins. "My feet," that is, the senses, "from falling," because there will not be then evil suggestion, nor tribulation. "That I may please before God in the light of the living." The light of the living is Christ, according to that: "I am the light of the world" (John 8). And likewise:

"He was the true light that enlightens every man coming into this world" (John 1). As in the Apocalypse concerning that holy city: "A lamp was not there, because the Lord God Almighty enlightened it, and its lamp is the Lamb," by whom the saints, rescued from the darkness of this world, are glorified (Rev. 21). The prophet prays these things not for himself only, but also for us. Whence let us pray that, with corporeal wars suppressed and the temptations of the age overcome, we may deserve to please Jesus Christ in that light. Amen.

PSALM 56

Unto the end, destroy not, for David himself, in the inscription of the title, when he fled from the face of Saul king of Israel into the cave. For David himself, in the inscription of the title, "destroy not," that is, do not corrupt the inscription of the title: when Pilate wrote upon the Lord's cross in three languages: "Jesus King of the Jews." And they [said]: "Write not King of the Jews: but that he said, I am King of the Jews." And Pilate said: "What I have written, I have written" (John 19). David hidden in the cave, that is, in the lower part of the earth; prefigured the human body, where that majesty was hidden in the body of Christ, as that: "I am given up, and I came not forth" (Ps. 87). And Paul says: "For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2).

"Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me: for my soul trusts in you." Having doubled the

petition for mercy, he joins his confidence which he has in the Father, that he may be more easily heard. "Because my soul trusts in you." He speaks as if one man: but one for many: because it is said: "From the ends of the earth I have cried to you, O Lord" (Ps. 60). And elsewhere: "They had one soul and one heart" (Acts 4). "And in the shadow of your wings I will hope." That is, in the paternal protection. A shadow is sought from the heat: but by "heat" persecution or tribulation is understood, and by "shadow" the protection of the divinity: to which we ought always to flee. But the two wings are the two Testaments, or the two precepts of charity. "Until iniquity pass away." The insulting of the wicked. For he teaches through these things to hope in the protection of the spiritual wings. Hence the prophet speaks.

"I will cry to God most high: to the God who has done good to me." These are the things which follow after the enumerated good things. "Until iniquity pass away," that is, the devil with his members, or his satellites. "I will cry to God most high." Christ cried to God the Father, and prayed for false brothers. And the Church prays for enemies. And to the "God who has done good to me," that is, he made me from nothing after his own image, and gave me all the good things of the present life, and afterwards promised eternal life in the future.

"He sent from heaven, and delivered me." He sent his Son from the heavens, that he might rescue man from sin: or the human race from the power of the devil, or from hell. "He gave

to reproach those that trod me under foot." The impious and those liable to sin, who neglected the prophetic word. Or as elsewhere: "He gave the apostles power to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10).

"God has sent his mercy and his truth." Mercy and truth is Christ. They are contained in one: nor is there one without the other. If there had been mercy alone, there would have been license to sin; and if truth alone, man could not have endured it. "He has delivered my soul from the midst of the young lions." The lions are the princes of the Jews: the young lions, the subject people: who cried out, 'Crucify him'. The lion is the devil, according to the Epistle of Peter: 'Your adversary the devil goes about like a lion, seeking whom he may devour' (1 Pet. 5). Therefore the Lord himself is understood as mercy and truth, who, sent from the Father, rescued our souls from the power of the demons: who were striving to devour us like the lions of the age: who also now speaks, saying: "I slept troubled." For he slept in the sleep of the passion when he said: 'Now my soul is troubled' (Ps. 6): because it is said: 'I have slept, and taken my rest, and risen up: for the Lord has raised me up,' according to that: 'I have power to lay down my soul, and power to take it up again' (John 10).

"The sons of men, their teeth are weapons, etc." He says the teeth of enemies are like the weapons of those attacking, which the Lord broke by his resurrection.

"Be exalted above the heavens, O God, etc." There is no measure of divine exaltation. We indeed know nothing else of the heavens than what we have seen. For when he says, 'above the heavens': it exceeds human knowledge. But concerning the glory which is upon the earth, that is understood which the Lord himself said elsewhere: "Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the age" (Matt. 28). Hence again the Lord:

"They have prepared a snare for my feet." When they brought deceitful questions to me. "And they have bowed down my soul." In death, but it was not perpetually subject to death. Thus the Jews wished to bow down Christ: so that his name might not be named.

"They have dug a pit before my face, and they are fallen into it." When after the resurrection they were delivered to enemies, captured, killed, and dispersed.

"My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready: I will sing and I will say a psalm to the Lord." He exults and sings together about the triumph of that free death. "I will sing," I will preach: "I will say a psalm," I will fulfill in work.

"Arise, my glory; arise, psaltery and harp: I will arise early." For he rose at dawn, in the morning while it was yet dark upon the earth. For thus "psaltery and harp": for this Davidic speech had sung: "arise, psaltery and harp". What do these instruments signify? one of heavenly things, the other of earthly things. What is understood by the psaltery? Christ is understood, as that: "Go,

tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind return to light, the dead rise again: the poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he who shall not be scandalized in me," that is, the divinity working through the flesh (Matt. 11). The harp is of earthly things, that is, to grow weary, to sleep, to be in want, to hunger, to thirst, or the like. Otherwise: the psaltery pertains to us, hope, faith, charity, patience, goodness, or other things similar to these. By the harp, the six works of mercy are understood, which we ought to fulfill, that is, I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, naked, sick, in prison. Likewise the psaltery, that is, to give thanks to God in tribulation: he through whom you endure comes from above. The harp, the persecution and tribulation which you endure in the body. "I will arise early." Christ answered to the Father. Whence he said above: "arise, my glory".

"I will confess to you among the peoples, O Lord, and I will sing a psalm to you among the nations." Whom I have called through the prophets, or the apostles. "I will confess to you among the peoples, O Lord," that is, after I shall have risen again. "I will sing a psalm to you among the nations," that is, to preach, to fulfill in work.

"For your mercy is magnified even to the heavens." For by my resurrection all things are pacified to you, which are in heaven and which are on earth. "And your truth even to the clouds." Fulfilling through the prophets what you had foretold to us. The heavens are the saints when

they contemplate heavenly things: the clouds, when they water human hearts by preaching.

"Be exalted above the heavens, O God." The prophet says these things concerning the glorious ascension of Christ. "And your glory above all the earth." When you shall have poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. Which also now may you deign to grant us, that in all pressures and in all tribulations you may send your Holy Spirit: by whose help and protection, or fortification, being protected, we may deserve to be prepared for eternal joys, and to be transferred to heavenly rewards. Amen.

PSALM 57

Unto the end, destroy not, for David, in the inscription of the title. You suggest falsehood, I will not corrupt the truth: "What I have written, I have written" (John 19). The Psalm contains the voice of the Prophet warning about judgments and justice.

"If you indeed speak justice, judge right things, you sons of men." He teaches that whoever of mortals uses public judgment, if he speaks the truth, should also judge the truth: nor should he set a mousetrap of deception by the blandishments of words, through which he might secretly slay the innocent. "If you indeed speak justice: judge just things, you sons of men." The Jews were speaking just things to Christ, when they were saying: "Master, we know that you are truthful, and you teach the way of God in truth" (Matt. 22). They were not judging just things,

when they sought Barabbas, the son of death, and killed Christ, the son of life (John 18). Or otherwise: "Judge just things," that is, you who judge justice to be good, "judge right things," that is, what you do not want for yourself, do not do to another.

"For in your heart you work iniquities on the earth." In this earth which you inhabit, by evil thought, while you seem to speak good things. "Let your hands forge iniquity." For your works, which are taken for hands according to allegory, are filled with iniquity.

"Sinners are alienated from the womb." Some understand this of the descent of the soul into the body, others indeed of the Jews: that they were alienated from God from the time when Mary brought forth the Savior. "They have gone astray from the womb, they have spoken false things." God, foreknowing the future, exterminates that iniquity before it was born. Therefore he says that sinners speak false things, and prophesies that they err and are alienated, just as formerly concerning Esau, who before he was begotten was repulsed from the inheritance of God (Mal. 1 and Rom. 9).

"Their fury is according to the likeness of a serpent." To those who wish to devour the servants of God by way of wrath, with poisonous bites, and neglect them through repentance. As of the deaf asp, and that stops her ears, etc.: he speaks of the devil or his satellites: who although they do harm daily, even to those of us who point out the song through the invocation of the Lord's name:

they, with the entrance of their ears stopped, do not cease to rage. The asp is a kind of serpent. That man who enchants is called a Marsian, and he draws them from darkness to light.

"God shall break in pieces their teeth in their mouth: the Lord shall break the jaw-bones of the lions." In "teeth," open persecution is signified; in "jaw-bones," hidden [persecution]. "God shall break in pieces their teeth in their mouth": lest they be able to tear his servants with wicked bites. "The Lord shall break the jaw-bones of the lions." The snares of evil wickednesses: which are held like the molars of lions' teeth for a more powerful bite.

"They shall come to nothing, like water running down." For just as water running down is either absorbed by the earth or fails in the sea: so also these are brought to this, that they perish. As water which from the beginning of the age goes in a circle: so is their doctrine. Running water, which is a torrent, that is, water which runs down from the mountains into the valleys. Or as the winter waters when they come, are immediately dried up: so these pass away quickly. Whence it is said: "He drank of the torrent in the way" (Ps. 10). The Lord drank of the torrent in the way, because he received of ours. "He has bent his bow until they be weakened." By the bow, the wraths and threats of God are understood. Whence he said: "Unless you be converted," that is, from pride to humility; he has brandished his bow, as Paul heard: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me" (Acts 9)? "He has bent his bow," the future

judgment: "until they be weakened": that is, until their snares vanish.

"As wax that flows, they shall be taken away." For just as wax is dissolved by fire, so also shall these be destroyed by the future fire of judgment. "Fire has fallen upon them," judgment upon the dead: "And they have not seen the sun." They have not understood Christ the Lord, who is the sun of justice, concerning whom the impious are to say in the judgment: "And the sun of justice has not shone upon us" (Wis. 5). "Fire fell, and they saw not the sun." Sinners see Christ as fire, the just as the sun of justice. Otherwise: He who, terrified by the threats of the Scriptures, performs penance, to him through the fire of punishments the true sun is shown.

"Before your thorns understand the buckthorn." "As if living, as if in wrath he swallows them up." Before your sins reach the very end, and the thorns of thoughts bubble up into a tree of sins: God will rebuke you, not angry, but as if angry. For it is not the wrath of God, but an emendation, and he will rebuke you not as living, but as if living. For those who have the thorns of faults do not deserve to be called living. "Before your thorns understood the buckthorn," he speaks these things to the sinning people: the buckthorn (rhamnus) is a most harsh kind of briar with prickles, and most pleasing in flower. Whence it is understood to have a double virtue: of vengeance and of the retribution of good things: that is, for the just it flowers for ornament, for sinners it offers thorns for breaking.

"As living, as if in wrath he swallows them up." Punishment swallows them up swiftly, because "he who has not believed is already judged" (John 3). "Living," that is, the wise of the world who through their own wisdom think of themselves as if they were living. But the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. But the "wrath of God" which he speaks of is a just vengeance.

"The just man shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance." Of the impious: because when those are condemned in punishments, these are gladdened in rewards. "He shall wash his hands in the blood of sinners." Because this little verse is difficult to understand, I will bring forth the very words which earlier [authors] treated; the blessed bishop Hilary and, so to speak, the great sustainer of the Church among the storms of the world, speaks thus concerning it: "The just man washes his hands not in the blood of sinners: but when sinners are in blood, because they are guilty of blood, he will keep his hands washed from all guilt of blood." Then the just man washes his hands in the blood of sinners when he sees the vengeance upon them, without the saints procuring it, and then he shall be gladdened, when after their departure, his works shine forth gloriously.

"And man shall say: If indeed there is fruit for the just." For then shall be his fruit, when Christ the Lord shall have made him a participant in the kingdoms of the heavens. "Indeed there is a God judging them on earth." Those before the

judgment of the end are judged on this earth, concerning whom we spoke above: "He who has not believed is already judged." And we, if in the precepts of God we do not stop our ears: if we follow the admonitions of the saints with innocence, if we be not afflicted by the thorns of our crimes: if we wash our hands immune from all blood with the innocent, Jesus the Lord will honor us with worthy rewards, in which the saints rejoice together with him perpetually. Amen.

PSALM 58.

"Unto the end, destroy not, for David, for the inscription of the title: when Saul sent to watch his house to kill him." This psalm, because it teaches David through the title to keep watch, declares the mystery of the Lord's Passion, saying:

"Deliver me from my enemies, O my God," etc. Through these grades of enmities, one ascends even to the shedding of blood. For the Jews were enemies to Jesus Christ our Lord when they envied him secretly. They rose up against him when they opposed his precepts. They were made workers of iniquity when they armed their hands for the killing. They were made men of blood when they said that the blood of the just man would be upon themselves and their children (Matt. 27).

"For behold they have caught my soul: the mighty have rushed in upon me." That they might deliver me to death.

"Neither my iniquity nor my sin, O Lord, without iniquity have I run and directed." David could not say these things of himself, who knew himself to be full of sins in another psalm; but of him who, bearing our sins, ran without any weight of iniquity even to the departure of corporeal death. "Without iniquity have I run and directed." And this psalm can be understood from the person of the Lord. For he says: "The prince of this world comes, and he finds nothing in me" (John 14). Or certainly "he ran": that is, from heaven he came into the womb, from the womb into the manger, from the manger into the cross: from the cross into the tomb: from the tomb to the lower regions: from the lower regions as victor he returned to the heavens. And he directed, not his own senses, but ours, because they were perverse and crooked. Whence the prophet said: "And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain" (Isa. 40).

"Arise to meet me." He speaks these things to the Father, by whom he prays to be glorified in the Gospels. Who, as if meeting and stretching out a hand, answered saying: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (John 12). Which meeting he asks to be extended even to the visitation of the Gentiles, saying: "But arise to meet me": that is, make them understand from that course which I had, that I am equal to you. Whence he says: "His going out is from the highest heaven, and his meeting even to the summit of it" (Ps. 18): that is, God the Father above all spiritual creatures. "And see." As if he were

saying: that you may make them see: that is, that they may believe me equal to you.

"And you, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: attend to visit all nations: have no mercy on all who work iniquity." That while the divine visitation regards the just, the punishment of sin may constrain those [others]. "And you, O Lord God of hosts": that is, of angels and men. "God of Israel": that is, the God of souls seeing God. Christ to the Father: "Attend to visit all nations," not only in Judea, but also among the Gentiles.

"Let them return at evening, and they shall suffer hunger like dogs." Even unto the end of their life, they shall suffer hunger for the word of God, nor are they rebuked in various evils, so that they might do penance. "And they shall go round about the city." But they find in it no joy of solemnities and of sacrifices. Or he speaks of those from among the Jews who are to believe in the end. For "when the fullness of the Gentiles shall have entered in, then all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11).

"Behold they shall speak in their mouth: and a sword in their lips." Their blasphemies and infidelities are compared to a sword. "For who has heard?" For no man hears when these are derided by the Lord, as follows.

"And you, O Lord, shall laugh at them." You who hold them in laughter and contempt. "You shall bring to nothing all nations." Those which do not believe that you have risen. For there are among these many believers: who are not laughed at by God. Or, "all nations," who were

worshiping wood and stones: with no preceding merits, God leads them to the knowledge of the truth.

"I will keep my strength to you." That is, I will keep all my virtues to you, not to myself, but to you; because always in them I render praises to you, not by my own powers. Whence Paul says: "For if you have received, why do you glory as if you had not received" (1 Cor. 4)? "I will keep my strength to you, because, O God, you are my sustainer." He says he will keep that strength, because no one could take away his soul, he himself saying: "No one takes it from me: but I have power to lay it down, and to take it up again" (John 10). "My God, his mercy shall prevent me." The mercy of the Father prevented him: since the centurion confessed him to be God before he saw that he had risen from the lower regions. But also many, striking their breasts, returned saying: "Truly this was the Son of God" (Mark 15).

"God has shown me over my enemies, do not kill them: lest at any time my people forget." So that even if they do not believe, yet they may understand him to be God, according to that: "and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God" (Luke 3). And do not kill them, lest perchance they forget your name.

"Scatter them in your power." Do not utterly destroy the Jews: because they have always been called your people, but scatter them in the whole world, so that at least thus emended, they may cease to be proud, so that even in this dispersion they may bewail their crime by repenting. "And

put them down, O Lord my protector. The sin of their mouth, the discourse of their lips." Let them be destroyed in their malice: on account of the words by which they denied your Christ, and yet they boast that they are sons of Abraham. "Let them be caught in their pride." That is, let them become humble.

"And they shall be announced in the consummation concerning execration and falsehood." For they were execrating the Lord when they said he was the son of Joseph the carpenter (Matt. 6). They were weaving falsehood when they said he had a devil (Matt. 9). "In the wrath of consummation, and they shall be no more." So that they may not be able to persevere in their malice, but may be consumed in it.

"And they shall know that God shall rule over Jacob, and the ends of the earth." For there are some who glory that they descend from the race of Jacob. And "the ends of the earth": that is, of all nations.

"They shall return at evening, and shall suffer hunger like dogs, and shall go round about the city." "They shall be scattered abroad to eat: and if they be not filled, they shall murmur." After the diapsalma (selah), he repeats the sentiment by which the enemies suffer hunger like dogs: while they pursue the letter of the law with carnal circumcision, and sacrifices from the killing of cattle. But because they celebrate these things in pilgrimage, nor are they spiritually refreshed by them, they murmur against God. Hence the

prophet, beholding the mystery of the Lord's resurrection, exults and says:

"But I will sing of your strength, O Lord." Because you have conquered death. Or the strength of the divinity: how he conquered the devil, this I will preach. "And I will exult in your mercy." Because he rose at daybreak. "In the morning," that is, when he converts in youth. Or "in the morning," the beginning of the Catholic faith: or "in the morning," as I said, the resurrection.

"Because you have become my sustainer and my refuge in the day of my tribulation." You have received me with the protection of your defense, lest my conscience be joined with these.

"My helper, to you will I sing: because, O God, you are my sustainer: my God, my mercy." The prophet promises to sing continually to the Lord himself, by whose help he was assisted and sustained. Who may also deign to grant to us, that fortified by his help, assisted by mercy, glorified by resurrection, we may deserve to exalt his praises in the holy Church with immaculate senses. Amen.

PSALM 59.

"Unto the end, for those who shall be changed, in the inscription of the title, to David himself for instruction, when he set on fire Mesopotamia of Syria and Syria Sobal, and Joab returned and struck Edom in the Valley of Salt, twelve thousand." It is asked where this history is written. In the books of Kings, it is read here most clearly (2 Sam. 8). But there, for "the Valley of Salt,"

the LXX Interpreters placed the Hebrew words themselves, GEMELAII. But because it was not translated, it is unknown by those who have no knowledge of the Hebrew speech what it signifies.

"O God, you have rejected us and destroyed us." It pertains to the Jewish people. When God permitted them to be troubled: then he seemed as it were to reject them. And now he seems to reject the Church, when he permits it to be tempted through tribulation. For otherwise he does not reject: because Saint Paul said: "God has not rejected his people, whom he foreknew" (Rom. 11). Whence also the voice to Jeremiah the prophet says: "Go, and destroy, and scatter, and pluck up, and build" (Jer. 1). As if he had said: Destroy vices and sins, and build virtues. He rejects and destroys us when we sin. He has mercy and builds when we return to him by repenting. "You were angry, and you have had mercy on us." The wrath of God is called a just vengeance.

"You have moved the earth." That of our body, indeed. "And you have troubled it." When it produced briars and thorns. "Heal the breaches thereof, for it is moved." For it is moved from malice: so that it may exhibit the fruit of holiness.

"You have shown your people hard things." That they might seek you more attentively. "For you chastise every son whom you receive" (Heb. 12). "You have shown your people hard things": that is, tribulation. Whence Saint Paul says: "They who wish to live piously in Christ suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3). "You have given us to

drink of the wine of compunction." That being confounded in crimes, there may be a compunction of returning to you. By the wine, the law of the people of God is understood, and compunction itself is the grace of God.

"You have given a sign to those who fear you, that they may flee from before the bow: that your beloved may be delivered." You have provided baptism, by which having been washed, we might flee from the future wrath: through which not only sinners, but also your beloved are delivered. "Save with your right hand." With your Christ, who is our salvation. "And hear me." When I shall have invoked you. The right hand of the Father is the Son. "Save." He speaks of those who are to be saved, when your Son shall place me at your right hand in the day of judgment. Whence in another place it says: "The right hand of the Lord has wrought strength" (Ps. 117).

"God has spoken in his holy one." The Father in the God-man, concerning whom Gabriel said to Mary: "That holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1). Or as Saint Paul says: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself" (1 Cor. 4). "I will rejoice and I will divide Shechem, and I will measure out the valley of tabernacles." Some think Shechem is Samaria: indeed the valley of tabernacles, this earthly habitation. Therefore when the Lord shall come in the joy of eternal splendor to judge the world, he will divide Samaria: and he will measure out the valley of tabernacles. Then one part he will transfer to beatitude: indeed the other

which he shall find unjust, he will punish with the infidels.

"Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine, and Ephraim is the strength of my head." In Gilead and Manasseh, he indicates the whole world as subject to himself. In Ephraim indeed he signifies the form of the future people: that is, of the Church to be gathered: on account of the blessing of Jacob, which he poured out upon him. But the "strength," he says, is the Church itself, of which he was made the head. "Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine." All these things are said concerning the calling of the nations: whose diverse virtues are to be referred under the interpretation of the individual names.

"Judah is my king." Because Christ arose from the tribe of Judah. Because the prince shall not fail from his stock: until the Lord comes, as Jacob said: "Judah, your brothers shall praise you: your hands on the necks of your enemies. You shall rule over your brothers" (Gen. 49). Christ is understood through Judah, as that: "The lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered" (Rev. 5:5). "Moab is the pot of my hope." Moab in Genesis received the reproach of a curse (Gen. 19): who after ten generations is received into the Church of God (Deut. 23). And therefore also "pot of hope," as if after conversion burning away the cruelty of sin. For the hope of God concerning sinners is this, that their sins having been boiled away, they may be converted and live. Thence Jeremiah the prophet says: "I saw a boiling pot, and its face from the face of the north" (Jer. 1). And elsewhere he says:

"From the north evils shall break forth, which are upon the earth" (Ibidem): that is, tribulations come from the devil upon the earth, which is the Church, as Paul says: "Tribulation works patience: but patience probation: indeed probation hope: but hope is not confounded, because the charity of God is diffused in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit who is given to us" (Rom. 5).

"Into Edom will I stretch out my shoe." He announces that the feet of the apostles are to be directed even into the region of Esau: because in "shoes," the feet [are understood]: indeed in the feet the apostolic steps are understood, according to that: "How beautiful are the feet of those evangelizing peace, of those evangelizing good things" (Nahum 1 and Rom. 10)! Edom is interpreted as bloody or earthly. As if he were saying: In such as these I will show my shoe, that is, my examples. "To me the foreigners are made subject." The foreigners (alienigenae): that is, the nations: are made subject to the Church. In the Philistines (Allophylis), he shows the perversities of foreign nations, who even unto the advent of Christ, resided in the darkness of ignorance. But now made subject, that is, humbly listening to the prophecy which announces Christ: through their faith, they see a great light.

"Who will lead me into the fortified city?" Christ the Lord, who turns away impiety from Jacob: he himself will lead us into the city of Jerusalem: in which the saints stand around the divine majesty. Or, "into the fortified city": that is, into the Church: which is fortified through faith.

"Or who will lead me even into Edom?" He who above promised to extend his shoes, himself also commands the prophecy, that is, the prophetic preaching, to be directed into it.

"Will not you, O God, who have rejected us?" That you might acknowledge us as proved. "You have rejected," on account of our transgression, or the sin of Adam: that is, he destroyed idolatry, or our vices and sins. "And you will not go out, O God, in our virtues." Because we are weak in sins.

"Give us help from tribulation: for vain is the salvation of man." Let those hear these things who place their hopes in the powers of men, or in the splendors of earthly riches: because vain is the salvation of man, and God alone provides opportune help for our tribulations.

"In God we shall do valiantly, and he himself shall bring to nothing those who trouble us." In him let our strength be: in him all glory, and he himself shall reduce to nothing both the vices which trouble us, and the enemies who impugn us and try to recall us from the hope of eternity.

PSALM 60.

"Unto the end, in hymns, a Psalm of David." It contains the voice of the prophet rejoicing concerning the beatitude of eternity.

"Hear, O God, my prayer." He asks to be heard with confidence, because he knows himself to be holy. "Attend to my prayer." As if he were saying: See it if it be just or pure, where you alone hear and see in the heart: as it was said to Moses: "Why do you cry to me" (Exod. 14)? Does he speak with

the voice of a shout? No: but he cries with the voice of the heart.

"From the ends of the earth have I cried to you: when my heart was in anguish." Not from the extreme limits of the earth, but from the habitation of this body which he desires to be clothed upon, and he cried from the pain of the inmost heart, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. "From the ends": that is, from the four parts of the world: as if one man were crying. Or one man is one Church. On account of unity she is called one. Whence also in the Song of Songs it is said: "One is my dove" (Cant. 6), that is, the Church diffused in the whole world. "When [my heart] was in anguish": that is, on account of the transgression of others. Or my end: while man does not know his departure. "On a rock you have exalted me: you have led me because you have become my hope." He says he is exalted in Christ, who according to the Apostle is named both a stable rock and the hope of believers. "On a rock you have exalted me": that is, in yourself, as that: "But the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10). Peter from the rock. Whence the Lord said: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church" (Matt. 16); and elsewhere: "The rivers came, and the winds blew, and they rushed upon that house, and it did not fall; for it was founded upon a firm rock" (Matt. 7), which is Christ. "You have led me": that is, in yourself: because you are my leader, you are my wayfarer. "Because you have become my hope." The voice of the Church to Christ. As if she were saying: Just as you rose immortal, so we believe that

we shall rise. "A tower of strength from the face of the enemy." For this hope, Christ the Lord, has become a tower for us from the face of the devil, or of his wickednesses, that he may fortify and defend us from his snares. But also God the Father has become for us a tower of strength: exalting us on a rock, that is, in his Christ. You, O Christ, a tower of strength, who have conquered the devil, and have deigned to suffer on account of us. There are therefore towers of infirmity, that is, those who trust in their own strength, as it is said in the Gospel: "If anyone wishes to build a tower, and does not calculate its costs," and the rest, "afterwards those who see it will mock him saying: this man began to build, and was not able to finish."

"I will dwell in your tabernacle for ever." In that [one], indeed, where remaining without end we shall continually contemplate God. "I shall be protected under the covering of your wings," etc. While I still tarry in this body, let me be fortified by your protection. "I shall be protected": that is, I shall be defended. "In the covering of the wings." Your wings are the two Testaments, by which the Church is protected. Or under the protection of the divinity.

"You have given an inheritance to those who fear your name." That is, you have provided for them in the kingdom of heaven, so that they may inherit eternal life.

"Days upon the days of the king." For the eternal King: that is, Christ the Lord, the days are eternal, which are increased daily upon days: be-

cause no night distinguishes his brightness. "You will add years to him even to the day of generation and generation." Therefore, the first generation of this king is that by which he is ineffably born of God the Father. The second, by which he was made the firstborn of the dead, which is extended even to that generation of the future judgment, of which the Lord says: "You who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit upon twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19). Therefore, both days and years shall be added between these generations of this king, when, the elect being gathered and the enemies being supplanted under his feet, he shall deliver the Kingdom to God the Father, the saints being gathered together at the same time, as follows:

"He remains forever in the sight of God." For he will remain eternal in those whom he has delivered to God the Father into the kingdom of heaven, and has made co-heirs, and conformed and participants with himself, no dominion of death now ruling in them. "In the sight of God": that is, where there will be no mutability. "Who will seek his mercy and truth?" It is mercy: because he pardons our sins. Truth, so that we may sin no more, so that we may not bring sin upon sin. "Who," for what reason is it said here? Because there are few who have anything of good, and seek God, but they speak more of their own virtue or their own strength than of the gift of God. "Who will seek his mercy and truth?"

His mercy and truth are not sought by those who consist in the fullness of God: But neither is anything lacking to them, according to that oracle of the Savior: "In that day you shall ask the Father nothing" (John 16). Therefore, the prophet, placing hope in this fullness, added:

"So will I sing a psalm to your name, O God, for ever and ever." The voice of the Church. "I will sing a psalm," I will preach, and I will fulfill in work. "That I may pay my vows from day to day." "That I may pay my vows": that is, whatever we have promised to keep for God. "From day to day": this is, both to praise you here always, and in the future without end. He will sing a psalm assiduously and pay his vows continually, when the corruption of this body shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, and shall shine forth (1 Cor. 15). Which may he also deign to grant to us, so that being made conformed to his glory: rescued from the corruption of the second death, we may deserve to sing a psalm to his name in the offering of spiritual vows.

PSALM 61.

"To the end, for Jeduthun, a Psalm of David." This psalm teaches the full affection of the prophet in God, saying:

"Shall not my soul be subject to God? for from him is my salvation." That man can also say this: who, having left the ravings of vain philosophy and the filth of the error of idolatry, has subjected himself with a clean heart to the Lord.

"For he is my God and my savior." For he knows that the salvation of the world, Jesus Christ, has taken the form of man, who may transfer himself from death to life. For from God himself is my salvation: as Simeon said: "Because my eyes have seen your salvation" (Luke 2). And in another place it says: "The salvation of my countenance, my God" (Psalm 41). "My helper, I shall not be moved any more." For he trusts that he will stand firmly in him. My helper in the present, my receiver in eternity. He afterwards does not fear to fall. He has nowhere to run further, except even unto God. The apostles said to Christ: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us" (John 14).

"How long do you rush upon a man, all of you slay, as if upon a leaning wall and a broken fence?" He does not want to acquiesce to the wicked, who compel the thin and vicious minds of men to lean into new crimes. "All of you slay." He who has the will to kill, even if he does not strike, kills. "As if upon a leaning wall and a broken fence." When I have come to suffer the passion, you compel [me] to die as if unwilling. Otherwise, however, according to the interpretation of Symmachus: "A natural sense is inverted in you: so that although you were created upright, you are carried headlong to ruin."

"But they have thought to cast away my price: I ran in thirst." He turns away from such as these, who not only attack sinners, but also strive to take away honor from the just. Therefore he runs in a holy thirst: because blessed are they who

hunger and thirst for justice (Matt. 5). "I ran in thirst." Christ ran from heaven, came into the womb, from the womb into the manger: or other things similar to these. He ran thirsting, he came to the fountain: hungering he came to the tree. Or he thirsted, that is, on the cross he thirsted for the salvation of the human race. Whence it was said: "From the torrent in the way he drank" (Psalm 109). And the saints run and thirst: They run, as Paul says: "I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4). They thirst, as it was said: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice: for they shall be satisfied." "With their mouth they blessed, and with their heart they cursed." They brought forth good things with a poisonous mouth to seduce, while they retained evil things in their hearts.

"But my soul shall be subject to God: for from him is my salvation." "For he is my God and my savior, my helper I shall not emigrate." "In God is my salvation, my glory is God the help of my aid, and my hope is in God." After the interjection of the Diapsalma, he professes that he has either help or glory from him, who left for us examples of all these things from the contumely of his passion.

"Hope in him, all you congregation of the people." He is both help and hope: in whom the whole ecclesiastical assembly ought to hope and pray, as follows: "Pour out your hearts before him: God is our helper for ever." If with weeping we open the secrets of our hearts to him, as all the

saints do, we shall obtain his helps. For because sinners omit these things, he added:

"But the sons of men are vain, the sons of men are liars in the balances so that they may deceive, they themselves in vanity for the same thing." Who, under the weighing of justice and the vanity of eloquence, deceive the innocent. Sons of man, sons of Adam, sons of the transgressor. Whence he says: "O you sons of men, how long will you be heavy of heart" (Psalm 4)? "The sons of men are liars in the balances." Solomon says: "Weight and weight, measure and measure: both are abominable before God" (Prov. 20). And in another place it says: "A deceitful balance is abominable to the Lord, and an equal weight is his will" (Prov. 11).

"Trust not in iniquity, and covet not robberies: if riches abound, set not your heart upon them." Because he who shall hope in these cannot take the heavenly kingdom. Whence the Apostle says to Timothy: "Charge the rich of this world not to hope in the uncertainty of riches; but in the living God, who provides for us all things abundantly to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6).

"Once has God spoken two [things]." In that he says "once," he shows the firmness of the words; in that [he says] "two," he demonstrates one author of the New and Old Testament. "Once has God spoken two, these things have I heard"; "once" is not to be referred to number, but to the firmness of the sentence. What, however, are these two things which he heard together? Both that God can do all things, and in the truth of

his judgment to have mercy. Some say thus: Once God spoke in the Law, and the same things again he commands in the Gospel. "These things have I heard, because power belongs to God." Through these two Testaments, he knew the power, mercy, and justice of God: as follows: "And to you, O Lord, is mercy, for you will render to every man according to his works." For he himself has received all judgment from the Father (John 5), so that he may prepare damnation for the negligent, mercy for the penitent, and rewards for the just, who may rescue us from the judgment of death: and subject us to himself as his own foster-children, and, having been made conformed to his body, may graciously admit us to perpetual eternity. "Because power belongs to God." There was power, because he created all creatures from nothing. Mercy, in ruling and governing. There was power in the flood: mercy delivered Noah (Gen. 7 and 8). "For you will render to every man according to his works": good to the good, evil to the evil. You condemn sinners, you reward the just.

PSALM 62.

"A Psalm of David when he was in the desert of Idumea."

David holds the figure of Christ. David is interpreted as "strong in hand," or "desirable." Idumea is interpreted as "bloody," or "earthly." The desert, that is, the forsaken [place], that is, the Jewish people themselves: or the Gentile [people], who are seen to dwell in blood or

earthly things. The psalm declares the mystery of the Lord's coming: concerning which the prophet, seeing himself as if illuminated, exults and says:

"O God, my God, to you from the light do I watch." Although all the saints watch in God day and night: yet here in his prayer, he shines forth with the full splendor of divine light.

"My soul has thirsted for you, how manifoldly my flesh for you! In a desert land, and pathless, and waterless." He thirsts for God, both with the affection of the soul and of the heart: retaining nothing doubtful, nothing adverse in himself: but among the aridities and solitudes of this world, he desires him with his whole mind: having that ardor by which the justice of God is thirsted for. "My soul has thirsted for you, how manifoldly my flesh for you!" The soul indeed desires God; but the desired end is reached by the labors of the flesh. Therefore the flesh seeks God manifoldly: because it is affected by many injuries. He describes the poverty, torments, watches, and sickness of the just man. The Lord thirsted for the faith of the Church, and hungered for the salvation of the human race. So also the Church daily thirsts for Christ. Whence it is said: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice: for they shall be satisfied" (Matt. 5). "The flesh manifoldly": because the flesh sustains more than the soul. Although the soul is tortured through thought in the body: yet the body sustains tribulation from without. It wants to be set free: that is, to lay down mortality. "In a desert

land, and pathless, and waterless." In the desert, where there is neither way nor water, the world is understood. The desert is spoken of on account of sinners. "So in the sanctuary have I appeared to you." Dwelling in this thirst, I shall appear holy to you. Here the prophet, on account of his hope, has placed the future for the past. "That I might see your power and your glory." Christ indeed, who, according to the Apostle, is both the power and the brightness of the Father. "Power": because he conquered the devil, he delivered the human race. He speaks of power, because what is weak of God is stronger than men (1 Cor. 1). "So in the sanctuary have I appeared to you": that is, in holy desire. "And your glory": that is, the glory of him rising from the dead, sitting at the right hand of the Father.

"For your mercy is better than lives." Your mercy provides eternal life. The present life often works death. "Your mercy," by which you have delivered us from the power of the devil. "My lips shall praise you, O Lord." "So will I bless you in my life." He well praises God with his lips in his life who lives in him: because he knows it is said elsewhere: "The dead shall not praise you, O Lord" (Psalm 113). After mercy, praise: here by praying, there by praising. "And in your name I will lift up my hands." I shall be sublimated by you in the good of a perfect work: Christ all the day spread out his hands on the cross to a people not believing and contradicting him. Just as Paul, lifting up pure hands without anger and

contention in the person of the saints (Isa. 65, and 1 Tim. 2). By hands, works are understood.

"As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips of exultation my mouth shall praise." Not with the fat and marrow of goats or lambs: as is the custom of the ancient holocausts; but with a pure heart and a clean mouth I will sing to your name. As that holocaust was acceptable to you in former times: so let my soul be filled from the fatness of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "With lips of exultation my mouth shall praise." Here prayers, and there praises, and everlasting joy.

"So have I been mindful of you upon my bed." In the bed of modesty and holiness I am mindful of you: because I am unmindful of worldly delight. "So have I been mindful of you." The Church says these things: both in rest and in tribulation, I have not been forgetful of you. "In the morning I will meditate on you: because you have been my helper." Deservedly they confess [him] a helper, because through the integrity of faith, she delights in his morning resurrection. Would that we also, through the splendor of a pure heart, might deserve to be delighted in him with spiritual joy.

"And in the covering of your wings I will exult." He thinks he is to be guarded by the protection of heavenly help: therefore he exults in it. "My soul has stuck close after you: your right hand has received me." Having left the world, he testifies that he has been received by the right hand of God, that is, by his salvation.

"But they." That is, the enemies. "In vain have they sought my soul." Because they wished to harm him to no purpose. "They shall enter into the lower parts of the earth." They shall be condemned in hell. "They shall be delivered into the hands of the sword." Into the perpetuity of torments, by which they are to be cut down. "They shall be the portions of foxes." About to receive the lot of Herod, who was called a fox by the Lord (Luke 13).

"But the king shall rejoice in the Lord." Christ in the Father after the resurrection. "And all who hope in him shall be praised." Those who have kept his received sacraments inviolably. "Because the mouth of those speaking wicked things is stopped." The mouth of the Jews and of the chief priests was stopped up at the rising of the Lord, while the testimony of truth increased. And let us pray to the Lord: so that watching in his light, continually thirsting for him, we may deserve, by his granting, to be filled with good works.

PSALM 63.

"To the end, a Psalm of David." The psalm contains the voice of the prophet continually praying to God: so that he may be able to escape not only his own sins, but also other poisons of the wicked, with him protecting. But we also ought to understand that what is sung in it can be fulfilled in believers.

"Hear, O God, my prayer when I make supplication: rescue my soul from the fear of the enemy." For one believing in God, there are many

temptations, according to the Apostle: "All," he says, "who wish to live piously in Christ Jesus, suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3). Whence it behooves us to watch intently in prayers, so that we may be able to fight back against vices. "From the fear of the enemy": that is, of the devil the persecutor: like that: "Fear not those who kill the body: but cannot kill the soul; but rather fear him who can lose both body and soul in Gehenna" (Matt. 10).

"You have protected me from the assembly of the malignant, from the multitude of those working iniquity: because they have whetted their tongues like a sword." The wicked act malignantly, and whet their tongues so that they may blaspheme; but this holy one is not disturbed, because he is protected by God. "From the assembly of the malignant": that is, of the Jews, or of the persecutors. "They have whetted their tongues like a sword." In another place it says: "Their tongue is a sharp sword" (Psalm 56).

"They have bent their bow." Their doctrine. "A bitter thing." So that they may deceive the little ones of Christ with deceitful doctrines: whether the neophyte in baptism, or him who as yet is ignorant of the mystery of heavenly doctrine.

"Suddenly they will shoot at him, and they will not fear." When they shoot at him deceitfully and poisonously. "Suddenly," as if unexpectedly: that is, in an ecstasy. "And they will not fear": that is, God and his judgment. "They have strengthened for themselves a wicked word." "They have talked of hiding snares: they said, who will see

them?" When they strengthen themselves in this malice, so that they may stretch these snares of deception for this unlearned one: they do not think that God can know this: from whom nothing lies hidden: who is also powerful to defend our souls from their arrows by the wide arms of his piety.

"They have searched out iniquities; they have failed searching with a search." Heretics also search the holy Scriptures: and not treating them spiritually, they bring forth vain questions from there, by which they desire to ensnare us through iniquity and deceit. But prevailing nothing, they themselves rather, searched out and exhausted by God, are left empty.

"A man shall approach to a deep heart, and God shall be exalted." If anyone approaching with the wisdom of God to the understanding of a deep heart distinguishes these things; that is, discerns truth and falsehood, then God shall be exalted. Who, although he is most high, yet when we think rightly of him, he is sublimated in us.

"The arrows of children have become their wounds." For the just, understanding when they see this little one whom we explained above being infected by this poison of persuasion: when they have lifted up their voice so that they may correct him, immediately their words shall be to the wicked like wounds. "And their tongue is weakened against them." Their speech takes no stability: but their deceit shall render them weak.

"All who saw them were troubled." Confused and troubled are those who recognize themselves

entangled in a similar error. "And every man was afraid." That divine judgment was imminent for them.

"And they declared the works of God: and they understood his doings." For being compunct in heart, they understand and announce the wonders of God.

"The just shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in him." Just as the impious man fears for his infidelity: so the just man exults in the Lord through the hope of his eternity. "And all the upright in heart shall be praised." Because they are about to see God. For blessed are the clean of heart: because they shall see God (Matt. 5). Who may deign to grant to us, that being free from the arrows of the enemies, rescued from the bow of falsehood, we may deserve to be protected by him, who gives the glory of immortality to all the saints for the hope of salvation.

PSALM 64.

"To the end, a Psalm of David, a Canticle of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and of the people of the captivity." This psalm is sung in the person of Christ, both concerning the return from Babylon to Jerusalem, and concerning our return to the heavenly Jerusalem.

"A hymn, O God, becomes you in Sion: and a vow shall be paid to you in Jerusalem." Not in theatrical places nor in the temples of idols, but to you, Almighty, praise and a vow is continually to be paid in Sion, that is, in the Church, beholding your glory: or in the heavenly Jerusalem you

are recorded as a worthy inhabitant. Therefore praise shall be rendered to you, because you are God; a vow, because you are the redeemer.

"Hear my prayer." Through the Holy Spirit: who intercedes for us with unspeakable groanings. "To you all flesh shall come." As if he were saying: To you every man shall be converted.

"The words of the wicked." The dogmas of philosophers, and the foolishnesses of the Gentiles. "They have prevailed over us." When we did not know you, as Jeremiah said: "Truly our fathers have spoken a lie and vanity, and it has not profited them" (Jer. 16). "And you will be merciful to our impieties." We would have been in error even unto the end, unless you had been merciful to us: who have bought us with your own blood. So also the Apostle Paul says: "Who has reconciled us to God the Father through the cross" (1 Cor. 5).

"Blessed is he whom you have chosen and taken to you: he shall dwell in your courts." God calls all: nor does he despise any; but few follow. Therefore he who shall have presented himself worthy of his election, dwells with him with the holy apostles in the everlasting tabernacles.

"We shall be filled with the good things of your house." That is, of the Church, which abounds with the various goods of spiritual gifts. "Holy is your temple." That man in whom the fullness of the divinity dwells; concerning whom it is said to Mary: "And that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 2): when the Lord, about to assume flesh, shall dwell

in her. "Wonderful in equity." Because to the Jews not believing, the Lord himself wonderfully opened the truth.

"Hear us, O God our savior: the hope of all the ends of the earth, and in the sea afar off." The prophet, foreseeing, announced that Christ is the hope of the earth, of the sea, and of all the ends. But that he asks to be heard by him: it is so understood as if he were saying: Now I have come, that I may deserve to be saved through you.

"Preparing the mountains in your strength, girded with power." The Lord himself, the Word, was made flesh in the assumed man. "Girded with power," he oppressed the loftiness of the mountains of diabolical dominion, and prepared them for everlasting fires. "Girded," God contracts his garment. For we cannot know the expanded garment of his strength. "Who trouble the depth of the sea." Moving the deep boasting of this world by the apostolic preaching. "Who shall withstand the noise of its waves?" For in the overthrow of idols the demons give a sound: enticing the pagans to kill the saints of God. But this sound is stopped up by the power of God.

"The Gentiles shall be troubled." When they shall not have been able to prevail against the saints. "And the ends of the earth shall fear at your signs." At the power of the cross, which to them was formerly foolishness: or they are compunct by these wonders. "The outgoings of the morning and of the evening you shall make joyful." God is delighted by the morning and evening hymns of the Church, through the faithful soul:

which, having left the rite of vain superstitions, shall have devotedly praised him. By the morning, joy: by the evening, sadness.

"You have visited the earth." He certainly visited the earth of our body by assuming the matter of flesh. "And you have inebriated it." Not with the wine of luxury, but with the infusion of the Holy Spirit. "You have multiplied its enrichment." With the riches of various graces.

"The river of God is filled with waters." Finally, the Lord says in the Gospel: "He who believes in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7). Attend to the Evangelist: for he was saying this concerning the Holy Spirit, whom those believing in him were about to receive. We, therefore, who have believed, are already the river of God. We are filled with water when we are washed by baptism, and if we are worthy, that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit. We are enriched by the same rain of spiritual infusion, when, filled with the fountain of perennial life, we are irrigated by spiritual gifts. "You have prepared their food, for so is its preparation." You have prepared, I say, O Lord, our food in the communion of your blessed body and blood: which if we draw worthily, we escape the judgment of death. For you are the bread of life descending from heaven: and giving back life to the world.

"Inebriating its rivers, multiplying its offspring: in its gentle rains." For the rivers in us emanate from that stream: that is, from the Holy Spirit, who inebriates us with the various gifts of graces: so that to one is given the word of

wisdom, to another prophecy, to another healing, to another interpretation, or the remaining donations: which one and the same spirit works, dividing to each one as he wills (1 Cor. 12). Through which kinds of donations the Churches are multiplied. Which at first indeed flow down in us like gentle rains, thereafter they become rivers. After these things they are multiplied in generations: so that they may bring forth fruit, one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold, another thirtyfold (Matt. 13). "The germinating one shall rejoice." The earth, to be sure, shall rejoice (Isa. 58): when in it this spiritual fruit shall arise.

"You shall bless the crown of the year of your goodness." By which you shall crown the saints with rewards, and yourself with their ranks. But another prophet records that the acceptable year is the Lord himself: "You shall bless the crown of his year." He called the circle and the seasons of the year always running into themselves, a crown. Or certainly because in the passion of the Lord victory was received from the whole world. "And your fields shall be filled with plenty." The fields of the law which brought forth no fruit of pleasantness in the letter: now understood spiritually, they are filled with the plenty of evangelical dogma.

"The beautiful places of the desert shall grow fat." The Church, to be sure, which flows with the divine grace of God. "And the hills shall be girded with exultation." The martyrs, or the remaining saints: who, honored with immense rewards by God, shall be girded with perpetual joys.

"The rams of the sheep are clothed." The patriarchs, prophets, or apostles: who were the leaders of the sheep of the ecclesiastical flock, translated from death into life: they are clothed with perpetual immortality. "And the valleys shall abound with corn." The saints of lesser merit shall cry out, and they shall not receive the crown: nevertheless they shall be nourished by the fruits of eternal life. "They shall cry out, for they shall sing a hymn." All the elect without distinction, for the gifts of various bounties, sing together perpetual praises to God. Praying that we may be gathered together by their merits, we pray that we may be joined to their rewards, so that if we do not deserve to be honored with rewards, or adorned with crowns, at least having attained pardon, we may lack the punishment of eternal judgment. Amen.

"Say to God, how terrible are your works, O Lord!" To be sure, that they may not worship a creature, but that they may understand the power of the Creator in those things which they contemplate. "How terrible are your works!" It is terrible that you can wonder at, and you cannot comprehend, that is, concerning the Jewish people chosen, and afterwards rejected, and the Gentiles first condemned, and afterwards chosen. Or those who are seen as if holy, and are rejected, and concerning sinners, who are seen as if rejected, and are chosen. Hidden are the judgments of God: terrible, that is, to be feared. "In the multitude of your strength your enemies shall lie to you." When they saw wonders and

signs in Egypt: and in the Red Sea. They lied when they said: "All things whatsoever the Lord has commanded us, we will do" (Exod. 24). Whence he says: "Iniquity has lied to itself, and the enemies of the Lord have lied to him" (Psalm 26).

"Let all the earth adore you, O God, and sing to you: let it sing a psalm to your name." Let it adore you, let it venerate you: let it sing together to you, not to a creature, which you have subjected to its uses. Here he interposes a selah, that he may turn the words to us, saying:

"Come and see the works of the Lord, terrible in his counsels over the sons of men." He invites the Gentiles, who for a long time lived in fanatic error, just as formerly our fathers did, to know God. Who consulted for the human race with terrible counsels, so that knowing the works of the Creator, they might know the framer of the works. "Come and see the works of the Lord." Come, believe, see, understand. The voice of the preachers. "How terrible in his counsels over the sons of men!" Terrible, that is, how one is rejected, and another is chosen. The Jews are rejected, and the Gentiles are chosen: as he said in the Gospel: "Two in the field: one shall be taken, and one shall be left." "Two women grinding: one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (Matt. 24). "Two in a bed: one shall be taken, and one shall be left." It is terrible, while they were created from one mass, yet some are chosen, and others are rejected.

"Who turned the sea into dry land: in the river they shall pass over on foot." He teaches to

adore him who, for the passage of Israel, both dried up the sea and held back the waves of the Jordan (Exod. 14). But the Lord himself, as leader, passed through these as if on foot, with the people following. Therefore, just as then these waters, with him as leader, being divided, opened the way for the people into the land of promise (Josh. 3): so now for us, if we do not pollute baptism, being washed through him, with him preceding in whom we are reborn, we enter into the region of the living. Or, "they shall pass over on foot": the holy preachers walked strongly by preaching, because God prepares the way for them. Whence it was said: "Shod your feet in the preparation of the Gospel of peace" (Ephes. 6). "There we shall rejoice in the self-same: who rule in his strength forever." In the self-same, that is, in Christ: because he who was humbled here, he himself rules in eternity. For just as the dominion of his strength is closed by no end: so our joy, by which we shall be made conformable to him, shall remain perpetually.

"His eyes look upon the Gentiles." That the Jews may be rejected, and the Gentiles may be chosen; as that: "He who formed the eye, does he not consider?" (Psalm 93). With holy contemplation he inspects the peoples about to believe: for he is distinguished by no members at all. "Let not those who provoke be exalted in themselves." The Jews, to be sure, while through the bitterness of gall in the carnal birth of Abraham they place the glory of God, are always humbled. The interjection of the selah changes the order of the

sayings, so that it may pass from the prophetic vaticination to the apostolic exhortation.

"Bless, O you Gentiles, the Lord our God, and make the voice of his praise to be heard." The apostles preach these things, so that the Gentiles may bless God himself: whom the same apostles call their own, and they may obey him in whom they are reborn through baptism. Hence the prophet speaks again.

"Who has set my soul to life." Lest perpetual death should consume it. Death killed death, that is, the death of Christ killed our death. "And he has not given my feet to be moved." But he established me in the preachings which I brought to the Gentiles. From here follows the voice of the martyrs.

"For you have proved us, O God: you have tried us by fire, as silver is tried. And you have brought us into a snare: you have laid tribulations on our back: you have set men over our heads." That is, the devil, that he might be raised up over us, for testing. Or otherwise: He did not speak concerning angels, nor concerning saints, but concerning sinners, that is, you have made sinners to be over us, that we may sustain them through patience. As that: "Through many tribulations it behooves us to enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14).

"We have passed through fire and water: and you have brought us out into refreshment." He shows here the victories of the martyrs, which they deserved in various passions, and he leads them to one refreshment, that is, Christ the Lord: having arrived through snares, through crosses,

through scourges, through fires and heats and other various punishments, through which also they were made an acceptable holocaust. Fire devours, water absorbs. Fire, temptation: water, prosperity. Or the fire of the Holy Spirit. "You have brought us into refreshment," this is, into eternal beatitude.

"I will go into your house with burnt offerings." Here the prophet speaks not only of himself, but also of those whom he mentioned above, who entered into the house of God: so that they might exhibit themselves to God not only as a living host, but also those who by their example suffered for the name of the Lord. "That I may pay you my vows: which my lips have uttered." What vows did they utter, unless that they might join others to themselves in martyrdom? Or the promise, that we may praise God and confess him as creator. "My mouth has spoken in my tribulation." For they spoke, that no persecution should ever separate them from the charity of Christ.

"I will offer to you marrowy holocausts." The faith of the soul, or the affection of the body, or the body of Christ. The bones are lower than the flesh: and the marrow, lower than the bones. "Marrowy," that is, viscera-filled with body and soul. "With incense." With the acceptable odor of prayer. "And rams." Apostles, or doctors of the Churches.

"I will offer to you bulls." Those who, having rejected the contumacy of the law, have subjected their necks to the yoke of the Lord, which is sweet. "With goats." Those who, having been

converted after sin, persisted faithfully in martyrdom. Here, however, all are offered to the Lord through a peaceful holocaust: to whom the prophet now turns his speech after the selah, saying:

"Come and hear, and I will tell, all you who fear God, how great things he has done for my soul." "To him I have cried with my mouth, and I have exulted under my tongue." You who fear the Lord, draw near and consider in what manner he has established my soul in everlasting beatitude: for that which I ask not only with my mouth, but also cried to the Lord in the secrets of a pure heart. "To him I have cried with my mouth:" it is most clearly declared in this place that "cry" in the Scriptures is not to be taken as of the voice, but of the heart.

"If I have looked upon iniquity in my heart: the Lord will not hear." "Therefore my God has heard me: and has attended to the voice of my prayer." For I saw the purity of my mind, therefore I presumed to ask.

"Blessed be the Lord, who has not turned away my prayer, and his mercy from me." Full of mercy, he has not turned away my deprecation from himself: because I was asking those things which were just. For his pious ears always lie open to the prayers of the just. But let us suppliantly pray the Lord, that he may open his ears to our prayers, and that he himself, the remission of sins being given, may rescue us from present distresses: and may join us, made a pure holocaust,

our vices having been slaughtered, to the ranks of the saints. Amen.

PSALM 66.

"To the end, in Hymns, a Psalm of a Canticle of David." This psalm, although it be small, nevertheless contains the voice of the apostles and prophets, who announced that the Lord either had come or was about to come to the Gentiles.

"May God have mercy on us, and bless us." The first deprecation is that God may provide mercy: thereafter a blessing. Therefore let the blessing which follows mercy be such that, carnal dominion being suppressed, it may make the spirit to triumph. Let him not be our judge, but merciful. "May God have mercy on us." It is the voice of the apostles, speaking to the people gathered from the Gentiles. You have indeed believed at our voice. Behold, this Church is gathered in the name of the Lord: therefore we say: "May God have mercy on us, and bless us." May he dissolve the first curse in man by his blessing. "May he cause his face to shine upon us." Let us not see him sad in our sins, but rejoicing in virtues. Let us not feel him as a judge, but as a Father. "May he cause his face to shine upon us." What is the face of God? Surely his image. For the Apostle also says that the Son is the image of the Father (Rom. 8). Therefore let him illuminate us by his image, that is, his Son: "let him illuminate upon us," that he himself may illuminate us. For the light of the Father is the light of the Son; he who sees the Father, sees also the Son. Where there is no

distance between glory and glory, each is glory. The apostles and prophets pray for these things, so that, illuminated by the face of God, their preaching may become the light of all nations.

"That we may know your way on earth, and your salvation in all nations." For so let our preaching prevail, that your way or your salvation, that is, Christ the Lord, may be discerned in those who now savor earthly things and are involved in the error of gentilism. "That we may know your way on earth." But we ask this, that you may illuminate your face: that is, your image upon us, which was always hidden with you, and was as it were in secret, and in the darkness of your mysteries: according to that which is written: "He set darkness his hiding place" (Psalm 17). We ask this, that it may be illuminated upon us, so that the mystery which was hidden from generations, according to the Apostle, may be revealed in us (1 Cor. 2). But why do we ask all this, why do we desire it? Unless you illuminate your image upon us, we cannot know your way and your knowledge, so that we may have your majesty, which is known in heaven, known also on earth. "That we may know your way on earth." "I am," he said, "the way, the life, and the truth" (John 14). "That we may know your way on earth." Let us know on earth: "Your will be done as in heaven so on earth" (Matt. 6), so that whom the angels adore in heaven, men also may adore on earth. But someone will say: because the way of God was known: "For God is known in Judea: in Israel his name is great." God was known, but

the way of God was not known in Judea. Since therefore the way of God the Father was not known among the Jews, for that reason he now says: "In all nations your salvation." Not in one people, but in all nations. "In all nations your salvation." Where we have in the Latin, "salutare" (salvation); in the Hebrew, it is called "Jesus." Finally, even the angel speaks this: "And you shall call his name Jesus" (Luke 2). For he shall save his people. "In all nations your salvation." Behold, it is fulfilled, what the apostles prayed for: In all nations his salvation is known. Wherever human speech can be, there Jesus resounds.

"Let the peoples confess to you, O God: let all the peoples confess to you." Let the peoples confess to you, of the Jews? No: but, "let all the peoples confess." As all nations, so also all peoples. "Let the peoples confess to you, O God." What should they confess? Surely their sins: or certainly let them confess that your image is in you. Let them confess you in the Son, let them see you in him: let them adore you in him.

"Let the nations rejoice and exult." Because they have been liberated from the captivity of the devil: because those who before were bowed down to adore idols, wood and stones, now with an erect face look back to the heavens. "Because you judge the peoples in equity." Wherever there is equity and judgment, there is not joy, but the dread of sinners. And how did he say: "May God have mercy on us, and bless us," and now he said: "Let the nations rejoice and exult: because you judge the peoples in equity"? He seems to be

contrary to himself. For if they need mercy, how do they rejoice and exult: "because you judge the peoples in equity"? For wherever there is mercy, there judgment is not; but where judgment is and the equity of judgment, there mercy is far off. But this is the sense: "Let the nations rejoice and exult." Why, let them rejoice? "Because you judge the peoples in equity": because you by no means accept the person of one nation, but you are the God of all. Not to you alone do the Jews please, but the whole world is yours. Let someone say: You do violence to the Scripture, he did not speak in this sense. The Scripture interprets itself, which speaks: "Because you judge the peoples in equity." Which peoples? "And you direct the nations on earth." The nations which before did not walk with a straight foot, you made them so that they might walk in your way. That we might know your way on earth, that we might walk in the way, not in trackless places, and through one way we might come to you, from whom the way is born. For we do not go to the Father, except through the Son. Let someone say: It is the dogma of the Arians. Therefore through the Son one comes to the Father. I say this, because through the image we go to the face; and in the light we see light, in the Son we see the Father. It is a mystery and a dispensation which speaks. For the rest, if anyone thinks it to be blasphemous, because we have said the Son is the way, and through the way we go as if to God, let us see what this very way says: "No one comes to me, unless my Father has drawn him to me" (John 6). There-

fore just as the Son leads to the Father, so also the Father leads to the Son. These are human words. For the rest, both the Son leads to the Father, and the Father leads to the Son, and it is one nature, and one substance.

"Let the peoples confess to you, O God, let all the peoples confess to you." He had already said it above, and in this little psalm, he repeats these two verses again. For he had said above: "Let the peoples confess to you, O God: let all the peoples confess to you: let the nations rejoice and exult," and so forth: and now again he repeats these verses, as if the apostles were singing before all nations. "Often they have fought against me from my youth, let Israel now say" (Psalm 128). "Often they have fought against me from my youth." See how they sing before, and the crowd of all nations responds. So also now, while they say in the beginning: "Let all the peoples confess," and the apostles commanding and saying: "Let the peoples confess to you, O God: let all the peoples confess to you," since they see them keeping silent, for that reason they iterate the same, and say: "Let the peoples confess to you, O God, let all the peoples confess to you." We have said it once, you did not hear; we say it again, that you may sing. But why have we said all this, both once and a second time, that the peoples may confess to God? Why do we say this? why do we command this? "Because you judge the peoples in equity." The Jews, who because of the excess of malice, are taken as "peoples," according to that: "The peoples have meditated vain things" (Psalm

2). "And you direct the nations on earth." He will direct them in the way of life, the remission of sins being given. When it is said, "all," he prays not only for the people of the nations, but also for those of the Jews, so that they too, having been converted, may confess Christ the Son of God. "The earth has given its fruit." The earth, holy Mary, from our earth, from our seed, from this mud, from this slime, from Adam. "You are earth, and into earth you shall go" (Gen. 3). This earth has given its fruit. What she lost in paradise, she found in the son. "The earth has given its fruit." First it gave a flower. He says also in the Canticle of Canticles: "I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys" (Cant. 2). This flower therefore was made fruit, so that we might eat him, so that we might eat his flesh. Do you wish to know who this fruit is? A Virgin from a virgin: the Lord from a handmaid: God from man, a son from a mother, fruit from the earth. See what the fruit himself says: "Unless a grain of wheat falling into the earth shall have died, it cannot bring forth many fruits" (John 12). "The earth has given its fruit:" it gave a grain of wheat. Which grain of wheat fell into the earth, and died, and therefore brings forth many fruits. It was multiplied in the ear: that which had fallen as one, arose in many. For a grain of wheat fell into the earth, and a copious crop arose. "The earth has given its fruit." For that reason, "let the peoples confess to you, O God, let all the peoples confess to you." "The earth has given its fruit." Who is this fruit?

"May God, our God, bless us, may God bless us." God, the Father: our God, the Son. For he himself is our God. "And you shall call," he said, "his name Emmanuel, which is, God with us." May our God bless us. God the Holy Spirit. See the mystery of the Trinity comprised in one verse. "The earth has given its fruit." In that fruit, the mystery of the Trinity is contained. "May God, our God, bless us." He who is the God of all by nature, was made our God properly. "May God bless us." May he expel the old curse. The curse cast us out of paradise: let the blessing lead us back. "And let all the ends of the earth fear him." He did not say: Let all the ends of the earth love him. For perfect love casts out fear. To fear is of those beginning; to love, of the perfect. He who still fears, is placed in the beginning, he does not have perfect and full faith. He however who loves God, all things will result in good for him. It seems a short and simple little sentence. But let us fan it, and in those simple words, we shall find huge mysteries. We shall find within, what lies hidden without. "For those loving the Lord, all things work together for good." Job, a holy man, was tempted, he lost sons and daughters, his house collapsed, he lost all things, he lost all things suddenly; neither father, nor lord; for nothing remained to him of health in his body, except the tongue alone through which he could blaspheme. See the tempter devil. "From the sole," he said, "of the foot even to the crown he struck him with a most evil wound, that is, elephantiasis" (Job 1). Thence from the whole

body worms were flowing, and rottenness. He reserved for him the tongue alone intact, that he might be able to blaspheme his Lord. In all these things Job did not sin with his lips. See the magnitude of the temptation, see the magnitude of the virtue. See and consider the sentence of the Apostle to be complete: "For those loving the Lord, all things work together for good" (Rom. 8). At that time in which he was losing his things, in which he was losing his sons; those things which had happened seemed indeed to be contrary to him; but because he loved the Lord, those evils which he brings upon him, work together for him as good. Those worms of the body were preparing for him the crown of heaven. Before he was tempted, God had never spoken to him: after however he was tempted, God came to him, and speaks familiarly, as a friend with his friend. Let plagues come, all kinds of punishments, as long as after the plagues, Christ may arrive. We have gone out from the psalm, but not uselessly, because we had said: "And let all the ends of the earth fear him," and we had said, because to fear is of little ones: for the rest to love, of the perfect, and we had said for the sake of proving this from the Apostle: "For those loving the Lord, all things work together for good." "And let all the ends of the earth fear him." By no means Judea alone, but all the ends of the earth. According to the tropology however, "all the ends of the earth:" not the middle of the earth: not those who are in the middle earth, but who are at the end of the earth, who leave the earth, and hasten to go to the heav-

ens. This therefore which the apostles said in the beginning, let us say in the end: "May God have mercy on us and bless us; may he cause his face to shine upon us, and have mercy on us;" and he will make known his way on earth. When Christ shall have come manifest in brightness, then he will make known to all why he descended in such great humility of flesh. "The earth has given its fruit." Mary brought forth the Savior.

PSALM 67.

"To the end, a Psalm of a Canticle of David." Psalm, works: Canticle, the understanding of a spiritual mind. The sixty-seventh psalm if it be understood spiritually, is found filled with the sacraments of the Law and the Gospels, which thus begins from the prophetic voice:

"Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered." And this psalm is understood both specifically and generally. Specifically of the Lord himself, that he may rise from the dead and destroy his enemies, that is, the devil and his army, or the Jews. Generally, however, when we are in tribulation and distress, and we say: "Arise, why do you sleep, O Lord? Arise and help us" (Ps. 43). Just as the apostles in the boat wake the sleeping Lord, saying: "Master, save us: we perish" (Matt. 8). "And let those who hate him flee from before his face." He did not say, "let them perish," but "let them flee": for sinners cannot stand in the sight of God. The foreseeing prophet prays that, as he arises, the diabolical dominations may flee, because even now it must be believed without

doubt that they cannot stand at the invocation of his name.

"As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish." Not that they may be reduced to nothing, but that they may rest from their sins. "As wax melts before the face of fire." As wax is dissolved, and does not lose its nature but becomes soft: so let these also not perish, but lay down their malice, and thus be converted to penance and be saved. "So let the sinners perish from before the face of God." Because sinners are not worthy to see God.

"And let the just feast." Those who remain in their justice, who have no vices, let them delight in the Lord. Or otherwise: let the punishment of judgment pursue them, so that they vanish like the thinness of smoke, and be dissolved as wax before the face of fire, while the saints feast on celestial goods. "Let them exult in the sight of God, and be delighted in gladness." There is great confidence in exulting in the sight of the Lord. Just as a steward fears the presence of the Lord if he has handled the substance entrusted to him by the Lord badly and lost it, so also he who has dispensed it well exults in the presence of the Lord. "Let them exult in the sight of God, and be delighted in gladness": not only because of vengeance, but also because of everlasting beatitude.

"Sing to God, say a psalm to his name." "Sing," in Scripture always signifies "theory": that is, to consider the mysteries and the sense of divine Scripture. But "to sing a psalm" signifies in Scripture a good work: for example, that the hearing

may perform its own work. Similarly also the mouth, and the eyes, and the hands, and all the members, if they agree, and thus strike the psaltery in virtues. Sing to the Giver of everlasting joy: and honor him with voices. "Make a way for him who ascends above the sunset: the Lord is his name." He teaches that, with the tumors of sin compressed, we should prepare a level way for him in our hearts through justice: who, ascending above the sunset of death, returned as victor from the lower regions. If the sun of iniquity does not set for us, the sun of justice cannot rise for us, whose health is in the heavens.

"Exult in his sight." For it behooves us to rejoice in his sights, and not to be delighted in the allurements of this world. "The fathers of orphans and the judges of widows shall be troubled before his face." Those who now call themselves guardians and judges, and on this occasion deceive the property of the needy, shall be confounded when the Most High begins to look back.

"God in his holy place." In the faithful soul. God always dwells in his saints. Wherever holiness is, there is the dwelling place of God. "God who makes those of one manner dwell in a house." In the Church, in which he pours the spirit of charity into those consistently faithful, who are of one manner and do not change. For the just man is not changed: because once he has judged to remain in justice. The sinner, however, is changed. For the fool is changed like the moon (Sir. 27). In the Hebrew, however, it has: "The

Lord makes monks dwell in a house": that is, those in whom sin does not cohabit.

"Who brings out the bound in strength." God himself by his virtue brings out those who are bound by the devil in sins: like that woman in the Gospel: who had been bound eighteen years by the devil (Luke 13). "Similarly those who exasperate, who dwell in sepulchres." God is sweet by nature. But those who lead him to bitterness are sinners, and they make God bitter to themselves. They do not change his nature, but they themselves, as sinners, make God bitter to themselves. "Who dwell in sepulchres." Having bound the strong one within his house, that is, the devil, he absolved those who were held bound by sins, and he liberated those who, given over to idols, had provoked God, and were lying dead as if in sepulchres: like that in the Gospel: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees: because you are like whitened sepulchres" (Matt. 23). Just as the saint is the temple of God, so the sinner makes himself a sepulchre.

"O God, when you went forth in the sight of your people." This is according to history, when God preceded his people going out from Egypt (Exod. 14). "When you passed through in the desert." God does not linger in the desert, but passes through. "The earth was moved, for the heavens dropped before the face of the God of Sinai, before the face of the God of Israel." "The heavens dropped," that is, manna (Exod. 16). Sinai is interpreted as "temptation." Therefore, God dwells in those who are tempted and over-

come. In those, however, who are in delights, he does not dwell. "For the heavens dropped before the face of the God of Sinai, before the face of the God of Israel." Here he designates one author of the Old and New Testament. For he who preceded before the Israelite people in the desert, he himself in the Gospels visited the deserts of the nations. And he through whom then in Sinai manna flowed down to this generation; he himself provides the manna of his body and blood for the Christian people in the Church.

"You shall set aside a voluntary rain, O God, for your inheritance." Holy preaching, which descended through the apostles into the hearts of men by a flowing irrigation. Or he speaks of the law, which was given through Moses. "For it was weakened." Either when Paul had the judgment of death in himself: or when Peter denied the Lord three times: or when the rest of the apostles, having left the Lord in his passion, fled (Matt. 5). "It was weakened," the law: since no one could fulfill it, except the Lord who said: "I did not come to loosen the law, but to fulfill it." And according to the Apostle: "For what was the impossibility of the law in which it was weakened, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law: that he might redeem those who were under the law" (Gal. 4). "But you have perfected it: your animals shall dwell in it." For your resurrection, turning away what was wavering, thus led this preaching to perfection: so that in it the nations, which before were held as irrational animals, might dwell. "Your animals shall dwell in it": that is, in the

inheritance. But he called those "animals" who live in God: that is, the saints. Or otherwise: "You shall set aside a voluntary rain." We ought to accept as "voluntary rain" either the precepts or the manna. "And it was weakened: but you have perfected it." The law, which had been weakened through the transgression of the Jews, was completed by the arrival of the grace of the Gospel.

"You have prepared in your sweetness for the poor, O God." "The Lord will give the word to those evangelizing with great power." In the Hebrew it has: "Those things which are evangelized": that is, to the women who were evangelizing to the apostles: where it is said: "Going, tell my brothers," and so forth (Matt. 28). Or it signifies the souls which have believed in Christ. According to the Seventy interpreters, however, it is said to the apostles: because the Lord gave them the power of preaching the Gospel. This sweetness of the rain, which surpasses the taste of honey and the honeycomb, flowed down in the poor, that is, in the saints of God, which proceeded from the mouth of the apostles, by God's command, with great power.

"The King of the virtues of the beloved, of the beloved." The virtues of the beloved of God, that is, of Christ, are the apostles. The Lord therefore, who is the King of the virtues of the beloved, will give great power to those evangelizing in preaching: so that, the enemies being conquered, whether Jews or demons, they may divide the spoils of the Church. The beauty of the house is the Church: whose divided spoils are reported:

that is, when the believers, divided from idols, have obtained various degrees of ministries in it: the beloved of the Father himself distributing, and the Paraclete cooperating. "The King of the virtues of the beloved." The King, the Father: of the virtues: that is, of the saints. "Of the beloved," of the Son. "Behold my beloved Son, hear him" (Matt. 17). "Of the beloved." If anyone loves someone, he always has him in his mouth. Therefore the Holy Spirit, on account of the love which he has for the Son, frequently remembers him. "And of the beauty of the house to divide the spoils." The apostles themselves divide the spoils in the churches, which they received from the idols.

"If you sleep among the midst of the clods, the wings of a silvered dove and the back parts of its back in the paleness of gold." When you have believed in the two Testaments, you will find in both the Holy Spirit. And although there may be beauty even according to the letter, to know what you read: nevertheless all the force of decor is in the sense. Thus the exterior ornament of the words is demonstrated in the name of silver: but the more hidden mysteries are contained in the secret gifts of gold. "If you sleep among the midst of the clods": that is, if you rest between the New and the Old Testament: you will find in the two Testaments the grace of the Holy Spirit. The "clods" are called the individual books: that is, Genesis, Exodus, Judges, the Gospels, the Apostle. "The wings of a silvered dove." "Silvered," signifies the clear word of divine Scripture. "And the

back parts of its back in the paleness of gold": that is, in the interior things, the mysteries are understood spiritually. If until the consummation of the present life, which is often accepted as sleep, you rest between the two Testaments: that is, the New and the Old Testament: you will find in these the Holy Spirit: whose wings in the preachers are silvered, corresponding to the beauty of the eloquence. In the back parts indeed, which are called the shoulders, because they cover the breast, the fruit of a good conscience is shown: which after the Gospel has been performed, are changed into the species of gold, that is, into royal honor.

"While the Celestial distinguishes, the kings upon it shall be whitened with snow in Zalmon." He calls the saints "kings," who fight against their passions. These saints therefore are divided in the churches: as Paul among the Gentiles, Peter in the circumcision. The celestial Lord established those separated from idolatries, whom we mentioned above, as kings in the beauty of that house. But first "they shall be whitened with snow in Zalmon." This is what he says, although they are saints; but yet in this world they are as a shadow, knowing in part. Zalmon is interpreted as "shadow." When therefore the celestial King Christ shall have begun to establish and divide apostles and princes in his Church: they will not have full light, but some part of knowledge: because now we see in part, and we prophesy in part (1 Cor. 13).

"The mountain of God, a fat mountain: a curdled mountain, a fat mountain." This is the

mountain to which both in Isaiah and in Micah, as they ascend they proceed, exhorting one another (Isa. 2, and Micah 4). But what he says: "curdled": agrees with the words of the Apostle, who says: "I gave you milk to drink, not meat" (1 Cor. 3). Or the mountain which in Ezekiel wounds the prince of Tyre (Ezek. 26). But he calls the Lord himself "the mountain." "Why do you suspect curdled mountains?" This he says to the Jews, who think Moses and the prophets are similar to the Savior.

"The mountain in which it has well pleased God to dwell in it." This is the sense: You ought not to think that there are several Churches, which have the breasts of doctrines, and can nourish believers with the milk of knowledge. There is one Church, and one Christ the spouse of the Church. For the Holy Spirit will dwell continually in no other, except in the Savior, John saying: "Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him" (John 1); he is the one who, cut out without hands, filled the breadth of all the earth: that is, the Dominical man. "For the Lord shall dwell unto the end." In the body, which he received from holy Mary, because with it he was carried up into heaven.

"The chariot of God is manifold by ten thousands." He speaks hyperbolically of the administrative powers and the saints, because they are innumerable, as he said in Daniel: "A thousand thousands ministered to him, and ten times a hundred thousand assisted him" (Dan. 7). And in Ezekiel it is described that the Cherubim of four

wings has four persons in four corners: whose charioteer is God (Ezek. 1 and 10). But Cherubim is interpreted as "fullness of knowledge." But the person of the lion signifies the regal: that is, to reign over passions; the person of the man, the rational; the person of the calf, in work; the person of the eagle, in contemplation, that is, in theory: which exalts us in virtues. But at the same time let us say: The throne of God is in the saints. "Manifold by ten thousands": For many thousands of secular chariots were conquered by those evangelizing Christ in the whole world. "Thousands of rejoicing, the Lord in them." He indicates that the divine ministries are here. "In Sinai, in the holy place." That is, God is in the saints when they are tempted, and after the temptation holiness follows. For it is impossible for anyone, although he be a saint, to pass through this world without temptation, according to Job: "Temptation is the life of man upon earth" (Job 7).

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive." Thou hast ascended into the heavens: thou hast captivated us, who were held captive by the devil. He who once descending in Sinai distributed the law to the people, he himself now in the holy place, that is, in the assumed man (of whom the angel to Mary said (Luke 1): "That which shall be born of you, shall be called holy"), ascending the heights of the heavens: absolved those who were held in the captivity of the devil: and restored those led after him as if captives to eternal life. Thus also he carried up the assumed flesh, as if captive, to the stars. "Thou

hast received gifts among men." Well he said, "thou hast received." He received from the Father: he received as man, he gives as God: and what he received, he received for men, that he might give it. For he himself is full, and needs nothing. He gave the gifts of spiritual graces to men: who thereafter approached him through faith.

"For even the non-believers, that the Lord God might dwell." And to these men; that is, to the people from the nations, Christ bestowed: who did not believe that God could dwell in mortals: and you saved these, who did not believe that it is possible for God to dwell in men: that is, the Savior to take flesh. Or he even ministered good things to those who were without hope that they could dwell in his Church.

"Blessed be the Lord daily." He who profits, can bless God daily. For what does it profit me, if I blessed yesterday: and today I cannot bless? Both for superior benefits, and because he now prepares for us a level way of coming to him, he is to be blessed continually. "The God of our salvation will make our journey prosperous." Because we are saved by him. "The God of our salvation will make our journey prosperous." Be secure, sinner: do not doubt that you can bless God daily. For behold he says: "The God of our salvation will make our journey prosperous." Therefore God helps us, and cooperates with us. "Of our salvation." Well he said in the plural, "of our salvations": because as many sins as we have committed, so many salvations we have. "Diapsalma," in the Hebrew has

SELA: that is, "always" and "continually." Therefore God always helps us.

"Our God." Because we know no other besides him. "The God of making safe, and of the Lord, the Lord, the issues of death." For he is ready to make safe those perishing: because he was born for our redemption. "And of the Lord, the Lord, is the issue of death": because he first opened the issue of death, the Apostle saying: "He was made," he said, "the first-born of the dead, because he himself rose from the dead, and made us rise together" (Col. 1; Rev. 1). Otherwise: The devil is the entrance of death: but the Lord leads out.

"But God shall break the heads of his enemies." Having gone out from the issues of death, he breaks the heads of the devil and all his virtues. "Thou hast broken the heads of the dragon in the water." As many sins as there are, so many heads the devil has: Principalities and powers, which stood out as a head to all, that is, diabolical dominations. "The crown of the hair of those walking in their offenses": The summit of the extolling of those who, neglecting penance, persist in sins. For his head is broken to such an extent that there remains in him no virtue by which he may stimulate those sinning. The highest part of the head is the hair, and of the hair, the crown. Therefore he says this, that not even the smallest part remains in the devil which is not broken.

"The Lord said: I will turn from Bashan, I will turn in the depth of the sea." "That thy foot may be dipped in blood, the tongue of thy dogs from the enemies by himself." Bashan is interpreted as

"confusion." From confusion therefore God turns us. But this was for this reason, because he sustained the cross, and his foot was bathed in his own gore, the Jews crying out against him and saying: "Crucify, crucify him" (John 19). Which Jews were stimulated by the enemies of Christ: that is, by the demons. But that all this should happen, was the will of the Savior himself who suffered these things to be done. Or "from the confusion of this world I will turn the human race": that is, through my passion and the cross, which these think is foolishness and confusion. "I will turn Bashan," my people. "I will turn into the depth of the sea": that is, from the deep vices and sins of this world: from the commotion and waves I will turn my people. "That thy foot may be dipped in blood." Since his own foot was dipped in his own blood. "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the nations there was not a man with me" (Isa. 63). And again: "Who is this that cometh from Edom? with dyed garments from Bozrah" (ibid.). Edom is interpreted as "blood": Bozrah, "flesh." It signifies our Lord himself crucified. "The tongue of thy dogs from the enemies by himself." He calls the Jews themselves "dogs," as above: who cried out, "crucify, crucify such a one: we have no king but Caesar" (John 19). But they were sent by the enemies, that is, by the demons, to deny the Savior and to blaspheme him. Otherwise: Because thou thyself by thy will camest and suffered: and by thy will thou wast crucified by the Jews. For the foot of the Lord was dipped in blood, when the assumed

flesh in which the divinity lay hidden, is struck by the lance. By that blood therefore their tongue also was dipped, who said: "Behold his blood be upon us, and upon our children" (Matt. 27). But after the glorious triumph of the Dominical ascension, by the Dominical vengeance, the foot of the enemies also was dipped in their blood: and the canine madness of the enemies, to be sure, was satiated by it.

"They have seen thy entries, O God, the entries of my God, of my king who is in the holy place." O how admirably in this psalm the Old Testament agrees with the words of the Gospels! For the journeys of Christ were seen in the entry of the Red Sea (Exod. 14): they were seen also in the Gospels of our king himself; when elevated in the holy man, he was carried into the heavens (John 20; Acts 1).

"The princes went before joined with those singing psalms: in the midst of young damsels playing timbrels." And indeed in that passage of the sea the princes went before: that is, Moses first went out, or the other elders, and they were joined to the young damsels in the celestial journey. "The princes went before," the souls of the holy angels, who were singing together the praises of the Lord with a mortified body, saying: "Lift up your gates, O princes: because now returns the triumpher of hell" (Ps. 23). But for this reason "of timbrel-players": because their body is dead to sin. And Miriam the sister of Moses, and Aaron holding the timbrel in Exodus, preceded those singing psalms and said: "Let us sing to

the Lord, for he is gloriously honored" (Exod. 15). Otherwise: "The princes went before joined with those singing psalms in the midst of young damsels playing timbrels." The apostles with the Churches, preceded with an equally joined step. Well he testifies that they went before: because the princes of the faith are from the Jews.

"In the churches bless the Lord." He has spoken more clearly, whom he called timbrel-players above. "The Lord from the fountains of Israel." Because salvation is from the Jews: and from there the first Church. For from the foreshadowing of the Law, the doctrine of the Church proceeded: in which now the Lord, who took flesh from the offspring of the Israelite stock, is blessed.

"There is Benjamin." The apostle Paul, who descended from the tribe of Benjamin. "There," in the Church. "A young man." The last of all the apostles. "In ecstasy of mind." Which he endured when he was going to Damascus.

"The princes of Judah their leaders." The apostles are the princes of Judah: that is, of the Lord, just as Jacob says: "Judah, thy brothers shall praise thee" (Gen. 49). "Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali." Zebulun is interpreted as "flow of night." Naphtali, "breadth." When we shall have been liberated from the passion of lust: that is, of that flow: then we begin the breadths of virtues. Or otherwise; "The princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali." He shows Peter and Andrew the princes of the apostles: who in the thickness of darkness, announcing his great light, were

established as teachers of the Gospel, according to that: "The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea beyond the Jordan of Galilee of the Gentiles, the people that sat in darkness, saw a great light" (Isa. 49).

"Command, O God, thy strength." To thy Christ. "Confirm this, O God, which thou hast wrought in us." That he may confirm the gift of baptism which he conferred, by the infusion of the Holy Spirit. Confirm this, O God, which thou hast wrought in us: that is, confirm the salvation which thou hast given us through thy passion, and give help, since we are men, and we cannot walk in virtues if we have not obtained thy help.

"From thy temple which is in Jerusalem: to thee kings shall offer gifts." He calls "kings" those who reign over themselves, according to what is written: "The heart of the king is in the hand of God" (Prov. 12). They themselves shall offer gifts to God. The virtues of the saints are the gifts of God. Or from that corporal temple, which they made holy by living well. Kings in whom sin no longer reigns, shall offer in the celestial Jerusalem, which is the Church of the first-born, gifts to the eternal King: namely, offering themselves as a living host, pleasing to God in the sight of all the angels.

"I have come into the depth of the sea." In the depth of this world. "And the storm hath overwhelmed me": the tempest of the Jews.

"I have labored crying; my jaws are become hoarse." Although he is pressed by sinners, he nevertheless does not cease to cry out the salu-

tary precepts. "My eyes have failed, while I hope in my God." According to the weakness of the flesh, he hoped that this chalice might pass from him; but according to his divinity, he fulfilled the will of the Father.

"They are multiplied above the hairs of my head, who hate me without cause." "They are strengthened," etc. Therefore they are multiplied and strengthened "above the hairs of my head," because the number of the wicked is always greater than that of the just. "What I took not away, then I paid." For he was not a debtor of death and sin, but in his passion he fulfilled both as a host.

"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my offenses are not hidden from thee." The Father knows that he did not bring these from the heavens, but assumed them for us, as the prophet says: "He hath taken our iniquities, and borne our infirmities" (Isa. 53). And Paul says: "Because that which is foolish of God is wiser than men; and that which is weak of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1). "My offenses are not hidden from thee," as that: "I have made my offense known to thee" (Ps. 31).

"Let them not be ashamed for me, who look for thee, O Lord," etc. Let the hope of those who believe in my passion not be made void: but let them know that I have come to do thy will, as follows.

"Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered," etc. For the sake of the Father's will, he supported the reproaches of the

wicked, and was covered with shame when he is bruised in the assumed flesh: because there was one will of the Father and the Son in that he sustained the passion. Or, "shame hath covered": when the apostles denied him.

"I am become a stranger to my brethren," etc. For he was a son of the Synagogue even as they were, according to the order of earthly embodiment, by whom he was held as an outsider and a guest: because they were full of crimes; but he was truly devoid of sin. "I am become a stranger to my brethren." The brethren of the Lord are the apostles. Whence he said: "I will declare thy name to my brethren" (Ps. 21). "A stranger to the sons of my mother." Christ as a stranger, as Cleophas says: "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem?" (Luke 24). Only, because he alone and first rose immortal. And the mother is the synagogue.

"For the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." Because they made it a den of thieves. "And the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." For they cast the strife of reproaches upon him, when they called him both a Samaritan and one having a devil. Whence the Jews said against Christ: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross, and we believe thee. Others he saved; himself he cannot save" (Matt. 27). They who reproach the Son, also reproach the Father, because he who does not believe the Son, neither has he the Father.

"I covered my soul in fasting; and it was made a reproach to me." For he endeavored to bring re-

proach upon him: when Satan tempting him said: "Say that these stones be made bread" (Matt. 4). Or when the disciples said: "Rabbi, eat." He said: "I have meat to eat, which you know not" (John 4). And in another place: "Labor for the meat which perisheth not, but endureth unto life everlasting" (John 6). But Christ hungered for the salvation of the human race. Or he hungered for the faith of the Church: because he found no meat from the Jews.

"I made sackcloth my garment; and I became a byword to them." In the sackcloth of mourning or weeping is shown: which he used at the death of Lazarus, and became a byword to the Jews, when, as he wept, they said: "Behold how he loved him" (John 11). But others: "Could not he that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die?"

"They that sat in the gate were exercised against me." Those, namely, who having the key of knowledge: neither entered in themselves, nor permitted others to enter: the Scribes and Pharisees who discerned causes when they sat in public judgment. "And they that drank wine made me their song." For filled with the wine of iniquity, they sang together how they might kill him. For he sings foolishly who contrives snares against God. For the prophet, knowing that it is foolish for some to sing, hear how he teaches some: "Sing," he says, "wisely." Or they were drunk with wine when they covered his head and said: "Prophesy to us, O Christ, who is he that struck thee" (Luke 22).

"But as for me, my prayer is to thee, O Lord." For I am not conquered by these passions, because I am with thee in prayer. "But as for me, my prayer is to thee, O God." While the Jews were cursing me and saying: "Crucify, crucify him": I, praying for them, was speaking: "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do" (Luke 23). "A time of pleasing, O God." A time of pleasing is the time of the passion, in which the Father was saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3). "A time of good pleasure, O God, in the multitude of thy mercy." For all thy times are well-pleasing, but especially this time in which by my passion thou redeemest the human race, thou makest it in a certain way more well-pleasing. "Hear me, O Lord, in the truth of thy salvation." That after true death, the truth of the resurrection may be approved.

"Draw me out of the mire, that I may not stick fast." Seek according to some whether perhaps the mire signifies the vileness of the flesh which he assumed. He prays that he may not be corrupted in mire and dust, as all the human race is dissolved. "Deliver me from them that hate me." He says this openly of the Jews, who never loved him. "And out of the depths of the waters." "Let not the tempest of water drown me." Let this tempest of passion not retain him in the depth of the infernal abyss. "Neither let the deep swallow me up." Into which while he descends through death, let him not be devoured by it. "Neither let the pit shut her mouth upon me." The entrance of hell, or the devil.

"Hear me, O Lord, for thy mercy is kind; look upon me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies." He asks this according to human weakness, saying: Thou who redeemest others by my passion, behold me, with mercy going before.

"Turn not away thy face from thy servant." The voice of Christ to the Father, who took the form of a servant, as the prophet says: "It is a great thing for thee to be called my servant" (Isa. 49). "For I am in trouble, hear me speedily." That I may resume the spirit which I have commended into thy hands.

"Draw near to my soul, and deliver it: save me because of my enemies." That, when I rise from the lower regions, they may be confounded. Whence Christ said: "I have power to lay down my life" (John 10).

"Thou knowest my reproach, and my confusion," etc. Which I sustain in the assumed flesh.

"In thy sight are all they that afflict me." Thou seest what kind of tribulations they bring upon me, and show illusions. "My heart hath expected reproach and misery." Reproach of the passion, and misery: that is, the contumely of the cross. "I looked for one that would grieve together with me," etc. No one from so great a multitude of the wicked either had compassion on my pains or stood forth as a consoler.

"They gave me gall for my food: and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." That this has already been fulfilled, we read in the Gospels: when the Lord thirsted on the cross, they reached out vinegar mixed with gall for him to drink

(John 19). And from this and from other testimony it is understood that the psalm ought to be referred to Christ. "Let their table become as a snare before them." The sayings of the Law and the prophets: at which frequently meeting they were refreshed. "And for a recompense, and for a stumbling-block." That they may not understand that the Lord was announced therein. For the Lord also said in the Gospels: "Moses accuses you, in whom you trust" (John 5). For he wrote of me. "Let their eyes be darkened that they see not." The divinity lurking under fragility. "That they see not." This was what he prayed for, that their table might become a snare: namely, that they might not know the sacraments of the law. "And bow down their back always." That they may always serve the Romans. Or under the burden of the law: which according to the letter no one could bear.

"Pour out thy indignation upon them, and let the fury of thy wrath take hold of them." "Let their habitation be made desolate," etc. All these things were fulfilled in the overthrow of Jerusalem under Titus and Vespasian. Or this is what he says: "Your house shall be left to you desolate" (Matt. 23). When Christ departed from Judea, all virtues likewise departed with him.

"For they have persecuted him whom thou hast smitten." Christ speaks these things to the Father concerning himself, as we read it said in another prophet from the person of the Father: "For the sins of the people I have smitten him" (Isa. 53). And again: "I will smite the shepherd,

and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered" (Zech. 13). For he was smitten that we might rise again: he was wounded that he might heal us. But also the blood and the water which went out from the wound of his side (John 19) offered a type of martyrdom and baptism, through which one goes to heaven. "And they have added to the grief of my wounds." When they persecuted either the Church or the apostles.

"Add iniquity upon their iniquity." For as the fact that they did not believe in me was reputed to them as iniquity: so let the fact that they persecuted me be added to this iniquity. "And let them not come into thy justice." Let them not receive the kingdoms of the heavens with the just.

"Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and with the just let them not be written." He indicates here two books written: of the living and of the just. Whence it is to be observed that that is the book of the living in which the prophets and patriarchs were written before the coming of God. Of which Moses, when the people sinned, says: "If thou do not forgive them the offense: blot me out of the book which thou hast written" (Exod. 32). But he calls that the book of the just of which the Lord says to those who followed through faith: "Rejoice and exult: because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10). These persecutors, therefore, were both blotted out of the first book, and in the second they are not written.

"I am poor and sorrowful." In the Passion. "And thy salvation, O God, hath set me up." Ris-

ing again. Hence the prophet now speaks: "I am poor and sorrowful": for though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor, and he did not despise his fettered ones. We can use this verse whenever we perorate in praises of the martyrs. Some also think this is understood of souls, that being shut up in bodies they were not despised by God.

"I will praise the name of my God with a canticle: and I will magnify him with praise." Because he either triumphed over the devil or conquered the world.

"It shall please God." That is, the Father. "Above a young calf." Who offered himself to the Begetter. "That bringeth forth horns." Giving strength to the Church. "And hooves." With which he may trample and tear asunder the sacrileges of the nations.

"Let the poor see and rejoice." Because, the superstition of the Gentiles being brought low, the kingdom of the Lord's Church is extolled. "Seek ye God, and your soul shall live." Which is now dead in sins.

"For the Lord hath heard the poor." That he might raise them up. "And hath not despised his prisoners." Because, having broken the bonds of the devil, he admitted them into his kingdom.

"Let the heavens and the earth praise him: the sea, and everything that creepeth therein." Let all things themselves of the celestial, terrestrial, and infernal regions bow the knee.

"For God will save Sion." The celestial Jerusalem, in which he will unite his elect according to their merits in one body of that celestial

mother. "And the cities of Judah shall be built up." The souls of the saints, which through confession are brought into the holy temple as living stones.

"And they shall dwell there, and acquire it by inheritance, and the seed of his servants shall possess it," etc. The saints, surely, who are transferred into it. Or their seed, that is, those who have been converted through them. But because the title of the psalm is inscribed "for those who shall be changed": let us pray the Lord that he may build us up, converted from gentility, into the cities of Judah, and absolved from the yoke of the devil, that he may love his own offspring. That those whom he redeemed through the bitterness of gall, through the harshness of vinegar, through the punishments of the cross, through the wounds of the nails, through the contumely of death, through the glory of the resurrection, he may deign so to keep in the world that he may make them partakers with his saints in the kingdom. Amen.

PSALM 69.

"To the end, a Psalm of David, in remembrance, because the Lord saved him." This psalm is sung from the person of the incarnate Lord, entreating the protection of the Father.

"O God, come to my assistance: O Lord," etc. Our assistance is Christ, who now asks the Father's help to confound those who oppose him.

"Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my soul, to take it away." For in this they are

confounded, when they know that he whose soul they wished to take away has risen again.

"Let them be turned backward and blush for shame that wish me evil." Let them not be changed in the resurrection with the saints, but turned backward blushing: because him whom they judged as a man, they see judging as God.

"Let them be presently turned away blushing: that say to me: Aha, aha." This is the voice of those who mock, which refers to those who said: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross"; and again: "He trusted in God: let him deliver him, if he will" (Matt. 27). But after the punishment of the impious, it is turned to the glory of the blessed.

"Let all them that seek thee exult and be glad in thee." Who through the tears of penance seek thee, who art merciful. "And let them say always: the Lord be magnified." Having received the indulgence of sins. "Who love thy salvation." Loving thee: because thou art the life of all.

"But I am needy and poor: O Lord," etc. Christ the Lord frequently calls himself needy and poor: whose care consists in the love of paternal piety.

"Thou art my helper and my protector, O my God, make no delay." For hence at the time of the passion he said to the disciple: "That which thou dost, do quickly" (John 13); namely, that the swift help of the resurrection might prevent the passion of the body. He who was wounded for our sins, and rose again for our justification: may he now bestow help upon us in the time of tribulation by his usual mercy, so that exulting with his

saints, we may be able to magnify and extol him. Amen.

PSALM 70.

A Psalm of David, of the sons of Jonadab, and of the first captives. This psalm contains the voice of the prophet: complaining of that corporeal humility of the Redeemer, and singing of his glorious resurrection.

"In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded." Our Mediator therefore prays that this confusion of death may not be, like that of all others, long-lasting. "And deliver me in thy justice, and rescue me." "Incline," etc. For it is thy justice that he who has done thy will should pass from death to life: through which I now also entreat to be rescued. Or otherwise: "Incline thy ear to me, and save me." The ears of the Lord are mentioned when he deigns to hear: because taking the form of a servant, he was made obedient to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.

"Be thou unto me a God, a protector, and a place of strength, that thou mayst make me safe." Because without thee neither refuge nor fortification nor protection can be provided by anyone. Is God local? He is local to those coming to him: but he is not local, because he is everywhere.

"For thou art my firmament and my refuge." Firmament, since an equal substance consists in him. Refuge, according to corporeal weakness.

"O my God, deliver me out of the hand of the sinner: and out of the hand," etc. From the power of the Jewish people, who did not understand in the Law that I was to come. "And of the unjust." Always acting malignantly. Not all sinners are also unjust. Sinners are transgressors, that is, Jews and bad Christians, who transgress the Old and New Testament. The unjust are those who do not believe, as Paul says: "They who have sinned without the law, shall also perish without the law."

"For thou art my patience, O Lord." Because I suffer for thy will. "My hope from my youth." From the beginning of corporeal age. Therefore hope is not confounded: "because the charity of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us" (Rom. 5).

"In thee have I been confirmed from the womb." Of the Law, surely, from which I began to believe. "From my mother's womb." Of the Synagogue from which I proceeded. "Thou art my protector, O Lord." "In thee is my song always." By thee I shall be protected in the passion, and I shall sing thy name among the Gentiles.

"I am become unto many as a wonder." For they were saying to him: "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil" (John 8; Matt. 17). "And thou, O Lord, a strong helper." Thou hast said to me: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him."

"Let my mouth be filled with thy praise, that I may sing thy glory; thy greatness all the day long." There is one day for thy saints in this world,

which no night obscures: in which and with whom I sing thy praise, glory, and magnificence: because I am in these. I sing to thee. But also now the Lord himself opens our mouth, that we may be able to announce his glory, and to discourse upon his praise.

"Cast me not off in the time of old age; when it shall fail," etc. In the consummation, surely, of this age.

"For my enemies have spoken to me." Saying: "This man is not of God, who keepeth not the sabbath" (John 9). "And they that watched my soul, have taken counsel together, saying: God hath forsaken him," etc. These things the impious said, and they erred: for their heart was blinded by malice. But also in the passion itself they were saying, as if he were forsaken by God: "Let be, let Elias come and deliver him" (Matt. 27).

"O God, depart not far from me: O my God," etc. That, the strong one being bound, I may return as a victor from hell.

"Let them be confounded and fail that detract from my soul; let them be covered," etc. When I shall have been raised again.

"But I will always hope in thee, O Lord," etc. That what things the law commanded to offer to thee in its visible sacrifices, the redeemed people may bring forth in their conduct.

"My mouth shall show forth thy justice; thy salvation all the day long." For rising again I will gather the Church, in which I shall sing thy praises.

"Because I have not known literature, I will enter into the powers of the Lord." He knew negotiation, who sold the master. For "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17). "O Lord, I will be mindful of thy justice alone." The prophet says he is mindful of the Father's justice, just as he himself says in the Gospel: "The things which I have heard from my Father, these I speak" (John 8).

"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and until now I will declare thy wonderful works, and even unto old age and grey hairs: O God, forsake me not." For was he forsaken by the Father? No, but he always bore testimony, because he is true.

"Until I show forth thy arm to every generation," etc. He announced all these things to the Christian generation: which he acquired by his blood and for which he suffered what follows. "What great things thou hast done, O God! who is like to thee?" Who hast sent me by a merciful counsel for human redemption.

"How great tribulations hast thou shown me, many and evil! and being turned, thou hast quickened me." Many tribulations indeed were shown to him in the infirmity of the flesh for the salvation of the human race, but he endured all things vigorously. "And thou hast brought me back again from the depths of the earth." That is, from the depth of hell. Let the Jews now say, who wish to sing this psalm concerning David alone: when was he brought forth from the deep abyss?

"Thou hast multiplied thy magnificence, O God," etc. When those who were held in hell returned with me.

"For I also will confess to thee in the vessels of the psalm." Who, filled with that new wine of evangelical and apostolic preaching, understand me proclaimed in the psalms: "I will sing to thee on the harp thy truth, O God, O Holy One of Israel." In those who retain thee in their mind.

"My lips shall exult," etc. The prophet says these things at the conclusion of the psalm. "And my soul which thou hast redeemed." That the second death might not have dominion over it.

"But also my tongue shall meditate on thy justice: when they shall be confounded and ashamed that seek evils for me." Whether vices or aerial powers, which bring iniquitous incursions upon me. Let us truly entreat the Lord that, our human mouth being filled with his praises, we may always meditate on those things in our hearts which we may bring forth with voices pleasing to him.

PSALM 71.

"Unto Solomon." And this psalm is properly referred to Christ. For Solomon means peaceful, and Christ is peaceful: and he endureth with the sun, and before the moon, from generation to generation. If this psalm is understood concerning Solomon, this cannot stand at all. For Solomon remained neither with the sun nor with the moon. But if we wish to understand it of Christ, it must be asked how Christ has no end,

since the sun and moon and heaven and all things are said to grow old and pass away. But this seventy-first psalm which the prophet sang shows the Son of God about to come into the world; and that he, after the injuries of the assumed flesh and the poor being delivered from the hand of the powerful, having returned to the heavens, received all judgment from the Father. It therefore takes such a beginning:

"Give to the king thy judgment, O God." The prophet therefore speaks, as we said, to the Father, that he may give judgment to the Son, not that he does not have him subsisting in one Deity, but that he may show him about to come in the body. "And thy justice to the king's son." To the people who, assumed into the adoption of a son, has been reborn in him through baptism. For it is suitably fitting that the people should live by justice: but that the king should exercise the judgment which he received from the Father, which the following verse confirms.

"To judge thy people in justice." Whom thou hast acquired through his passion and resurrection. "And thy poor in judgment." That, after present hardships, they may receive eternal consolation.

"Let the mountains receive peace for the people, and the hills thy justice." We have often warned that mountains and hills have a double meaning, that is, of the deified part and the adverse part. Therefore these who, the adversary seducing them and riches favoring them, were elevated in the manner of hills and mountains:

being now subject to God, let them receive that peace and justice which the people whom we called adopted above holds, that is, Christ, who is our peace and justice.

"He shall judge the poor of the people." That having become poor for his sake, they may be enriched with celestial kingdoms. "And he shall save the children of the poor." Who have been converted through them. "And he shall humble the slanderer." Having bestowed the reward upon the just, he humbles the devil, who now stands forth as their slanderer.

"And he shall continue with the sun." With paternal clarity. For these things cannot be fitted to this sun: because it will be dissolved with this world. "And before the moon from generation to generation." For he shall stand first before every assembly of the Church, and shall remain forever.

"And he shall come down like rain upon the fleece." For as the rain descending upon Gideon's fleece (Judges 6), when the dry earth failed, so also here he glided into the virginal womb through the infusion of the Holy Spirit. "And as showers falling gently upon the earth." For the earth of the human body was dry when he arrived, nor could it exhibit any fruit of holiness: but he himself, having fertilized it with the showers of his preaching, filled it with eternal fruits.

"In his days shall justice spring up, and abundance of peace." Which was fulfilled in the days of Augustus Caesar, when the Lord proceeded from the virginal bridal chamber. For in these days all wars so ceased that even that was fulfilled which

another prophet sang, saying: "They shall turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles" (Isa. 2). Now his days are when he is conceived, when he is born, when he is nourished. His days are when he works the works of the Father, when he suffers, when he descends to the lower regions, when he rises again, when he shows himself to the disciples, when he ascends to the heavens. "Until the moon be taken away." Until the Church be elevated.

"And he shall rule from sea to sea," etc. The prophet testifies that this whole world was acquired and subjected to Christ the Lord by his passion.

"The Ethiopians shall fall down before him." Those dark with sins. "And his enemies shall lick the ground." According to that: "They shall worship thee, and shall lick the dust of thy feet" (Isa. 49).

"The kings of Tarshish and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Sheba shall bring gifts," etc. The prophet pronounces here that all worldly empire, honors, and orders approach Christ the Lord, and submit their necks to him, and bring gifts of good conduct: which we understand to have begun from the gifts of the magi. For they themselves are shown to have held the type of the nations and kings.

"For he hath delivered the poor from the mighty." The faithful people from the power of the devil. "And the poor that had no helper." "He shall spare the poor and needy," etc. Those who,

having cast away the riches of the world, have done penance: these are spared, and they shall be saved.

"He shall redeem their souls from usuries and iniquity." Lest they lay up treasures from perishing usuries on earth, but let them place in heaven purses that grow not old. But usuries are also sins, when malice received from Satan is multiplied. "And their name shall be honorable in his sight." In the sight of God the Father.

"And he shall live." In his saints, as Paul also said: "I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2). "And to him shall be given of the gold of Arabia." They shall offer to him purity of mind, as Arabian gold, glowing with most beautiful splendor. "And they shall adore of him always." Because they have been liberated from iniquities. "All the day shall they bless him." Gathered into the one body of the Church.

"And there shall be a firmament on the earth." For his coming, passion, and resurrection brought a great firmament to the slipping earth. "On the tops of mountains shall his fruit be exalted above Lebanon." For above all the heights of the world is elevated the grace of baptism, through which sins are taken away. "And they shall flourish from the city." That is, from the celestial Jerusalem. "As the grass of the earth." Grass has a double meaning. There is grass that withering falls away, and there is flowery grass, and enduring with green hair, from which the crowns of the saints are adorned. The saints therefore, reborn through baptism, shall flourish

from the celestial Jerusalem, splendid with the ornament of good works. "As the grass of the earth." Not of that earth subject to the curse, but of that flowing with honey and milk.

"And his name shall be blessed for ever." By those whom he has transferred thither, he shall be perpetually blessed. "Before the sun his name continueth." Namely, the power of his name: according to that: "Before the day-star have I begotten thee" (Ps. 109).

"And in him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed: all nations shall magnify him." For the evangelist records this, the Lord saying thus: "This Gospel shall be preached in the whole world" (Matt. 24). But also all nations shall come, and shall adore before thee, O Lord.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who alone doth wonderful things." For he did them in the Old Testament: he doeth them also in the New, when he worthily calleth those things that are not, as those things that are.

"And blessed be the name of his majesty for ever." According to that: "And to them that believe in me there shall be a new name, which shall be blessed on the earth," that is, Christian. "And the whole earth shall be filled with his majesty: so be it, so be it." When he shall have poured out his Holy Spirit upon all flesh: which we already read in the Acts of the Apostles was completed (Acts 2). And may he deign to infuse into us even now the Paraclete, that is, the Consoler, that we may be able to understand that for our redemption he assumed an earthly body, underwent death, pen-

etrated the lower regions, and returned a victor to the heavens.

"And in him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed: all nations shall magnify him." For the evangelist records this, the Lord saying thus: "This Gospel shall be preached in the whole world" (Matt. 24). But also all nations shall come, and shall adore before thee, O Lord.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who alone doth wonderful things." For he did them in the Old Testament: he doeth them also in the New, when he worthily calleth those things that are not, as those things that are.

"And blessed be the name of his majesty for ever." According to that: "And to them that believe in me there shall be a new name, which shall be blessed on the earth," that is, Christian. "And the whole earth shall be filled with his majesty: so be it, so be it." When he shall have poured out his Holy Spirit upon all flesh: which we already read in the Acts of the Apostles was completed (Acts 2). And may he deign to infuse into us even now the Paraclete, that is, the Consoler, that we may be able to understand that for our redemption he assumed an earthly body, underwent death, penetrated the lower regions, and returned a victor to the heavens.

PSALM 72.

"The hymns of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." A Psalm of Asaph. It should be known that the seventy-first psalm is the end of the second book; whence also it has at the end, "so

be it, so be it": for which we have shown in the above that "amen, amen" is said in Hebrew. Also this should be more diligently observed, that "The hymns of David, the son of Jesse, are ended" belongs to the end of the seventy-first psalm: but that which follows, "A Psalm of Asaph," is the beginning of the following.

"How good is God to Israel, to them that are of a right heart." For he is good to those who are about to see him: as the Lord saith: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5).

"But my feet were almost moved, my steps had well nigh slipped." Because, etc. The stability of his holiness and his walking toward God was sliding, because he had been jealous of the peace and happiness of the wicked.

"Because there is no regard to their death: and a firmament in their plague." And in the labor of men, etc. They quickly recover from infirmity and plagues, nor are they shaken by the scourges of tribulations like just men.

"Therefore pride hath held them, they are covered with their iniquity and their impiety." For through the arrogance of happiness, they are oppressed by multiplied iniquity.

"Their iniquity hath come forth, as it were from fatness." In the fatness also of riches, forgotten iniquity proceeded from them. For of this fatness Moses also saith: "Jacob waxed fat, and kicked" (Deut. 32).

"They have passed into the affection of the heart." That they might do their own will, and not God's.

"They have thought and spoken wickedness," etc. Whether the Jews, who blaspheming God placed in the flesh, were stretching snares of wickedness in perverse thoughts: or the heretics, who through iniquitous interpretations detract from God.

"They have set their mouth against heaven: and their tongue hath passed through the earth." Through the pride of knowledge they have spoken against the inhabitant of heaven, but their iniquitous speech was humbled even to the earth, and passed through: because it had no firm standing. Therefore in these prophecies the Lord speaks of his own, saying:

"Therefore my people shall return here: and full days shall be found in them." The just, seeing these things, who before had been jealous of sinners, beholding their peace, return to God: that they may receive the fullness of eternal days, knowing that the iniquitous reach not even to half.

"And they said: How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" For sinners are ignorant that God can know all things: the wretched ones not knowing that nothing is hidden from his eyes.

"Behold these are sinners; and yet abounding in the world they have obtained riches." Abounding in the riches of the world, they have lost the gifts of paradise.

"And I said: Then have I in vain justified my heart, and washed my hands among the innocent?" Has the just man, seeing these things, justified himself in vain, or on the contrary done an innocent work? But the Lord himself says these things from the person of the just, as the following show.

"And I have been scourged all the day." For the Lord was often scourged by their deceits: but on the day of the passion he was beaten with certain contumelies and true blows. "And my chastisement in the morning." Judas indeed said: "What will you give me, and I will deliver him unto you, that he may be apprehended?" (Matt. 26). But he himself was scourged in the morning: when on the following day he went away from the Lord's betrayal and hanged himself with a snare.

"If I said: I will speak thus; behold I should condemn the generation of thy children." The order of the reading and the meaning is this: While I accuse myself in the morning prayers, I found this that I might say: If I shall have spoken thus; if I shall wish to search into the hidden things of God, I begin to become a stranger to thy children: as if someone were not justified, nor did a just work. These who preach me, and through me have become thy children, rise up against me. From here the prophet speaks.

"I studied that I might know this thing, it is a labor in my sight." I have searched out all things, even if laboriously: yet I thought with the Apostle, that "the sufferings of this time are

not worthy to be compared with the future glory which shall be revealed in the saints" (Rom. 8).

"Until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand concerning their last ends." I understood also concerning these saints, entering in mind into their assembly: that even if in the first life they were vexed in few things, in the last they shall be well disposed in many things. From here the words are turned to those who trusted in the deceit of riches.

"But indeed for deceits thou hast set them." Because they troubled the just with iniquitous frauds. "Thou hast cast them down when they were lifted up." Lifted up in riches, they were cast down by thee.

"How are they brought into desolation?" This is the manner of the questioning voice, and that of the responding follows. "They have suddenly ceased to be, they have perished by reason of their iniquity." For he explained the order of the thing, according to that which the Apostle saith: "When they shall say, peace and security: then sudden destruction shall come upon them" (1 Thess. 5).

"As a dream of them that awake." As someone sleeping sees in a vision great treasures of gold and silver, and rising loses all: so also these their riches after the life of this world in which they were occupied as if in a dream. "O Lord, in thy city." Namely, in the celestial Jerusalem. "Thou shalt bring their image to nothing." When to these knocking at the celestial palace, thou shalt say: "Depart from me, workers of iniquity: for I know you not" (Luke 13).

"For my heart hath been inflamed." That I might do the Father's will. Christ the Lord speaks these things. "And my reins were changed." Lest the luxury of human thought should prevail against me. "And I am brought to nothing, and I knew not." He calls himself both humbled and ignorant, that he may show himself a true man. For God is deceived by no ignorance, but he only knows not sinners.

"I am become as a beast before thee." Bearing in the flesh the sins of thy people. "And I am always with thee." I in thee, and thou in me.

"Thou hast held my right hand." When I descended into hell, because the left hand of the devil was against me. "And in thy will thou hast conducted me." When I rose again. "And with glory thou hast received me." Returning to the heavens.

"For what have I in heaven? and besides thee what do I desire upon earth?" To be read with emphasis: thou hast prepared such great things for me in the heavens, and I, unhappy on earth, was seeking small things from thee? Otherwise: Neither in heaven nor on earth have I sought another besides thee. For by thee my will is fulfilled, that to me every knee should bow, of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. The voice of the Church follows, saying:

"My heart and my flesh hath fainted: the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever." After the God of her heart, that is, Christ the Lord of whom she has become a part, she desires both with heart and with her whole body. For the

fainting which she says she has, is not to be taken for diminution, but for desire.

"For behold they that go far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that are disloyal to thee." All who are disloyal, sin without God. But he who sins is far from God: and therefore is near to perdition.

"But it is good for me to adhere to my God." By whose blood I have been redeemed. "To put my hope in the Lord God." Because it is vain to trust in the goods of the world.

"That I may declare all thy praises, in the gates of the daughter of Sion." For through the contemplation of the hope which she has in God, she hopes to be led into the gates of the celestial Jerusalem: to lay hold of future beatitude with his elect. Into whose fellowship may Christ the Lord, not the inspector of merits, but the giver of pardon, admit us. Amen.

PSALM 73.

"Understanding of Asaph." "Understanding" is therefore noted in the title: because a twofold captivity follows; namely, carnal and spiritual.

"Why, O God, hast thou cast us off unto the end: why is thy wrath enkindled against the sheep of thy pasture?" Immense is the gift of the Lord's piety, who so repels that he may recall: he is angry that he may amend.

"Remember thy congregation, which thou hast possessed from the beginning." Namely, the ecclesiastical congregation which thou hast fig-

ured either by the calls or by the sacrifices of the patriarchs or prophets.

"Thou hast redeemed the rod of thy inheritance." The rod of God's inheritance is Christ, as it is said to Jeremiah seeing a watching rod: "Thou seest well, for I watch over my people" (Jer. 1); and again: "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root, and the Gentiles shall pray to him" (Isa. 11). This rod, therefore, was liberated from the persecuting enemies. "Mount Sion in which thou hast dwelt." Whether in the assumed body, or in the Church. For both belong to the holy mountain.

"Lift up thy hands against their pride unto the end." Those who endeavor to attack thy Church. "How great things the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary!" That he might make these men persecutors of them by evil counsels.

"And they that hate thee have made their boasts," etc. For by the instinct of the devil they boast: when in hatred of God, they afflict the holy martyrs with punishments.

"They have set fire to thy sanctuary in the earth: they have polluted the tabernacle of thy name," etc. These things were indeed done according to history: either when Nebuchadnezzar brought them into Babylon (4 Kings 25), or when Titus and Vespasian, having burned the city with the temple, and the multitude being prostrated by the sword, led the remaining common people away captive. But even now it must be guarded against, lest what then happened to Jerusalem should now happen to the Christian people: as

he said above in that verse which we passed over: "They have set their signs for signs, and they knew not, as in the way out above": so the Babylonians, lifted up in the swelling of the arrogance of victory, set their signs in thy temple, as trophies are wont to be established over the arches of gates from enemies. Which Symmachus interpreted more plainly, saying: "They have set their signs manifestly on high, in the entrance of the gates." Therefore let each of us have, in his heart, the standard of the cross: not the sign of the adversary, lest he be cut off from grace by his axe, but let him be purged for glory by the evangelical sickle. Let him not be set on fire in concupiscences, but let him be kindled by spiritual sacraments. Let him not be polluted by vices, but be filled with virtues. Nor let him think that God cannot know anything, but let him confess that nothing is hidden from his eyes. Finally, let him not yield consent to the reproaches of the devil, but let him glorify the name of his God.

"Why dost thou turn away thy hand, and thy right hand out of the midst of thy bosom unto the end?" The bosom is his sanctuary, as he saith through another prophet. For as a shepherd cherishes his flock, and carries the young in his bosom: so the Lord invigorates his people (Isa. 40). Then, therefore, does he turn away from this bosom either his inspection or his power, when we have sinned against him.

"But God is our king before ages." As through Solomon it is said of Wisdom, which is Christ: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of

his ways, before ages he founded me" (Prov. 8/ Ecclus. 24). "He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth." Either in Judea which is called the midst of the earth, or in the virginal womb.

"Thou hast established the sea by thy strength." The world, or the things that are in it. "Thou hast broken the heads of the dragon in the waters." Thou hast subjected the power of the demons in baptism. "Thou hast broken the heads of the dragon in the waters": that is, of the devil. "And hast given him to be meat for the people of the Ethiopians." That in turn he might be devoured by these, or be crushed through the sign of the cross, whom he had previously devoured in vain persuasions.

"Thou hast broken up the fountains," etc. The apostles, or the rest of the preachers.

"Thine is the day, and thine is the night." The clarity of the Gospel, or the obscurity of the Law: because both pronounce thee. "Thou hast made the sun." That man through whom those sitting in darkness saw a great light. "And the moon." The Church, which shines in the obscurities of the world.

"Thou hast made all the borders of the earth." For by thy command all things were created. "Summer and spring thou hast formed them." Although God made the seasons of the year and all the elements of the world, nevertheless according to allegory, we call it spring when the just flourish in this world with good works: summer, when they receive the fruit of their labor.

"Remember this, the enemy hath reproached the Lord: and a foolish people hath provoked thy name." Thy martyrs stand in the contest, the devil reproaches, the gentile people exasperate. Thou, Lord, be mindful of those who suffer such things for the love of thy name.

"Deliver not up to beasts the souls that confess to thee." O devil, O ministers of the devil, who wish not to devour bodies, but souls. For then is the soul devoured by the mouth of the beast, when it yields connivance to the diabolical will. "The souls of thy poor forget not unto the end." And if for an hour they are subjected to tribulations, let them not perish; but being proved, let them be made manifest.

"Have regard to thy covenant: for they who are obscured of the earth are filled with the thickets of iniquities." Thickets are interpreted as thorns. These therefore who have obscured thy earth with their persecutions, are filled with the brambles of iniquity. But thou, O Lord, who through thy Testament, whether old or new, because both proceeded from thee and are held as almost one, hast promised to protect thy own, the thorns being now cut down, deliver us.

"Let not the humble be turned away with confusion." Let him who is crushed in many tribulations not be forgotten by thee. "The poor and needy shall praise thy name." When they shall have received thy promises.

"Arise, O God, judge thy own cause." For these reproaches which either thou hast sustained for us, or now the Church sustains. "Remember thy

reproaches: those which are from the foolish man all the day." That they may be confounded in judgment.

"Forget not the voices of thy enemies." Who indeed invoke thee in present pressures, let them be consoled by thee. "The pride of them that hate thee ascendeth continually." For unless their pride ascends, these are not humbled. For so also the Lord saith in the Apocalypse: "He that is unjust, let him do unjustly still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still" (Apoc. 22). "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me." We also as suppliants pray, Lord, that having been snatched from the thorns of iniquities, from the cothurnus of ruinous pride, thou mayest deign to lift us up into heaven after the contempt of the world.

PSALM 74.

"Unto the end, corrupt not, a psalm of a canticle for Asaph." Asaph is interpreted as synagogue. In Hebrew, it does not have "unto the end," but it is had, "Victory." And the seventy interpreters did not err greatly; since indeed victory is perfect. Well did he say, "Unto the end, corrupt not." This word is interpreted in many ways. David also says to one of his friends: "Corrupt him not": that is, Saul. See what he says. And in another place we read, that David blessed the Lord: because his hands were kept, that is, lest he should kill Saul. And we therefore, when we do not kill someone: our hands are kept. Others say that this psalm was composed by David, and sung by Asaph. Others however, that Asaph himself both

composed and sang it. Therefore according to the Septuagint he says this: O Lord, who hast kept me: that I might not put my hand upon thy Christ Saul, keep me unto the end.

"We will praise thee, O God." Here, "we will praise" (confitebimur) signifies not penance, but glory. "And we will call upon thy name." The name of God is Father: for previously it was unknown. For the Lord saith: "Father, I have revealed thy name to men" (John 17). For every Son is the name of the Father.

"We will relate thy wondrous works." This the Church says: this the multitude of believers says. "We will relate thy wondrous works." This verse is joined with the previous ones; but this which follows is said from the person of the Lord. For so the Ancients interpreted.

"When I shall take a time, I will judge justices." For now he is not judge, but he will be. For if he were judge now, sinners would not be lifted up, and would not obtain riches in the world. Does this scandalize you: that the just flee, and sinners persecute? Does this scandalize you: that iniquity reigns in the world? Hear the Lord saying: "When I shall take a time, I will judge justices." For the time of judgment is reserved. In the present there is not judgment, but a contest. For the Father judgeth no man; but hath given all judgment to the Son. But hearing this, be not scandalized, and say: because this one is minor, who receives from him who gives; but see what he says in the Gospel: "For neither doth the Father judge any man; but hath given all judgment to the Son: be-

cause he is the Son of man" (John 5/3). He renders the cause why he received judgment: because he is the Son of man. You hear the Son of man, and do you doubt why he received it?

PSALM 75.

"Unto the end, in hymns, a psalm for Asaph, a canticle to the Assyrians."

"In Judea God is known: his name is great in Israel." Before the cross illuminated the world, and before the Lord was seen on earth, God was known in Judea, but in Israel his name was great. But when the Savior came, "their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world" (Ps. 18).

To the terrible one. To whom? To God. And to him who takes away the spirit of princes. When we see some powerful ones, for example, emperors, prefects, and those too powerful in this world, let us also say to God: "Who takes away the spirit of princes." We can speak of the "spirit" regarding the soul; we can also speak of it regarding pride. Let us understand it as speaking of pride. Let us understand it also in another way: "who takes away the spirit of princes." We understand the "princes" here as the saints. As if he were to say: Solomon was a prince, the other saints were princes, even the Apostle Judas was a prince, and because they sinned, God took the Holy Spirit from them. Therefore, let no one say: I am a bishop, or a deacon, or a monk; I am a prince in this world: God is powerful to take away the spirit of princes. Finally, that you may know

that God takes away the spirit; the good spirit of God departed from Saul, and an evil spirit suffocated him. It follows: "And an evil spirit of God suffocated him" (1 Kings 16). Therefore, does God have an evil spirit? By no means: but the spirit of God had departed for this reason, so that afterwards an evil spirit might suffocate him: therefore the spirit of God is called "evil." Finally, holy David, knowing that the spirit would take away the princes: asks God, and says: "Take not thy holy spirit from me" (Ps. 50). To the terrible one among the kings of the earth. It is also understood according to the letter. Moreover, may God grant to us that we may be kings of the earth. Kings of the earth, that we may rule our flesh. Whence the Apostle also says: "Let not sin reign in your mortal body" (Rom. 6). And in another place it is written: "The heart of the king is in the hand of God" (Prov. 21). The heart of Julian the persecutor was in the hand of God. The heart of Saul was in the hand of God. The heart of Manasseh was in the hand of God, and those of all the impious kings of Judah were in the hand of the Lord. You see that according to the letter it cannot stand. Therefore the kings are the saints, and the heart of these is in the hand of the Lord. And let us therefore ask God that we may be kings, that we may rule our flesh, that it may be subject to us. Whence the Apostle also says: "Therefore I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway" (1 Cor. 9).

PSALM 76.

Unto the end, for Jeduthun, a Psalm for Asaph. In Hebrew, "through Jeduthun": so that it signifies that the psalm was sung not "for him," but "through him." What follows, "a psalm for Asaph," is not had in the ancient copies.

I cried to the Lord with my voice: with my voice to God, and he gave ear to me. In the day of my trouble I sought God. See how he is in tribulation, and prays to the Lord and to God, and yet there is one God. I cried to the Lord with my voice. Crying at that time is necessary: when he who cries is far away. Therefore what this man says is this: because on account of my sins I am far from thee: therefore I cry that thou mayest hear me. With my voice to the Lord, and he gave ear to me. It is the same as what he says also in another place: "In my trouble I cried to the Lord, and he heard me" (Ps. 119).

In the day of my trouble I sought God. He speaks of a difficult thing: when we are in trouble, we are cast down to the earth: we think of nothing else except the trouble. But this man is moved in tribulation: so that he prays to God. As if he were to say openly: I have lost a son: my house is burned, I have come to beggary: I do not seek that which I lost, but I seek the Lord. "For if I find him, I find all things in him." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6). With my hands in the night towards him: and I was not deceived. In the Hebrew it has it otherwise: "My hand is stretched

out in the night, and it resteth not." With my hands in the night towards him. It is understood: "I cried." See therefore that even our works, while we are silent, cry out to the Lord: therefore it is said: "The word of the Lord was made in the hand of Haggai the prophet" (Haggai 1). It is not made to him "in the mouth," that is, in speech, but "in the hand," that is, in work. With my hands in the night: that is, I cried, I cried with my hands. Therefore it is said also to Moses: "Why criest thou to me?" And certainly it is not written there that Moses cried to God, but that his heart cried: "Abba, Father" (Exod. 14). Thence is what is said in Jeremiah: "The apple of my eye hath not been silent" (Lam. 2). See therefore that even the apple of our eye is not silent, but as often as we bring forth tears, so often do we cry to God. With my hands in the night towards God: that is, what is said: "In the nights lift up your hands in the holy places, and bless the Lord" (Ps. 133). In the night of this world, and in the darkness when others hasten to vices, I lifted up my works to thee alone. And I was not deceived: because thus I cried, and I cried by work. I was not deceived. It is understood in two ways. Either I obtained what I wanted, or certainly I was not deceived by the snares of the devil, who desired to circumvent me. But in the Hebrew it is written: "My hand is stretched out in the night, and it resteth not." The hand is always stretched out for virtues, sometimes it is contracted by sins.

My soul refused to be comforted. Insofar as it is in my sins, I could be comforted by no hope. I

was mindful of God, and was delighted. Insofar as it was in my sins: I could find no consolation. Again I thought of God, and in his mercy I was delighted. In the Hebrew it has it otherwise: "I was mindful of God, and I was troubled." I considered his mildness: I considered his piety, I considered his purity, and seeing myself impure, I was vehemently troubled. I was exercised, and my spirit fainted. In the Hebrew it has it better: "I spoke within myself, and my spirit fainted": either from desperation, or from desire for God.

My eyes prevented the watches. In the Hebrew it has it otherwise: "I prohibited the suspect of my eyes, I was astonished, and I spoke not." What he says is this: Considering my sins, I did not dare to lift up my eyes to heaven: for to the sinner God saith: "Why dost thou declare my justices" (Ps. 49)? Therefore I was astonished, I was afraid, I could not speak. This is according to the Hebrews. My eyes prevented the watches: Before anyone would keep watch, I was watching. We read also in Daniel (Chap. 10). "And behold," he says, "ir," that is, a watcher. He shall not slumber nor sleep, who keepeth Israel. Therefore the monk who does not keep watch cannot say this verse.

I was troubled, and I spoke not. This is what the Apostle says: "Let not the sun go down upon your anger" (Ephes. 4). I was troubled, as a man: I spoke not, as a Christian. Anger began in my heart; but I did not bring forth the anger into words.

I thought upon the days of old, and I had in my mind the eternal years. Insofar as it is for my sins, I was despairing: and my soul had refused to be comforted. I began to think from the beginning of the world, when God made man, even to my own year: from Adam even to my own time.

I meditated in the night with my own heart, and I swept my spirit: I did not think about my anger, I did not think about my enemy; but my whole thought was about God. The night which is wont to be either for rest or for lust: to me was a thought about virtues. I meditated in the night with my own heart, and I swept my spirit: that is, I was digging as if a field, so that I might put there the seed of the doctrines of the Lord.

Will God cast off for ever? This was my whole thought; God made man from the earth, and promised him eternal life: how then was he cast out of paradise? And will he never be favorable again? Or will he cut off his mercy for ever from generation to generation? That is, will he cast off both generations, both of the first people and of the following? And if he had cast off the people of the Jews: Will he also cast off the Gentiles?

Or will he in his anger shut up his mercies. He could not have said it more beautifully; although he restrains himself, so as not to have mercy: yet his mercy overcomes him.

And I said, now I have begun. In the Hebrew it has it otherwise: "And I said, my infirmity": that is, this which I suffer is not from the cruelty of God; but from my sins. This is the change of the right hand of the Most High: That the Lord may

have mercy, that he may give his grace to the whole world: so that he may not retain his mercies in his anger. This is the change of the right hand of the Most High: Unless his right hand, that is, his Son, had been changed, and had taken the body of man: we could not receive mercy. And I said, now I have begun, this is the change of the right hand of the Most High. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Philipp. 2).

I was mindful of the works of the Lord. Which he had done to Moses, which he had done to the saints. "For I will be mindful of thy wonders from the beginning, and I will meditate on all thy works," etc. My whole thought is about thy virtues. I consider how thou hadst mercy on them, and I do not despair of myself.

Thy way, O God, is in the holy. Whoever therefore is not holy, the way of God is not in him. What is the way of God? "I am the way and the truth" (John 14). This the Savior says. Therefore the way of God is the Son, but the way of God is not except in the holy. If we wish that Christ should dwell in us, let us be holy. For God's way is in the holy. Who is the great God like our God? For as there are many gods: and many lords. This the Apostle speaks, "God hath stood in the synagogue of gods" (1 Cor. 8). "I have said, You are gods, and all of you the sons of the most High" (Ps. 81). And to Moses: "I have made thee the God of Pharaoh" (Exod. 7). The saints are called gods. They are gods according to grace: but thou art

God by nature. Thou art the God that dost wonders. He did not say, because thou hast done; but, "who dost wonders." Daily God does wonders, and works, both the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thou art the God that dost wonders. Yesterday a robber, today a Christian. Yesterday a fornicator, today continent. Yesterday you were seizing the things of others, now you offer your own.

Thou hast made thy power known among the peoples. Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, the mystery which had been hidden from the ages, he has now made known among the peoples. Thou hast redeemed thy people with thy arm. O Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Thou hast redeemed thy people with thy arm: that is, in Christ. The sons of Jacob and Joseph. Both peoples, both of the Jews and of the Christians. Jacob in the people of the Jews, and Joseph in the people of the Gentiles. Finally, Joseph is interpreted in the Hebrew language as "increase." They therefore preceded, and we were added: therefore he says, "the sons of Jacob and Joseph."

The waters saw thee, O God: the waters saw thee, and they were afraid. For the time being let us speak according to the letter; let us stick to the earth for the sake of the simpler ones. When the people passed through the Red Sea, and through the Jordan: the waters understood their creator, and the people did not understand. And the depths were troubled. The sea saw and fled: Jordan was turned back (Ps. 113).

The multitude of the sound of the waters, the clouds sent out a sound. For clouds, it has "waters" in the Hebrew. What he says, "The clouds gave a voice," they interpret this as when God was seen on Mount Sinai.

For thy arrows passed to and fro: the voice of thy thunder in a wheel. And this they interpret concerning the lightnings, and they say: when God thunders, he makes a voice similar to a wheel. You see how I still stick to the earth, and speak according to the killing letter.

Thy lightnings enlightened the world. Here what dost thou, O Jew? "Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in many waters." And this also, let it be said either of the sea, or of the Jordan. "And thy footsteps shall not be known." This according to the letter, how dost thou understand it? For the sake of the simpler ones we have spoken according to the letter: let us return therefore to spiritual understanding.

The waters saw thee, O God. Let us speak of the revelation of John. "The many waters," he says, "are many peoples" (Apoc. 17). The waters saw thee, O God. Which waters? "And let the waters that are above the heavens praise the name of the Lord" (Ps. 148). The waters saw thee, O God. Pure minds and souls. The waters saw thee and they were afraid. The fear was not from hatred, but from faith.

And the depths were troubled. Let us say something according to spiritual understanding. In the beginning of Genesis it is written: "And the spirit," he says, "moved over the waters."

And then it is written: "Over the depths," he says, "darkness moved." See therefore what is said in the beginning of Genesis: this is, according to spiritual understanding. "The spirit," he says, "moved over the waters." Already at that time baptism was signified. For there could not be baptism without the spirit. "But darkness over the depths." This is the abyss to which the demons ask that they be not sent by Jesus. Darkness therefore over the depths. In the waters was purity: in the depths, darkness. Which the depths are, though I be silent, you understand: because the demons dread to go into the abyss.

The clouds gave a voice. The clouds are the prophets: who were silent to the Jews, but have spoken to us. The clouds gave a voice, for thy arrows passed through. The preaching of the word of Christ ran into the whole world. The voice of thy thunder in a wheel. Thunder properly is a great voice. Finally, at that time when God spoke: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased": a voice was made like to the thunder of a wheel (Matt. 3). Finally, for this reason it is written: "Deep calleth on deep at the voice of thy floodgates" (Ps. 41): that is, the two Testaments, the New and the Old. The voice of thy thunder in a wheel. The voice of thy preaching in a wheel.

Thy way is in the sea. Where the waves are, where the bitter water is, where the dragon dwells: where the tiny little fishes cling. Thy way is in the sea. Thou who wast in heaven, didst descend to the earth. According to the letter we can say: At that time when Moses led forth Israel,

thou wast he who led them forth (Exod. 14). Thy way is in the sea. Then we can also say otherwise according to history: the seas were a way for thee. But he did that once. Moreover, he speaks daily to the sea: "Be silent, be still." The Lord mitigates thee, so that we may be able to pass through this world. Thy way is in the sea. He came as the fountain of life, so that he might sweeten the sea. The bitter sea, the dead sea. Therefore according to Ezekiel: a fountain of living water comes out from the temple of the Lord, and goes to the Dead Sea, which had nothing living (Ezek. 47). For no little fishes could be in the Dead Sea, nothing lived in the Dead Sea. From the temple of the Lord, that is, from his bosom the Savior went forth, and sweetened the Dead Sea, and the bitter waters. Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in many waters. Therefore thy way is in the sea: so that thou mightest make a way, and thy apostles might follow thee.

And thy paths in many waters, and thy footsteps shall not be known: thou hast conducted thy people like sheep. The good shepherd conducted his people like sheep. By the hand of Moses and Aaron. He did this according to the letter. Moreover, he does it daily in us. By the hand of Moses, that is in the law. For we know that the law is spiritual. In thy spiritual law and Aaron: that is, in the priesthood. In thy spiritual law, and in thy spiritual priesthood, thou hast conducted us, thy people (Rom. 7). Let us understand this according to the letter concerning Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron indeed were

led out, but were not introduced into the land of promise. Joshua succeeded him. See what is written: Moses died in the desert: Aaron died; Miriam died, and this is what is written in the prophet: "and I will cut off," he says, "three shepherds in one month." They died: for they could not enter into the land of promise (Zech. 1). They saw only over against the land of promise, and could not enter. The Jews saw the land of promise, and could not enter. For they died in the desert, and their carcasses are in the solitude, of those who died in the desert. We sons under Jesus as leader came to the Jordan and entered the land of promise, and we came to Gilgal, and a second time we were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, and the reproach of Egypt was taken away from us. Now Jesus himself our leader holds the sword, and always precedes us, and fights for us and overcomes the adversaries, and for seven days we go around Jericho: that is, this world. We sing with priestly trumpets, and we go around Jericho: that is, this world, and its walls fall, and we enter, and we exist as victors. Then we conquer the city of Ai: we come afterwards to Jebus: we come to Hazor: we come to other cities, we conquer the adversaries, whom under Moses we could not conquer. Let us therefore give thanks to our leader Jesus; for with him as leader, with him fighting, we conquer. He commanded the sun to stand still, and it stood: and in a type of him that man was great, he commanded, but the Lord brought it to pass. He vi...

PSALM 77.

Divine Scripture commands that when we have been invited to the banquet of a rich man, we should put our hand to the feast with intelligence. Therefore also for us a rich banquet of the Scriptures is set forth. We have come into a meadow, where the herbs flourish: here the rose is red, there the lilies are white, there are diverse flowers. Our soul is drawn here and there, whence it may take more beautiful flowers. If we gather the rose, we leave the lily: if we have taken the lily, violets remain for us. So also in the seventy-seventh psalm, which is mystical, and involved in very many sacraments: whatever letter you look at, they are flowers. Diverse flowers, and we cannot gather all of them. But let us choose all that we can, from a few the remaining dignity of the flowers can also be contemplated. Understanding of Asaph. By this title it is pre-notated. The title itself provokes us to intelligence. Asaph was one of the choir-masters, just as were also the sons of Korah, and Jeduthun, and the others. Therefore of the others from the choir-masters, even this one is a prophet. Because therefore the understanding is simple, and in the psalm history is narrated: we are compelled by necessity to understand everything that is written according to intelligence. It is written: In the land of Egypt in the field of Tanis; He divided the sea, and brought them out in a cloud of the day, and all the night in the illumination of fire, and the rest. We see that a simple history is narrated. If therefore we

have understood it as it is written, the title is prenotated without cause: Understanding of Asaph. But if we have understood as the title is prenotated, we are compelled by necessity to have one thing in the letter, and to find another in the spirit.

The things we have heard and known. These verses from: Attend, O my people, to my law, up to that verse, I will speak propositions from the beginning: are said in the person of Christ, and the Savior himself speaks. Now the remaining verses up to the end of the psalm, we ought to receive in the person of the apostles. Therefore, since the Lord says: Incline your ear to the words of my mouth. O apostles, what, he says, you have heard in secret, preach upon the housetops (Matt. 10). What do the apostles say? The things we have heard and known them; and the patriarchs and prophets have spoken to us. And our fathers have told us. They are not hidden from their sons, etc. Therefore they spoke, that we their sons might know. And he set a law in Israel: as many things as he commanded our fathers. He spoke to them carnally: but we understand them spiritually. That they might make them known to their sons. That is, to us. Therefore he spoke to them, that they might deliver them to us.

To the sons who shall be born and shall rise up, and shall tell their sons. Instead of thy fathers, he says, sons are born to thee (Psalm 44). We are their sons. They told us, and we have told our sons; we are their sons.

That they may put their hope in God. That they may no longer believe in idols, but believe in God. That they may not forget the works of God. That they may see the order of the creature, and from the creature understand the creator. And seek out his commandments. Let them not despise like the Jews, but seek out like Christians (1 Cor. 10).

Nor become like their fathers. Lest they murmur as some murmured in the desert, and perished. A perverse and exasperating generation. It is not I who speak this: thy Prophet speaks this of thee. A perverse and exasperating generation. An adulterous and wicked generation seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it, but the sign of Jonah (Matt. 16). Why did he say, perverse? Because they have become like a perverse bow. For a bow is never stretched against him who shoots himself, but against adversaries. But this generation, although it was created upright by God, and was held in the hand of God like a bow, that he might shoot arrows through it, was turned like a perverse bow, blaspheming against its Creator.

A generation that did not direct its heart. Even until today Israel is perverse. And its spirit was not trusted with God. Since it did not receive the Son, therefore it did not receive the Holy Spirit. Finally the Holy Spirit, when he descended in the likeness of a dove, did not descend upon the crowds of the Jews, but upon Jesus alone. If therefore you wish, O Jew, to receive the spirit, believe in Jesus, because the Holy Spirit rests in Jesus.

The sons of Ephraim bending and shooting the bow. O how great the mysteries! O how many the flowers! I do not say a day, but even a whole month cannot suffice for the understanding of this psalm. There are meanings in every single word. We also have a treasure in these earthen vessels. Many interpret this concerning the body, and concerning the Holy Spirit: that is, we have a treasure in earthen vessels. Indeed, that is also an understanding: but this one is much better, since we have a most precious treasure in earthen vessels: that is, in the rustic words of the Scriptures. The sons of Ephraim bending and shooting the bow, were turned back in the day of battle, and the rest. We read in the books of Kings: that under Rehoboam the son of Solomon, Jeroboam the son of Nebat split the people from the rest of the people, and led ten tribes into Samaria (1 Kings 12). But the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained under the empire of Rehoboam, and many from the tribe of Levi, who dwelt in Jerusalem as priests and Levites, as it is written in Chronicles, returned into the temple of God, that is, into Jerusalem (2 Chron. 11). There were therefore three tribes: that is, Judah: Judah itself the royal tribe, and Benjamin, and afterwards the Levites had come there from diverse tribes to the temple. Those therefore who were in Samaria, had a king from the tribe of Ephraim. For just as those who reigned in Judea had a king from the tribe of Judah, and the lineage of David: so those who reigned in Samaria had a king from the tribe of Ephraim, and their kings were called Ephraim.

Let us read the prophet Hosea, and we shall find all his prophecy against Ephraim (Hosea 7). And it is said there: Ephraim, he says, is become like a senseless dove. See what he says. For a senseless dove leaves the temple and dwells in the woods. A dove always dwells in houses. But Ephraim, my dove, has left the temple, left the house, and dwells in the woods, dwells in the deserts. This in the meantime according to the letter, for we ought also to set down the history. But now after the letter, as if by certain steps we ought to ascend to greater things. Let us say therefore, that the sons of Ephraim are all heretics. For these too have departed from the house of God, and these have dismissed David, and were dwelling in the deserts. And they are indeed called doves, because they themselves read the Scriptures, but they understand them senselessly. Many are they who are called the sons of Ephraim, bending and shooting the bow. See all the heretics, who have forsaken Jerusalem, who have forsaken the temple of God, who dwell in Samaria. Where did they make the golden calves? In Bethel, and in Dan. And see what he says: They made the golden calves in Bethel, in the house of God, they became idolaters. And they did that in Dan: that is, unto their own judgment, and unto condemnation. They forsook the house of the Lord, and think of nothing else but gold. Someone might say, Why did they make golden calves? Our treasure is laid up in earthen vessels. For the members of the Church are rustic and simple: but all the heretics are Aristotelians and Platonists. Finally, that you

may know, since all secular eloquence is called gold: that is, since their tongue is spoken of as if because of the splendor of gold: Babylon is a golden cup in the hand of the Lord. See what he says: Babylon of confusion. Therefore this world is a golden cup. From this golden cup it is drunk to all nations (Jer. 51). The sons of Ephraim bending and shooting the bow. Whatever writing of the heretics you see, they all have superstitions. They were turned back in the day of battle. They do not know him who said: My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you (John 14): but they are prepared for words. They have words, but they shall hear that which is written: Scatter the nations that want wars (Psalm 67). Someone might say that this is our opinion: let us see the following:

They kept not the covenant of God, and in his law they would not walk, and they forgot his benefits. They rose up against him, who regenerated them in baptism. And his wonderful works which he showed them. See the sense of the Scriptures, how from the sons of Ephraim he comes to past histories: that he might show that what is written: I will open my mouth in parables, I will speak propositions from the beginning: was spoken parabolically.

In the sight of their fathers the wonderful things he did in the land of Egypt, in the field of Tanis: he divided the sea, and brought them through, he made the waters to stand as in a vessel, and he led them in a cloud of the day. Someone might say: You are doing violence to the Scripture: for it is said simply concerning

the people of Israel, when they were led out from the land of Egypt, and therefore it is said according to history. And we read that the ten tribes forsook God, and became idolaters, and as it were followed golden calves. Let us see at what time the prophet Asaph lived. Surely at that time when David was for forty years. Again Solomon for another forty years. After eighty years under Rehoboam, afterwards the ten tribes were split. You see therefore that what is said, is not said of the ten tribes, but is prophesied of the heretics. In the sight of their fathers he did wonderful things. Therefore the heretics have forgotten their father, who did wonderful things in the land of Egypt, in the darkness of this world, how he delivered them. They were reborn in the Church, and afterwards where they were born, the Church displeases them. In the land of Egypt in the field of Tanis: where there was idolatry, where the king of Egypt was, where the cavalry of Egypt was, where Jannes and Mambres were the adversaries of Moses, where there was idolatry. We were all in Egypt, and we were delivered by the Lord. He divided the sea, and led them out. The Lord walked upon the sea, and mitigated the waves of the sea, and led us through. He divided the sea, and led them out. Until today, O faithful Monk, when you are led out from Egypt, the sea is divided, and thus you are led out. He made the waters to stand as in a vessel. In the Hebrew it does not have vessel (utrem): but as a heap. And he led them in a cloud of the day. Behold the Lord comes into Egypt in a light cloud. We ought to receive the

light cloud either properly as the Savior's body: which was light, and weighed down by no sin. Or certainly we ought to receive the light cloud as holy Mary: weighed down by no human seed. Behold the Lord comes into Egypt, of this world: upon a light cloud, the Virgin. And he led them in a cloud of the day. He said beautifully, of the day: for that cloud was not in darkness, but always in light. And all the night in the illumination of fire. And darkness is not hidden from thee. As the light is to thee, so also the night to thee (Deut. 4). And all the night in the illumination of fire. Our Lord is a consuming fire. A consuming fire. He did not say what he consumes, he left the understanding to us. Those who have built upon the foundation of Christ wood, hay, stubble (1 Cor. 3): to them the Lord is a consuming fire. Fire has a double nature: it both shines and burns. If we are sinners, it burns: if just, it shines for us.

He divided the rock in the desert. The rock was divided for us in the wilderness. The rock was struck, and the waters flowed. That rock which says: he who thirsts, let him come and drink; from whose belly flowed rivers (John 7). And he gave them water as in a great abyss... In the desert, where there was no water, an abundance of waters was made for us.

And he brought forth water from the rock, and brought forth waters as rivers, and they added yet to sin against him, etc. O the perversity of a wicked heart, it speaks ill against God, and he who ought to have hungered for justice, seeks meats and herbs. For as Moses struck the rock in

the wilderness, and produced waters for the people (Num. 20), so also the Lord, whom Paul says was struck for our sins, produced immense fountains for us (Rom. 4): namely the apostles, whom the rock showed, and through whom the torrents flowed. Now we receive the torrents as teachers: by which torrents, that is, the subsequent teachers of the Churches were filled. From whose preaching we quench our thirst for the word of God. But the same rock also points us to the fountain of Baptism and of martyrdom. For from his side when he was struck, blood and water came forth, which figured baptism and martyrdom (John 19). Now the teachers were called torrents, because before they believed, they were filled from the rains and wallowings of this world. But now washed by baptism, they have overflowed from the fountain of perennial life. The Jewish murmuring adds, saying:

Can he also give bread, or prepare a table for his people? It thinks the power of God is difficult: as if he who brought forth water from the stone, could not give manna from heaven.

Therefore the Lord heard, and deferred. Certainly himself from them, lest they should enter into the land of promise. And a fire was kindled in Jacob, and wrath ascended in Israel. Jacob is not always understood as a supplanter of vices; nor is Israel in all things accepted as seeing God. Now the Apostle teaches that there is an Israel according to the flesh (1 Cor. 10), of whom it is said: And Israel committed fornication (Judges 8). For if he had seen God in his mind, he certainly would not

have committed fornication. So of Jacob, when he was adoring Esau polluted with idols, saying: I see thy face as the face of an angel of God (Gen. 23); or, when being fattened he kicked, he was not a supplanter of vices. Therefore also here it is thus to be understood: because an earthly fire of concupiscence was kindled in Jacob, and so in divine vengeance, it ascended upon the carnal Israel.

Because they believed not in God, nor hoped in his salvation. They believed neither the Father, nor the Son, who is the salvation of the world.

And he commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven. And he rained manna upon them to eat. These things were granted to the Hebrews: but even now in the Church it is commanded to the prophets and apostles, that they should announce to us the word of preaching, by which the soul may be spiritually fed. He gave them the bread of heaven, man ate the bread of angels. He himself provided food for man, who said: I am the bread of life, who descended from heaven: he who shall eat of it, shall live forever (John 6). For from this bread of heaven, the saints and angels are refreshed. He sent them provisions in abundance. That they may no longer be satiated with the barley of the letter, but with the dogma of spiritual wheat.

And he translated the South wind from heaven, and brought in the South-west wind in his power, and rained flesh upon them like dust, etc. In the winds, he demonstrates the breath of the Holy Spirit. Now the comparison of the mul-

titude, which is likened to dust or the sand of the sea, argues their earthly and hard sense.

And they fell in the midst of their camps, round about their tabernacles, and they ate, and were filled exceedingly. Camps, he calls the synagogues. But the tabernacles, their hearts into which these things flowed. Now that he indicates them to be exceedingly filled, rebukes their carnal gluttony: because these who ought to have been refreshed from the precepts of God, feel themselves satiated from dusty meats. And he brought their desire to them: they were not defrauded of their desire. The immense piety of the Lord, as he feeds those hungering with earthly food: so also him who shall have desired him, he fills with the celestial bread, of which we spoke above. Therefore these who desired flesh only, and not God, let us see what they carried away in what follows.

While their meat was yet in their mouth, and the wrath of God ascended upon them, and killed their fat ones. This is of those who forsook God after receiving the manna. For even now in the Church if anyone is refreshed with the Flesh and Blood of Christ, and declines to vices, let him know that the judgment of God is imminent for him, as the apostle Paul says: He who shall have received the body and Blood of Christ unworthily, takes and drinks judgment to himself (1 Cor. 11). And he impeded the chosen ones of Israel. They are impeded even now, the chosen of the Church: if not even the priests themselves should perceive these sacraments innocently.

In all these things they sinned yet: and they believed not in his wonderful works. And they failed, etc. The wicked sin daily, until they fail, and they fail with haste: who despise to obey the priests of God, just as also that people who was murmuring against the servant of God, Moses.

When he killed them, they sought him, and they returned, and came to him at daybreak. Struck in their sins they returned: and the sleep of infidelity being shaken off, they hastened that they might hear the word of God.

And they remembered that God is their helper, and the high God is their redeemer. They understood that no help could be brought, except by him who delivered them from the servitude of Egypt.

And they loved him in their mouth. When they said: All things whatsoever Moses has commanded, we will do (Exod. 2). And with their tongue they lied to him. Saying to Moses: All things whatsoever the Lord has said, we will do.

But their heart was not right with him, nor were they counted faithful in his covenant. For even the Lord, using the testimony of the prophet Isaiah, said: This people honors me with their lips: but their heart is far from me (Isa. 29).

But he is merciful, and will become propitious to their sins, etc. For a multitude of mercies contains him, so that while he expects penance, he does not punish the delinquent: because he does not wish the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live (Ezek. 18).

And he remembered that they are flesh. For he knows, that the flesh always resists the law of God. A spirit going, and not returning. For he knows that man, having lost his spirit, returns to dust. For also the Holy Spirit, when he recedes from sinners, as long as they are in the wallowings of sins, does not return to them.

How often did they exasperate him in the desert: they provoked him to wrath in the waterless place. Certainly in the infidelity and aridity of their heart.

And they were converted, and tempted God, and exasperated the Holy One of Israel. Moses was then the holy one of Israel, who saw God both with his mind and with his eyes, whom they quite often exasperated. But even now they exasperate, when they hear what he announces concerning Christ the Lord to be born in the flesh.

They did not remember his hand: in the day when he redeemed them from the hand of the afflicter. Of Pharaoh certainly, who figuratively is called the devil.

As he set his signs in Egypt, and his prodigies in the field of Tanis. For as then in ten signs, that is, plagues, Moses delivered the people from Egypt: so also the apostle Paul with ten Epistles oppressed the darkness of the present world.

He turned their rivers into blood, and their rains that they might not drink. The vain words of the philosophers, which in Platonic doctrines were killing the little ones of the Church: in divine vengeance was turned into gore for them, so that those who were pouring out blood, that is, had

jugulated souls by seducing them, might henceforth drink blood.

He sent the dog-fly among them, and it ate them. In the dog-fly (cynomyia) he indicated the sect of the Cynics, which preaches lust and luxury as the supreme good. And the frog, and it destroyed them. In the voices of the frogs, even the songs of the poets are designated, which through the inflation of verbosity brought in fables of exterminations.

And he gave their fruits to the mildew. In the mildew (aerugine), or the dog-star (canicula), the form of fornication is shown. For just as this, creeping with slow effort, most cruelly lies in wait for the fruits of trees: so also this, blandly enticing men, devours them most savagely with wicked and hidden bites. And their labors to the locust. In the locust, the discords of the human race are confuted. Which, although it leads an ordered army without a king, yet the human race always dissents and disagrees.

He killed their vines with hail, and their sycamores with frost. And he delivered their cattle to the hail, and their possessions to the fire. In the hail divine chastisement is shown: in which either vines or trees are scourged: these namely which instead of good fruits, brought forth thistles. For by this hail even the cattle are killed, that their senselessness may be argued, who gave the divine name to beasts. Fire also is sent to feed upon vices and to illuminate the hearts of the believers, as the Lord says: I came to cast fire upon

the earth: and what will I, but that it be kindled (Luke 12)?

He sent upon them the wrath of his indignation: indignation, and wrath and tribulation, a sending by evil angels. So that those who were not argued by divine plagues, might be pounded by diabolical snares. Now who the angels are, the Lord himself declared in the Gospel: Go, he says, into the fire, which my Father has prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25).

He made a way for the path of his wrath, and spared not their souls from death, and shut up their cattle in death. Divine wrath has a way, when someone delivered in the vengeance of sin does not free his soul from the punishment of Gehenna. Or when senselessness, which is like cattle, is shut up in eternal death.

And he struck every firstborn in their land: the firstfruits of all their labor in the tents of Ham. Just as these deeds are recounted in Egypt: so also the Lord, by his most holy coming, destroyed and triumphed on the wood of his cross over principalities and powers, whether of demons or of vices in this world; and he drove them out from the hearts of those who had been devoted to diabolical cunning, because Ham is interpreted as cunning. And he took away his people like sheep, and led them like a flock in the desert. The Lord, having struck Egypt with these plagues, led out his people from the aforementioned servitude—whom he had redeemed with his blood—and placed them in the Church, which previously had been barren and deserted;

of which he says: 'Many are the children of the desolate, more than of her who has a husband' (Isa. 54). And he led them out in hope, and they did not fear, and the sea covered their enemies. When these were placed in the hope of eternity, the sea covered their enemies, namely so that while these were being washed by baptism, the devil with his armies would be drowned. And he brought them into the mountain of his sanctification: into the mountain which his right hand acquired. Into the very Church which he acquired by the power of his glorious resurrection. And he cast out the nations from before their face, and by lot he divided to them the land in a line of distribution, and made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents. When the sins of the nations were cast out from human hearts, the possession of the land of the living was given to them: and it came to pass that where once the soothsayer and the diviner had dwelt, now he who sees God with his mind may dwell. And they tempted and provoked the most high God: and they did not keep his testimonies. And they turned away, and did not keep the covenant: just as their fathers. The discourse now turns to the Jews, whom neither power nor divine benefits softened: but just as their fathers killed the prophets, so also these persecute the Lord himself. They were turned into a crooked bow. For a bow is perverse which, while it is thought to shoot an arrow against enemies, wounds the one holding it. So also the Jews, who shoot wicked arrows of words against God their liberator. They provoked him to anger

on their hills: and with their graven images they provoked him to jealousy. For having abandoned him, they served idols and images, even worshipping on the mountains. The Lord heard and despised: and he reduced Israel greatly to nothing. Him who was Israel only in name, and not in vision. And he rejected the tabernacle of Shiloh, his tabernacle, in which he dwelt among men. Either in the tabernacles of Shiloh under Eli, or in Jerusalem under Solomon. But these being rejected, he chose rather the temple of the king —the incorrupt virgin—namely the holy Church called out from the nations. He delivered their strength into captivity, and their beauty into the hands of the enemy: and he shut up his people in the sword, and despised his inheritance. Their young men, etc. Clearly he here foretold that destruction which was carried out in Jerusalem under Titus and Vespasian. And because he foretold things to be done as if they were already done, let him who reads know that with God future things are already accomplished. But would that this also happened in us, by the cooperation of the Lord, so that concupiscence might fall and the power of virtues be raised up. Let the form of wicked love collapse, and the beauty of the Church be raised up. Let the people of vices be slain, and the multitude of virtues be quickened. Let the earthly inheritance be rejected, and the kingdom of God be acquired. Let the young man —that is, beginning sin—be burned up by the power of the Holy Spirit, and let the virgin soul rejoice. Let the inciters of vices be slaughtered

by the sword—that is, the word of God—so that minds widowed of these may exult with Christ. And the Lord was awakened as if sleeping, as a mighty man surfeited with wine, and he struck his enemies in the hinder parts, he gave them an everlasting reproach. The Lord is held as one sleeping and as if drunk in the hearts of the wicked. But when they begin to do penance, he is awakened. And having struck vices even to the later times, and delivered them to everlasting reproach, he watches in them.

And he rejected the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim: but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which he loved. He did not reject the tribe of Joseph or Ephraim for this purpose, that he might despise them forever: but he did not wish to take flesh from them, choosing the tribe of Judah, from which the blessed Mary would proceed, from whom he himself would be born, so that he might lift up the mountain of his love, that is, the Church. And he built his sanctuary as of unicorns in the land, which he founded for ages. He strengthened his Church itself with singular power, so that it might remain immovable for everlasting ages. He chose David his servant, and took him from the flocks of sheep, and brought him from following the ewes great with young. To feed, etc. All these things are to be referred to Christ the Lord, who by the Father's counsel was chosen from the flock of mortals for our redemption: assuming flesh, feeding the Christian people—whether the supplanter of vices or he who sees God with his mind.

Who may now deign to feed his Church, which clings to his will, in the goodness of his heart, and to place it in the heavenly Jerusalem. To him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, for ages of ages. Amen. PSALM 78. A Psalm of Asaph. This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, lamenting the captivity of the earthly Jerusalem: which captivity is to be referred not so much to that city, as to the soul, which is often written of as a city. O God, the nations are come into your inheritance: they have defiled your holy temple. The Apostle says: 'You are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you' (1 Cor. 3). If anyone violates the temple of God, God will destroy him. Therefore, if the Christian soul succumbs to increasing vices: then the inheritance which ought to have been God's is subjected to the adversary, and then the temple dedicated to the Holy Spirit, defiled by the crimes of the nations, is destroyed. They have made Jerusalem for a storehouse of fruits. For just as fruits, when they begin to ripen, are watched by their keepers, and being ripe are more easily devoured: so also our adversary, when vices rush in, watches the soul that consents to him until, bringing it to the full consent of its will, he is able to devour it. For as long as the spark of faith shines in it, it is bitter to the teeth of the enemy. They have given the dead bodies of your servants to be meat for the fowls of the air: the flesh of your saints to the beasts of the earth. They have poured out their blood like water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them. These things

indeed were done in Jerusalem before the coming of the Savior: but they figured the passion of the infants, where their flesh was exposed to beasts and birds, that is, to persecutors, and such a multitude of blood was shed that the small bodies of all could scarcely be buried. Moreover, the 'round about Jerusalem' is understood as the grief of the mourning Church, according to that saying: 'Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be comforted, because they are not' (Jer. 31; Matt. 2). We are become a reproach to our neighbors, etc. The saints become a reproach to those who previously had been brothers, and then having been separated from the Church, persecute those who fear God: which is referred to heretics. How long, O Lord, will you be angry unto the end, will your jealousy be kindled like fire? Pour out your wrath upon the nations that have not known you, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon your name, etc. Do not be angry with us, we beseech you, O Lord, who know you: but rather turn back your fury upon those who are ignorant of your Christ. For they have devoured Jacob, and have laid waste his place. That carnal one, who was seduced by the cunning of the enemy. Remember not our former iniquities: let your mercies speedily prevent us, O Lord, for we are become exceeding poor. Let mercy, which is your only-begotten Son, prevent us, we beseech you, O Lord, so that coming he may be propitious to our iniquities and rescue us from sins. For we have become poor in the world because of him. Help us, O God, our Savior; for

the glory of your name, O Lord, deliver us, and be merciful to our sins, etc. Then you either help us or are propitious to us: if the brightness of your name, which is blessed among the nations, snatches us by its death from death.

Lest the nations should say, where is their God? and let it be known among the nations before our eyes. The nations are adverse powers which prevail against us, saying: Where is your true God? Just as the pagans often said to the martyrs. The vengeance of the blood of your servants which has been shed. He here invokes judgment: by which the blood of the martyrs may be required by the Lord, who in the Apocalypse says: 'Rest for a little while, until the number of your fellow servants is fulfilled' (Rev. 6). Let the sighing of the prisoners come before your sight. Those who seeking you through long tears, desire to be loosed and to be with you. According to the greatness of your arm, possess the children of those who were put to death. Those namely who, running through the examples of the martyrs, have crucified themselves to vices and concupiscences. Render to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom. So that they may not be condemned by the penalty of judgment, but in this world may pay a sevenfold compensation by repenting. For the bosom is often understood as the breast of man, in which the soul rests. Their reproach with which they have reproached you, O Lord. For they reproach you: because they afflict with insults your martyrs in whom you dwell. But we are your people, and the sheep of your pasture.

On account of the innocence which they bear, they are called sheep, or because they have Christ as their shepherd. We will confess to you forever, and from generation to generation. That is, from the prophets even unto the Gospels. We will show forth your praise. Because to you with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory, for ages of ages. Amen. PSALM 79. Unto the end, for those who shall be changed, a testimony of Asaph. This psalm contains the voice of the prophet praying and recounting the great deeds of God. Give ear, O you who rule Israel. He is ruled by God, who sees God with his mind. Therefore the prophet asks him to give ear to him. Who lead Joseph like sheep. Not that Joseph whose type he rejected in another psalm: but him who, sold for thirty pieces of silver by a disciple, was led out from hell by the Father's power with the flock of the just. Who sit upon the Cherubim. Upon the fullness of all knowledge. Appear. Show yourself to be seen by this world. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh. He commemorates that Ephraim and Manasseh whom elsewhere he calls the strength of his head, that is, the Church or the apostles. But that he placed Benjamin in the middle: signifies Paul the apostle, who descended from the tribe of Benjamin, to be joined with the other apostles (Phil. 3). Stir up your power. Which you showed to the Egyptians and the children of Israel. And come, to save us. That just as you rescued those from Egypt, so you may save us from the power of demons. O God, convert us. To knowing you.

And show your face, and we shall be saved. Show your Son, so that we may be saved. O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry against the prayer of your servant? For he is not angry if we seek justice; but the conscience of sin thinks that he is angry even at prayer. You will feed us with the bread of tears, and give us tears for drink in measure. Often on account of the desire for God, or the remembrance of sin, tears become our bread and drink. But that he says, 'in measure,' indicates that in this prayer, in which we desire to be loosed from sins or desire to see God: a meager sustenance is received, if it is brought forth in prayer and not in much speaking. You have set us for a contradiction to our neighbors, etc. To the Jews and heretics, who make a noise round about the Church and assail us. O Lord God of hosts, convert us to you, and show your face, etc. Him who said: 'He who sees me, sees the Father also' (John 14). You have brought a vineyard out of Egypt: you have cast out the nations, and planted it. You were the guide of its journey in its sight, etc. Although these things figured the synagogue, they are to be referred to the Church, which from the darkness of the world to heavenly dignity—the nations of vices being cast out, faith favoring—was translated. To which also the way, that is, the mandates through which she should walk, were granted, teachers being planted in her, through whom the sound of the Gospels should be announced in all the earth. She also is guarded, directed, and nourished by the Lord residing upon the Cherubim.

The shadow of it covered the hills: and the branches thereof the cedars of God. With the patriarchs and apostles of his brightness. It stretched forth its branches unto the sea, and its boughs unto the river. We are the vines, who have sprouted from that vineyard. Unto the sea. That is, we have come unto baptism, who previously were tossing in the vanity of this world. For the Sea in the Apocalypse signifies baptism. And its boughs unto the river. So that those who were being reborn in it might be washed by baptism. From here he returns to the synagogue. Why have you broken down its wall? For then the protection of the synagogue was laid aside, when blindness befell it, until the fullness of the Gentiles should come in. And all they who pass by the way pluck the grapes thereof. It is despoiled by those who pass through the way of this world to God: while they cause the Jews to be converted by preaching. The boar out of the wood has exterminated it: and a singular wild beast has devoured it. In the boar and the singular wild beast the cruelty of the devil is understood, by whom it was exterminated on account of unbelief. O Lord God of hosts, convert us. The synagogue to the Church. Look down from heaven, and see, and visit this vineyard. Of which I have spoken above. And perfect the same which your right hand has planted. Which Power—that is, your Son—founded by his resurrection. And upon the son of man. The Son of the virgin. Whom you have confirmed for yourself. Whom, death having been conquered, you have placed at your right hand. Things set on fire

and dug down shall perish at the rebuke of your countenance. The synagogue surely with the unbelieving Jews. Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand: and upon the son of man whom you have confirmed for yourself. Upon the people whom the Right Hand—that is, your Christ—shall save. And upon the son of man whom you have confirmed for yourself. Our Mediator and Savior himself. We depart not from you, you will quicken us. If we cling to you by faith, then we are refreshed by that bread of life which you sent from heaven. And we will call upon your name. That very name to which you gave a name above every name. O Lord God of hosts, convert us, and show your face, and we shall be saved. Him, who is your image: him, who is your face, who is the illumination of your countenance, in whom you abide, and who abides in you. Who may deign to glide into our purified minds, and show himself to us as the Savior of the world, and save us by his holy inspection. To him be glory and empire with you, and with the Holy Spirit, both now and for ages of ages. Amen.

Unto the end, for the winepresses, a psalm of Asaph himself. In the law it is written that there are three solemnities: of Passover, of Pentecost, and of Tabernacles. Before the Feast of Tabernacles, for ten days there was a fast, and the fast was until evening. At that time they sounded trumpets—that is, they fasted, and in the fast they sounded trumpets—and after ten days was the Feast of Tabernacles. Attend diligently: Three solemnities are held as written in the law. First

Passover, then Pentecost, then Tabernacles. Before Tabernacles, a fast: and in the fast they sounded trumpets. Observe what the Scripture signifies. Take away the veil which was placed before the eyes of Moses; and see that we cannot become tabernacles unless we first fast. But the fast itself, unless it has the sign of victory which deters our adversaries, Amalek is not conquered. Since therefore there are three solemnities—Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles—therefore also three psalms have the title 'for the winepresses': the eighth psalm, the eightieth, and the eighty-third. You see therefore how three psalms are written in the psalter which are pre-notated 'for the winepresses.' See what the eighth, the eightieth, and the eighty-third psalms say: and before we dispute about the number, let us say what the winepresses wish to signify for themselves. 'For the winepresses.' Winepresses are not found elsewhere except where there are vineyards and an infinite vintage. 'For the winepresses.' Therefore the Lord and Savior says: 'I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the nations there was not a man with me' (Isa. 63). Therefore he translated a vineyard out of Egypt and planted it. And he says in Jeremiah: 'I planted you a wholly true vineyard, a chosen one: how are you turned for me into the bitterness of a strange vine' (Jer. 2)? And Noah drank wine, and was drunk. It is said also of Solomon, it is said even in a mystery: 'Drink, friends, and be drunk' (Cant. 5). We read also in another place: that Joseph, that holy man who preceded the Savior in type, who was sold

by his brothers: whom his brothers sold, and he reigned in Egypt (Gen. 43). So also our Lord and Savior was sold by the Jews, and reigned in the Egypt of this world. That Joseph therefore, the holy man, that preeminent one who overcame cruelty with piety: who was therefore sold into Egypt that he might feed Egypt and his brothers who sold him. That Joseph therefore invited his brothers. But see: he is also said to have been drunk at noon. But this indeed according to the letter cannot stand, that a holy man should have been drunk. Noah also was drunk, but he had truly been drunk. Joseph was drunk as Noah, and was drunk in his house. See the mystery: Let us first see what it signifies in a mystery, and afterwards let us dispute what it signifies in sense. After the deluge of this world Noah drank, and was drunk in his house, and his thighs were uncovered, and his shame appeared: and the elder brother came and mocked, but the younger brother covered him (Gen. 9). All this is said of the Savior, because he said on the cross of the passion: 'Father, if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me' (Matt. 26). He drank, and was drunk, and his thighs were uncovered, and the ignominy of the cross appeared. The elder brother, the people of the Jews, came and mocked: and the younger, the people of the nations, covered the ignominy. Therefore cursed be Canaan, he shall be a servant to his brother. Behold that curse perseveres even until today. We, the younger people, rule over the elder people of the Jews. As therefore the Lord was drunk in the Passion,

so also the saints in the heat of faith are daily drunk in the Holy Spirit. You who yesterday were collecting gold, today cast it away: do you not seem insane among strangers? Finally, the apostles also, when the Holy Spirit had descended upon them and had filled them and they spoke in various tongues, were therefore said to be full of new wine (Acts 2). There are many things which might be said concerning the mystery of wine and concerning drunkenness. Unto the end, for the winepresses, Asaph. The eighth psalm, and the eightieth, and the eighty-third. No other could have the numbers of the winepress, except the eighth, the eightieth, and the eighty-third. The eighth is the day of resurrection in the singular number. Again in eight decades, the eightieth is another greater number. You see therefore that these winepresses are not prescribed except on the day of resurrection, the eighth and the eightieth. Someone may say: Why is it said afterwards in the eighty-third 'winepresses'? These winepresses pertain to the mystery of the Trinity. Therefore also there are three chorus-teachers. In the eighth psalm, David; in the eightieth, Asaph; in the eighty-third, the sons of Korah. David is the eighth, who is interpreted as 'strong of hand.' For our first victory has a fight and a struggle. Therefore David is called strong of hand. But the second, that is, in the eightieth, is Asaph. Now Asaph is interpreted as 'Synagogue.' In the eighth therefore we conquer, and in the eightieth we are gathered with the Lord. But in the eighty-third it is of the sons of Korah. Korah is interpreted as

'Calvary.' 'Go up, you bald head; go up, you bald head' (4 Kings 2). These things also the boys said to Elisha, because he had suffered in the place of Calvary. There are many things which might be said, how Elisha in Bethel was mocked by forty-two boys. Those are the winepresses of which the Savior also says: 'Make for yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, that they may receive you into eternal tabernacles' (Luke 16).

Exult in God, our helper. Who delivered us from the darkness of Egypt. Rejoice in the God of Jacob. In the supplanter of enemies.

Take up the psalm, and bring the timbrel, the pleasant psaltery with the harp. A hymn from a pure heart, or mind, and by the thinning of the sins of the world.

Blow the trumpet at the New Moon, on the notable day of our solemnity. They used to blow the trumpet at Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Scenopegia). We now in the Church, although we ought to sing to God at all times: but especially in the resurrection, in the remission, and in the innovation of the house: that is, when we rise again in Christ: when we receive remission, when the house of our breast has been renewed after its ruin.

For it is a precept in Israel, and a judgment to the God of Jacob. For it is his precept, and judgment, that we may be saved by grace, and not of ourselves.

A testimony in Joseph. In Christ who was sold for us. He placed it, when he went out of the land of Egypt. Either in the bush, or in the fire,

or in other mysteries. A language which he knew not, he heard. That people of the Gentiles, in the Church, received mandates which they previously ignored.

He turned away his back from the burdens. When we were in Egypt, we were building the cities of Pharaoh, we were carrying mud and brick, and our whole soul was seeking straw. We had no grain, we had no heavenly bread which comes from heaven: we had not yet received manna from heaven, the serpent had not yet been suspended for us in the desert: the rock had not yet sent us water: we were not yet extending our hands, and Amalek was falling. We were sitting in the mud, and we were doing the works of Egypt, we were building the cities of Pharaoh. He turned away his back from the burdens. How great were the burdens we had before! Therefore our Moses says: Come to me, all you who are burdened with sins, and I will refresh you (Matth. XI). His hands served in the basket (cophino). Whose? Israel's. There are some baskets of Egypt, and others of Jesus. Jesus also has his baskets, and our Savior filled twelve baskets with fragments (Luc. IX). O wonderful thing, and signifying great mysteries! Five thousand of the people were fed in the desert, without the little ones and the women: in a deserted place only five loaves are found: for the place was deserted. I ask you who follow only the letter. In a deserted place only five loaves are found, and how are twelve baskets found? If the place was deserted, surely it could not have twelve baskets; but all this signifies that the Lord

led his people out of Egypt in the desert of this world: he fed them with his breads, and whatever remained, he stored in twelve baskets, that is, in the twelve apostles, so that what had perished in the twelve tribes might be saved in the twelve apostles.

In tribulation you called upon me, and I delivered you. The prophets and the psalms are obscure for this reason: because suddenly, when you do not know it, the person changes. Finally, up to this point the prophet has spoken: now suddenly the person of God speaking to the people is introduced. In tribulation you called upon me, and I delivered you. Whoever you are in tribulation, be secure, call upon me, and you shall be heard. I heard you in the secret place of the tempest. That tempest, when it was pressing upon you, and drawing you here and there as if by waves: I was in the midst of the tempest. I proved you at the water of contradiction. According to the letter it is said of Moses and Aaron: that they offended God at the water of contradiction (Exod. XVII; Num. XX). Finally, for this reason they did not enter the land of promise. But to us God says: I proved you at the water of contradiction. Simon was proved at the water of contradiction: because he received baptism in hypocrisy (Act. VIII). Whoever, therefore, has received baptism in hypocrisy, he is proved at the water of contradiction.

Hear, my people, and I will testify to you. God speaks to us. Whatever he said to the people, he also speaks to us. Israel, if you will hear me. What

do you seek, that they may hear? Let us see what he commands. There shall be no new god in you. For him whose god is his belly (venter), a god is new to him. However many vices we have, however many sins, so many new gods we have. I am angry: anger is a god to me. I saw a woman and I lusted: lust is a god to me. For whatever each one desires and venerates, this is a god to him. The greedy man has gold as a god. Nor shall you adore a strange god. Our God is virtue: the god of others is vice.

I am the Lord your God who led you out of the land of Egypt. We are they who have been led out of the land of Egypt: if however we have gone out, if we are in the desert, if we desire to see the land of promise. If we have left Sodom, let us not look back to Sodom. We have been saved on the mountain, let us not desire Egyptian meats, let us not say: How well it was with us in Egypt, when we ate meats in pots, and garlic, and cucumbers (Num. XI)! Do you wish to receive the Lord's foods? Do you wish to eat the Lord your God and Savior himself? Hear what he says: Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. Open your mouths wide, he is the Lord, and bread. He himself exhorts us to eat, and he himself is our food. As much as you open wide, so much will you receive. It is not, therefore, in my power, but in yours. If you will, you shall receive me whole: if you will not, receive at least a part.

And my people heard not my voice. I stand before the door, and knock. I want you to open

and I may enter, and you do not want to open (Apoc. VIII).

And Israel did not attend to me: and I dismissed them according to the desires of their heart, etc. Unhappy is he who is not corrected by God. If anyone sinning is not struck, he is wretched. Therefore he says: I dismissed them according to the desires of their heart. I dismissed them for this reason: because I struck them often, and they did not receive discipline. I asked, they did not hear: I struck, they did not feel pain. I dismiss them to their own wills, so that being saturated with their vices, they may even כך perform penance.

If my people had heard me. O most clement Father, O merciful God! He asked, and was not heard: as if angry he dismisses the wanton son. Again he sees him perish, and grieves because he perishes. And what does he say: Israel if he had walked in my ways, for nothing, etc. Was it a great thing for me to deliver you from tribulation? Could I not send my majesty, and rescue you from danger? But because I dismissed you to free will (libero arbitrio), and proposed a stadium to you, and no one is crowned unless he has fought, therefore I leave the victory to your judgment (II Tim. II).

The enemies of the Lord have lied to him. In Hebrew it is better: The enemies of the Lord will deny him, that is, the Jews: for his enemies denied him. But will these enemies who are going to deny him, then perish? will there be no remnants? And how did you swear to Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob: that their seed should be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the sea? Why did you promise the fathers, and do not render to the sons? The enemies of the Lord will deny him. But what does he say? And their time shall be for the age (in saeculum). When the fullness of the Gentiles shall have entered, then all Israel shall be saved (Rom. XI). In the future they will believe, now they have not believed. Now I will speak to the Jews. They are accustomed to applaud themselves, and say: And their time shall be for eternity. Let us say, it is true: for they of the Jews are going to believe. Finally, we read in the Apocalypse of John, twelve thousand from each tribe, that is, one hundred and forty-four thousand are going to believe, and this is said to be of virgins. But where there shall be so great a number of virgins, how many of non-virgins will there be? Therefore let us also say to the Jews, and your time shall not be for eternity, that is, in the future age. But to you who today do not believe, what does it pertain? And their time shall be for the age. What kind of time will it be for the enemies of God?

And he fed them with the fat of wheat (adipe frumenti). He led them into the land of promise: he fed them not with manna as in the desert, but with the wheat which fell, which rose again. And he fed them with the fat of wheat. See the mystery of the Scriptures: From the fat of wheat. Does wheat have fat: did it also have intestines? But he wished to show the bounty and richness of spiritual grace, and therefore he named it fat.

And with honey from the rock he satisfied them. He himself is the wheat: he himself is the rock, who satisfied the people of Israel with water in the desert. Spiritually with honey, and not with water, he satisfied them, so that whoever believed and received food, might feel honey in their mouth. How sweet are your words to my throat, more than honey and the honeycomb to my mouth (Psalm CXVIII)! Finally, our Lord also after the resurrection for this reason ate honeycomb, and was satisfied with honey from the rock (Luc. XXIV). Therefore I say a new thing: The rock itself ate honey, that it might grant us honey, and sweetness, so that those who in the Law had drunk myrrh, that is, bitterness: afterwards in the Gospel they may eat the honey of the Gospel: to whom is glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM LXXXI.

A Psalm of Asaph.

This psalm exhorts us that if we wish the Lord to dwell with us, we should always do those things which are pleasing to him.

God has stood in the synagogue of gods. There are many figures (schemata). For frequently we sit, sometimes we stand, sometimes we lie down, sometimes we run, sometimes we walk, so also God is described according to the variety of men, and his diverse state is introduced. If we are holy, and are similar to Moses, it is said to us: But you stand here with me (Exod. XVII). For God said this to Moses. For Moses was standing upon the rock,

therefore also the Lord was standing for him. If indeed we were previously holy, and afterwards sinners: God no longer stands for us, but walks: that is, he is moved from his place, who had previously stood for us. After we have been moved, he also is moved equally with us. Finally, even Adam, as long as he was in paradise and kept the mandate, God stood for him. But after he transgressed: he heard the voice of God walking in paradise. Do you wish to know that God was walking for him? What did he say to him? Adam, where are you? He who before had not fled from God standing, afterwards fled from him walking (Gen. V). We have spoken of him standing, we have spoken of him walking, let us speak of him sitting. Whenever God is introduced sitting, he is introduced in two ways. Either as a king, or as a judge. If as a king, he is seen as Isaiah: I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated (Isai. VI). There he is introduced as a reigning king. When indeed he is introduced as a judge: thrones are placed, and books are opened, as it is written in Daniel: What is said? Thrones were placed, and books were opened (Dan. VII): that is, the Lord as a judge about to sit, and about to re-read the works of all. The books which now are folded up, then shall be opened. Every thing that we do, that we speak, that we think, even for an idle word we are going to render an account. It is written in the books of God. Someone thinks there are books in heaven, where our sins are written: I think the books are our consciences, which then shall be opened, and each one shall

see what he has done. Nothing hidden that shall not be revealed. Therefore thrones are placed, and books are opened. How many things are written in my book, which I do not dare to confess even to my brother, nor to my friend. The angels know what I have done, the archangels know: and he who sees all things, he alone is silent: so that I may speak, and he may forgive me. The angels know what I have done, the Thrones know, the Seraphim know; the Father knows, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We have spoken of God, that for some he stands, for others he walks, for others indeed he sits: either as King, or as judge: for others indeed he sleeps. If ever he leaves us to temptations, although we be holy: yet we are left to temptations that we may be proved: at that time the Lord sleeps for us. Finally, what does the Psalmist say: Arise, why do you sleep, O Lord (Psal. XLIII)? And the apostles, when they were in the ship, and the ship was being pounded by the waves, the Lord was sleeping for them: For therefore the ship was being pounded by the waves. Finally, they awaken him, and he wakes up, and immediately the tempest grows quiet (Marc. IV). We have spoken of the four figures of God: that for some he stands, for others he walks, for others he sits, and for others as if he sleeps: for others indeed he wakes up and rises up. God has stood in the synagogue of gods. Because they were gods, therefore God was standing for him. In this our synagogue, God has diverse figures: for some he stands, for others he sits, for others he walks, for others he sleeps. Since he himself is immutable,

he is changed according to our variety. See the dignity of man. God has stood in the synagogue of gods. He grants us the name, so that he may also grant the merit. But in the midst he judges the gods. Like a commander in the midst of the army he judges. God judges the gods. A formidable thing, a thing full of terror. If he judges the gods, what does he do concerning a sinner? These two verses he said as a prophet; but this which follows:

How long do you judge iniquity? God himself speaks to the judges, that is, to the princes of the people. Especially these verses which follow are said to the judges. If judges of the world, it is manifest. If indeed judges of the Church, let us understand it of bishops and priests. How long do you judge iniquity? He who judges iniquity is a judge of iniquity. He was that judge of iniquity, of whom it is said in the Gospel: who feared not the Lord, and revered not man. How long do you judge iniquity? I gave you power over my flock, and over the people of God: you ought to be judges, and not wolves. And you accept the persons of sinners. Judge for the needy and the fatherless (pupillo), justify the humble and the poor. Rescue the poor, and the needy, etc. When judgment comes to you, you do not consider the cause, you do not consider the judgment, but the persons of those who have the causes. As if he were to say: If a poor man comes, having a just business, and a rich man comes, having an evil business: you look at the person, not the business. This is meanwhile according to one in-

terpretation. Moreover there is also another more sacred interpretation. It is customary in theaters that one man frequently has diverse persons (masks): now he enters as a woman, now as a man, now as a king, and he who had gone forth as a king, again goes forth as a servant. I have given the example, so that from the carnal we may be able to come to the spiritual. We also receive diverse persons. For when I am angry, I assume the person of a lion. When I seize the things of others, I assume the person of a wolf. When indeed I am cruel and I kill, I assume the person of a cruel one. But just as those who are sinners have diverse persons in sins, so on the contrary those who are holy have also themselves diverse persons, but in good. When I perform almsgiving (eleemosynam), I have a person as if merciful. When indeed I judge well, I have the person of a good judge. When indeed I suffer injury and am humble, I have the person of a humble one. Unhappy is he who has many persons in evil. Happy is he who has diverse persons in good.

They have not known nor understood, they walk in darkness. Who? The evil judges. Those whom I was calling gods, by their own fault are called evil. They have not known me, nor understood my judgment: they walk in darkness. Because they have forsaken the light: therefore they walk in darkness. I said: you are the light of the world, and you have declined from the light, and have become darkness. Because therefore they have done this, let us see what follows. All the foundations of the earth shall be moved. See

what kind of retribution the evil princes have. Because of evil judges, the foundations of the earth are shaken. This meanwhile we have said first according to the letter: since the concussion of the whole world comes because of evil princes. But let us also say it otherwise: All the foundations of the earth shall be moved. I will subvert the evil judges, who have placed foundations on the earth, and not in heaven: who ought to have had Christ as a foundation, whom the architect Paul placed: and they would not, but placed their foundations on the earth.

I have said, you are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High. Let Eunomius hear, let Arius hear, who say that the Son of God is a son in the same way as we are. That we are gods is not of nature, but of grace. For as many as received him, he gave them power to become sons of God (Joan. I). Therefore I made man, that from men they may become gods. I have said, you are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High. See how great is the dignity, we are called both gods and sons. I made you gods, as I made Moses the God of Pharaoh (Exod. VII): so that after you shall have been gods, you may be made worthy to be my sons. Consider the divine Scripture: There is no acceptance of persons with God. He did not say: I have said, you are gods, kings and princes, but all to whom I equally gave a body, and a soul, and a spirit: I equally gave both deity and adoption. We are all born equally, both emperors and paupers: we also die equally. For the condition is equal.

But you shall die like men. You see therefore that he who is a man, dies. For God does not die. And Adam, as long as he kept the precept, and was a God, did not die. But after he tasted of the illicit tree, he immediately died. Finally, God says to him: In whatever day you shall have tasted, you shall die the death (Gen. II). It has it better in the Hebrew: But you shall die like Adam. Just as he was cast out of paradise, so also we were cast out. And like one of the princes you shall fall. Since he had said: All of you sons of the Most High, one cannot be a son of the Most High unless he himself were also lofty. I said, that all of you might be lofty, as I am lofty. But you indeed shall fall like one of the princes. Since we were lofty, for that reason we are said to have fallen. Where are those who say the devil was made the devil? Where are those who say an evil nature was created by God? According to the Hebrew, two things are said here: But you shall die like Adam. Just as your father would not hear the precept of the Lord, and fell: so also you shall die. Therefore that was said concerning Adam. But this which follows: And like one of the princes you shall fall, who is this one of the princes who fell? If you wish to say Adam, it has already been said in the superior verses: But you shall die like Adam. And at the same time see the significance of the word: But you shall die like Adam. Since Adam died, we also die. But the devil who was a prince and fell, did not die. For neither can the angelic dignity receive death, but only ruin. Therefore he said: Like one of the princes you shall fall. How has

lucifer fallen, who used to rise in the morning: And behold, both here he fell, and there he fell. He fell for this reason, because he was always conversant in heavenly things. This is he to whom it is said in Ezekiel: You are the counter-seal of likeness (Ezech. XXVIII). See what he says: The counter-seal of likeness. He did not say: you are the seal of likeness: but the counter-seal of likeness. God had sealed you, and had made you like himself. You indeed afterwards unsealed yourself from the likeness and image of God, and you were founded. Finally, it is said in the prophecy itself: You were nourished in the midst of the Cherubim: you were among the stones of jasper and carbuncle in the paradise of God, and you fell, he says, and you were wounded by the mountain of God. This is the prince of Tyre from that time in which he fell; since Tyre in the Hebrew language is called Sor: that is, tribulation. Therefore also this prince who was first in heaven: now has been made the prince of Tyre, that is of the tribulation of this world. Like one of the princes you shall fall. When he says, like one, he shows there are also others. Read the Apocalypse of John: When the dragon fell from heaven, he drew with him a third part of the stars (Apoc. XII). Thus far God has spoken to men, and again he speaks through the prophet.

Arise, O God, judge the earth. Arise, because our ship is beaten by the waves. Arise, O God, judge the earth: because evil judges do not judge, but they subvert your law, and they tear your sheep. You arise, who are the true judge. Because

therefore evil judges have died like Adam and have fallen like one of the princes: for that reason you arise, you judge, you save your creature. For the hireling, when he sees the wolf, flees (John X), he leaves the sheep: he cannot grieve for what is another's in the way that he grieves for a father and mother. Let us say it also otherwise: Arise, you who have suffered for us, have died for us: arise, and save us. Let us say it otherwise: You who came humble and despised, come as a judge and avenge us. Arise, O God, judge the earth. See the significance and properties of the words. He did not say: judge heaven, but the earth. Therefore the earth is judged, not heaven. If therefore the earth is judged, and not heaven, then in heaven sins are not committed; but if sins were committed in heaven, he would say: Arise, O God, judge the earth, and heaven. And see the clemency of the prophecy. He did not say, kill the earth: but judge, and save. He did not say, judge through angels, judge through your ministers. For they, if they should judge, cannot have mercy, because they are executors of your sentence. But you, if you shall have judged, will be able yourself to have mercy. Arise, O God, judge the earth. An emperor can change his sentence: a prefect cannot. For that reason we pray to you as judge, not despising, but praying. For men and angels are cruel in comparison with you. You alone are the mildest judge. Do you wish to know that God is a merciful judge, and every man is cruel? While the master of the house was sleeping, an enemy man sowed tares over. The

servants wish to pull them up, and the master of the house says: Let them grow together until both grow: lest when you pull up the tares from the wheat, you root up the wheat also at the same time (Matt. XIII). Because you shall inherit in all nations. For that reason we pray to you as judge, because you have had mercy on all nations. Why did he not say, you shall possess all nations; but, you shall inherit? Wherever inheritance is placed, there death has preceded before. For that reason we are called heirs and co-heirs. He said heirs of Christ, because he died for us. Co-heirs, because he is about to reign with us. You shall inherit: For you sent your servants, let us return to the apostles, one to the circumcision, another to the nations. As long as you had sent Moses, as long as Isaiah, as long as Jeremiah, as long as other prophets: God was known in Judea, in Israel his name was great. In a small land the knowledge of the name of God was carried. You sent Peter the fisherman, who had left his net, who from his work had a calloused hand. You did not send an orator, you did not send a philosopher: You sent a rustic man, a fisherman man. This fisherman, this rustic went from Jerusalem to Rome, and the rustic took Rome which the eloquent were not able to take. Again Paul the apostle went, and from Jerusalem he preached even into Illyricum, and he preached where the Gospel had not been preached, lest he should place a building upon another's foundation (Rom. XV). Then he says, that from the city of Rome he would go to Spain. See Paul the persecutor, who in Judea had been

a persecutor, preaches to the nations. Where are those who preach Alexander the Great, the emperor of the Macedonians, that in a short space of time he conquered such great nations? He had an army, he had also huge crowds, and he was not able to do such a thing, but only a certain small thing. But this Paul was once a persecutor, who said: And if I am unskillful in speech, yet not in knowledge (II Cor. XI). He who makes solecisms in speaking, carries the cross of Christ, and as if triumphing takes all. He subdued the whole world from the Ocean even unto the Red Sea. Someone may say: they did all this for the sake of gain. For this is what Porphyry says: Rustic and poor men, because they had nothing, worked certain signs by magic arts. It is not, however, a great thing to do signs. For the magicians in Egypt did signs against Moses (Exod. VII). Apollonius also did them, and Apuleius did them. Infinite people have done signs. I grant you, Porphyry, they did signs by magic arts, so that they might receive riches from wealthy little women, whom they had led on: for this is what you say. Why did they die? Why were they crucified? Others also did signs by magic arts, but for a dead man they did not die, for a crucified man they were not crucified. Do these men know the man is dead, and do they die without cause? Happy therefore is our victory, which was dedicated in the blood of the apostles. Our faith is not proved, except through their blood. Let us bless God, therefore, to whom is glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM LXXXII.

A song of the psalm of Asaph.

This psalm contains the voice of the prophet praising God. He says therefore:

O God, who shall be like you? Since none is like you: we seek no other author but you. Do not be silent, and do not be restrained, O God. We are silent, you speak for us. It is the voice of the just which says: And do not be restrained, O God. He is secure in his justice.

For behold your enemies have sounded. We can interpret according to tropology concerning the Church and heresies. But we can also interpret according to the letter concerning the people of the Jews, and concerning the other nations, which in the circuit are expugning Judea. For behold your enemies have sounded. He wished to call the voice and the detraction of the adversaries a sound. For behold your enemies have sounded. See what he says: They have sounded, that is, like a tinkling cymbal, so they sounded in my ears. A sound is properly so called when only a sound is heard, and a voice is not understood. Therefore what he says is this: They indeed were speaking, and as if they wished to argue with me: but I, not as a voice, but as if I were hearing a sound. And they who hated you, have lifted up the head. See what he says: Therefore he who elevates the head, hates God. For the Lord resists the proud: but to the humble he gives grace (James IV, and I Pet. V). And they who hated you, have lifted up the head. If you have a cause against

someone: if your brother detracts from you, and you are humble for Christ, and he is proud for the devil, you imitate him who says: Learn from me, because I am mild and humble of heart (Matt. XI). But he who is raised up imitates him who says: Into heaven I will ascend, above the stars of heaven I will place my throne, I will be like the Most High (Isa. XIV). And they who hated you, have lifted up the head.

Against your people they have taken malicious counsel. It suffices for anyone, if he be the people of God. They have thought against your saints. This does not need interpretation. To have read it, is to have understood it.

They said, come and let us destroy them from being a nation. And let it not be a nation, because it is the people of God. And let the name of Israel be remembered no more. Let him not be remembered here, who in sense sees God.

Because they have thought unanimously together. Unhappy are we: Unhappy is the people of God, it cannot have as much concord in good as the evil have in evil. Against you they have disposed a testament: the tabernacles of the Idumeans and the Ishmaelites: Moab and the Agarenes, Gebal, and Ammon and Amalek, the foreigners with the inhabitants of Tyre: for indeed Assur came with them, they were made for an aid to Lot. There are eleven who fight against the holy one. Because therefore they have fought against the saints, they were not able to come to the perfect number, that is, the twelfth.

The tabernacles of the Idumeans. They do not have a foundation for a house, but tabernacles which pass away quickly. Idumea is interpreted in two ways, either as bloody or as earthly. See therefore who they are who fight against the saints. The tabernacles of the Idumeans, the earthly; and the Ishmaelites are interpreted as obedient to themselves, that is, whatever the heart has, and an evil thought, they immediately do. For that reason it is said in Ezekiel: Son of man, speak against the prophets, who follow their own heart, and whatever the thought impels, they do (Ezech. XIII). But we ought not to follow our own thought, nor be called Ishmaelites, that is, obedient to self, but Ishmael, that is, obedient to God. Moab, from the father, that is, receding from God the Father. The Agarenes, proselytes. Those who, when they ought to have been inhabitants of God, were made proselytes. Gebal is interpreted as empty valley. Ge is said for valley. But Bal is interpreted as empty. Those therefore who are against the people of God are not of the mountain, but of the empty valley. And Ammon is interpreted as a turbid people: that is, those who trust in a multitude, and not in simplicity. Amalek is interpreted as licking the earth. For whoever fights against the people of God does not eat heavenly bread, but licks the earth like a serpent. Foreigners. Where it is said, foreigners, the Hebrew has Philistines. But the Philistines are interpreted as falling by drink: that is, those who are inebriated from the cup of the devil, and being inebriated

they have fallen. With the inhabitants of Tyre. Tyre in the Hebrew language is called Sor, which is interpreted as tribulation and distress. Those who ought to have been pilgrims in this world have been made inhabitants. Those therefore who expugn the people of God inhabit Sor, that is, in the distress and tribulation of their soul.

These so many nations therefore who fight against the holy one, let us see whom they have as prince: the Savior, or the devil. What follows? For indeed Assur came with them. Assur, Nabuchodonosor the adversary of God, who led the people of God into captivity: although he may seem to have very many nations fighting for him: yet they have Assur as prince, that is, the devil. They were made for an aid to the sons of Lot. Lot is interpreted as declining. The demons were previously angels, and afterwards they fell with the devil, and were made his henchmen, as it is written in the Apocalypse of John: Because the dragon fell, and drew with him a third part of the stars (Apoc. XII). Therefore what does he say? These who came with so many nations, and expugned your people, and Assur came with them, and they have the devil as prince, were made for an aid to the sons of Lot, that is, to the demons. Those who have declined from you work this which the demons also work. You see that these are very difficult places; you see that they are obscure, and in single words there are great sacraments, and we are compelled by necessity to stay longer in the Hebrew words and those full of mysteries. For we are not now ventilating a rhetorical place, but

we are striving to interpret that which was said by the Holy Spirit. For unless it be interpreted thus, as we have said, what does it profit the churches of Christ to read of the tabernacles of the Idumeans and the Ishmaelites, and the other names? Since therefore they have come against your people, let us see what the Psalmist imprecates against them.

Do to them as to Midian and Sisera, as to Jabin. You have read in the book of Judges: This is Midian whom Gideon expugned (Judges VII and VIII). Jabin and Sisera are these, whom Deborah and Barak expugned (Judges IV). At the torrent Kishon they perished in Endor. Deborah and Barak killed Sisera the prince of the army. Therefore what he says, see what it is: Lord, how great pride they have! since they come with such a great army, since they have Nabuchodonosor the prince of the Assyrians: since they were made for an aid to the sons of Lot: since they do this which the demons do: since their pride has been raised up even unto you: for that reason I pray you, that to their ignominy, they may be conquered not by a man, but by a woman. They were made as the dung of the earth. Who? Midian, and Sisera, and Jabin. These three were made as the dung of the earth. Midian is interpreted as relinquishing judgment: Whoever fights against my people, does not think that there is a future judgment. Sisera is interpreted as the vision of a horse. These who fight against your people are not of your flock, and of your sheep, but of the horses which rage after women. These horses therefore

are always ready for battle. As Jabin. Jabin is interpreted as intellect. Those who trust in themselves in their own wisdom, and not in the glory of God. They were made as the dung of the earth. Those who were glorying in their army, who had Assur as prince, and were saying: Into heaven I will ascend, not only fell to the earth, but in the earth they were made dung.

Set their princes. Whose? Those who fight against your people. As Oreb and Zeeb, and Zebah and Zalmunna. All their princes. I think you have read the history in the book of Judges: that Gideon, who is called by another name Jerubbaal, fighting for the people of God, conquered these four kings and killed them (Judges VI and VII).

See what kind of princes the Midianites are, who relinquished the judgment of God: Oreb, and Zeeb, and Zebah, and Zalmunna. Who thinks that in these words there are mysteries of the Savior? Philosophers read this and mock. Rhetoricians read it and think they are ravings. Not only rhetoricians, however, but also the Jews do not have the key of knowledge: since a veil is placed before their eyes. Oreb is interpreted as a hole, into which a serpent enters. Zeeb is interpreted as a wolf. See the names of the princes of the adversaries of Christ. Zebah, a victim, that is, those whom the wolf has suffocated. And Zalmunna, perfect in malice. See therefore the sacraments of the names.

Who said: let us possess by inheritance the sanctuary of God. They said it, but they did not

perform it: because the Lord was fighting for his people.

My God, set them like a wheel. See the clemency of the prophet: He does not pray against them, but for them. See what he says: My God, who are the God of all, my God properly. My God, set them like a wheel. Those who as it were have a foundation in malice: let them not have a foundation, but let them waver, and not stand in malice. As stubble before the face of the wind, as fire which burns the forest. As stubble: not as wheat, but stubble; what he says is this: if there is anything in them that is stubble and chaff, let it perish. As fire which burns the forest. He did not say, fruitful trees; but, the forest, which has no fruits. If anyone therefore is stubble, and has no wheat: if anyone is a forest, and has no fruits, let him perish here. As a flame burning the mountains. Let pride perish in them.

So you shall persecute them in your tempest, and in your wrath. What? Will you kill them? No: but, You shall trouble them. So that they may be saved.

Fill their faces with ignominy. So that they may be confounded. Why this? So that they may seek your name, O Lord. You see therefore that he prays not against them, but for their salvation. Finally also in the following things see what he says:

Let them be ashamed and troubled for ever and ever, and let them be confounded and perish. Let them perish according to this, that they are evil, and let that which is good be saved. Finally

see, since perdition here does not sound of abolition, but of salvation. Which follows.

And let them know that your name is Lord: you alone are Most High in all the earth. Let him who wishes to be raised up, raise himself up. Let us say: You alone are Most High in all the earth. However much someone may be exalted, let us have God, whose name is more exalted, to whom is glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM LXXXIII.

Unto the end for the wine-presses for the sons of Korah, and a Psalm. There are three psalms which are prescribed "for the wine-presses," the eighth, the eightieth, and the eighty-third. The eighth is prescribed for David: the eightieth truly is prescribed for Asaph: the eighty-third truly for the sons of Korah. I give you a certain rule, so that you may know what you ought to observe in the Scriptures. Whichever psalm is prescribed for the sons of Korah, has nothing sad, but always signifies joyful things. For since Korah, and Dathan, and Abiram acted against Moses, and were punished by the Lord: the sons of Korah who did not follow their father, were blessed with eternal joy. But since Korah is interpreted as Calvary, and it is manifest that Calvary signifies the place of resurrection: whoever is a son of Korah, is a son of the resurrection; and whoever is a son of the resurrection, can have nothing that is sad.

How beloved are your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord. Then it is said: Blessed are they

who dwell in your house. See that there are three: tabernacles, and courts, and at the end, a house. How beloved are your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! What are these tabernacles? Let us see if the Gospel provides us any significance. The Lord speaks and says: Make for yourselves friends of the unjust mammon, so that when you fail, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles (Luke XVI). You see therefore that unjust mammon fails in this world. However, consider that this unjust one prepares justice. Mammon in the Hebrew language is the name for riches: not gold, as some think. Of unjust mammon. A certain sentence of a philosopher is true: "Every rich man is either unjust, or is the heir of an unjust man." Therefore the Lord and Savior says that rich men enter with difficulty into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. XIX). Someone may say: How did Zacchaeus enter into the kingdom of heaven, who was rich? But he gave his riches, and immediately exchanged riches for the kingdom of heaven. He did not say, whoever shall be rich shall not enter into the kingdoms of heaven: but he said, that rich men shall enter with difficulty into the kingdoms of heaven. How beloved are your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Others desire possessions, others the riches of this world, others to appear in the Churches of this world, and to have some glory among men: to me this is the only desire, to see the eternal tabernacles. Those tabernacles are beloved to me, where the congregation of virtues is, not of vices. My soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord: this is the

only desire, this my only love, that I may see your courts. See the order. First he desires tabernacles: tabernacles which have no foundation: tabernacles which are quickly changed. For a tabernacle is always changed, and is transferred here and there. Moreover, courts are not indeed a house, but yet they have some foundations, and from the court we enter into the house. He therefore first desires tabernacles, and afterwards faints, and pines away with love so that he may see the courts, and when he is in the court, then he says: Blessed are they who dwell in your house.

My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God. It is difficult for the heart and flesh of anyone to agree in common. For if according to the Apostle the spirit fights against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit (Galat. V): how does he say here, my heart and my flesh have rejoiced? He cannot say this, except he who is fixed in the love of God with his whole mind. My heart, and my flesh. That is what he says also in another place: my soul has thirsted for you, how manifoldly my flesh for you (Psalm LXII)! This is the flesh which desires the Lord, of which it is said in another place: And all flesh shall see the salvation of God (Isaiah XL). But that flesh of which it is said: All flesh is grass (Ecclus. XIV), does not desire the Lord. My heart and my flesh. See for me someone who is abstinent, who thinks the death of his flesh is the gain of his soul. But these are the fasts and injuries of the flesh. Finally what does the Apostle say? Whom he delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit

may be saved (I Cor. V). Unless the flesh shall have been dead, the spirit cannot be quickened. Therefore the Apostle also says: When I am weak, then am I stronger (II Cor. XII). Let everyone consider himself when he is weary and failing from fasting: how the soul flourishes, how the mind considers nothing other than God: how he always says, how beloved are your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

For the sparrow has found itself a house, and the turtle-dove a nest for itself where it may lay its young. Your altars, O Lord of hosts, my king, and my God. Meanwhile let us interpret simply. See what he says: I desire, O Lord, your eternal tabernacles: my soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord. I desire to have some seat and little nest for my soul and for my body. Birds which wander freely here and there: yet after they have flown, they have a place and little nests where they may rest: how much more should my soul, and my flesh prepare for itself a place where it can rest! Now let us ascend something higher. In the Lord I trust: how do you say to my soul, migrate into the mountains like a sparrow? See therefore that no one migrates into the mountains except he who is a sparrow. And the turtle-dove a nest for itself. This is the turtle-dove, of which it is said in the Canticle of Canticles: The voice of the turtle-dove has been heard in our land (Cant. II). The turtle-dove a nest for itself. The turtle-dove is an animal of chastity. The turtle-dove does not dwell in low places, but always makes nests for itself in high trees. As

therefore the sparrow and the turtle-dove, most chaste birds, make nests for themselves in higher places: so therefore the tabernacles, and courts and house are not in this low earth, but on high, that is, in the kingdoms of heaven. Finally see what he says.

Blessed are they who dwell in your house. In a tabernacle we do not dwell, but we sojourn. And as long as we are in the court, we do not dwell, but we sojourn. For from the courts we pass into the house. But when we shall have come into the house, what is said? Blessed are they who dwell in your house: the house which has a foundation. Since it is not permitted for us to go out from the house, but from the courts it is permitted.

Blessed is the man whose help is from you. We indeed desire your tabernacles and courts and house, but that we may be able to reach this very thing is not of our virtue, but of your help. He has disposed ascensions in his heart. Who has disposed ascensions in his heart? Blessed is the man whose help is from the Lord: he has disposed ascensions in his heart. Whoever is holy, daily extends himself to the things that are before, and forgets the things that are behind. Therefore also in the Psalter fifteen psalms of degrees are mentioned, and the first is called: In my trouble I cried to the Lord. And in the second: I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me. And in the third: I rejoiced at the things that were said to me, and he always proceeds, and profits, and ascends into higher things. What he says is this: He has

disposed ascensions in his heart: Happy is he who daily profits, who does not consider what he did yesterday, but what he may do today, so that he may profit. The holy man places ascensions in his heart, the sinner descents. As he who is holy daily profits: so he who is a sinner daily decreases. Blessed is the man who disposes ascensions in his heart. See the consequence of the Scriptures.

In the valley of tears in the place which he has set. Where it is said, "in the valley," it is necessary that we understand by contrast also "the mountain." Therefore whoever disposes ascensions in his heart, where is he placed? In the valley of tears. Let us consider that we are in the valley, we are not on the mountain, we are not in paradise: nor in the height of paradise, but in the humility of the earth, of the cursed earth, cursed which generates for us thistles and thorns, which is the food of the serpent, of which it is said to Adam: Earth you are, and to earth you shall go. As long therefore as we are in the valley of tears, we ought not to laugh, but to weep. Therefore also the Lord says: Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall laugh (Matt. V). Meanwhile therefore while we are in the valley of tears, this world is of tears, not of joy. We ought not to laugh, since this world and this time is of tears, that one of joy. In the valley of tears in the place which he has set. What is it that is said: "in the place which he has set." In the place, that is, in the valley of tears. In the place which he has set, God has set us for the contest, so that we may always fight in this. This

place therefore, that is, the valley of tears, is not of peace, nor of security, but of contest and of wars.

For the lawgiver shall give blessings. Someone may say: In the valley of tears, in the place which he has set, for the agon, that is, for the contest: why did he set it for the agon? why did he want us to fight? The Psalmist answered himself, and says: Therefore in this place he wanted us to fight, so that he might be able to bestow crowns. For the Lawgiver shall give blessings. This Lawgiver, that is, our agonothete, therefore wanted us to fight, so that he might be able to bless us. See the consequence. What however are the blessings of this agonothete? They shall go from virtue to virtue. Here they conquer, so that there they may be crowned. If here a man shall have appeared strong, there he becomes more robust, they shall go from virtue to virtue. Therefore unless we shall have had virtue here: we cannot have greater virtue there. For he did not say, they shall go from weakness to virtue: but, they shall go from virtue to virtue. Do you want to be strong there? First be strong here. Do you want to be crowned there? Fight here. They shall go from virtue to virtue. We can also say otherwise: Christ the virtue of God, and the wisdom of God (I Cor. I). He who shall have had virtue here, also there shall have that very virtue. They shall go from virtue to virtue. What gain will they have when they shall have gone from virtue to virtue? What reward will they have? The God of gods shall be seen in Zion. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. V): The face of Christ is enough for the

victors, enough for those who have fought. To see God is an infinite crown. The God of gods shall be seen in Zion. How great a joy it is, with how great a happiness to go from virtue to virtue, and to have this very thing as a reward, that we may merit to see Christ!

Behold, O God our protector, and look upon the face of your Christ. See what he says: And look upon the face of your Christ. And a man prays, that the father look upon the face of the son. But see what he says. For the Apostle said: Do you seek a proof of Christ who speaks in me (II Cor. XIII)? And again the Savior himself said: He who receives you, receives me (Matt. X). Therefore this is what he says: look upon us. For in us you look upon your son, who dwells in us.

For one day in your courts is better. See what he says: One day. Someone thinks it should be understood thus: It is better for me to have a little in the kingdom of heaven, than the whole here, that is, in this world. Indeed that understanding is not bad. But let us say: If it could happen, that someone were one day in the kingdom of heaven, and afterwards were cast down, he would rightly say: One day in your courts is better. But now what he says, "one day," is what he says in the kingdom of heaven. That one day has no night and darkness, but is always light. He therefore who shall have been one day in the kingdom of heaven, is always there.

I have chosen to be abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners. This is what the Savior also said of John:

Amen, amen I say to you, that among those born of women there is not a greater than John the Baptist (Matt. XI). Then he said: that he himself is an angel. And then he said: But he who is lesser in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he. The sense there is this: John is greater among all men. And if you wish to know, he himself is an angel. But he who is an angel on earth, is the last in the kingdom of heaven, that is, he is lesser than the angels. But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven, that is, an angel, is greater than he who is greater than everyone on earth. This is therefore what the prophet now says: I have chosen to be abject in the house of my God, that is, I wanted to be less in the kingdom of heaven, than first in this world. I have chosen to be abject in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners. Tabernacles have no foundation, but they pass away. However, he who is a sinner, never sojourns on the earth, but inhabits and possesses it.

For God loves mercy and truth. God loves two things: mercy and truth. If he were only merciful, he would provoke us all to sins. If he only loved truth, no one would have hope of repentance. Therefore he seeks two, so that he may temper the one with the other. If you are a sinner, hear the merciful God, and do not despair, but do penance. But if you are just, do not be negligent, because God is clement: for God is both just, and loves truth. The Lord will give grace and glory. He did not say, he will give glory and grace; but he

said, the Lord will give grace and glory. First he forgives sins, and afterwards he crowns.

He will not deprive of good things those who walk in innocence. It is better in the Hebrew, "in perfection." For innocence is not a perfect virtue; since he who is innocent, unless he shall have had prudence, is not of perfect and consummate virtue. Therefore he also says in the Gospel: Be prudent as serpents, and simple as doves (Matt. X). Lord of hosts. See what he says, Lord of hosts. Therefore when we have some sins in us: God who is the Lord of hosts, is not our Lord; because he is not the Lord of sinners, but of the just. Blessed is the man who trusts in you. He trusts in the Lord, who has no conscience of sins, who lifts up free eyes to heaven. He trusts, who knows that he has not offended his Lord; to whom is glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM LXXXIV.

Unto the end for the sons of Korah. The psalm is pre-noted with this title. I have frequently said, wherever the title is "of the sons of Korah," there is nothing sad, but always joyful. For the sadness of the father is consoled by the joy of the sons. Finally, read the psalms carefully again, and wherever you find the title "of the sons of Korah," you will find nothing sad. I have frequently said that Korah, which is interpreted as the place of Calvary, must necessarily signify something joyful. Finally, who is this Korah? He who was ascending from Jericho into Bethel. Bethel, the house of God. Attend carefully. Whoever is in Jeri-

cho, and wishes to go to the house of God, must necessarily ascend. Therefore our Korah, that is, Elisha, ascended from Jericho into the house of God in Bethel, and there come out from Bethel, that is, from the house of God, that is, from the synagogue where previously the house of God had been, there come out forty-two boys, and they mock Elisha and our Korah, and say: Go up, you bald-head; go up, you bald-head. He came to his own house, and is mocked by the little ones of Bethel. But that most patient Elisha, who therefore had come into Bethel so that he might save, looked back at some point: he looked back, and commanded two bears to come out from the forest, and they killed the forty-two boys (IV Kings II). So also our Lord, that is, our Korah, when he had come into Bethel, and wished to ascend, being mocked by the little ones, commands two bears to come out, that is, Vespasian and Titus, and they killed the forty-two boys. Who are these forty and two boys? From the ascension of Christ until the subversion of Jerusalem, there are forty and two years. Look carefully, and so you will find. And so he gave them a place of repentance for forty and two years after his resurrection, when he ascended to Bethel. But because they were mocking: Go up, you bald-head; go up, you bald-head; two bears came out, and killed them.

Lord, you have blessed your land. It is said of the coming of the Savior. This is properly according to history. Moreover according to tropology, when we shall have spoken of the history, afterwards we shall speak. Lord, you have blessed

your land. This we have said of the coming of the Savior. The land which had offended you, which had been defiled with idolatries, was saved at your coming. Lord, you have blessed your land. The sinner speaks after having obtained pardon. Lord, you have blessed your land. Although it brought forth thistles and thorns, yet it is your creature, and therefore it was saved. You have turned away the captivity of Jacob. Of those who believed in Christ. You have turned away the captivity of Jacob. Whoever is in sins, is held captive.

You have forgiven the iniquity of your people. Not because of their works, but because of your mercy you have saved your people. And you have covered all their sins. Until the end the psalm is about the coming of the Savior, as it said, mercy and truth. Nevertheless his salvation is near them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land. For truly the glory of God dwelt in our land, and then justice looked down from heaven. For the Lord will give goodness. What goodness? Our land has given its fruit. Mary, our land, our flesh, gave its fruit. Justice has walked before him. The virgin land gave just fruit. This meanwhile we have said according to history: now let us speak according to tropology: You have forgiven the iniquity of your people. No one forgives, except what is owed. You have covered all their sins. You have covered them with virtues, and therefore sins do not appear. As if he were saying: You have covered iniquity with justice; you have covered impudicity with chastity; you have covered blackness with brightness.

You have mitigated all your wrath: you have turned away from the wrath of your indignation. Convert us, O God of our salvations, etc. See what he says: You, as far as was in you, were turned away from wrath because of your clemency. Convert us, O God. You being turned away from wrath, have turned us away from sins. Convert us, O God of our salvations. Why did he not say, of our salvation, but of our salvations. If we sinned once, we would need one salvation. We have sinned many times: therefore we need many salvations.

God, you being turned will quicken us. As long therefore as the Lord is not turned to us, we are dead.

Show us, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your salvation. That the Savior descended, is the mercy of God. The physician would not have come, unless many were sick. Because many were sick, therefore the physician came. Because we were in need of mercy, therefore the Savior came.

I will hear what the Lord God may speak in me. Many think when Moses speaks and says: thus says the Lord, and Isaiah, and the rest, and when it is said: The word of the Lord was made to Isaiah, or to Ezekiel the prophet; that the speech happens outwardly, and through these ears the prophet hears what is spoken by the Lord: It is not so. Finally also what does our Lord speak to the Pharisees and Jews? he who has ears to hear let him hear (Luke VIII). And Isaiah says: The Lord added to me an ear (Isaiah V). See what he says: The Lord added to me an ear. Since I did not have

that ear which is in the heart; he added it to me so that I might be able to hear the speeches of God. And now therefore whatever the prophet hears, he hears in the heart. For when we cry in our hearts, Abba Father, and that cry is of silence, and the silence is heard by the Lord: so also the Lord speaks to our heart, which cries, Abba Father. Therefore therefore now the prophet says: I will hear what the Lord God may speak in me. The prophet Habakkuk says something such: I will stand in contemplation, and I will see what the Lord may answer to me, and what I may answer to him (Habak. II). And I will hear what the Lord God may speak in me. Therefore also this which he says: I will hear what the Lord God may speak in me: he speaks in the heart, he speaks in the sense. Do you wish to know what kind of thing the cry of the heart is? Do you wish to know that the cry before God is not of the voice, but of tears? It is said in the Lamentations of Jeremiah: The apple of my eye has not been silent (Lam. II).

For he will speak peace unto his people. Properly this is said of the people of the Jews, who are to believe in Christ. This is of the coming of Christ. It is said also of the faith of the Jewish people, that is, of the apostles, and whoever believed the apostles. For he will speak peace unto his people. Peace is not spoken, except when there is no war.

And upon his saints, and unto them that are converted to the heart. This means those who first followed the flesh, and afterwards are converted to the heart. That you may know that this

verse is said for the Jews, that is, for those who believed in the Savior: see the examples which we have mentioned. Make me a Jew read Leviticus, and all those sacraments which are written, and how a leper enters into the synagogue, how a hen is taken and its neck is twisted. Then it is told of the blood how it is sprinkled: it is told of the water: it is told of the hyssop: it is told also how his garments are rent, and thus he who had been a leper enters into the synagogue. If we read according to the letter, what does it profit us what we read? But if we be converted to the heart, if we understand spiritually: we shall see that a leper cannot enter unto the people of God, unless his garments be rent, unless whatever has been closed be revealed. Finally see, that this leper enters not the synagogue except through blood and water and hyssop. Therefore thou also who until this day hast been a leper, thy leprosy did not appear before thou camest to the priest. But because thou hast come to the priest, the priest has unripped thy garments, and what seemed covered and sound, he has shown to be leprous. All thy sins and thy leprosy he has placed before thy eyes, and therefore he leads thee back into the synagogue of God through blood and water. Through blood, through the passion of Christ, and through water, through baptism. Therefore after leprosy thou shalt not be able to be healed, except through the passion and through baptism. And when thou shalt have done this, that also is said: Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: thou shalt wash me, and I

shall be made whiter than snow (Ps. 50). Until today thou art in Egypt: as long as thou shalt not come to the blood and to the water, thou shalt not be able to be saved. Dost thou wish that the exterminator who slew Egypt, slay thee not? Take hyssop, dip it in blood, sprinkle thy door-posts. The exterminator, when he shall see the blood on thy forehead, shall not be able to approach. Why have I said all this? Because it is written: And unto them that are converted to the heart. Therefore God shall not be able to speak peace to his people, except to those who are converted to the heart.

Nevertheless, his salvation is near them that fear him. I show the way of salvation, I give mercy, although thou art not yet converted to the heart: yet I wait, I give a place for repentance. And what is all this. That glory may dwell in our land. Therefore he calls thee to repentance: that thou who wast a leper, mayest have Christ as a guest.

Mercy and truth have met each other; justice and peace have kissed. O how excellent a friendship! Mercy and truth have met each other. Thou art a sinner: hear what it says, mercy. Thou art a saint: hear what it says, and truth. Neither if thou art a sinner, shouldst thou despair: nor if thou art just, shouldst thou be proud. Let us say it another way: There are two believing peoples: one from the people of the Gentiles, and the other from that of the Jews. To the Jews it was promised that the Savior would come: but to us who were strangers to the law of God, it was not promised. Mercy therefore is in the people of the Gentiles, truth in the people of the Jews: because what was

promised, has come, that is, what was promised to the fathers, is fulfilled in the children. Justice and peace have kissed. See what it says: Justice and peace have kissed. It is the same as what it said above: Mercy and truth. Mercy is the same as peace: but truth is the same as justice. For if anything pertains to peace, it pertains also to mercy, and if anything to truth, it pertains to justice. See therefore what it says: Justice and peace have kissed each other, that is, mercy and truth have made friendship, that is, both the people of the Gentiles and that of the Jews is under one shepherd, Christ.

Truth is sprung out of the earth. I am the way, and the life, and the truth (John 14). He who says, I am the truth, is sprung from the earth. What is this truth that is sprung out of the earth? A rod shall come forth out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root (Isa. 11). And in another place: For God has wrought salvation in the midst of the earth (Ps. 73). What sayest thou, Manichaean, who deniest that the Savior had flesh? Behold truth, that is, the Savior, is sprung from the earth, that is, from Mary. And justice has looked down from heaven. For it was just, that the Savior should have mercy on his people. See what it says: O the just judgments of God and his unsearchable ways! Truth is sprung out of the earth, that is, the Savior. And again: And justice has looked down from heaven. Justice is the Savior himself. How is it sprung from the earth? How has it looked down from heaven? It is sprung from the earth, because he was born a

man; it has looked down from heaven, because God is always in the heavens, that is, he was indeed born from the earth; but he who was born from the earth, is always in heaven, that is, he so appeared on earth, that he did not forsake heaven. For God looked down everywhere: because as long as we were sinning, he turned away his eyes from us. What it says is this: It is just that the potter should have mercy on his works, that the shepherd should have mercy on his flock. We are his people, we are his creature. Therefore he is sprung from the earth, and has looked down from heaven, that he may fulfill his justice, and have mercy on his work. Finally, that you may know that justice does not sound of cruelty, but of mercy, see what it says:

For the Lord will give goodness. Therefore he looked down from heaven, that he might have mercy on his works. And our land shall yield her fruit. Truth indeed is sprung out of the earth. This is of the past. Now it is said of the future: And our land shall yield her fruit. Despair not: what was once born of Mary, is daily born in us also. And our land shall yield her fruit. And we can bring forth Christ, if we will. And our land shall yield her fruit, from which may be made the heavenly bread, of which it is said: I am the bread which came down from heaven (John 6). All these things we have said of the mercy of the Lord, because for this reason he came, that he might save the human race. Nevertheless we ought to know, that he himself is to judge the living and the dead, he himself shall come to judgment.

Justice shall walk before him, and shall set his steps in the way. Be not negligent. Justice shall walk before him, and shall set his steps in the way. See what it says, his steps: where there are no stones, where there are no thorns and thistles, where the way is level, where he can walk, where he cannot stumble. And let us therefore make in our heart a way for the Lord; for which way John also labored, and cried in the wilderness, that we should make a way for the Lord (Matt. 3). Therefore even now it is said: And he shall set his steps in the way. Where he finds a way, he walks. Although before we had thorns and thistles, although also stones, it is said to us in Isaiah: And cast out the stones from the way (Isa. 57). But for this reason he says it: lest when he should wish to walk in our way, he should strike his foot. The stones which are in the way, and are commanded to be cast out, are our sins. Christ walks not in our heart, if there be any sin, immediately he strikes against the stones. And he shall set his steps in the way. Let us make a way, and Jesus shall set his steps in the way, to whom be glory and honor for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 85.

A prayer of David. This psalm contains the voice of our Mediator coming to his passion. But at the end of it, it holds the prayer of the prophet.

Incline, O Lord, thy ear, and hear me: for I am holy. According to the fragility of the assumed body he pours out prayer to the Father. But

according to his deity he calls himself holy, as he had once said to Moses: Be ye holy, because I am holy (Lev. 19 and 20). Save thy servant, O my God, that trusts in thee. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have cried to thee all the day. He took the form of a servant, which he prays to be saved in all the time of the present life. For he knows that although the spirit is willing, yet the flesh is weak.

Gladden the soul of thy servant. From the present tribulations, [which is] sorrowful. Because to thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul: Believing that it is to be raised up to thee.

Because thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and of much mercy to all that call upon thee. To those who call upon thee from a pure heart, thou showest thyself mild, and grantest them copious mercy.

Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer, etc. Because I ask just things.

In the day of my tribulation. That is, in the day of the passion. I have cried to thee. From the cross. Because thou hast heard me. That thou mightest restore my spirit commended to thee.

There is none like to thee among the gods, O Lord, and there is none according to thy works. There is none found in the idols of the Gentiles, who can work as thou dost.

All the nations whatsoever thou hast made, shall come and adore before thee, O Lord, etc. For through my passion they shall know the greatness of thy virtue. From here the prophet speaks.

Lead me, O Lord, in thy way, and I will walk in thy truth. For if thou leadest me to thy Christ,

who is the way, no fallacy shall hold me back. Let my heart rejoice that it may fear thy name. When I shall have been rescued from the sorrow of crimes, then I shall rejoice in thee with spiritual joy.

I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart: and I will glorify thy name for ever, etc. Why he should praise the name of the Lord, or honor him, the following verse explains, saying:

Thou hast delivered my soul from the lower hell. Not that there are two hells, but he called the upper hell, sin: and the lower, the true hell, in which sinners are damned. Therefore he praises for this the mercy of the Lord, that he has been rescued from the punishment of the lower hell.

O God, the wicked are risen up against me: and the assembly of the mighty have sought my soul. [The assembly] of vices, or of demons. Not from the person of Christ the prophet speaks these things, but it is understood of the Jews. They have not set God before their eyes. Their malice had blinded them.

And thou, O Lord God, art a compassionater and merciful: patient and of much mercy and true. Merciful, when thou forgivest: patient, when thou waitest for the sinner, that he may be converted: true, when thou shalt restore the promises.

Look upon me, and have mercy on me: give thy command to thy boy. For resisting adverse powers. And save the son of thy handmaid. Of the Church, in which I am reborn.

Show me a token for good, that they who hate me may see, and be confounded: because thou, O Lord, hast helped me, and hast comforted me. Let me be fortified with the sign of thy cross, which seeing, the adverse powers may flee confounded, and depart from me. For these things the prophet asks for our people. But we also pray, O Lord, that being protected by the sign of thy cross, and guarded by its defense, we may deserve to be delivered from all the snares of the devil: because to thee is honor and glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 86.

A psalm of a canticle to the sons of Korah. What the difference is between a psalm and a canticle, I have frequently said: a psalm is said from the Psaltery: but a canticle is brought forth from the voice. A psalm refers to the hands, that is, to works: a canticle to theory.

Its foundations are in the holy mountains. He did not say beforehand whose; and he said: Its foundations are in the holy mountains. He who speaks is a prophet. They are the sons of Korah. What Korah is interpreted as, I have frequently said: Calvary, that is, the sons of the resurrection. Its foundations, whether of God, or certainly of the Church. But what are the foundations, if not the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit? These foundations therefore are not in the valleys, but they are in the mountains, and not in any mountains whatsoever, but in holy mountains. Paul speaks: As a wise architect I have laid

the foundation (1 Cor. 3), that is, the faith of the Trinity. Finally he says, also in another place: For they looked for a city having foundations: whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11): Its foundations are in the holy mountains. Therefore he said in the holy mountains: because there are also other mountains not holy. Finally it is said in Isaiah: Upon a dark mountain lift ye up a banner (Isa. 13). And in another place it is said: Who art thou, O corrupt mountain (Zech. 4)? It is said also in Jeremiah: Give glory to the Lord your God, before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains (Jer. 13). You see therefore that there are also dark mountains, and it is said to us by Jeremiah, that we should give glory to God, before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains. For if our feet shall have struck against those mountains, we cannot give glory to the Lord. Its foundations are in the holy mountains. Whom can we call the foundations? The apostles. In them were the foundations: there first was laid the faith of the Church, and there the foundations were laid. And because everyone builds upon the foundation: one gold, another silver, another precious stones: the Lord loveth the gates of Zion above all the tabernacles of Jacob. He loves these gates, which we see to have fallen. He loves these gates, and he loves this Zion, which is plowed as a field. And see what it says: The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, above all the tabernacles of Jacob. See what it says: Above all the cities of Jacob, that is, of Judah: he loves this city only. And how do we see others standing in part, and this one to have utterly

fallen? Let us read the Apocalypse of John (Chap. 21): let us read also Isaiah (Chap. 62). Where the city of Jerusalem is built, and its twelve gates are said to be constructed of precious stones, and the city itself descends from heaven, and its walls are said to be golden, and its streets are said to be paved with emerald, and individual gates are said [to be] of individual precious stones (Ezek. 28). Are these all the riches of the Lord, and does the Lord love this which men also [love]? Does he prohibit us from avarice, and does he himself construct a city out of avarice? Therefore, the Lord loveth the gates of Zion. It is manifest that he wrote of the apostles [as] those twelve gates of Zion. Above all the tabernacles of Jacob, [that is] above all the ancient saints. This we have said for now according to one trope. But let us say it also another way: The Lord loveth the gates of Zion. To me the gates of Zion seem to be the virtues. For as the gates of death are vices and sins: so the gates of Zion seem to me to be the virtues. Finally he says in another place: thou who liftest me up from the gates of death (Ps. 9). But if the gates of death are sins: therefore the gates of Jerusalem are virtues. Above all the tabernacles of Jacob. See how Jacob, that is, the old people, has no foundation, nor a house placed on foundations, but tabernacles which quickly pass away.

Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God. Therefore this which was said, 'its foundations are in the holy mountains', we can also say of God. But we can also say this: Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God. What is this city where

glorious things are said? In all the prophets it has been spoken of this city. Isaiah says: Arise, arise, O Jerusalem, put on the strength of thy arm (Isa. 52). Again Isaiah himself [says]: I am a firm city, a city which is not attacked. David also says: The rush of the river maketh glad the city of God (Ps. 45). And in another place: O Lord, in thy city thou shalt bring their images to nothing (Ps. 72). And the Savior spoke glorious things of this city. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid (Matt. 5).

I will be mindful of Rahab and Babylon knowing me. Because it said: 'Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God', and yet we understand that city [to be] the Church gathered from the Gentiles, therefore now it is said of the vocation of the Gentiles: I will be mindful of Rahab and Babylon knowing me. Whoever is a sinner, let him be secure. The Lord was mindful of Rahab. I said 'secure', if he should return to the Lord. Otherwise security without tears has no remedy. I will be mindful of Rahab. Rahab that harlot who received the spies of Joshua: who was in Jericho, where Joshua had come, and sent two spies to Jericho (Josh. 2). This world, which is subverted in seven days, wishes to kill the spies. And while it desires to kill the spies, only the harlot Rahab received [them]. And she received them not in a lower place, but in an upper room. Let us say therefore first according to what is commonly said: for neither ought we to let go that interpretation. And she received them not in a lower place, but in an upper room. On the roof, that is, in the sublimity of her faith, and she hid them in

flax, that is, in the stalks of flax. This we have said for now according to the history, and you see how from the history itself we gradually ascend to mystical sacraments. Joshua the leader, who had led the people out of Egypt: Joshua the leader, who is interpreted as 'Savior', Moses being dead and buried in the land of Moab, in the land of Arabia, that is, the Law being dead, desires to lead his people into the Gospel. He sends two spies to Jericho. Two spies, one to the circumcision, the other to the Gentiles, Peter and Paul. Jericho seeks to kill them: that harlot received them, the Church gathered from the Gentiles. She believes in Jesus, and those whom Jericho wished to kill, she saves on her roof. And she places them on her roof, in her exalted faith, and hides them in the stalk of flax. Although she be a harlot, yet she places them in flax. Flax comes to whiteness with much labor and diligence. You yourselves know, that flax is born of the earth, and when it has been born in the earth, it is black: it has no beauty, no use. First therefore it is taken from the earth, it is broken, then it is twisted, afterwards it is washed, then it is beaten, then it is woven, and with much care and labor it hardly comes to whiteness. Therefore this is said, that this harlot indeed received the spies in her flax, that those spies might turn her flax into whiteness. What then? She gives them counsel, and says thus: Wait these three days. It was not one day, not two, but three days. See what it says. Wait three days. It does not name three nights, but three days: because she had an enlightened heart. And then

it says 'after three days'. And what does it say: Go not, she said, through the plains, but go up into the mountains. For the faith of the Church is not established in the valleys, but in the mountains. Jericho therefore is afterwards subverted by Joshua, and this harlot alone is kept safe. Therefore this is said: I will be mindful of Rahab, that is, of her who received my spies, and I in the day of judgment will be mindful of her. I will be mindful of Rahab. What is Rahab interpreted as? we have spoken according to the history: let us speak also according to the interpretation of the name. According to anagoge Rahab is interpreted in two ways. Either it is interpreted as 'breadth': or certainly it is interpreted as 'pride'. Therefore see what it says. She who once walked in the broad and spacious way which leadeth to death (Matt. 7): she who was proud, and had an impetus to ruin, afterwards was converted to humility. I will be mindful of Rahab, and of Babylon. Babylon is interpreted as 'confusion'. See what it says: Not only of Rahab will I be mindful, but also of Babylon: whatever soul is confounded by vices and sins. And of Babylon knowing me. See what it says: Although one has been a Rahab, although he has been a Babylon: yet I will be mindful of whoever shall have known me. Therefore if we have been Rahab and Babylon, we also ought to be secure, and to say: God has said: I will be mindful of Rahab and Babylon. But see what follows: 'knowing me'. They were Rahab and Babylon, but afterwards they were converted to me. I will be mindful of Rahab and Babylon

knowing me. She who once was in the breadth of sins, afterwards ascended to the memory of God. Hitherto he has spoken as if through an enigma: but now he speaks more openly to the vocation of the Gentiles. For see what it says:

Behold the foreigners and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians, these were there. He calls them 'foreigners' in distinction to Israel. For we are foreigners, and Tyre. Tyre is interpreted as 'tribulation,' that is, sor; and the people of the Ethiopians is black, and involved in the filth of sins. 'And the people of the Ethiopians.' This is what is said: 'Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God' (Psalm 67). 'Behold the foreigners, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians.' What is said is this: Those who were previously alien, they were in tribulation; they were placed in the heart of the sea. For it is said of Tyre: 'Tyre placed in the heart of the sea.' Those, therefore, who were previously in the sea and were beaten by the waves, were afterwards found in the Church. 'And the people of the Ethiopians.' We once were Ethiopians, Ethiopians in vices and sins; for sins had made us black, but afterwards we heard: 'Wash yourselves, be clean' (Isaiah 1). And we said: 'Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow' (Psalm 50). Therefore, we Ethiopians have been turned into whiteness. 'Behold the foreigners, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians, these were there.' Where were they? Where glorious things were spoken of thee, O city of God.

'Shall not a man say to Zion, and a man was born in her?' The Seventy interpreters translated it thus: 'Shall not a man say to Zion?' Many, therefore, despised it, nor did they understand what meti Sion is, and they added rho (ρ) and read meter Sion erei anthropos ('Mother Zion shall a man say'). And they say this for this reason: because there follows: 'and a man was born in her.' They even hoped it ought to be said thus: 'Mother Zion shall a man say,' because he is said to be a 'born son'; for this reason they err in the word for 'mother.' Let us say therefore first according to what is commonly said; for neither ought we to let go that interpretation. Let us also say: 'Mother Zion shall a man say, and a man was born in her.' These who were born in the Church—the foreigners, Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians—these are those who are born in the Church; they believe in the Church, and are born in the Church. For unless they be baptized, they will not be sons of the Church. But those who are baptized in the Church call the Church 'mother.' Let us say also according to the Hebrew Truth: 'Shall not a man say to Zion, and a man was born in her?' What he says is this: who will be able to announce to Zion? who of men will be able to announce to her: that a man shall be born in her, and he himself shall save her? That is, no man can announce to her that Zion is saved in the man who is born in her. 'And a man was born in her.' Who is this man? 'And the Most High himself hath founded her.' Let the Arians respond, since they say that only the Father is the Most High; behold, here it is

said of the Son: 'And the Most High himself hath founded her.' He did not say: The Son of God, who was in the beginning with the Father. But what did he say? 'A man was born in her, and the Most High himself hath founded her.' But if he is called 'Most High,' how much more the Word of God!

The Lord shall tell in the scripture of the peoples, and of these princes who were in her. He did not say, 'who are in her,' but 'who were in her.' The Lord shall tell: and in what way shall He tell? Not by word, but by scripture. In whose scripture? In that of the peoples. It is not enough to say 'in that of the peoples,' but He also says 'of the princes.' And of which princes? Who are in her. He did not say this, but 'who were in her.' See, therefore, how Holy Scripture is full of sacraments. We read the apostle Paul: we read Peter, and we read him saying: 'Do you seek a proof of him who speaketh in me, Christ?' (2 Cor. 13). And what Paul speaks, Christ speaks. 'For he who receiveth you, receiveth me' (Matt. 10). Our Lord and Savior, therefore, tells us and speaks in the scriptures of His princes. The Lord shall tell in the scriptures of the peoples: in the Holy Scriptures. Which Scripture is read to all peoples, that is, so that all may understand. What he says is this: Just as the apostles wrote, so also the Lord Himself, that is, through His Gospels, has spoken, not so that a few might understand, but so that all might. Plato wrote in scripture, but he did not write for the peoples, but for a few. For hardly three men understand [him]. But these, that is, the princes of the Church and the

princes of Christ, did not write for a few, but for the whole people. 'And of the princes,' that is, of the apostles and evangelists, 'of these who were in her.' See what he says: 'Who were,' not 'who are': so that, with the exception of the apostles, whatever else shall be said afterwards may be cut off, and not have authority afterwards. Although someone may be holy after the apostles, although he may be eloquent, he does not have authority. For 'the Lord shall tell in the scripture of the peoples, and of these princes who were in her.'

'As if of all rejoicing, the habitation is in thee.' The prophet speaks to the Church, and says to her: 'As if of all rejoicing, the habitation is in thee.' Why did he not say, 'the habitation of all rejoicing is in thee,' but said, 'as if of all rejoicing'? It is said in another psalm: 'When the Lord turned back the captivity of Zion, we became as if comforted' (Psalm 125), and he did not say, 'comforted.' So also in this place he says: 'As if of all rejoicing, the habitation is in thee.' Why did he say all this? Because in the present world, although someone may be holy, although he may renounce the world, he does not have perfect victory. Finally, it is said in the Gospel: 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted' (Matt. 5). If, however, it is said: 'Blessed are they that weep, for they shall laugh,' it is manifest that in the present world there is no certain joy; therefore, our joy is, as it were, joy. 'The habitation is in thee.' See what he says, so that someone may never depart from the Church. We ought to know that what we have interpreted concerning the Church can

also be understood concerning our soul. For if Zion is interpreted as 'watchtower,' and our soul, if it does not otherwise, except always to consider more sublime things: the true Church, the true temple of Christ, is nothing else but the human soul. The Church of Christ is nothing other than the soul of those believing in Christ. 'You,' he says, 'are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you' (1 Cor. 3). 'Her foundations are in the holy mountains,' that is, God's foundations are only in the holy mountains, in the dogmas of the believing soul. 'The Lord loveth the gates of Zion.' Our Zion has many gates, which if we have opened, the bridegroom enters to us and sleeps with us. Finally, he himself says: 'Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man shall open to me, I will enter in and will sup with him' (Rev. 3). 'Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God.' A city is not one building, but consists in many buildings. So also our Zion, unless it has many virtues, will not be the city of God. 'I will be mindful of Rahab and Babylon knowing me.' She who once was in the breadth of sins, afterwards ascended into the memory of God.

PSALM 87.

A song of a Psalm for the sons of Korah: unto the end, for Mahalath, to respond, an understanding of Heman the Israelite. This psalm contains the sacraments of the Lord's Passion, bringing forth those things even unto the consummation, which the same Lord, having suffered for the salvation of the world, spoke to the Father.

'O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried in the day.' Living with Thee in that clarity which I always had: I have preached repentance to the peoples. 'And in the night before thee.' Amidst the darkness of the Jews.

'Let my prayer enter into thy sight: incline thy ear to my petition.' Which I, placed in this body, pour forth from the deep.

'For my soul is filled with evils.' With the sins of the perishing people. 'And my life hath drawn nigh to hell.' When I am delivered up for those who perish.

'I am counted with them that go down into the pit.' Just as they thought to bring me down into death like other sinners: nor did they believe I would rise again. 'I am become as a man without help.' When there is no companion for my freedom in hell: nor a helper to deliver. 'Free among the dead.' No one bound me in hell: but I, by my own power, loosened the chain of the bound.

'As the wounded sleeping in the sepulchers: of whom thou art mindful no more.' Just as those satiated with the riches of the world, and buried in lusts and obscenities, are not remembered by Thee, so also I was snatched from the heart of the Jews. 'And they are cast off from thy hand.' Separated from Thy power.

'They have laid me in the lower pit.' With thieves and guilty sinners. 'In darkness and in the shadow of death.' To the infernal anguishes, in which death alone shall dominate.

'Thy wrath is confirmed upon me, and thou hast brought all thy waves upon me.' The anger

and storm of the slaughter of Thy wrath, which Thou wast about to pour out upon the Gentiles, Thou hast brought upon me, who took up their sins: as he says elsewhere: 'For the sins of my people I struck him' (Isaiah 53).

'Thou hast put away my acquaintance far from me.' The angels or the apostles, so that no one would provide help. For I also could have asked Thee, Father, to provide me more than twelve legions of angels (Matt. 26), but I was silent, so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. 'They have set me as an abomination to themselves.' Not the acquaintance, but the Jews.

'I was delivered up to death, and I came not forth.' I am not disjoined from the paternal divinity: but neither did I immediately come forth from the sepulcher, so that the delay of the resurrection might show the truth of death. 'My eyes have grown weak through poverty.' By the thinness of the senses, surely, when the apostles, having left him, either fled or denied [him]: because they did not know he would rise again, like that beloved disciple. For as yet he did not know the Scriptures, that it behooved him to rise again from the dead.

'I have cried to thee, O Lord.' Saying: 'Eli, Eli, lamma azabthani' (Matt. 27). 'All the day I have stretched out my hands to thee.' Extended on the cross.

'Wilt thou show wonders to the dead?' Not to those who, being alive, are dead, but to me who am alive in Thee. 'Or shall physicians raise [them] up, and they shall confess to thee?' Not the spices

of physicians, but Thou, Father, dost raise me up. Neither shall they, but I will confess to Thee among the peoples.

'Shall any one tell of thy mercy in the sepulcher, and of thy truth in perdition?' He buried in the riches of the world will not praise Thee, nor he dwelling in the perdition of sin.

'Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy justice in the land of oblivion?' For every one that doth sin, hateth the light; and from a body oppressed by earthly vices, Thy justice is hidden.

'But I to thee, O Lord, have cried.' In the secret of prayer. 'And in the morning my prayer shall prevent thee.' Because Thou shalt clarify me by the morning resurrection.

'Why, O Lord, dost thou cast off my prayer: dost thou turn away thy face from me?' So that this cup may not pass.

'I am poor, and in labors from my youth.' From the time of the flesh assumed. 'But having been exalted.' On the cross. 'I have been humbled.' In the sepulcher. 'And troubled.' In death.

'Thy wraths have passed over me.' They passed, and did not persist. 'And thy terrors have troubled me.' Those very things which I pronounced above that I would pour out upon the nations.

'They have surrounded me like water all the day.' The Jews in the waves of persecutions. 'They have surrounded me at once.' The Pharisees with the priests: Pilate with the princes, and the peoples.

'Thou hast put away friend and neighbor far from me.' The neighbor is he who does mercy: who was not found with me. 'And my acquaintance because of misery.' Before the confusion of the Passion, even the apostles themselves were put far from me. From here, now descending into hell, bringing back spoils from the hand of the bound strong man, his morning operation prevents the Father: when rising in the morning he appeared to many. Whom we suppliantly pray, that He may deign to strengthen with His fortitude the people made free by His Passion from the snare of hell, and to absolve [them] from the bonds of the second death: so that, being dispatched and free, we may merit to be joined to His kingdom. To Him be glory and empire with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for all ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 88.

An understanding of Ethan the Israelite. This psalm is contained in many voices. For it has the voice of the Father to the Son, of the Son to the Father: of the Church, and of the prophet himself, or of the apostles. From the prophetic voice, therefore, it thus begins to the Father:

'The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever.' Those mercies by which Thou didst deign to visit through the Son man dead in sin.

'From generation to generation.' From the Old in the New Testament. 'I will announce thy truth.' Thy Christ. 'In my mouth.' In which confession is made unto salvation.

'For thou hast said: for ever mercy shall be built up.' For Thy miseration is always being sublimated, and is never destroyed. 'In the heavens thy truth shall be prepared.' In the apostles it is predestinated. Hence the voice of the Father:

'I have disposed my testament to my elect.' To the teachers of the Churches, that they may either teach or inform the peoples acquired through grace. 'I have sworn to David my servant.' Surely God's swearing is the confirmation of a promise. 'To David my servant,' that is, to Christ the Lord: who assumed flesh from the race of David. 'I will prepare thy seed for ever.' In the believers of the Church.

'And I will build up thy throne from generation to generation.' The Church itself, in which as king Thou shalt sit for ever. Again the prophet says:

'The heavens shall confess thy wonders, O Lord: for [they shall confess] thy truth in the church of the saints.' For the apostles shall preach Jesus Christ, and the things which Thou workest through Him in the congregation of the saints.

'For who in the clouds shall be compared to the Lord?' In the prophets surely. 'Or who shall be like to the Lord among the sons of God?' There are many sons of God through adoption: but no one can be assimilated to the only-begotten Son, the true God.

'God, who is glorified in the counsel of the saints.' The Paraclete, surely, who was to be adored in the apostolic congregation, is preached to be equal to the Father and the Son. For also the

Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, subsists in one omnipotence. 'Great and terrible above all them that are round about him.' Who have merited to draw near to Him through innocence of life.

'O Lord God of hosts, who is like to thee?' In power and virtue. 'Thou art mighty, O Lord, and thy truth is round about thee.' These concerning whom Thou, who art the truth, sayest: 'Father, I will that where I am, they also may be with me' (John 17).

'Thou shalt rule the power of the sea.' Over the powers of this world. 'And thou mitigatest the motion of the waves thereof.' The temptations which they move against Thy servants.

'Thou hast humbled the proud one as one that is wounded.' The devil, who, wounded by the nails of Thy cross, was humbled in the spoils. 'Thou in the power of thy arm hast scattered thy enemies.' His satellites.

'Thine are the heavens, and thine is the earth.' The apostles or the rest of the saints: who, placed on earth, lead a heavenly life. 'The world and the fullness thereof thou hast founded.' There is no doubt that the fullness of this world was procreated by Thee. But also that land of the living, in which the fullness of holiness shall inhabit, with Thee introducing, Thou hast prepared for Thy elect. 'The north and the sea thou hast created.' By the 'north' (aquilo) the Antichrist is understood. Concerning whom God says to Jeremiah: 'From the north shall an evil be opened upon all the inhabitants of the earth' (Jer. 1).

Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name. Hermon, I say, is interpreted as 'anathema,' as we explained in the forty-first psalm. Tabor, however, means 'coming light' or 'let light come.' Therefore, that light which is pronounced to come either optatively or prophetically is understood as the Old Testament. That, however, which brings forth anathema, that is, perdition, shows the New Testament, in which sins are commanded to be anathematized, the Lord saying: 'Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish.' Let both, therefore, exult in the name of the Lord: since either that one prophesies that the light of the world is coming, or this one demonstrates that He is already shining in the world itself by signs and virtues. Thy arm with power. Thy fortitude shall prevail with that efficacy which Thou shalt will.

Let thy hand be strengthened. The works which Thou doest in the world. And let thy right hand be exalted. Thy majesty, or the Church acquired among the nations. Justice and judgment are the preparation of thy throne. Unless someone has first done justice and judgment, he cannot be made Thy throne.

Mercy and truth shall go before thy face. For where mercy and truth accompany, there also the inspection of Thy face is turned. Blessed is the people that knoweth jubilation. Surely spiritual jubilation, through which the wickednesses of the world are collided: as once at the jubilation of Joshua and the priests, Jericho fell, holding the figure of the world (Josh.).

O Lord, they shall walk in the light of thy countenance. In the illumination surely of the Holy Spirit. And in thy name they shall rejoice all the day. In that new name which is blessed on earth, that is, 'Christian.' And in thy justice they shall be exalted. Following and guarding it.

For thou art the glory of their virtue. For they glory in Thee, and not in another. And in thy good pleasure shall our horn be exalted. For just as Thy precepts were well-pleasing to them, so it is well-pleasing to Thee that their virtue be exalted in Thee.

For our taking up is of the Lord. Of the flesh, surely. And of the holy one of Israel our king. Of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who reigns in the Church. Hence again the prophet speaks to the Father:

Then thou spokest in a vision to thy saints. To the prophets and the rest of the elect. And thou saidst: I have laid help. Surely for the people. Upon one that is mighty. That is, over the devil, who would oppress his pride. And I have exalted one chosen out of my people. Christ the Lord. Who is therefore called 'chosen out of the people' because He assumed flesh from man.

I have found David my servant. He found him: He chose him, surely, that from his race He might assume flesh. But what he says, 'servant,' the Apostle explains: 'He thought it not robbery to be equal to God: but he took the form of a servant' (Phil. 2). With my holy oil I have anointed him. Not with a sad and corrupt [oil], but with one full of joy and holiness.

For my hand shall help him: and my arm shall strengthen him. In the assumed body.

The enemy shall have no advantage over him. The devil surely. And the son of iniquity shall not approach to hurt him. Judas the traitor, who is deservedly called the 'son of iniquity,' that is, of the devil: because the devil entered into his heart to betray Christ.

And I will cut down his enemies before his face. The Jews surely, who often confounded by the Lord as if cut down by swords, departed from His sight. And them that hate him I will turn to flight. He speaks of the wicked demons: who often fled before Him, crying out: 'Why hast thou come before the time to torment us? We know that thou art the Son of God' (Matt. 8).

And my truth and my mercy shall be with him. Truth, because He speaks those things which He heard from me. Mercy, because He heals the infirm, as much in mind as in body. And in my name shall his horn be exalted. The fortitude of the Church redeemed by His blood.

And I will set his hand in the sea. I will show His works to the world. And his right hand in the rivers. Over the principalities and powers of the world.

He shall cry out to me: Thou art my Father: my God, and the support of my salvation. That He often invoked God the Father, we read in the Gospels: as is that [word]: 'Father, clarify me with thyself' (John 17). And again: 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit' (Luke 23). My God. But He calls [him] God when He says: 'God,

my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and many other things.

'And I will make him my firstborn, high above the kings of the earth.' For the Lord Jesus is the firstborn from the dead (Col. 1); as the Apostle says: 'Having become high, ascending into the heavens: subjecting all the kingdoms of the world.'

'I will keep my mercy for him for ever, and my testament faithful to him.' In the Church which He redeemed through mercy and the testament of His precepts, these are perpetually preserved in her.

'And I will make his seed to endure for evermore, and his throne as the days of heaven.' For the congregation of the saints which is in the Church, in which God resides as if on a throne, shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

'But if his children forsake my law,' etc. That the forsakers of the law, the forgetters of judgments, the profaners of justifications, and the transgressors of commandments, are corrected with the rod, that is, in the discipline of God, and divine mercy is not taken away: this is shown, so that no one without hope of recovery may be barred from the Church: because as divine severity terrifies, while justice argues, so piety repairs, while clemency moderates.

'Once have I sworn by my holy one.' In that man of the Lord. 'If I lie unto David.' For by no lie is God circumscribed: as the evangelist says: 'One jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till

all be fulfilled' (Matt. 5). 'His seed shall endure for ever.' The acquired people. 'And his throne as the sun before me.' He promises again and again that the Church itself shall remain in the clarity of future beatitude. 'And as the moon perfect for ever.' All lucid, all perfect: containing nothing of obscurity in itself. 'And a faithful witness in heaven.' Christ the Lord Himself, who rendered faithful testimony of the Father's work in the world, is to be carried up into the heavens. Hence to the Father the apostolic voice:

'But thou hast rejected and despised.' Because we are separated from our king while He suffers. 'Thou hast deferred thy Christ.' By delivering Him up to enemies.

'Thou hast turned away the testament of thy servant.' By which He had promised that we would reign with Him. 'Thou hast profaned his sanctuary on the earth.' For Thou hadst promised that Thou wouldst not give Thy holy one to see corruption, and now already he is covered in the sepulcher.

'Thou hast broken down all his hedges.' The words of the Law and the prophets in which He was retained. 'Thou hast made his strength fear.' We who heard him when he taught the crowds.

'All that pass by the way have robbed him.' For they pass by Him who said: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life' (John 14): when either they divide His garments, or pierce His body with nails and a point. 'He is become a reproach to his neighbors.' To the Jews, and the princes of the priests, who said: 'Vah! thou that destroyest the

temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it: come down from the cross' (Matt. 27).

'Thou hast set up the right hand of them that oppress him.' When Thou humblest Him into death. 'Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.' Pilate with the Gentiles and the Jews.

'Thou hast turned away the help of his sword.' When the word of His preaching did not profit the Jews. 'And thou hast not assisted him in battle.' In the conflict, surely, of the Passion.

'Thou hast destroyed him from purification.' For if His purity had been bound, surely His garments would not have been defiled by our crimes: as He himself says: 'Their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have defiled all my raiment' (Isaiah 53). For He was also counted among the wicked, and crucified with thieves. 'And thou hast dashed his throne to the ground.' The souls of the saints upon whom He rested; which were troubled by His death.

'Thou hast shortened the days of his time.' His days were diminished, that He might more swiftly return to the Father. 'Thou hast covered him with confusion.' With the confusion surely of death. These things the apostles said, being ignorant that He ought to rise again from the dead. But that they did not know this, the evangelist commemorates. For of the beloved disciple he says: 'For as yet he knew not the Scripture: that he must rise again from the dead' (John 20). And to Peter the words of this resurrection seemed as if delirious tales. But Thomas said: 'Unless I shall see, I will not believe' (Ibid.). Therefore

the apostles spoke such things as if reproaching the Father: because they were ignorant that He would return from hell. Succeeding these, therefore, the Church says:

'How long, O God, turnest thou away unto the end: shall thy anger burn like fire?' How long wilt Thou be angry, that Thou dost not recall Him from death?

'Remember, O Lord, what my substance is.' I have no substance of life, except in Him whom I wait for to return from hell. 'For hast thou made all the children of men in vain?' For if Thou didst not constitute them in vain, but truly in the hope of resurrection, how much more oughtest Thou to raise up Thy Son!

'Who is the man that shall live and not see death: or who shall deliver his soul from the hand of hell?' I know that no carnal man escapes death, nor shall save his soul from the infernal regions. But I know that God lay hidden under the veil of flesh, whom death and hell ought not to retain.

'Where are thy ancient mercies, O Lord: as thou swarest to David in thy truth?' If He is not raised up here?

'Be mindful, O Lord, of the reproach of thy servants.' Who wait for Him. 'Which I have held in my bosom of many nations.' Whom I have gathered as if in a bosom, in one house of belief.

'Wherewith thy enemies have reproached, O Lord.' The Jews, Pharisees, and Sadducees. Wherewith they have reproached. What have they reproached? 'The change of thy Christ.' When changing Himself from these, He said to

the Gentiles: 'Behold your house shall be left to you desolate' (Luke 13).

'Blessed be the Lord for evermore: so be it, so be it.' Behold He is blessed, behold He is glorious when He returns from the infernal regions: when He presents Himself to the disciples, when He restores the vows and pious desires of the Church, saying to the saints: 'Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world' (Matt. last). May He deign to change us from evil acts into good ones, and having made us worthy by His piety, filled with the Holy Spirit, constitute us in His kingdom with His wonted miseration. Because to Him is glory and empire with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 89.

A prayer of Moses the man of God. There are four psalms which are prenoted with 'prayer': the sixteenth, the eighty-fifth, the eighty-ninth, and the hundred and first. In the hundred and first it is said: 'A prayer of the poor man when he was anxious, and poured out his prayer in the sight of God.' This one is: 'A prayer of Moses the man of God.' We read the song of Moses, which [is] in Exodus at that time when the people crossed the Red Sea, and Pharaoh having been submerged with all his army, Mary and Moses sang (Exod. 15). Then we read also in Deuteronomy, that he had written that song in Deuteronomy (Chap. 32). If, therefore, these psalms and these songs are Moses's, why are they not held in their own

volumes? We said, therefore, how the hundred and first psalm is inscribed 'A prayer of the poor man,' and it is another who wrote concerning him, and that poor man who prays for us is the Lord: who though he was rich, was made poor for us, etc. (2 Cor. 8). So also here Moses, since from the beginning of the human race he himself wrote the history: for he himself wrote how heaven and earth were made, how also man was made, concerning the condition of man. And this psalm speaks of the condition of man: what man is, and why he was born. He, therefore, who in Genesis wrote of the condition of men, the same is now also brought in by the Holy Spirit to dispute what man is.

'Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation.' He who seeks a refuge, either seeks [it] from excessive heat and warmth, or a beast pursues him, or enemies pursue him to kill [him]. And we, therefore, are in the heat of this world, and the beast pursues us, concerning which we say: 'Deliver not up to beasts the soul that confesseth to thee' (Ps. 73). And enemies pursue us: for this reason we fly for refuge under Thy wings. 'From generation to generation.' Both in the past, and in the present, and in the future. Otherwise: 'From generation to generation.' Both in the old people of the Jews, and in the new of the Christians.

"Before the mountains were made, and the earth and the world were formed." A heresy creeps in at this place. If He was made a refuge for us before the mountains were made and

the world was formed: therefore souls existed before the world was made. For what does the Scripture say? "Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation," it says, "to generation." From the beginning of the world: before the beginning of the world. This is what they say. And so that you do not think that I say [this], it says, "before the mountains were made, and the earth and the world were formed, thou," it says, "wast made a refuge for us." But if He was our refuge before the world was made: then souls existed before the world was made. You distinguish poorly, heresy. Why do you bring a false accusation against the Holy Spirit? Speak thus, as the Holy Spirit has spoken. Thus, therefore, it must be read: "Lord, thou hast been our refuge, from generation to generation," here [is] the distinction. Again, another beginning: "Before the mountains were made, and the earth and the world were formed, from age even unto age thou art God." Thou art God before the mountains were made: thou art God before the earth and the world were formed. "From age even unto age thou art God." Thou art always, thou art eternal.

"Turn not man away into lowliness (*humilitatem*), and thou hast said: be converted, O ye sons of men." O Lord, that we dare to ask this, and let us say: "Turn not man away into lowliness": thou hast given us confidence, saying: "Return to me, O returning children, and I will heal your contritions" (Ezek. 18; Hos. 14). "And thou hast said: be converted, O ye sons of men."

"For a thousand years in thy sight are as one day which is past." And a watch in the night which are held for nothing, their years shall be. We ought to know according to history that the night is divided into four watches. Finally, it is also said in the Gospel: "But in the fourth watch" (Matt. 14, and Mark 4). One watch, therefore, is three hours. The night, therefore, is divided into four watches. Finally, soldiers have four stations when they watch, and keep guard, and serve. See, therefore, what he says. O our brief eternity! That Adam, our propagator, who lived nine hundred and thirty years: also that Methuselah, who lived nine hundred and sixty-five years (Gen. 5); suppose that he lived a thousand: in comparison to thy eternity, that which was great is brief. For what can be great that has an end? Our thousand years before we offended was one day with thee. What do I say, one day? One watch. See what he says: Thou didst deign to descend for our salvation: thou didst shed thy blood for us: suffer us not to perish, and to die in lowliness. Thou thyself hast said: "When I shall be exalted, I will draw all things to myself" (John 12). Thou wast exalted and thou hast exalted us: do not forsake [us], lest we be contracted.

"In the morning like grass let it pass away: in the morning let it flourish and pass away: in the evening let it fall, harden, and wither." O mysteries of the Scriptures! "In the morning like grass let it pass away." Our Lord and Savior speaks in the Gospel concerning the hay which in one day arises, and in one day withers (Matt. 6). Just as

the grass which is green and flourishes, in the morning is seen as if to be a flower and greening: but when the sun has come and has covered it, toward evening it as if fades away and falls; so also all our life is seen to be as if a flower when it greens and withers. You saw a youth ten years ago. Nothing [was] more beautiful than he: he was running hither and thither. If you should look at him now, he is seen in old age as if dead. Although he lives in old age, yet youth perishes. "In the morning like grass let it pass away," that is, our youth: for that itself is the morning. "Like grass let it pass away: in the morning let it flourish, and pass away." We flourish in youth: we wither in old age. "In the evening let it fall, harden, and wither."

"For we have fainted in thy wrath, and in thy fury we are troubled." For nine hundred and thirty years we lived before, we had come almost to a thousand. Behold, our life is contracted into a brief life.

"Thou hast set our iniquities in thy sight." Nothing is hidden from thee, that is, our sins, neither does the night hide [them], nor [are they] wrapped in darkness. All things shine before thee. "Our age in the illumination of thy countenance." It is better held in the Hebrew: "Our life in the illumination of thy countenance." Whatever we do, whatever we think we do in secret, is open in thy eyes.

"For all our days have failed." Age has run [its course]: and while we are ignorant, we perish

heavily. And this very thing that we speak, is of death, and we do not understand.

"Our years shall be meditated upon like a spider." See what he says. Just as a spider as if sends out threads, and runs hither and thither, and weaves all day, and the labor indeed is great, but the effect is none, so also the life of men runs hither and thither. We seek possessions, we long for riches, we procreate children, we labor, we are lifted up into kingdoms, and we do all things, and we do not understand, because we weave a spider's web.

"The days of our years in them [are] seventy years." Where are the thousand years? We are contracted into seventy years. But if [there be] much, eighty. But if we should live more, it is no longer life, but death.

"But if [they be] in powers, eighty years." For whom will you find to be an octogenarian and healthy? The Greek sentiment also says: old age itself is a disease. "And more of them [is] labor and sorrow." Whatever shall be more, is not life, but sorrow. We have said this in the meantime according to history. For the rest, let us speak according to anagogy. And every psalm indeed receives a tropology, and I could now run through individual verses, and speak the spiritual understanding in each, but we are excluded by the hour. Yet with one verse I give you as if a taste of spiritual understanding, so that whatever I shall keep silent here, you may think has been said here. "The days of our years in them [are] seventy years." Seventy years are seven decades,

and eighty years are eight decades. See, therefore, how the seventh and the eighth number are preached. And as we said: "thou hast been made a refuge for us from generation to generation," both in the Old and in the New Testament: for this reason he now places both the seventh and the eighth number. This he says in Ecclesiastes: "Give a portion to seven, and give a portion to eight" (Eccl. 11). For this reason also the psalms of degrees are fifteen, that is, seven and eight: fifteen likewise lead us to the kingdoms of heaven: Finally, after the seventh psalm of degrees was completed, what is said in the scripture of that psalm? "A psalm," it says, "of Solomon," who had built the old house. And what does it say: "Unless the Lord build the house, they have labored in vain who build it" (Ps. 126). What, therefore, does Solomon himself say, who is prescribed in that title? Therefore I have built the temple, but unless the eighth number shall have built [it], the house is built in vain. We read also in the Gospel according to Matthew: "Blessed [are] the poor: Blessed [are] the mild: Blessed [are] they who hunger and thirst," etc., and there are eight Beatitudes (Matt. 5). Therefore our Lord concluded the Gospel with the number eight. Finally, nowhere do we find eight Beatitudes likewise, except in the Gospel. In the number eight, that is, on the day of resurrection. "The days of our years in them [are] seventy years." Do you want me to show you in the meantime that the seventh and eighth numbers contain very many mysteries (*sacramenta*)? We read Ezekiel, and in one gate

it is said: "And let him enter," it says, "through the gate of the east into the temple which is being built." In Ezekiel, in the furthest part: "And the priest," it says, "shall ascend first, through seven and eight steps." And it was possible that in that gate there were both seven and eight steps. But see what it says: The eastern gate from where the light comes, our Lord and Savior. There is indeed one gate, and no one enters into it except the high priest. And what is said there? "This gate shall be always closed." "But it is not opened except to the priest" (Ezek. 44). So, therefore, both the New and the Old Testament were always closed: they were not opened except to the Savior. For He is the one who has the key, who opens, and no one shuts; who shuts, and no one opens. One gate, therefore, has seven and eight steps. And in the Old Testament indeed there are Evangelical mysteries, and in the New Testament there are mysteries of the Law. Hear greater mysteries. At that time when Solomon, that is, our Peaceful One (who says [John 14]: "My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you": for He himself is our peace, and the peace which surpasses all understanding), He himself built the temple to God. And see there what the Scripture says. "And there were," it says, "seventy thousand stonecutters, and eighty thousand of those who carried" (3 Kings 5). See the number. The stonecutters who cut stones, who as if prepare the foundations of the buildings, who lift up stones from the earth for building in the temple of God, are placed in the seventh number, in the prophets, in the

patriarchs. For they, as if ejecting the human race from the earth, prepared [them] for the temple of the Lord. These truly, that is, eighty thousand: Apostolic and Evangelical preaching: these who with God the Savior and Solomon himself were carrying the heavy sins of the nations. Hitherto the mystery seems to be finished. Hear greater mysteries. "And those who presided," it says, "over these works and the temple, were three thousand." They cannot be greater. And who preside over the works, except those who preach the Trinity? "The days of our years in them [are] seventy years." Many are the things that might be said, but we are excluded by the hour.

"Make thy right hand so known, and those fettered in heart in wisdom." In certain codices it is said, "the learned (*eruditos*)": in others it is said, "the fettered (*compeditos*)." "Learned" signifies one thing, "fettered" another. What, therefore, does he say: "Make thy right hand known"? Why for so long dost thou contract thy right hand? "God, why dost thou turn away thy hand into thy bosom?" is said in another psalm. What is said? This is, we are placed in sickness, we lie in sins: send thy right hand, and lift us up. Why for so long hast thou thy right hand in thy bosom? "Let thy heart belch forth a good word": send thy right hand, and deliver us. Make known to us the mystery, which was hidden from generations. "Make thy right hand known." Why do you creep in, Arius? He did not say, "make thy right hand." For God never was without His right hand. But what did he say? "Thy right

hand," which always was, and was in thy bosom, "make known." Since Him remaining in His deity we cannot know: let Him assume man, and so let us understand Him. "Make thy right hand so known, and those fettered in heart in wisdom." Those who have the fetters of wisdom, that is, who are fettered in the heart through thy wisdom. Let it not be troublesome to you, because the place is obscure. The prophets had wisdom: but wisdom itself was fettering them, they could not fly without Christ. See, therefore, what he says: Send thy right hand, that is, thy Son. Make Him known to us: so that even the prophets who as if prophesied a shadow, may begin to preach the Lord more manifestly.

"Turn, O Lord, how long?" We have sinned much, thou turnest away thy face: our sins are not worthy to be seen by thy eyes. For this reason we deprecate, "turn, O Lord, how long?" Behold now so many ages have flowed by: the prophets always preached that thou wouldst come to the nations, and yet thou hast not come. "And direct the sons of men." We who are crooked, let us be directed by thee. "And direct the sons of men." For this reason direct them, because they are sons of men. For if they were thy sons, they would have been directed. For thou hast said: "I said, ye are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High" (Ps. 81). "But you like men shall die, and like one of the princes you shall fall." And in another place: "My spirit shall not remain in these men: because they are flesh" (Gen. 6). Since they are men, for that reason they are flesh. Therefore because [we are]

sons of men, and we have lost being sons of God, and we have been made crooked: for this reason direct us, and let us again be made thy sons.

"And let the splendor of the Lord our God be upon us." The Apostle also says to the Hebrews: "Since the Lord and Savior is the splendor of the glory of the Father" (Heb. 1). "And let the splendor of the Lord our God be upon us." This is what is said also in another place: "The light of thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us" (Ps. 4). The sign of the cross is our standard. These things in the meantime we have said concerning the psalm, and as I estimate, we have lingered longer than we ought. We understand that we have said much more than we ought to have said; but we cannot keep silent the words of our Lord, we cannot leave the psalm we have begun. It is not much, whatever profits the soul: nothing is enough, which is good, if yet [it be] good. Let us, therefore, ask our Lord [and] Savior, that His splendor may shine in our hearts, that He may eject from us the attacks of darkness and filthy thoughts, and propel all sins from our hearts, that He may illuminate our darkness, that the darkness may flee, and the splendor of light may dwell in our hearts. The temple of the Lord, and the tabernacle, and the Holy of Holies, let them always have a lamp burning: let the lamp always shine above in the house of the Lord. For if the lamp shall have been extinguished, the Lord does not dwell in darkness. Let us also say: "Thy word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet" (Ps. 118): to whom be glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 90.

This psalm has no title, for the reason that it is sung concerning the head, or the members. The head in heaven: the members on earth. And properly it is understood concerning fasting, and that temptation of the desert. The prophet was foreseeing that Christ was to come in the flesh, that He might be tempted by the devil (Matt. 4).

"He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High." "Aid" is interpreted as "Ezra" (*Ezras*). Finally, the prophet Ezra is called *Boethos* (Helper). He is the one who led back the people from the Babylonian captivity, and led [them] into the land of promise. He, therefore, who dwells in Ezra, dwells in Jesus. In the meantime according to tropology: He who built the house without hands according to the Apostle, that house which the Lord had built even for the midwives in Egypt (Exod. 1). "In the protection of the God of heaven he shall abide." He shall say to the Lord: Thou art my upholder, and my refuge, my God." For many enemies pursue me: for this reason thou art my refuge, my God. "I will hope in the Lord: for he shall deliver me from the snare of the hunters." He did not say, "I hope": but, "I will hope." For as long as we sin, we do not hope. If we shall have ceased to sin, we hope. "For he shall deliver me from the snare of the hunters." There are many hunters in this world, who try to hunt our soul. Finally, even that Nimrod the giant was a great hunter in the sight of God (Gen. 10), and Esau was a hunter (Gen. 27): since he was a sinner: and we

find absolutely no saint in the Holy Scriptures as a hunter. We find saints [as] fishers.

"For he shall deliver me from the snare of the hunters." Our soul like a sparrow is delivered from the snare of the hunters. The snare is broken, and we are delivered (Ps. 123). Who is that hunter whose snare is broken? The Lord, he says, shall crush Satan under our feet swiftly; and the Apostle says: "That you may be delivered from the snare of the devil" (Rom. 16). Do you see, therefore, that he is a hunter, who desires to hunt our souls to perdition? The devil has many snares, and he has diverse snares. The avarice of the devil is a snare: wrath, detraction, etc. "And from the harsh word." As long as we are in holiness, our soul is tranquil. But when our soul shall have begun to think of sins, it is troubled, and is as if shaken by certain waves.

"He shall overshadow thee with his shoulders." But these things [are] according to that of Deuteronomy: The Lord, like an eagle, protects us with his wings like his chicks (Deut. 32). For it is said there, that like an eagle he protects his chicks. Although, therefore, we can say this, that God like a father protects us, and like a hen protects her chicks, lest they be snatched by the hawk (Matt. 23). Yet we can also say another thing: "He shall overshadow thee with his shoulders." He shall be exalted on the cross, he shall extend his hands, and he shall protect us. "And under his wings thou shalt hope." Looking, he says, at his crucified hands, and if the serpent shall have bitten thee, thou shalt be healed (Num.

21). Although thou walkest in the desert of this world: if a scorpion shall have struck thee, if a basilisk, if an asp, if other venomous animals, be secure of health: the serpent is suspended in the desert.

"His truth shall compass thee with a shield." Our shield is round, that is, it hedges us in from every side. It is not only a shield, but also a wall. Lord, as with a shield of thy good will thou hast crowned us. Some he crowns from a shield. See what he says: "Lord, as with a shield of thy good will thou hast crowned us" (Ps. 5). What does he say? Thou shalt protect us; and thou shalt make [us] to conquer, and after victory thou shalt crown [us]. "His truth shall compass thee with a shield." Since he had said, "from the harsh word," and the harsh word we can understand [to be that] of heretics and philosophers and Jews, and this as it were harsh word is not true, but is a liar. For for this reason it is turbid, because it is a liar. For this reason it is turbid, because it troubles our souls, through its lie. The Lord, therefore, who is truth, and says: "I am the truth" (John 14), His truth compasses us with a shield, lest we be struck by the burning arrows of the devil. For this reason Christ, who is the truth, places His shield underneath, so that with the shield of truth He may overcome the lie. "Thou shalt not be afraid of the nightly fear." For the devil is always in darkness; that he may strike, he says, the innocent in secret (Ps. 9 and 63). You see, therefore, that he who is simple, is innocent, and is always struck in secret. "Thou shalt not be afraid of the nightly

fear." What he says is this: although thou shalt have been in error, which is night, yet thou shalt not fear, because thou hast the shield of truth.

"From the arrow that flieth in the day." The flying arrow of the devil, seems to me to be the speech of heretics and philosophers. For these also promise the light of knowledge, and say that they have the day; and they cannot deceive, unless they have promised light. But this light which they promise, is of the burning arrows. And for this reason it is said: "From the arrow that flieth in the day, from the business that walketh about in the dark." The arrow indeed flies as if in the day, but it is a business walking about in the dark. "From the invasion and the noonday devil." It is better to say in Greek *apo symptōmatos*. *Symptōma* however is called an event, that is, when we do not hope, and something new happens. Or *symptōma* is said, when many fall together. See therefore what he says: Although many were unlearned, yet thou who art holy, let [thee] not be led in. I give an example, so that the simpler people can understand what is said: If thou shalt have gone into the city [as] a monk alone, and shalt have begun to walk about, and shalt have heard a clamor in the circus, and someone shall have said to thee: "Come and watch: it is the circus"; and thou shalt have begun to say to him: "It is not allowed: I cannot go." If he shall have shown to thee infinite thousands of men, and shall have said to thee: "Two hundred thousand men are there: therefore are all those to perish; and shalt thou alone be saved?" Thou

oughtest to understand, that it is a symptom of the devil, that is, thou oughtest to know that many fall. "And the noonday devil." Many indeed say: that there are also noonday demons, and this is said commonly (*vulgo*). For the rest I say simply: since the devil has power in us at that time, when we sin. Whether we shall have sinned in the morning, the demon enters into us, whether in the evening, whether in the night: in whatever hour we shall have sinned, the demon enters into us. You see therefore that what is commonly said is frivolous. What therefore does he say, "from the noonday devil"? Since Abraham had received the angels at noonday, and Joseph had invited his brothers to a meal at noonday (Gen. 18 and 43). For they were saints, both Abraham and Joseph, and for this reason their banquet was in the clear light, and the sun being perfect. For this reason they feed at noonday. And I, if I shall have had full knowledge of the Scriptures, although it be the third hour, yet I feed you at noonday. Finally even the bride in the Canticle of Canticles says: "Where dost thou feed," she says, "where dost thou lie down at noonday" (Cant. 1)? You see that the bridegroom does not feed, does not lie down at the third hour, but at noonday. "Where dost thou feed, where dost thou lie down, where do I find thee, where dost thou enjoy delights, where can I find thee, O my bridegroom?" "Dost thou wish to find me? In the noonday, in perfect knowledge: in good works: in clear light." Since therefore we have the noonday: for this reason also the devil is transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11), and

he himself simulates that he has light, that he has noonday. When heretics as it were promise some mysteries, when the kingdoms of heaven, when continence, when fasts, when holiness, when renunciation of the world, they promise noonday. But since it is not the light of Christ: it is not noonday, but the noonday devil.

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hands." Every single word of the Scriptures are individual mysteries (*sacramenta*). These words, which are thought rustic by the men of the world, are full of mysteries. For we have this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4). The treasure, the divine sense, we have in the vilest words. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hands." From whose side? From his to whom it had been said: "His truth shall compass thee with a shield: thou shalt not be afraid of the nightly fear." Who is this? Concerning whom it was said above: "He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High, in the protection of the God of heaven he shall abide." From him, therefore, who dwells in the aid of the Lord, a thousand shall fall at his side, and ten thousand at his right hands. The right hand of the saint is spoken of: the left is not spoken of, but the side. For see what is said: "And ten thousand at thy right hands." And how hadst thou said: "A thousand shall fall at thy side"? For when the right hand is spoken of, and the left is not named: for the left, the side is named. For it could not be just, that a just man should have a left hand. "He who," he says, "shall have struck thee on the right

cheek, offer him also the other." He did not say, "and the left": for it is not the left which is offered, but the other right. Therefore I say simply: since a just man has two right hands. Finally, also that Ehud (*Ajoth*), who is written [of] in the book of Judges, for this reason is said to have two right hands: because he was just, and he killed that very fat king. "A thousand shall fall at thy side: and ten thousand at thy right hands." There are more who lie in wait for our right hand; and there are not more who lie in wait for the left. For this reason a thousand shall fall at the side, and ten thousand at the right hands. For where [there is] a greater fight, [there is] a greater victory. Few lie in wait for the side: more lie in wait for the right hand.

"For he hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," etc. The devil interpreted this place concerning the Lord, at that time when he tempted the Lord: "If," he says, "thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down" (Matt. 4). "For it is written of thee: For he hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone." The devil said nothing more, except this: "For he hath given his angels charge over thee, that in their hands they may bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone." He left out the middle part. For here it is said: "For he hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." This he did not say, "to keep thee": for he knew it was against himself. For

the Lord could have answered him: "If the Lord keeps me in all ways: then I am also kept from thee." He kept silent, therefore, [about] what he knew was against himself, and he placed what was for himself. Truly the devil as a devil, interprets concerning the Savior what is not of the Savior. For if the whole psalm is of the Savior, as thou interpretest, O devil, also of Him is what is said: "I will protect him, because he hath known my name." This is, I the Father will protect my Son. If it is so interpreted, O devil, as thou understandest: let us see if the sense stands: "I will protect him, because he hath known my name": that is, I the Father will protect my Son. "He hath cried to me, and I will hear him." This is on the day of the cross. "I am with him in tribulation, I will deliver him and I will glorify him." That is, I will make him rise again. "With length of days I will fill him." That is, he shall live forever. And let us understand this concerning the Son of God. "With length of days I will fill him." This which follows, how does it stand in the Savior? "And I will show him my salvation (*salutare*)." The salvation of God is the Son of God. If, therefore, it is said concerning the Son, how can it stand: that the salvation of God is the Son of God? You see, therefore, that you have interpreted poorly, O devil. But suppose that it is so interpreted, as you say. You said: "For he hath given his angels charge over thee, that in their hands they may bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone." Say what follows. Why are you silent? "He shall walk upon the asp and the basilisk, and he

shall trample under foot the lion and the dragon," Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 91.

PSALM 91

A Psalm of a canticle on the sabbath day. This psalm is pre-notated with this title. No one can keep the sabbath day, except him who has passed through six days. Six days we labor, on the seventh day we rest. Therefore we cannot sing to the Lord, except on the sabbath day. As long as we do the works of this world, that is, for six days, we cannot sing to the Lord. Finally, it is said in Leviticus: "You shall do no servile work on the sabbath day" (Lev. 23). Whoever, therefore, is in the sabbath, and in the rest of the Lord, ought not to do servile work, that is, what pertains to this world: but he ought to do that work which pertains to the sabbath. Do you wish to know that the priests work in the temple of the Lord on the sabbath? It is not permitted for anyone to cut wood on the sabbath (Num. 5). Finally, one who was found in the desert [doing so] was stoned and killed. Finally, it is not permitted to kindle a fire: it is not permitted even to do any work. But you see that all these things which it is not permitted for anyone in the world to do on the sabbath, are permitted to the priests alone. For they both cut wood, and they place fire beneath, and they perform other ministries, and they immolate hosts. Why have I said all this? So that I might show it to

be written in the law, that we ought to cease even on the sabbath day from the works of the world, and to do those things which pertain to God. The psalm, therefore, is of a canticle on the sabbath day: when we do not work for the world, and we work for God. Let us see what we must sing on the sabbath, when we cease from the works of the world.

"It is good to give praise to the Lord, and to sing to thy name, O Most High." He did not say: it is good to sing, and afterwards to give praise: but see the order: "It is good to give praise," and "it is good to sing." First perform penance, and wash away sins with tears, and afterwards sing to the Lord: "It is good to give praise to the Lord;" not to men, but to God; confess thy sins to Him who can heal. "And to sing to thy name, O Most High."

"To show forth thy mercy in the morning, and thy truth by night." Understand diligently what is said: "To show forth thy mercy in the morning, and thy truth by night." Individual verses refer to individual [things]. "It is good to give praise to the Lord: to show forth thy mercy in the morning." If thou confessest to the Lord, thou announcest in the morning the mercies of the Lord. "And to sing to thy name, O Most High." This verse he refers to this one which follows, "and thy truth by night." For when we confess to the Lord, we hope for mercy. But when we sing, we work virtues. "To show forth thy mercy in the morning." Where are they who understand the Scriptures according to the letter? Can we not announce the mercy of God at midday? And cer-

tainly it is the [custom] of Christians and monks, especially in the nights, to confess their sins. And how does he now say: "To show forth thy mercy in the morning"? What he says is this: We cannot confess to the Lord, and obtain his mercy, unless a clear light begins to shine in our heart. Unless darkness has preceded, and morning has been made, we cannot obtain the mercy of the Lord. But then thou announcest in the morning the mercy of the Lord, when the sun of justice shall have arisen in thy heart. "And thy truth by night." The truth of the Lord is not announced except by night: in the day it cannot be announced. For the weak cannot bear those things which are great: nor can they sustain those things which are precious. Whence it is said also in another place concerning God: "He made darkness his hiding place" (Ps. 17), that is, the Lord made darkness his hiding place. And the truth, therefore, of the Lord is announced in the night: it is as if wrapped in certain darknesses of words. It is said in an enigma, and in parables: "that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand" (Mark 4). We read in Hosea, and it is said to the prophet: "Go, and take to thee a wife, a wife of fornications" (Hos. 1): Jews and gentiles laugh. Why do they laugh? Because the truth is placed in the night, not in the day. Do you wish to know that the truth of God is in the night, and is placed as if in darkness, and in parables? Moses ascended into Mount Sinai, and he entered, he says, into the whirlwind, and the mist, and the darkness, and there he spoke with the Lord (Ex.

24): Nor indeed could the people of Israel see the mysteries of God: because they had not entered into the mist of God.

"Upon a ten-stringed psaltery, with a canticle and the cithara." I say simply, whenever we lift up hands without thoughts and disputes, we sing in a ten-stringed psaltery to the Lord. "Upon a ten-stringed psaltery, with a canticle in the cithara." In our cithara, both body, and soul, and spirit, are composed with all the strings.

"For thou, O Lord, hast made me glad in thy work, and in the works of thy hands I shall rejoice." Whatever a Christian shall have seen, he is always edified. Nothing shall destroy a monk, except sin. Whatever thou shalt have looked upon, is thy edifice. Thou seest the heaven, thou seest the sun, thou seest the stars, thou seest the moon, this edifies thee. For thou oughtest to think and to say: If the sun, and the moon, and the heaven, and the stars serve God: why should I not serve? Thou seest the earth, thou seest the animals, and all things which are upon the earth, and confer this with thy mind, and it edifies thee, and say to thy mind: All things run in their time. Indeed spring and summer, autumn and winter, these times are never changed, but according to the disposition of the Lord all things serve. Heaven serves, and earth serves, and I, unhappy man, do not serve. Let us come to minute animals: I let go now of elephants, I let go of lions, I let go of diverse animals, I come to minute animals. Behold the bee, behold the ant: see the body, and inquire into the wisdom (Prov. 6 and 30). Greater

wisdom than the magnitude of the body. Bees and ants think that winter is about to come; and the monk and the Christian do not think that the judgment is about to come. Those think that they can be endangered by hunger, if they shall not have labored in summer whence they may live in winter; we do not think that without work we shall be tortured in Gehenna. Why have I said all this? Because now it is written: "For thou, O Lord, hast made me glad in thy work." Whatever I shall have looked upon, delights me. For I understand the Maker, and I bless God. "And in the works of thy hands I shall rejoice." I see a tree, and I consider how the bark of the tree is like a tunic, with which it is clothed, and like a bud it grows green. And then I see how a flower is made: how the flower falls, and the flower itself is turned into a fruit. I see little by little through individual days, in individual times, nature working for me, and growing for my foods. I see how God labors in all things for me, that nothing may be lacking to me. Therefore I rejoice in thee, O Lord.

"How magnified are thy works, O Lord!" In this place Marcion and Manichaeus burst forth. For what do they say? If God made all things, and made [them] for the utility of men: what necessity was there to make the bug (*cimicem*) and the flea? I answer thee briefly: so that thy fragility might be shown, O man. Thou who placest thy thought in heaven, behold, thou art bitten by a bug, and thou tremblest. Why dost thou raise thyself to heaven, and thy thought transcends to heaven? Behold thou art wounded by a flea. "How

magnified are thy works, O Lord!" Small bodies indeed, but great reason. Individual [things] have their utilities. I so admire the Lord in elephants, as also in the ant: I so preach Him in the camel, as also in the gnat (*culice*). Behold the gnat how it is like a point of some small body, and yet see in that very point of a small body, all the members are divided. It has six feet, it has two eyes, it has a mouth, it has also a belly, it has also a trumpet of a voice, it has also wings. If thou shalt have considered the members, thou dost not find a body, and yet God is magnified, because all the members are without a body. "Thy thoughts are made exceeding deep." Whatever I shall have thought, I cannot find. Thy judgments [are] an abyss. O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God. I will say also with Ecclesiastes: "I said, I will be made wise, and it was made far from me: much farther than it was." "And who can find the deep?" (Eccles. 7). What Ecclesiastes says is this: Before I placed my thought in the work, I did not see the magnificence of God. I said, I will be made wise, that is, I said, I ought to seek the reasons of individual causes, and it was made far from me, much farther than it was, that is, the wisdom which before, not inquiring, I was ignorant of: afterwards I began to seek, which I could not find.

"A senseless man shall not know, and a fool shall not understand these things." Whoever is not a Christian, and does not understand the Creator in [his] works, he is senseless.

"When the wicked shall have sprung up as grass." Thou hast seen emperors: thou hast seen prefects: thou hast seen armies: thou hast seen victories and triumphs. Yesterday it was, and today it is not. "And all they that work iniquity shall appear, that they may perish for ever and ever." Yesterday it appeared like a flower: today the flower itself does not appear. Yesterday the grass was green: today it is dried up. Where is that beauty? Nothing is good, except what is eternal. Nothing is good, except what is perpetual. Whatever has an end, is not even to be numbered among good things. For what does it profit me, if yesterday I was a prefect, and today I die of hunger? For what does it profit me, if on the previous day I was a king, and today I die in prison? Everything which is past, and has an end, is nothing. Every one of us comes from the world to this life. One left a mother, another sons, another a wife, another parents. Let us remember our infancy: let us remember our youth: let us remember that sometimes we have had riches, and every one according to his strength had what he could. Behold we have passed to this life. Where are all those things? Thought [of them] causes more pain than pleasure. Nothing is therefore good, except what is perpetual.

"But thou, O Lord, art Most High for evermore, for behold thy enemies, O Lord: for behold thy enemies shall perish, and all they that work iniquity shall be scattered." If they shall perish, how shall they be scattered? For he who once has perished, cannot be scattered. He ought to have

said: Behold they shall be scattered and they shall perish. What he says, therefore, is this: "thy enemies, O Lord, shall perish," when all things shall have been subjected to thee: every one who shall have been thy enemy, shall afterwards be made a friend, that is, the man shall not perish: but the enemy shall perish. He who was an enemy, shall be a friend, and thus the enemy shall perish. "For behold thy enemies shall perish, and all they that work iniquity shall be scattered." Just as if the saints are together, it is gracious: so if the sinners shall have been together, it is as it were a most wicked congregation (Gen. 18). For by how much more they shall have been together, by so much the worse they are. Finally, at that time when the tower was being built against God, they were scattered for their own utility. Their consensus was evil: but the dispersion indeed profited even those themselves who were scattered.

"My horn shall be exalted like that of the unicorn." A horn is always placed in [reference to] a kingdom. "In thee we shall toss our enemies with the horn" (Ps. 43). Finally, no animal is immolated to the Lord in the temple except that which has a horn. Three were immolated to the Lord in the temple: a bull was immolated, a ram was immolated, a buck-goat was immolated. Three were immolated, and all are horned. For unless someone shall have had a horn in which he may toss the enemies, he is not worthy to be immolated to God. For this reason also the Lord is called a horn, to those who believe in him: And in the horns of his cross he tossed the enemies.

There he confounded the devil, and all his army: Christ indeed was crucified in the body: but truly he was crucifying the demons there. It was not a cross: but it was a triumph, it was a standard. For this reason he ascended the cross, so that he might lift us from the earth on high. And I think that this cross of the Savior is that ladder which Jacob saw. On that ladder angels were descending and ascending (Gen. 28). On that ladder, that is, the cross, the Jews descend, and the gentiles ascend. "And my horn shall be exalted like that of the unicorn." Others may have more horns: I have one only horn. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord: by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6). "And my old age [shall be] in plentiful mercy." Our old age has need of the oil of God. For just as our bodies when we labor (I speak more simply because of the simpler brothers, who cannot understand more sublimely) just as our bodies, when they labor, are not refreshed, except by the anointing of oil: just as the light which is in a lamp, unless thou puttest in oil, is extinguished: so also the light of my old age, has need of the oil and mercy of God so that it may grow. Finally, the apostles also ascend into the mount of Olives, so that since they were weary, and their lamps had need of the oil of the Lord, they may be illuminated from the oil of the Lord. Whence also the just man says: "But I, as a fruitful olive tree in the house of the Lord" (Ps. 51). And in another place it is said: "Thy children as olive plants round about thy table" (Ps. 127). Was there no

other mountain, from which the Lord ascended to the kingdoms of heaven, except the mount of Olives? Was there not a more sublime mountain in Galilee, Tabor? What necessity was there that the Lord should ascend from the mount of Olives into the kingdom of heaven? But see what the Scripture teaches thee: Unless thou shalt have put oil for thee and thy lamps, thou shalt not be able to ascend into the kingdoms of heaven. Thou oughtest to be on the mount of Olives, and not in the valley of Olives, but on the mount of Olives. Someone may say: What is this valley of Olives? The devil has his olives: he has philosophers: he has heretics: they also have oil. They also promise the light of knowledge, but those oliveyards lead into perdition: "But let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head" (Ps. 140). Let us therefore ask the Lord, that our old age, and all our labor, and all our darknesses, may be illuminated by the oil of the Lord. I carefully observe in the Scriptures, where I first read of old age. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and yet is not called an old man: Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and is not called an old man. I come down to the flood, and after the flood through almost three thousand years, and I find no one who was called an old man. Abraham is the first called an old man: and certainly he was of much lesser age than Methuselah. But for this reason he is called an old man, because his old age was anointed with plentiful oil. Finally, it is written there: "And Abraham died, nourished in a good old age: full," he says, "of days" (Gen. 25). For this

reason in a good old age, because full of days. For all the time of his life was days, and not night. This same [thing] which was said of Abraham, was said of Isaac and of Jacob. For they who together served the Lord, are rightly together called old men of the Lord. "As the cedar of Libanus he shall be multiplied:" a wood of good odor, a wood from which the roofs of the temple were covered. "As the cedar of Libanus he shall be multiplied:" an incorruptible wood.

"Planted in the house of the Lord: in the courts of our God they shall flourish." Elsewhere we are planted, in the kingdom of heaven we shall flourish. "I indeed have planted, Apollo watered, but the Lord gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3). Planted in the house of the Lord, that is, in the Church: not in walls, but in dogmas. "For the kingdom of God," he says, "is within you" (Luke 17). Whoever shall have been planted in the house of the Lord, if he has sent down roots here, there he brings forth flowers. "Planted in the house of the Lord: in the courts of our God they shall flourish." These are the eternal tabernacles. What are these courts? Diverse mansions in heaven. At the same time see what he says: "Planted in the house of the Lord: in the courts of our God they shall flourish." Here is the house: there is the court. He ought certainly first to have said according to the order, the court: and thus the house. But see what he says. Although here we may seem to be in the house: when we shall have migrated to the kingdoms of heaven, in comparison to the angels, and the other virtues, we are not in the house, but we

are in the court: we are in the beginning, not in perfection. For we shall not be angels, but as the angels (Matt. 22). Let it not seem to thee as a little thing, O man, if thou shalt be like an angel.

They shall still be multiplied in a fruitful old age. Happy is he who grows daily, who grows old in age, and grows old also in virtues. We have said these things meanwhile concerning the Psalter: we have spoken also a few things concerning the Gospel, and we have also spoken concerning the Apostle. Let us pray the Lord that all that we have said, and what you have heard, we may fulfill in work, and turn words into deeds: so that we who are here planted in the house of the Lord, may flourish in the court of Christ: to whom be glory for ages of ages. Amen. PSALM 92. A praise of a canticle for David himself, on the day before the Sabbath, when the earth was founded. This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, singing of the power and magnificence of the Lord. The Lord has reigned, he is clothed with beauty. When rising from the dead, he joined to himself the choir of the saints. The Lord is clothed with strength. Because he oppressed the devil. And has girded himself with power. When surrounded by the angelic multitude, he returned to the Father. For he has established the world, which shall not be moved. For it would still be unstable and movable unless it had been established by his resurrection. Your throne is prepared. In holy souls. For you chose them before the constitution of the world, that they should be a chosen generation. And then from of old you are. And before

the resurrection of the world. The floods have lifted up, O Lord: the floods have lifted up their voice. The apostles: whose streams of preaching have irrigated the parched lands of the nations. At the voices of many waters. Of the disparaging peoples. Wonderful are the surges of the sea. In the waves of this world. The Lord is wonderful on high. Glorious residing at the right hand of the Father. Your testimonies, O Lord, are made exceedingly credible. Through your apostles. Holiness becomes your house, O Lord, unto length of days. Your Church which you presented to yourself not having spot or wrinkle, in which you may deign to keep us clean and bright (Eph. 5); nor to defile the grace of baptism, through which we are reborn in you unto life: because to you with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ages of ages. Amen. PSALM 93. A psalm of David on the fourth day of the week. We always dispute concerning the title, so that from the title the psalm also may be understood. A psalm of David on the fourth day of the week. The fourth day of the week is in the middle of the week: as if in the heart of the week, that is, in the middle of the seven days. For the day is the fourth, and the fourth day has equal days on both sides. For it has on one side the first, second, and third day: and on the other side it has the fifth, sixth, and seventh day. You see therefore that the fourth day, that is, the fourth day of the week, is established on both sides by a double trinity. And at the same time it is to be considered: that the number four is, in power, ten. How? For if you compute

and make an order: one, two, three, four, the number ten is produced. You have seen therefore that the number four produces ten, and consider from this: that the four Gospels are computed in the Decalogue, so that whatever was said in the Decalogue may be fulfilled in the four Gospels, so that the old law may not disagree with the evangelical dignity. We have said these things meanwhile concerning the title, now let us come to the psalm.

"The Lord is the God to whom revenge belongeth: the God of revenge hath acted freely." He who for so long a time lay hid, and did not appear among the people: afterwards he acted freely. Because before he was ignored, afterwards he triumphed on the cross. "The Lord is the God to whom revenge belongeth." If the Lord is the God of revenge, "Revenge is mine, and I will repay," saith the Lord; why dost thou desire to avenge thyself, O man? Thou hast God as an avenger. The Apostle also says this: "If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat." "If he thirst, give him to drink." For doing these things, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head" (Deut. 32; Rom. 12). This does not seem to be of piety, but of cruelty. For if I do good to him, so that God may do evil to him; this comes not from piety, but from cruelty of mind. For what the Apostle says: "If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat: if he thirst, give him to drink:" thus far it seems mercy. This however which he adds: "For doing these things, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." For you see that for this reason he gives bread, and

gives water to drink, so that he may be tortured in the ages. And does the Apostle say this, and does the preacher of mercy teach cruelty? It is not therefore to be taken thus, but in another sense. If an enemy strikes thee, "offer him also the other cheek" (Matt. 5). If he does evil to thee, do thou good to him. For if thou shalt have done this, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. What he says, is this: thou shalt cleanse him from sin. For his cruelty is conquered by thy patience. If thou directest an arrow against a stone, and the stone be hard: not only is it not fixed in, but it rebounds. So thy enemy if he shall have struck, and shall not have been struck back, overcome by thy patience, is converted to better things.

"How long shall sinners, O Lord, how long shall sinners glory?" Human impatience does not wish to have the patience of God. Wretched are we, who wish God to be patient toward us, and impatient toward our enemies. If ever we sin, we desire God to be patient. If ever someone has offended against us, we do not wish God to be patient toward him. "How long shall sinners glory?" It does not suffice for them to sin, but they also glory in sins. The first unhappiness is to sin: the second unhappiness, indeed the last, is not to do penance. These sinners therefore not only do not bend the neck, but freely after their sin they glory.

"They shall utter and speak iniquity." Properly this speaks concerning heretics. "All that work iniquity shall speak." See the sign: He who speaks, must of necessity do evil. "For out of

the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Luke 6). Wherever the conscience is wounded, there in the mouth it is easily sinned.

"Thy people, O Lord, they have brought low." Always the people of God is brought low: the people of God is oppressed: "Thy people, O Lord, they have brought low." Always the people of God is brought low, and imitates God who was humble, and meek of heart.

"They have slain the widow and the stranger, and they have murdered the fatherless: and they have said: The Lord shall not see." Although this may be manifest according to history, for always whoever lacks protection is easily oppressed, and the more humble someone shall have been, so much more he who oppresses offends God: nevertheless let us also interpret according to tropology: for I had said that this is said of heretics. "They have slain the widow and the stranger." That widow who has ceased to have God as a husband, is the soul of a sinner. The stranger is he who is not an inhabitant, that is, he who does not dwell. He who had recently believed, suddenly scandalized perishes. "And they have murdered the fatherless, and they have said: The Lord shall not see." Do we wonder if they are called fatherless, where there is a widow? For just as the widow is the soul of a sinner: so he calls those fatherless, who have lost having God as Father.

And they said. What did they say? "The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob understand." This says everyone who oppresses the

saints. To them saying these things see what the Holy Spirit responds.

"Understand, ye senseless among the people: and, you fools, be wise at last: He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? or he that formed the eye, doth he not consider?" Is he who is the potter ignorant of his own vessel? Does he who makes another hear, therefore not hear himself? Does he who gave me eyes, therefore not see himself? Does he who is the author of my understanding, not understand himself? This passage acts especially against those who are Anthropomorphites, who say that God has members, which we also have. For example: God may be said to have eyes: "the eyes of the Lord behold all things": "the hand of God doeth all things." And "Adam heard," he says, "the sound of the feet of the Lord walking in paradise" (Gen. 3). These things they hear simply, and refer human imbecilities to the magnificence of God. But I say that God is all eye: all hand: all foot. He is all eye: because he sees all things. He is all hand: because he works all things. He is all foot: because he is everywhere. See therefore what he says: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" He did not say: he that planted the ear, therefore he himself does not have an ear. He did not say: therefore he himself does not have eyes. But what did he say? "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? and he that formed the eye, doth he not consider?" He took away the members: he gave the efficiencies.

"He that chastiseth nations, shall he not rebuke?" He who teaches others, does he therefore

not know himself? "He that teacheth man knowledge." It is understood, does he therefore not have knowledge himself?

"The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men: that they are vain." We read in a secular poet: "O cares of men! O how much vanity is in things!" Both the gentiles and the philosophers lift up this little verse to the sky. And what do they say? Nothing more prudent could be said: Behold our Hebrew rustic spoke this so many ages ago. And what did he say? "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men: that they are vain." Do you wish to know that the thoughts of men are vain? A father and mother nourish a son: they promise themselves happiness from him: they send him to studies, they erudite him: he comes even to adolescence, they arrange that he may even serve in the military. When they shall have thought all things through thirty years, one little fever comes, and takes away all the thoughts. I have an enemy: and the day of judgment is thirty days away, days and nights I think of nothing else, except what I should respond to him. I am in my little bed, and my thought responds to the absent enemy. There is no enemy to thee, and words respond to the enemy. Days and nights I am in thought. But when the day of judgment shall have come, all those things which I had thought, perish: and whatever God shall have said, this I speak. For this reason also the Lord says in the Gospel: "When you shall stand before judges, think not what you should respond: for the Lord will give you in that hour what you should respond" (Luke 12). "The Lord

knoweth the thoughts of men that they are vain." One thought is happy, to think of the Lord.

"Blessed is the man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord." Happy is he who uses God as teacher. "And shalt teach him out of thy law: that thou mayest give him rest from the evil days." See what he says: "Blessed is the man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach him out of thy law:" that is, by thy Scriptures. But what does this profit, that he be taught out of thy law? "That thou mayest give him rest from the evil days." You see therefore that knowledge, and exercise, and works from the Scriptures mitigate for us the evil days? "Until a pit be dug for the sinner." When thou shalt have been instructed out of the law of the Lord, one thing is divided into two for thee. For it mitigates the evil days for thee; and it digs a pit for the sinner.

"Who shall rise up for me against the evil doers? or who shall stand with me against the workers of iniquity?" The psalms are obscure, and they always change persons, and for this reason they are obscure, and it is of too much difficulty to know in each verse who is speaking. "Who shall rise up for me against the evil doers: or who shall stand with me against those who work iniquity?" The Savior speaks these verses: I am holy, I was lifted up on the cross: I died, I rose again, and as a victor I ascended to the heavens. Who among the saints, thinkest thou, shall rise again with me? Therefore what he says, is this: For this reason I rose again, so that others also might rise again with me. "Who shall rise again for me?" When he

says "Who," he provokes the others to rising. For just as we read in Isaiah: "Whom shall I send to this people, and who shall go for us?" (Isa. 6) etc. Just as Isaiah himself offers himself: so also the Lord provokes us saying: "Who shall rise again for me against the evil doers?" Whoever shall have risen again, shall rise again for me: he is of my army. "Against the evil doers," against the devil, and his army. "Or who shall stand with me?" See the order: He did not say first, who shall stand, and who shall rise again: but, "who shall rise again and who shall stand." For first we rise, then we stand. "Or who shall stand with me against the workers of iniquity?" As if a general should stand and say: Who comes in my army?

"Unless the Lord had been my helper, my soul had almost dwelt in hell." For this reason, O Lord, I rise again, because thou wast at the lower regions, and thou didst rise again. My soul would have been detained among the lower regions, if thy soul had not risen again from the lower regions.

"If I said: My foot is moved." Considering my fragility, and human imbecility, I did not think my foot stood on a firm step: wherever I placed my foot, I feared a slip. Again I thought upon thy name, and I stood on a firm foot.

"According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart, thy comforts have given joy to my soul." This very thing also the Apostle speaks: because according to the labors, and miseries which we suffer in this world, we have a reward with God in the heavens (1 Cor. 3). The greatness of

tribulations is the greatness of rewards. As many wounds as we suffer, so many crowns also do we deserve. This is what he says: As often as I have done penance, so often hast thou comforted me. I shed one tear: I deserved one comfort. I shed ten tears: I deserved ten comforts. However great was the weight of penance, so great was also the number of comforts.

"Who frameth labor in a commandment." No one sleeping is crowned, no one secure possesses the kingdoms of heaven; no one, with a filled belly, can worthily dispute concerning fasts. Thou seest therefore what he says: "Who frameth labor in a commandment." All the commandments of the Lord have labor. Without labor we cannot possess the kingdoms of heaven. Do you wish to know that it is so? "If thou wilt," he says, "be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come follow me" (Matt. 19). He who wishes, he says, to attain the kingdoms of heaven, let him pray day and night, let him watch, let him fast, let him lie in sackcloth, not in down, not in silk. Penance does not love delicacies. "Because," he says, "I did eat ashes like bread: and mingled my drink with weeping" (Ps. 101). "Who frameth labor in a commandment: they shall hunt after the soul of the just." See how it does not seem to be consonant. For what is the consequence: "Who frameth labor in a commandment: they shall hunt after the soul of the just?" But what the fleshly ear does not understand, the spiritual ear will understand. What therefore does he say? "Who frameth labor in a commandment." For

this reason, he says, we labor in the commandments of the Lord day and night, we watch, we pray, we fast, because we have many adversaries, who hunt after the soul of the just. See what he says: they hunt after the soul of the just; not of the unjust. For they do not wish to deceive those who are deceived, but the just. Whence it is said in Habakkuk: "His meat is choice" (Hab. 1). "And they shall condemn innocent blood." Some are wont to say: He who was slain, would not have been slain, unless he were a fornicator, or had had some sin. Ruin would not have occupied him, unless he had been a sinner. Shipwreck would not have oppressed him, unless he had been a sinner. See therefore what holy Scripture says: "And they shall condemn innocent blood." As long as we are in this world, we suffer all things in common. The just and the sinner are equally shipwrecked: they have equal flesh, and equal conditions of the flesh. The just and the sinner perish equally. A similar outgoing, but diverse rewards the just and the sinner have. One is led to Gehenna: another is led to the kingdoms of heaven. "And the Lord is become my refuge." This passage acts against the Arians. For since they contradict the Lord Savior, because he is called "become" (factus): behold we say: "The Lord is become my refuge." No one doubts, but that we interpret this of the Father. If however it is said of the Father: "The Lord is become my refuge," it is to be understood in this sense: The Lord who always was, is become to me a refuge. So also the Savior who always was, is become to me a Savior.

PSALM 94

"A song of praise for David himself." This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, exhorting men to pass over to God with all their heart.

"Come, let us praise the Lord with joy: let us joyfully sing to God our Savior." Let us understand that he himself is the Lord, and he himself by his death conferred salvation upon us.

"Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving." Before he be angry with us with a face turned away, let us confess our sins. "And make a joyful noise to him with psalms." Singing in our hearts. Giving thanks to God.

"For the Lord is a great God." For no one is equaled to his greatness, that is, to his power. "And a great King above all gods." For he himself rules all things.

"For the Lord will not reject his people;" whom he redeemed with his own blood.

"For in his hand are all the ends of the earth." For in his fist, that is, in his power, he encloses all the breadth of the earth. "And the heights of the mountains are his." The apostolic preachings, which he himself inspires.

"For the sea is his, and he made it." These things are to be understood both of the world, and of this true sea, for the confutation of those who say that the waters were not created by God. For Solomon also in the person of wisdom, which is Christ, says: "Before he produced the fountains of waters, I was" (Prov. 3). "And his hands formed

the dry land." Whether the fields, or human bodies.

"Come, let us adore, and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us: for he is the Lord our God." The prophet exhorts us again and again to prostrate ourselves before him, and to confess our sins to him with weeping and tears, whom they know to be the God of all ages. "And we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." By whose blood we are either redeemed, or nourished.

"Today if you shall hear his voice," etc. Most clearly the Apostle opens these things to the Hebrews: nor do we presume to interpose another exposition. Who says thus: "For some exasperated; but not all who went out of Egypt by Moses" (Heb. 3). But with whom was he offended for forty years? surely with those who sinned: whose bodies also were laid low in the desert. But to whom did he swear that they should not enter into his rest, but to those who were incredulous? And we saw that they could not enter in because of incredulity. Let us fear therefore: lest perhaps, the promise being accepted of entering into his kingdom, any of us should be thought to be wanting. For it has been announced to us, even as to them. Therefore let us show ourselves holy, that we may merit to enter through hardship into that rest, which we hope to receive. Through Christ our Lord: to whom is honor and glory with the eternal Father, and the Holy Spirit, for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 95

"When the house was being built after the captivity, a song of David." This psalm is prenoted by this title. The whole mystery is in the title. The sacrament of our whole life, and salvation, is in the title. "When the house was being built after the captivity, a Song of David." The Jews understand this place thus. When after the Babylonian captivity, under Ezra and Zerubbabel and Joshua the son of Jozadak, the temple was built again, David in the spirit five hundred years before knew that the temple was to be built again. This they say. If this is so, O Jew, as you interpret, what does that mean which follows: "Sing to the Lord a new song": and then: "Announce his glory among the nations"? What is that new song: what are those nations? You see therefore that according to the killing letter it cannot stand at all. Therefore it must be interpreted mystically: when the house was being built after the captivity. Many of us are captured: many are led into Babylon: many have carried the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar on their necks: many have been sent into the furnace of fire, and have burned: many have lost the temple, and in them the house of God was subverted. Unhappy Judas when he was an apostle, was the house of God. The devil came, and he took the morsel, and immediately Satan entered into him (John 13), and his house was subverted, and was not restored: because he did not perform penance. But if anyone performs penance after sin; the house

of this one is rebuilt after captivity. Let us therefore also pray to the Lord, first indeed, that our house may not be subverted, lest the Chaldean and the Assyrian come, and subvert the temple of Christ in us. But if it should be subverted as if by shipwreck, we can be saved by a second consolation through a plank. "When the house was being built after the captivity." Daily this house of Christ is instructed in penitents. Finally he did not say: when the house was built: lest it should seem only to have been in the past; but, "was being built," that he might demonstrate this to be done daily. This in the meantime we have said of our soul. But we can say otherwise: when the Church of Christ was being instructed after its ruin. Let us see therefore after this title what follows.

"Sing to the Lord a new song." Happy penance: although you have fallen, nevertheless if you perform penance you are called a new house of God. "Sing to the Lord a new song." A new house merits a new song. "Sing to the Lord a new song." To whom sing? "Sing to the Lord, all the earth." If it is said of the temple of Jerusalem, O Jew, how is all the earth provoked to praise? "Sing to the Lord, all the earth." This passage conquers both the Jew and the Novatian. "Sing to the Lord, all the earth." Not Jerusalem, but the whole world. Here the Jew is slain. "Sing to the Lord, all the earth." The Novatian is slain. How? For Novatian says: There are some sins for which we ought to perform penance. As if he should say: Of lying, of perjury, of theft. But he who has committed

fornication, who has committed homicide: this one cannot perform penance. Hear what he says; "Sing to the Lord, all the earth." But all the earth is both adulterous and homicidal, and all sins are earthly. If however all sins are earthly: whatever kind of sins you have had, perform penance and you shall be saved.

"Sing to the Lord, and bless his name." The name of the Lord is Savior, from this that he is become in us. "Sing to the Lord. Announce from day to day his salvation." What does he want to say: "Announce from day to day his salvation"? He who is simple understands it thus: On all days praise the Lord, that is, let day succeed day, that is, you praised today, praise also tomorrow. Indeed the sense seems to be simple: but it seems to me that some sacrament lies hidden. "Announce from day to day his salvation." The Savior cannot be praised, except in the day. For he ought to have said: Praise the Lord day and night, if it were said of this day. For we ought to say this, if we understand according to the letter. If therefore we praise the Lord in the day, can we not praise him again in the night? See therefore what he says: Whenever you praise the Lord, always praise him in the light: not in the darkness of sins, but in the light of virtues. Always let the sun of Christ rise in your soul: so that always a new light may be born in you. "Announce from day to day his salvation." Let us say otherwise: There are two days, not three, not four, not five. There are two days, the Old Testament, and the New. And in that one Christ shines, and in this one Christ shines. Do

not let him only be praised in the Old Testament, lest you be Jews: do not only praise him in the New Testament, lest you be Manichaeans. Praise him from day to day, that is, in the Old and in the New Testament: which two days make one light. Therefore it is written also in Leviticus: "But every animal that cleaves the hoof and ruminates, is clean" (Levit. 11). That is, if it has two hoofs, and ruminates, it is clean. If therefore it has one hoof, it is not clean. The Jew has one hoof, and therefore is unclean. The Manichaean has one hoof, and therefore is unclean. And because he has one hoof, he does not ruminate his foods: nor that which he has once sent into the belly, does he lead back again to the throat, and ruminate it, and make it thin: so that what had been coarse, is sent again thin into the belly: this indeed pertains to divine sacraments to say. Every animal that cleaves the hoof, ruminates, is clean. The Jew has one hoof: for he believes in only one Testament, and he does not ruminate. For he reads only the letter, and considers nothing: he seeks nothing within. But the ecclesiastical man cleaves the hoofs and ruminates, that is, he believes in both Testaments, and in both Testaments he often seeks. And whatever is hidden in the letter, he brings forth in the spirit. Why have I said all this? Because it is written: "Announce from day to day his salvation." Therefore also the apostles are sent two by two: therefore we have not one eye, but two. Therefore we have two ears, therefore two nostrils, therefore two lips, therefore two hands, two feet. We have nothing single

in us, except what is shameful. And the members of our body testify to the sacraments of the two Testaments.

"Bring to the Lord, O you kindreds of the nations: bring to the Lord glory and honor." If it is said of the temple of Jerusalem; what does it mean now, "bring to the Lord, O you kindreds of the nations: bring to the Lord glory and honor"? It is the multitude of nations, the vocation of the nations, and the congregation of the Church. "Bring to the Lord glory and honor." When we honor the Lord in our body, the Lord is glorified in us. "Bring to the Lord glory to his name." The glory of the servant, is the glory of the Lord. "He who receives you, receives me" (Matth. 10). Happy is the servant, on account of whom the Lord is glorified.

"Bring up sacrifices, and come into his courts." A sacrifice holy, living, pleasing to God (Rom. 12, and Philip. 4). "Bring up sacrifices." You yourselves bring sacrifices. What sacrifices? Be you yourselves sacrifices. Virginity is the holocaust of Christ. All chastity, whether in virginity, or in widowhood, or in continence, is the sacrifice of Christ. I speak a new thing, the sacrifice of chastity carries itself. "Bring up sacrifices, and come into his courts." "Adore the Lord in his holy court." I see several courts: I see one court. "Bring up sacrifices, and come into his courts." Behold several courts. Again: "Adore the Lord in his holy court": behold one court. See therefore that one cannot come from one court to several courts: but from very many courts one comes to one court.

Do you wish to know this very mystery? Behold in another place that merchant who had very many pearls: he sold many, that he might buy one (Matt. 13). And in Micah it is said: "Stand," he says, "in the ways of the Lord, and search," he says, "the way of the Lord" (Mich. 4). Unless we have stood in several ways, we cannot find one way. What are those many pearls? What are those many ways? What are those many courts: so that we may find one pearl, and one way, and one court? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Isaac, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the twelve Prophets, David, Solomon were courts, that is, they are our courts. First we enter into those, from those courts afterwards we come to the court of the Gospel, where Christ is found.

"Let all the earth be moved at his face." See what he says: Heaven is not moved at the face of God: but whoever is earthly, he regards the Lord: and is moved, and trembles. "Say among the nations that the Lord has reigned." Unless the earth be moved, and recede from its earthly work, the Lord will not reign among the nations.

"For he has corrected the world, which shall not be moved." Never is anything corrected, unless what was right before, and afterwards was depraved. So therefore both we, and all the human race naturally understand God. For there are no nations which naturally do not understand their Creator. For although they venerate stones and wood: nevertheless they understand something to be greater than they themselves are, and in their error they indicate themselves

to have wisdom, that is, there is no nation which naturally does not understand God. Finally the gentiles worship idols: that is, they venerate stones and wood: and if perhaps they have made a quarrel, and if some oath has come between them, they do not say "these stones see," "these woods see": but "God sees," and "God hears." See therefore what he says: "For he has corrected the world, which shall not be moved." Therefore Christ came, and corrected the human race, which before had been depraved, so that in eternity it might not be moved. For his cross is the column of the human race. In that very column his house is built. I say the cross, not the wood, but the passion. But that cross is both in Britain, and in India, and in the whole world. Finally what does the Lord also say in the Gospel? "Unless you take up my cross, and daily follow me" (Luke 9). See what he says: Unless your soul has been so prepared for the cross, as mine was for you, you cannot be my disciples. Happy is he who carries the cross, and the resurrection, and the place of Christ's birth, and the place of ascension in his breast. Happy is he who has Bethlehem in his heart: in whose heart Christ is daily born. Finally what is Bethlehem called? House of bread. Let us also be the house of his bread, who descended from heaven. Daily Christ is crucified for us: we are crucified to the world: and Christ is crucified in us. Happy is he, in whose heart daily Christ rises again: if daily for his sins, even light ones, he performs penance. Happy is he who from the mount of Olives ascends to the kingdoms of

heaven: where the fruitful olives of the Lord are, where the light of Christ is born: where the olive groves of the Lord are. For I am as a fruitful olive in the house of the Lord. Let us also therefore light our lamp from this olive, and immediately with Christ we shall go to the kingdoms of heaven. "For he has corrected the world, which shall not be moved," which before was crooked because of sins. "He shall judge the peoples in equity." He spoke of this future judgment: in which he shall come again to judge the living and the dead.

"Let the heavens rejoice." The apostles, or the other saints. "Let the earth exult." Namely the heavenly bodies. "Let the sea be moved, and the fullness thereof: the world, and all who dwell in it." Surely the world, that it may be changed for the better. "The fields shall rejoice, and all things that are in them." Holy souls, and especially virgins, who are powerful with the diverse sweetnesses of flowers.

"Then shall all the trees of the woods exult before the face of the Lord." Because they are not liable to burning. "For he comes." In the first advent to redeem. "For he comes to judge the earth." In the second to judge.

"He shall judge the world in equity, and the peoples in his truth": that he may subject sinners to punishments: and reward the just with eternal prizes. Who, granting to us the fear of his name, may deign to grant that in that tremendous time of judgment we may not be placed in the number on the left: who confess ourselves redeemed by

his blood, to him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 96

"A psalm for David himself, when his land was restored to him."

We read in the books of Kings and Chronicles, that David was a warlike man, and subjected all the nations round about, and reduced them into his power. Let us in the meantime understand this according to the letter in this way: A psalm of David which he sang to the Lord: when, his adversaries being conquered, he restored peace to his land, that is, to Judea. This according to history. But if David is interpreted "strong in hand": but no one is strong in hand, except he who conquered all nations, our David, to whom the demons cried out: "Why have you come to torture us before the time, son of David" (Matt. 8)? This psalm was composed by him, when the land was restored. And excellently some one said: that this land which is restored, is our bodies. For truly at that time ought we to sing to the Lord, when our land has been composed. But let us say otherwise: For it does not hurt, if we understand the same thing in two, and three ways. For it is written in Solomon: "You shall take," he says, "these things in the table of your heart triply" (Prov. 3 and 7). It does not hurt to say something different, when it is said with one spirit: "When his land was established." This land before our David conquered all, had no peace; but everywhere there was discord. One nation worshiped Jupiter,

another Mercury, another Juno, and all nations had diverse idols. The standard of the cross was raised, and all the earth was established.

"The Lord has reigned, let the earth exult." Let the whole earth, and the whole world, which before had been subject to demons and idols, rejoice in our God reigning. "The Lord has reigned." The Lord, the Creator who made us, he himself has reigned. O you who before were subject under the dominion of the devil, now you are subject under the Lord creator. "Let many islands be glad." He said well of our souls: which are buffeted on this side and that by various thoughts, as if by various waves. But let us call both the islands Churches. Finally it is said, also in another place: "Many islands shall be converted to me." Do you wish to know that the Churches are called islands? It is said in the prophet from the person of the Lord: "Speak," he says, "to the inhabitants of this island." "Let many islands be glad." For as islands are placed in the middle of the sea: so also the Churches are placed as if in the middle of the sea of this world: and so they are buffeted by persecutions, as if by diverse waves. But these islands are buffeted daily, but they are not overthrown. Indeed they are in the sea, but they have Christ as a foundation who cannot be moved.

"Clouds and darkness are round about him." I think that cloud is the one of which it is said in the Gospel: "And a bright cloud overshadowed them" (Matt. 7). At that time when the Lord was transformed, and the apostles fell down, a bright cloud overshadowed them. I think those

are the clouds to which the Lord commanded that they should not rain rain upon Israel (Isai. 5). I think those are the clouds of which it is said in another place: "Thy truth even unto the clouds" (Ps. 35). That truth of the Lord, which he says in the Gospel: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14). The truth of God is Christ. The truth of the Lord even unto the clouds. The clouds are the apostles and prophets: to these it was commanded, that they should not rain rain upon Israel. For from the time when, according to history, what was written in the book of Judges, that fleece was dried (Judic. 6): rain runs through the whole world. Which is said, that is, Israel was dried up, and rain runs over all the world. "Clouds and darkness are round about him." The Lord comes into Egypt upon a light cloud (Isai. 19). See what he says. The Lord comes: the Lord and Savior into this Egypt in which we are: into the place of darkness where Pharaoh is, the Lord comes. He does not come, except upon a light cloud. What is that light cloud? It seems to me holy Mary, weighted down by no human seed. That light cloud comes into the world, and carries with it the creator of the world. And what is said there in Isaiah? "The Lord comes into Egypt upon a light cloud: and the idols of Egypt shall be broken." The Lord came, and the idols of Egypt were moved, and shaken, and destroyed. This cloud destroyed Serapis in Alexandria: not a mortal man as emperor; but this cloud which came into Egypt. "Clouds and darkness are round about him": We have spoken of the cloud: let us

speak of the darkness. The Lord is in darkness. The Lord is either in light, or in darkness. He is in light for beginners. For to beginners he speaks simply: but to those who are perfect, he speaks to them mystically. Finally to the apostles he did not speak as to the crowds, but he spoke inwardly: and what does he say? "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." What therefore does he say? "And darkness is round about him." This is, and mysteries are round about him. Therefore it is said also in Exodus: "And all," he says, "the people stood below: but Moses alone entered into mount Sinai in the darkness" (Exod. 19). For all the people of God could not know the mysteries, which Moses alone could know. It is said of God: "He made darkness his hiding place" (Ps. 17). "Justice and judgment are the correction of his throne." What does he want to say, "the correction of his throne"? He ought to have said the stability of his throne. When therefore it is said, "the correction of his throne," it is shown that whatever is corrected, was crooked before it was corrected. The judgment of God therefore, before he comes to judge, seems as if crooked. Now the judgment seems to be unjust and crooked. For when wicked men are enriched, and saints are poor: does not the judgment of God seem to be crooked? But when he shall come to judge, that he may render to each one according to his works, at that time as if his throne shall be corrected. Finally do you wish to know that it is said of the day of judgment?

"Fire shall go before him." Let him who is holy fear this fire: let him who is a sinner fear it. This fire purges the holy: it consumes sinners. "Fire shall go before him." "Who makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a burning fire" (Ps. 103). I think those are the fires, that is, his angels. These angels therefore, that is, his fire, shall go before him. This fire whom does it consume? Whoever is wood, hay, stubble. But he who is gold, silver, and precious stones, is indeed sent into the fire, but he is found cleaner.

"His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled." Philosophers say that lightnings are generated from the collision of clouds. For unless a sound is first heard, lightnings are not seen. This is said also of the flint stone: which, unless it has been struck, the fire within will not go forth. This we say according to history, and we speak as little children. We have said therefore the nature of things: that from the nature of things we may bring forth something spiritual. The stone which is commonly called flint, if it is alone, it cannot send fire: but if it has been struck with another stone, the fire within is shaken out. Make for me a cloud Jeremiah, Isaiah, Elijah: and a cloud, also Paul and Peter, and the rest of the apostles. These clouds therefore when they have been collided among themselves, emit the fire within, and it shines to the world. "His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw and trembled." The lightnings of the apostles enlightened in the whole world. "It trembled." They spoke, and the thunder of their voice the whole

world heard. They had both a great voice and splendid lightnings equally. These lightnings illuminated believers: they consumed non-believers.

"The mountains melted like wax before the face of the Lord." It seems to me these mountains are the powers of demons. Or surely mountains, all proud men. This fire does not consume the humble, but whoever are mountainous: Finally when lightning is emitted, it difficultly strikes those who are in the valley; but always those who are on the mountain.

"The heavens have announced his justice." These are the heavens, of which it is said also in the eighteenth psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God." The heavens announce his justice: the earth does not announce it. Whoever is heaven, does not fear the just God. Whoever is of the heavens, does not fear to announce his justice. Whoever is holy and is heaven, this one does not fear the just God. But the sinner seeks the merciful God.

"The heavens have announced his justice": the evangelists namely. "And all the peoples have seen his glory." Because even those to whom it has not been announced concerning him, understood that God had come in the flesh.

"Let all them be confounded that adore graven things, and that glory in their idols." That while they are confounded in vain hope, they may be able to reach that true one.

"Adore him, all you his angels." The announcers of his kingdom. "Sion heard, and was glad." The Church which was beholding his glory.

"And the daughters of Judah rejoiced." The souls of confessors. "Because of thy judgments, O Lord." Because they kept them.

"For thou art the Most High Lord over all the earth: thou art exalted exceedingly above all gods." And not only above gods, but also above the heavens of heavens.

"You that love the Lord," who alone is good; "hate evil," the devil. "The Lord preserves the souls of his saints: he will deliver them from the hand of the sinner." Lest anything should hurt them.

"Light is risen to the just." Christ shines in his heart. "And joy to the right of heart." Because whom they were expecting, they merited to discern.

"Rejoice, you just, in the Lord, and confess to the memory of his holiness." You who contemplate him in the light of a right heart, praise continually, either his holiness: because he was mindful of you, that he might sanctify: or the piety, by which he received you into his kingdom. Who may deign to grant to us, that, his light rising in our hearts, we may merit to be rescued by him from present things: by whose baptism we have been delivered from original harms. To him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 97

"A psalm of David."

This psalm containing the voice of the prophet, narrates the power of the Lord's name and virtue.

"Sing to the Lord a new song." The new song is the Son of God crucified, which had never been heard of before. A new thing has a new song. "Sing to the Lord a new song." It is indeed a man who suffered: but you, sing to the Lord. He suffered indeed as a man, but he saved as God. "Sing to the Lord a new song." A new song should merit a new name. Therefore it is said elsewhere: "And a new name shall be called," it says (Isa. 62). A new name merits a new song. And in the Apocalypse it is said: "To him that overcomes," it says, "I will give a stone, and I will write a new name upon it" (Apoc. 3). The new name is that of Christians. "Sing to the Lord." Why? For what has he done? Why should he merit a new song? "Because he has done wonderful things." He performed signs among the Jews: he healed paralytics: he cleansed lepers: he raised the dead. Other prophets did this too. He turned a few loaves into many, and fed an infinite people. Elisha did this too. What new thing did he do, then, that he should merit a new song? Do you want to know what new thing God has done? He died as a man, so that men might live. The Son of God was crucified, so that he might lift us up to heaven. "For he has done wonderful things." Do you want to know how he has done wonderful things? The son of the widow was lying in the upper chamber: Elisha came and contracted himself, and put

mouth to mouth, and hand to hand, and foot to foot (4 Kings 4). For if he had expanded himself, the son of the widow would not have returned. Therefore he contracted himself, that he might give life. Although he was in the form of God: therefore he took the form of man (Phil. 2): therefore he contracted himself, that he might make us higher.

"His right hand has saved for him." What it says is this: He saved men, not someone else's work, but his own; that is, what he made for himself, he himself saved for himself. He had made man for salvation, who had perished by his own fault. He died, that he might save man for himself by his right hand. "Right hand" here is placed for power, and "arm" for strength. "And his holy arm." Although both the arm and the right hand may be called Christ: "The right hand of the Lord has wrought strength," and "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Ps. 117), nevertheless here it is said concerning Christ.

"The Lord has made known his salvation." He did not say, he showed, but, "he made known." What he says is this: that they had known God before, and by their own fault they forgot. Therefore God coming, by his grace manifested to them that which they had lost. Therefore he says this: He whom Adam had known, whom Seth had known (Gen. 4): whom Enoch had known: who called upon the Lord, and hoped in him: and whom Noah had known: and afterwards the human race had forgotten, he came again into the world, so that men who afterwards had

been forgotten, might know again. "The Lord has made known his salvation." In Hebrew it is read: "The Lord has made known his Jesus." For wherever "Savior" is said, in Hebrew "Jesus" is placed. "He has revealed his justice in the sight of the Gentiles." By no means in Judea alone, but, "in the sight of the Gentiles." For it was just, that the Savior should save his creature. He revealed his justice, which had been obscured by the unbelief of men.

"He has remembered his mercy." He has shut up all under sin, that he may have mercy on all (Rom. 11). "And his truth to the house of Israel." He remembers mercy: he fulfills truth. "He has remembered his mercy," that is, among the people of the Gentiles. "And his truth to the house of Israel." Completing by this work what he had promised to the patriarchs.

"All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." Not Israel and Judah alone saw, but "all the ends": and at the same time according to the mystical understanding, "the ends of the earth." As long as we are in the middle of the earth, we cannot see God. When therefore we as it were leave the earth, and are at the summit, then we merit to see God. Do you want to know how the ends of the earth see God? We read in Ezekiel: "And those wheels which were revolving, it was said to them, Gelgel, which is called revolution" (Ezek. 1). For "Gel" is rolling; "Gelgel," revolution. Those wheels therefore hear, "revolution." For the wheel touches the earth with as it were a certain small space, and its whole self hastens to-

ward heaven. Therefore it is said also in another place: "Holy stones are rolled over the earth" (Zech. 9). And what is said in Ezekiel? "Whithersoever the spirit went," it says, "thither the wheels also followed." Let us also follow the Holy Spirit, that we may be called wheels. And what is said there? "And they went not backward," it says, "but they always went before them." At the same time consider what it says: "They did not return," it says, "but they always went before them." For they were forgetting the things that were behind, and stretching themselves forth to those that were before (Phil. 3). "And they were full of eyes," it says. For all these wheels were full of the light of God. It is not for this time that we should dispute concerning the wheels, and the Cherubim, and the animals of Ezekiel.

"Sing joyfully to God, all the earth." Not Judea alone, but "all the earth, sing joyfully to the Lord." Send forth the signs of a victorious army. "Sing, and rejoice, and sing psalms." Sing with the thought: sing psalms with the word, that is, with all your members. Let the hand sing psalms in almsgiving: let the foot sing psalms going in a good work.

"Sing psalms to the Lord on the cithara." Let all your strings be vocal. There cannot be a cithara if one string is missing. What does it profit you if you are chaste, if you are generous in almsgiving, and you are envious? What does it profit you if you have six strings intact, and one broken? If one string is missing, the perfect sound of the cithara cannot be. "With ductile trumpets, and the voice

of a horny trumpet." We read in the book of Numbers that there are two kinds of trumpets: one kind of trumpet ductile from silver; another kind of trumpets made of horn (Num. 10). Therefore here both are said: "With ductile trumpets, and the voice of a horny trumpet." What is said is this? The ductile trumpet from silver is the word of God, and the speeches of the Lord, chaste speeches: silver tried by fire, purged sevenfold (Ps. 11 and 14). Again, "in the voice of a horny trumpet," here the man of God is introduced as reigning. In the Scriptures properly "horn" is said for kingdom, and for power: as it is written there: "He has raised up a horn of salvation for us" (Luke 1). And in another place it is written: "In thee we will toss our enemies with the horn" (Ps. 43). Therefore see here what he says: Have two trumpets, both the silver and the horny. The silver, that you may have the word: the horny, that you may have virtue. Do you want to know that the horn is always placed in a good sense? We read in Leviticus: No animal may be offered, unless it is horned. Three kinds of animals are offered: the ox, which has a horn, and the ram, which has a horn, and the goat, which has a horn. Do you think it is said without cause, that no animal should be offered unless it is horned? And we therefore as long as we have a horn, merit to be the victim of God. But if our horn should be struck off, we are as it were weak, and cannot come among the priests of God. "Let the sea be moved and the fullness thereof." Let the sea be moved, and let the bitter waters be changed into sweet.

Finally even Marah was changed and made into a sweet flavor (Exod. 15). Nothing else made that bitter water sweet, except the wood of the cross, which was cast into it. To me the bitter sea seems to be the law of Moses. This is what is called Marah, that is, bitter. This bitter water of the old law received the wood of the cross, and was made sweet.

"The rivers shall clap their hand together." Let us ask the Jews, who understand according to the letter: do rivers have a belly? Do rivers have voices? Do rivers have feet? Do rivers have hands? Someone may say: It is not written concerning the belly, concerning the feet. But I say to you: from one member we understand also the rest. For we cannot understand hands without feet, without a belly, without the other members. "The rivers shall clap their hand together." The rivers which have drunk from the fountain of Jesus. "Me," he says, "they have forsaken, the fountain of living water" (Jer. 2). Those rivers run from the fountain of Christ. He is the fountain; we are the rivers: if indeed we merit to be rivers. Christ is the fountain: the saints are the rivers. Those who are lower, are rivulets. Others indeed are torrents. Who are the torrents? Those who have waters for an hour, and, when temptation comes, they are dried up. "The rivers shall clap their hand together." It is not one river, there are many rivers. As many saints as there are, so many rivers there are. But these rivers do not have dissension among themselves. Since they are the rivers of Christ, for that reason they have concord among

themselves. "The rivers shall clap their hand together." They shall clap, because the work of the saints is the praise of God. Christ is not praised with the voice, but with the work. He does not hear the voice, but the works. "The rivers shall clap their hand together." Therefore he himself says in the Gospel: "He that thirsts, let him come and drink," and "rivers," he says, "shall flow from his belly" (John 7). "The mountains shall rejoice in the sight of the Lord." What is similar between rivers and mountains? But because he speaks concerning the perfect saints, he did not say, rivulets shall clap their hand together: but, "the rivers shall clap their hand together." See the order: "Let the sea be moved," and all the world. "The rivers shall clap their hand together." The mountains likewise, which have reached the height of justice. I will say it otherwise: "Let the sea be moved," which before had been unmoved, let it be moved at the coming of Christ. "Let the sea be moved," we have already said, that is, the law of Moses. "The rivers shall clap their hand together," that is, the prophets. "The mountains shall rejoice at the sight of the Lord," that is, the apostles. "Because he is come to judge the earth." By no means is he come only humble in the flesh, but he is come glorious in his majesty. "Because he is come to judge."

"He shall judge the world in justice, and the peoples in equity." Justice and equity are placed. First justice is placed, and afterwards equity; euthytes is properly called that which makes the crooked straight. He comes therefore to judge in

his justice, so that what is crooked, may become straight in him. To whom be glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 98.

"A psalm of David."

This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, a priest of the Lord, admonishing for the returning of thanks to the grace of Almighty God.

"The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry." Three psalms have the same beginning: the ninety-second, and the ninety-sixth, and the ninety-eighth. But although they have the same beginning in the verse, in the end they are different. For when it is said in the ninety-second: "The Lord has reigned, he is clothed with beauty"; in the ninety-sixth: "The Lord has reigned, let the earth rejoice"; but in the ninety-eighth: "The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry": the order seems as it were contrary to itself. For he ought first to have said: "The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry"; and afterwards to say: "The Lord has reigned, let the earth rejoice"; and in the last: "The Lord has reigned, he is clothed with beauty." Truly the diverse order gives us some suspicion of understanding. "The Lord has reigned, he is clothed with beauty." The Lord has reigned, and he is clothed with the patriarchs, and the prophets, and the believing people. He is clothed with beauty, because the patriarchs and prophets were as it were the garment of Christ. That is the loincloth (perizoma) which is

written of in Jeremiah: that is the loincloth which Jeremiah had about his loins. Do you want to know that the saints are as it were the loincloth, the garment of God (Jer. 13:11)? Therefore God himself speaks to Jeremiah: "As you," he says, "have placed this loincloth (lumbare) at your loins: so also have I applied my people to me." As therefore the garment is around a man: so the people are around God. Truly because this loincloth, truly because this beauty, with which the Lord had been clothed, was exposed across the Euphrates in a hole of a rock, and there it rotted, and was led into captivity by the Assyrians: what does the Lord do? He is not naked, he cannot be without a loincloth, and he cannot be without a garment; the former people being lost, he makes for himself a garment from the people of the Gentiles. And what is said? "The Lord has reigned, let the earth rejoice." Let the whole earth rejoice, that is, the people of believers. Finally, do you want to know that the second loincloth is spoken of concerning the people of the Gentiles? "The Lord," he says, "has reigned, let the earth rejoice: let many islands be glad." Not one island, Judea, but many islands, that is, the whole world. Let someone say to me: Give me an example from the Scriptures, where Judea alone is called an island. Everything that we speak, we ought to affirm from the holy Scriptures: "For in the mouth of two and three witnesses every word shall stand" (Deut. 17:6). The word of the speaker does not have as much authority as the precept of the Lord. We read in the prophet Ezekiel: "And thou, son

of man, speak to the inhabitants of this island" (Ezek. 27), that is, of Judea. Since therefore one island has been dismissed, now it is said: "Let many islands be glad." Therefore the loincloth is spoken of in the former people: "The Lord has reigned, he is clothed with beauty." In the second people gathered from the Gentiles: "The Lord has reigned, let the earth rejoice; let many islands be glad." Now in the third it is said: "The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry." Whether they are from the Gentiles or from the Jews: whoever does not believe: let them be angry. "Why have the Gentiles raged, and the peoples devised vain things" (Ps. 2)? "The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry." The Lord suffered: the Lord was crucified: the Lord died: the Lord rose again: the Lord ascended to heaven as victor. "The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry." Who are these peoples? Let us tell an example from the Gospel: "A certain householder went to receive for himself a kingdom from afar" (Luke 19). What is further than heaven from earth? He left the earth: he went to the heavens, that he might receive for himself a kingdom. "And those citizens," it says, "who hated him, sent a legation, saying: We will not have him to reign over us." Truly he received the kingdom, and came to the worst citizens. He came to those who did not want to have him as king. And now the Holy Spirit says to the evil citizens: Whether you will or not, "The Lord has reigned, let the peoples be angry." O clemency of the Holy Spirit: he did not say, let them perish: but, "let them be angry." He

wanted to signify the fault, not the punishments. They are angry, and the Lord entreats. And what does he say? "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened" (Matt. 11). I have received the kingdom from the Father, or rather the man whom I have assumed, I give as God, I receive as man. "Thou that sittest upon the Cherubim, let the earth be moved." As long as the earth is immobile, it cannot be healed. He does not speak concerning an earthquake, by which we see the lands shaken, and every kind of mortals fear; but he speaks concerning our earth. Which as long as it shall be unmoved, cannot be healed. But when it shall be moved, and shall tremble, then it will receive health. "Upon whom," he says, "shall I rest, but upon him that is humble and quiet, and trembling at my words" (Isa. 66)? Since the trembling earth is moved: for that reason he who sits upon the Cherubim begins to sit in the trembling earth. Happy is he who is the throne of God. Happy is he in whom God always sits. There are diverse figures (schemata). For either we sit, or we stand, or we walk, or we lie down. Unhappy is he for whom God lies down: for he lies down with the one who is lying down. As he mourns with the mourning, and laughs with the laughing: so also he lies down with the one who is lying down. As he thirsts with the thirsty, and hungers with the hungry, and is naked with the naked, so also he lies down with the one who is lying down. He therefore who is wounded, and lies down; he also is said in a certain way to lie down with him. But he who walks, he also walks with him. He who

walks, indeed seems to be better than he who lies down, yet he has not yet come to the happiness of him who stands. Finally even Adam when he hid himself from the face of God: God walked for him in the afternoon (Gen. 3). Someone may say: If Adam had offended, and had been cast out of paradise: therefore he is in imperfect happiness for whomsoever God walks. And I say: If Adam had been entirely killed, and the place of penance had not been given to him, God would have lain down for him. But now because the place of penance is given to him: therefore God walks for him.

"The Lord is great in Zion, and high above all peoples." Ascending to the heavens, he is made higher than all: from where he watches us and our acts through each day.

"Let them confess to thy great name: for it is terrible and holy." Let the saints prepare themselves to confess to thy name: which is holy, since thou hast said: "Be you holy: for I am holy" (Lev. 19 and 20). "And the king's honor loves judgment." A man ought first to judge himself, and by his own judgment condemn his own evils, and thus let him honor the eternal King God.

"Thou hast prepared loves among the peoples." But they have been depraved by their own fault. "Thou hast wrought judgment and justice in Jacob." Not only in the patriarchs: but also in the Christian people, who merited the birthright of the elder.

"Exalt the Lord our God." That he may be high in your hearts. "And adore his footstool,

for it is holy." There are many opinions concerning the footstool: but here the prophet says the Lord's body, in which the majesty of the divinity stands as if upon a footstool. For we have often taught that he is called holy. Moreover, that it ought to be adored, the apostles taught when he was ascending, when adoring they returned into Jerusalem (Acts 1). But these are to be referred also to the Lord's cross, and to the holy soul.

"Moses and Aaron among his priests." Although one may hold the rule of the law, the other of the priesthood: nevertheless both announced the coming of the Lord with a priestly proclamation, either in the legal trumpets, or in the bells. "And Samuel among those who call upon his name." Samuel holds the rule of the Levite order: which that linen and white Ephod figured (2 Kings 6): showing that he can be made white, who calling upon the name of the Lord through penance, has washed away the blackness of sin with tears.

"They called upon the Lord." The apostles. "And he heard them: he spoke to them in the pillar of a cloud." The Lord spoke from the cloud to the children of Israel (Exod. 16 and 19): but he also afterwards addressed the apostles from the veil of the assumed flesh: in which the divinity lay hidden, overshadowed.

"They kept his testament: and the precept which he gave them." They brought nothing of these to naught.

"O Lord our God, thou heardest them; O God, thou wast merciful to them, and taking

vengeance on all their inventions." For all the things which they studied to do, thou hast led to perfection: because they were pleasing to thee.

"Exalt the Lord our God, and adore on his holy mountain: for holy is the Lord our God." Exhibit yourselves holy in his Church, as he himself exhibited her holy, not having spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5). Who may deign to grant to us, that holding the manner of the priestly order with perfect holiness, he himself may deign to lead to effect those things which we study to do concerning good.

PSALM 99.

"A psalm for confession."

This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, who provokes the faithful to exercise themselves in the Lord's praises unceasingly.

"Sing joyfully to God, all the earth, serve the Lord in gladness." You who, the yoke of the law having been shaken from your necks, rejoice not in the mourning of the old servitude, but in the liberty of the new man.

"Enter into his sight in exultation." Do not be dissolved by base jests: but everything whatsoever you do, do for the glory of God.

"Know that the Lord himself is God: he made us, and not we ourselves." For by him we are not only made corporally, but also recreated into a new man. And this not by our merit, but by his gift.

"We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." He is the good shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep (John 10). We however are the sheep, who follow him, and have heard his voice. "Enter his gates in confession." For as he himself is the gate of the Father when he says: "By me if any man shall enter in, he shall be saved" (Ibid.), so also the apostles are his gates through which he is approached: which no one can enter, unless he has purged himself by confessing his sins. "Confess to him his courts in hymns." Bring to him expanded minds with spiritual hymns and songs.

"Praise his name, for the Lord is sweet." For he has nothing bitter: "His mercy is forever." Because he has redeemed us, and continually saves us. "And his truth is unto generation and generation." By which he will judge the peoples. Who may deign to grant to us, that having been made by him, redeemed by him, we may merit also to sing together the jubilation of exultation with thanksgiving in everlasting gladness. To him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 100.

"A psalm for David himself."

This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, narrating the mercies of God.

"I will sing to thee, O Lord, mercy and judgment." Let the sinners who despair of their salvation, who are in penance, hear mercy. Let the

contemners hear judgment, who say: "The Lord is merciful: let us sin, he will indulge us."

"I will sing and I will understand in the immaculate way." That one may understand what he sings, and his sense may contemplate the psalm, so that his mind may not wander outside, and he may indeed seem to sing with his body, but his mind be without fruit. "In the immaculate way": that walking in this world I may act justly, and have no spot.

"When wilt thou come to me?" But when I shall have received understanding, and shall have acted justly: then with confidence I say to the Lord: "When wilt thou come to me?" "Thou wilt come," however, is to be understood concerning his second advent.

"I walked in the innocence of my heart: in the midst of my house." Nothing so pleases God as simplicity and innocence. Finally, the Holy Spirit was not well pleased in other birds except in the dove, on account of simplicity, and in quadrupeds in the sheep, on account of mildness.

"I did not set before my eyes any unjust thing." I did not put anything before the Lord, nor did I consent to iniquity: but I was wholly toward God.

"I hated those who work prevarication." Whether it was my father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or friend, yet if he had turned aside from the fear of the Lord: him I held in hatred, and did not approach him at all. I did not put proximity or friendship before the piety of the Lord.

"A perverse heart did not cleave to me." There was not in me anything difficult, or anything

perverse: but equity and justice. "The malignant man turning aside from me I did not know." That is, if he was my friend or neighbor, or bishop or priest, or established in whatever dignity: yet if he perverted his ways, I so fled him, that I made no memory of him at all.

"The one detracting his neighbor, him I persecuted." To such an extent it is not fitting to consent to one detracting, that even as much as is in us we should persecute such a one, providing utility in both, so that we neither listen willingly, nor permit him to sin. For there is such a distance between one committing fornication and one detracting: that he who commits fornication kills only himself: but he who detracts, drowns both himself and him who hears.

"With a haughty eye, and an insatiable heart, with this one I did not eat." If any one was haughty or greedy, with this one I did not eat at all.

"My eyes are upon the faithful of the earth, that they may sit with me." He did not say the rich, or emperors, or bishops, or priests, or deacons: but the faithful: with these I sat. A bishop who is a holy man can say this, since I did not ordain that priest who was obsequious to me, or my relative, but him whom I knew to be faithful. And again the same can say: Because I had all my clerics and laity as faithful. This little verse can be said from the person of the Lord: "Walking in the immaculate way, this one ministered to me." Since I did not ordain those who were near to me, but the just and faithful.

"He who speaks iniquitous things, did not direct in the sight of my eyes." For to such an extent I turned aside from him who detracted his neighbor, that I neither believed him, nor listened to such a one.

"In the morning I destroyed all the sinners of the earth," he said well, "sinners of the earth." For sinners are earthly. He wishes to say this, that the injections of the devil which he suggested to me, I cast out from my heart, and did not receive. For by casting out evil thoughts, demons are killed. The Jews hearing this verse, and following the killing letter, and desiring to shed blood, if any one has prevaricated concerning the law, they kill him. Since they are not content with the killing of the prophets: but they even crucified the Lord himself. "That I might destroy all those who work iniquity from the city of the Lord." Would that we also might destroy those who work iniquity from the city of the Lord. The city of the Lord is the Church of the saints, the congregation of the just. I will destroy, that is, I will argue, I will rebuke him who sins, so that he may do penance, and destroy iniquity from his heart. For he did not say, that he should be cast away, but that he should be saved.

PSALM 101.

"A prayer of the poor man when he was anxious, and poured out his prayer in the sight of the Lord."

This psalm in the beginning contains the voice of the prophet from the person of a sinner: then praise of the Lord's name is contained in it.

"O Lord, hear my prayer," etc. Because it is brought forth from the whole heart.

"Turn not away thy face from me." If any one prays in a clean heart, and is not rebuked by his conscience: he can say this: For a sinner does not dare to say: "Turn not away thy face from me," but rather says: "Turn away thy face from my sins." "In whatever day I am in trouble, incline thy ear to me: In whatever day I shall call upon thee: hear me speedily." He prays for present pressures, that he may be snatched from these by divine contemplation.

"For my days have vanished like smoke." As if he were to say: I was an infant, and while I know not, I came into youthful age, and again into perfect age, and while I know not, I have grown old. "And my days have vanished like smoke." For some think themselves to be everlasting, and persevere in their sin. "And my bones have withered like brushwood." He calls strength itself bones. If therefore that which is strong in me has withered, and has been made infirm: how much more the flesh which by nature is infirm?

"I am smitten as grass, and my heart is withered." As also it is written elsewhere: "Man, his days are as grass." For thus the life of men flourishes, and quickly withers. "Because I have forgotten to eat my bread." He did not say, I did not desire to eat, or I despised eating. To such an extent the memory of my sins came to me, and I

performed such penance, that I even forgot to eat: having the desire of God, and considering him alone.

"From the voice of my groaning: my bone has cleaved to my flesh." Let those who perform penance learn how they ought to perform penance. For thus I dried myself up that I was without flesh, and my skin cleaved to my bones. He said flesh for skin.

"I am become like to a pelican of the wilderness." Two kinds are said to be of these birds. One is in the waters, and its food is fish: and one in the wilderness, and its food is poisonous animals, that is, serpents, and crocodiles, and lizards. These birds, moreover, are called in Latin onocrotali. To that one therefore I am become like who is in the wilderness: who eats poisonous animals, that is, my food was as poison to me. "I am become like a night-raven in the house." We know that a raven is black: and has nothing white in itself. He wished to say by hyperbole: because, "I am become like a night-raven." Thus therefore it is black in the day: how much more in the night? Thus therefore I am become on account of my sins, considering myself.

"For I did eat ashes like bread." I dipped my bread into ashes: and thus I ate. If therefore a prophet says this, what do we do? "And I mingled my drink with weeping." Nothing was sweet to me, neither bread, nor drink: but I desired only the heavenly bread, that is, Christ.

"From the face of thy wrath and indignation." And all these things I did, considering thy advent

and the future judgment. "For having lifted me up, thou hast thrown me down." Let those who at some time were holy, and fell, say this. For having been exalted in virtues, afterwards they fell. Since the saints say: "because lifting me up, thou hast held me."

"My days have declined like a shadow." If days, how much more nights? That is, if light, how much more darkness? "And I am withered like grass." Since as grass, so man passes through, and is dried up.

"Thou arising, wilt have mercy on Zion." From this little verse it is manifest that this psalm was said from the person of Zion: and not from the person of the prophet. Moreover, Zion is she who is placed on a watch-tower, and looking forth at those things which come from afar. This Zion therefore, which is placed on high, has fallen from on high. Therefore let him who stands, see that he does not fall (1 Cor. 10). "Because it is the time of having mercy on her: for the time is come." Either on account of penance it is the time of having mercy: or it signifies the second advent of the Savior. Therefore let him who performs penance trust: since the time of being saved has come. For the Lord is merciful (Ps. 77 and Eccl. 2).

"For her stones have pleased thy servants." The stones are the saints. Moreover, the earth, that is, sinners, stand in need of the Lord's mercy. "And they shall have mercy on her earth." That she may exhibit the fruit of holiness.

"The Gentiles shall fear the name of the Lord: and all the kings of the earth thy glory." Those

who before feared idols, and called upon the names of demons: now let them venerate and fear thy name.

"Because the Lord will build Zion." His Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets: "And he shall be seen in his glory." When he shall have glorified his whole body unto the likeness of the image of his glory.

"And he hath had regard to the prayer of the humble: and he hath not despised their prayers." But by his advent he visited the world: which of old was desired.

"Let these things be written in another generation." In the New Testament. "And the people that shall be created, shall praise the Lord." The Christian surely, who previously dead in sins, has been recreated in him.

"Because he hath looked forth from his high sanctuary: the Lord from heaven hath looked upon the earth." "That he might hear the groans of the fettered: that he might release the children of the slain." He looked that he might have mercy. He descended that he might loose the bonds, by which we were bound.

"That they may declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem." Always a good messenger exhibits new joys: as the Angel to Mary: "The Holy Spirit," he said, "shall come upon thee" (Luke 1). And again to the shepherds: "Behold, I announce to you today a great joy: for a Savior is born to you" (Ibid., 2). So also now in Zion or in Jerusalem it is announced: because he

is born on earth who would bring life to the world dead in sins.

"In the assembling of the peoples together: and kings to serve the Lord." They shall assemble in one belief, that they may serve the Redeemer.

"He answered him in the way of his strength: declare to me the fewness of my days." The Lord answered Jerusalem in the day of strength, that is, when he was approaching his passion: and he announced the fewness of his days, saying: "Because the days will come when thou shalt be surrounded by enemies, and shalt be uprooted" (Luke 19), and the rest.

"And call me not back in the midst of my days: thy years are unto generation and generation." The iniquitous do not even halve their days (Ps. 54). This one truly prays, that he may not be called back from the midst of his days, namely that coming to a perfect man he may enjoy with the Lord the perennity of times.

"In the beginning thou, O Lord, didst found the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands." For as in the beginning thou didst create these things: so also now thou either repairest the earth of our body into a new man: or thou composest our minds with the dignity of the heavens. But concerning the former heavens he says:

"They shall perish, but thou remainest." According to that: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24, and Mark 13). "And all shall grow old like a garment." "And as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art

the selfsame, and thy years shall not fail." That is, thou who wast in the heavens, showest thyself the same on the earth. The same in the womb of the virgin: the same descending into hell. The same rising from the dead: thou thyself hast returned into heaven.

"The children of thy servants shall inhabit." Because they have been reborn to thee through the apostles. "And their seed shall be directed forever." Either their preaching or their virtue is spread abroad among every nation. We however deprecate the Lord, that he may hear the prayers of the suppliants, and insert his light into our minds: that narrating his magnificence, we may merit to be made consorts of his saints in the heavenly kingdoms. To whom be glory and empire unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 102.

A psalm of David.

This psalm dwells especially upon the piety and mercy of God: for it says:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and let all that is within me bless his holy name." It is said also in another place: "And know, that the Lord himself is God" (Ps. 99). And now it is said: "And all that is within me, to his holy name." If we shall have said: "Bless the Lord, O my soul": and the Lord is the Lord: what name does the Lord seek here? If the Lord is called the Lord: why does he say: "And all that is within me to his holy name?" The advent of the Son is the name of the Father.

Before the advent of Christ God was known: the Father was ignored. Finally he himself says in the Gospel: "Father, I have revealed thy name to men" (John 17). We cannot dwell on individual little verses: since the psalm is long: but we ought to fit short little sentences to individual verses, explaining the sense rather than weaving words.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and forget not all his retributions." Many retributions the Lord has granted to us: great benefits he has granted to us: because he made the heaven, because he made the earth, because he made all elements for us.

"Who is propitious to all thy iniquities." That he may delete them as a cloud. "Who healeth all thy infirmities." The sins by which thou art made infirm. Our soul has many infirmities. As many sins, so many infirmities. Finally also that woman in the Gospel, who for eighteen years had a spirit of infirmity, and could not lift up her head (Luke 13). See what he says: When any one has a spirit of infirmity, he is contracted, he looks downward, he gazes at the earth, he cannot see heaven.

"Who redeemeth thy life from destruction." "By a price," he says, "you have been redeemed: do not become servants of men" (1 Cor. 6 and 7). What is a greater price than the Creator shedding blood for his creature? "Who crowneth thee in mercy and commiserations." With mercy running before, he gives victory, he bestows the palm.

"Who filleth thy desire with good things." Joining thee to the saints in the heavenly Jerusalem.

"Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's." That thou mayest be changed from the old into the new man.

"Doing the mercies of the Lord, and judgment to all that suffer injury." That, the impious having been oppressed, he may lift up his poor.

"He hath made his ways known to Moses: his wills to the children of Israel." To him who understands the law spiritually, or to him who contemplates him with the eyes of the mind.

"The Lord is merciful and compassionate: patient and of much mercy." Because he is quickly turned to mercy.

"He will not be angry forever, nor will he threaten eternally," etc. For he has indulged better things than we merited.

"For according to the height of the heaven from the earth, he hath strengthened his mercy upon those who fear him." Heaven is far distant from the earth; but divine mercy continually both protects and confirms its own.

"As far as the east is distant from the west, he hath put our iniquities far from us." Where God approaches, sins are elongated: so that, according to the Apostle, "where sin abounds, grace may superabound" (Rom. 5).

"As a father hath mercy on his children, so hath the Lord had mercy on those who fear him." A father has mercy on a son when he beats him so that he may amend. So also the Lord corrects us at times that he may make us safe: nevertheless he does not desert us forever that we should perish.

"For he himself knew our frame." For the prophet knows the human race as if the potter's vessel formed from clay, adopted into the honor of children: and therefore considering that the judgment of death for sins approaches it, he says, deprecating mercy:

"He remembered that we are dust, man, his days are as grass." As if he were to say: Thou art not angry, so as to crush; but thou rememberest that we are potter's vessels: which once broken, cannot be repaired; but immediately fall and wither. "As a flower of the field so shall he flourish." For a time.

"Because the spirit hath passed through in him, and he shall not stand: and he shall know his place no more." But the spirit passing through, all the joy of his greenness is delivered to oblivion.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity, and unto eternity upon those who fear him." Because while he rebukes sinners, he offers mercy to the just.

"And his justice unto children's children to those who keep his testament, and are mindful of his commandments to do them." In good works surely: by which the commandments of God are continually remembered, so that they may be kept by them.

"The Lord hath prepared his seat in heaven, and his kingdom shall rule over all." He foretells the Lord's Ascension, which was made after the restoration of man: through which Christ the Lord subjected the whole ends of the world to his dominion.

"Bless the Lord, all ye his angels." Messengers of truth. "Mighty in strength, doing his word." Immediately fulfilling those things which he shall have spoken. "To hear the voice of his words." That is, to understand what he shall have commanded.

"Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his will." You who, strengthened by his power, minister the word to the Churches.

"Bless the Lord, all his works." You surely who live in him. Because every work that was made in him is life (John 1). "In every place of his dominion." For nothing is found where he does not rule. He contains all things, and diffuses himself everywhere. "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Moreover the prophet speaks these things not of his soul only, but also to our souls likewise, that they may continually bless him who bestows good things, who is propitious to sins, who redeems from destruction; who fills every desire with good things: who may now deign to have mercy on us as a father on children, the masses of sins having been remitted here; to whom is honor and glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 103.

A psalm of David.

This psalm contains the voice of creation itself praising and blessing God. But this very thing we ought to observe spiritually.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul." So that while thou blessest him, thou mayest be blessed by him. The prophet provokes himself in blessing God. Moreover, to bless the Lord, that is, he who praises the Lord, blesses himself. "O Lord my God." To all indeed thou art both God and Lord; but to me properly, because I am not a servant of sin. "Thou art magnified exceedingly." Either in me, or in the rest of thy saints. Who is the God of all, is my God specially: because I am not a servant of sin, because I merited to be called thy servant. "Thou art magnified exceedingly."

"Thou hast put on confession and beauty." Thou hast put on confession saying: "I confess to thee, O Lord, Father of heaven and earth" (Matt. 11). Thou hast put on beauty, with him answering from the splendid cloud: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him" (Matt. 17). Confession is understood in two ways. Either in penance, or in the glory of God: That is, thou hast put on glory: just as the Savior himself says in the Gospel: "I will confess to thee, Father": that is, I glorify thee: or because we confess our sins to the Lord. For in that we confess our sins to God, we glorify him. "And thou hast put on beauty." See the order. First someone confesses, and thus he has received loveliness and beauty, and afterwards light. For this follows: "Clothed with light as with a garment." This little verse seems contrary to that which says: "He made darkness his covert": Or to that which says: "Clouds and darkness are round about him." But it is to be known that those things are said concerning occult mys-

teries: for from the fullness of this light the whole earth shines.

"Stretching out the heaven like a skin." For in the manner of a certain book, or a volume, the heaven, when the majesty of God has willed, is either stretched out, or folded: as the Evangelical faith witnesses. "Who coverest the higher parts thereof with water." The higher parts of heaven, according to Genesis, are covered by waters (Gen. 1): because he says the waters placed above the firmament: which we understand as the multitude of angels: according to that: "Let the waters that are above the heavens praise the name of the Lord" (Ps. 148).

"Who makest the cloud thy ascent." For the Lord Jesus, the disciples having been blessed, was lifted up, and a cloud received him, and they looked upon him going into heaven (Acts 1). "Who walkest upon the wings of the winds." Above all alacrity of the winds the Lord proceeds. But also over the souls of the saints which tend toward heavenly things, he both walks and rests.

"Who makest thy angels spirits." That they may inspire men to do his will: because the carnal man does not receive those things which are of God. "And thy ministers a burning fire." That in some they may infuse the light of truth: in others they may consume sins.

"Who hast founded the earth upon its own stability," etc. These things seem to disagree with that, where he says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away." But this visible earth passes away: but the earth of the body which exhibits the fruit of ho-

liness, is surrounded by the pallium of heavenly mysteries.

"The waters shall stand above the mountains." Upon high pride the foolish peoples dwell. "At thy rebuke they shall flee: at the voice of thy thunder they shall be afraid." For it is thy voice when thou sayest: "Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3). But as if thunder, so that these may fear, when thou threatenest, when thou sayest: "Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13).

"They all ascend." The saints profit in spiritual understanding. "And the plains descend." The peoples subject to their doctrines, so that they may be filled with the flowers of virtues. "Into the place which thou hast founded for them." Into the Ecclesiastical assembly.

"Thou hast set a bound which they shall not pass over." The Catholic faith surely, which they keep even unto the end of the present life. "Neither shall they return to cover the earth." In the crimes in which they previously lived.

"Who sendest forth springs in the valleys." Among the deserts of the nations, he granted the grace of baptism. "Between the midst of the mountains." That is, of the Churches. "The waters shall pass through." Of the laver itself, or of the teacher: irrigating the people with heavenly gifts.

"And all the beasts of the field shall drink, the wild asses shall expect in their thirst." That this grace may be ministered equally to all: as Paul

says: "To the wise and the unwise I am a debtor" (Rom. 1).

"Over them the birds of the air shall dwell." Those who merited a higher sense for understanding. "From the midst of the rocks." That is, of the Churches. "They shall give forth their voice." To praise God together.

"Watering the mountains." That is, the apostles. "From his upper rooms." From the heavenly things, pouring out the Holy Spirit upon them. "The earth shall be satiated with the fruit of thy works." From the benefits of thy largess.

"Bringing forth grass for cattle, and herb for the service of men." Granting to each one according to his own necessity.

"That thou mayest bring forth bread from the earth, and may wine cheer the heart of man." From the field of the earthly body which he assumed from us, bringing forth the mystery of the heavenly bread and the cup of salvation, by which the Church may be refreshed.

"That he may make his face cheerful with oil." For the face of the just is cheered by the oil of mercy before God. "And bread strengthens the heart of man." The bread itself strengthens our hearts themselves: who descending from heaven granted life to the world.

"The trees of the field shall be filled." Either rational or irrational men, as we explained above concerning the beasts and the wild asses. "And the cedars of Libanus." The saints, higher in merit. "Which he hath planted." In the unity of

the Ecclesiastical faith. "There the sparrows shall make their nests." The wise build.

"The house of the heron is their leader." The heron is greater than all birds, which overcomes and eats the eagle. Therefore, such a man, who dwells in the house of God, should provide leadership for overcoming the devil, because the eagle is often put for the devil. "The high hills for the stags." This animal kills serpents and eats them. Therefore, he rightly dwells in the mountains who kills the intelligible serpent, who was wiser in paradise than all the beasts, who deceived Eve (Gen. 3). "The rock a refuge for the hedgehogs." He who is fearful has the rock as a refuge; but the rock is Christ.

"He made the moon for seasons." They say that when the moon waxes, all fruits wax, and when it wanes, the fruits wane again. Therefore he said well: "He made the moon for seasons." Or let us understand the moon in another way as the Church. For in the Church's profiting, we also profit with it, and when it suffers persecution and is diminished, we also are diminished with it and suffer persecution. "The sun knoweth his going down." If the sun sets, do we think ourselves to be eternal? But in this it is to be wondered at: how such a great light and such great brightness, which covers the whole world with its light, sets in a moment. Let us pray, however, that the sun of justice may not set for us.

"Thou hast appointed darkness, and it is night: in it shall all the beasts of the woods go about." And according to the letter it has its order:

for night was made for this reason, that men might rest from their works, and the beasts might go forth to pasture. But according to tropology: when the sun of justice has set for us, all things are dark to us, and then the beasts pass into us: even the roaring lion, wishing to seize and devour us.

"The young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their meat from God." He said well, "from God": because he desires to deceive the saints; as if he were to say, Judas, David, Solomon, Peter: as it is written: "his meat is choice" (Hab. 1).

"The sun is risen, and they are gathered together." Let him who has fallen not be sad, but let him do penance. The sun of justice rises for him, and all the beasts and sins flee from him, and he becomes such as he was before. For again the sun of justice has risen.

"Man shall go forth to his work, and to his labour, until the evening." But after the sun of justice has risen: we go forth again to our labour until the evening, that is, until the consummation. It behoves us, therefore, at all times to work justice.

"How magnified are thy works, O Lord." The prophet came into an excess of mind. Not finding how he might praise the Lord, he said: "How magnified are thy works, O Lord." Thy works exceed human sense. "Thou hast made all things in wisdom." In our Lord Jesus Christ. For he himself is the wisdom of God according to the Apostle saying: "that in him all things were created" (Rom. 11). "The earth is filled with thy posses-

sion." And indeed all the works of the Lord are full of wisdom. For when we see the ant know when winter comes, and it stores up food for itself, and again the gnat so minute, having eyes, a belly and all members just as we have, and the flea and others. Moreover, we see the elephant, such a great beast, having eyes, nostrils, feet, a belly just as we have in the same places. Similarly also the bee, how it makes honey and wax. Are not these things worthy of wonder, and full of wisdom?

"This great sea, which stretcheth with its arms: there are creeping things without number. Creatures little and great." Is not this of wonderful wisdom, how in the sea there are creeping things without number? And fishes both greater and smaller: how they are in the deep, and from there resume life, where if a man falls, he dies, and they if they come onto the land, die? "There the ships shall go." Which of us is a strong ship that can flee this world and not be submerged or strike against a rock: but may have the sense which may govern him, that he may be able to be saved?

"This dragon which thou hast formed to play therein." The Jews say that God made a great dragon, which is called Leviathan, and it is in the sea; and when, they say, the Ocean recedes, the dragon turns. But let us say: This is the dragon who was cast out of paradise, who deceived Eve; and he was given in this world to mock us. For how many monks and clerics has he cast down! "All expect of thee that thou give them food in season," etc. Because all things live by God's nod.

"Thou shalt take away their breath and they shall fail, and shall return to their dust." It signifies the consummation of the world: when by God's command all things are exterminated, as it is written: "Dust thou art and into dust shalt thou go" (Gen. 3).

"Send forth thy spirit and they shall be created." In the day of consummation. If the spirit creates, therefore he is God. For he creates in the same way as the Father.

"Let the glory of the Lord be for ever." Therefore we also who glorify him shall be eternal. "The Lord shall rejoice in his works." For it is the joy of the Lord when we, his creature, bless him in the day of resurrection.

"Who looketh upon the earth, and maketh it tremble." For our earth shall tremble in the day of judgment. Moreover, it signifies earthly sinners. "Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke." If the mountains smoke, how much more the earth? The saints smoke, because we shall all be saved through fire. For they would not have smoke unless there were fire.

"I will sing to the Lord in my life: I will sing psalms to my God as long as I am." Just as he said elsewhere: "Forgive me that I may be refreshed before I go away, and be no more" (Ps. 38). Forgive me for a little time, that I may do penance for my sins: because in hell there is no one who can confess his sins.

"Let my speech be pleasant to him." Let it be pleasant to him so that one may worthily praise and bless God. He spoke in the optative mood,

not the imperative. "But I will be delighted in the Lord." Blessed are those who say this after the judgment.

"Let sinners fail from the earth." He did not say that sinners should perish, but sin itself, so that it may not appear. For when sin does not appear, surely they are no longer sinners, but all shall be found just. "And the unjust, so that they be not." Unjust, that is, but just.

PSALM CIV.

Alleluia. This psalm especially repeats the history of the fathers: but it ought to be understood spiritually. For all things which happened of old, happened in figure, that we might be instructed (2 Cor. 10).

"Confess to the Lord, and call upon his name." Confess and say: because we are sinners. But thou art merciful, and hast mercy on us. "And call upon his name." That we may not fashion idols in our hearts, but call upon our Lord, and he himself will be our redemption. "Declare his works among the nations." Let the Jews be ashamed who say that only in Israel have wonders and his works been done.

"Sing to him, and play to him." He who understands the holy Scriptures, and meditates in the law of the Lord continually, and whose mind contemplates heavenly things, he sings to God. But he who has in himself all virtues, that is, is a worker of good work, he as if composing a cithara of virtues, plays to the Lord. "Tell ye all his wondrous works." In the hundred and sixth psalm

he says: "They that go down to the sea in ships, doing business in many waters. These have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." If we pass through unharmed in our corporal ship, and the storm nowhere overwhelms us, nor do we strike against a rock and break our ship, we can tell the wonders of God. And indeed it is a great miracle to pass through this world without stain. "Glory ye in his holy name." For he prophesies concerning the people of the Gentiles. That is, that we may be and be called Christians, from the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord." Let monks rejoice: because the hearts of them that seek the Lord rejoice. If of those that seek: how much more of those who find him? For those who find him are immovable. "Seek the Lord and be strengthened." Before we sought the Lord, we were weak. But now seeking him, we are firm and strong. If, however, we also find him: how much more perfect shall we be? "Seek his face always." It was written for the Hebrews indeed, that three times in a year they should appear before the Lord (Exod. 13). And what justice was this: what great thing did they do, to appear three times in a year in the sight of God? There he was speaking to children: but here the prophet tells those who believe in God to seek him always, just as it is written in the Gospel: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5).

"Remember his marvellous works which he hath done." In Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the desert.

"The seed of Abraham his servant: the children of Jacob his chosen." If anyone is seed; he is not yet a son, according to what is written in the Gospel: "If you were the children of Abraham, you would do the works of your father" (John 8). Therefore what they boast of they are not, even if they are seed. They are servants constituted under fear: not having perfect charity which casteth out fear (1 John 4). We are the sons of Jacob, of him who supplanted his brother, and took his birthright. Many, however, are called, but few chosen.

"And they passed from nation to nation." Many think that he speaks of the captivity of the Jews. It is not so. For he speaks of Abraham. He went out from the land of the Chaldeans, and came into Mesopotamia, and from Mesopotamia into the land of promise, and again into Egypt. "And from one kingdom to another people." We pass through many kingdoms, that we may arrive at the land of promise.

"He suffered no man to hurt them." Pharaoh, that he might hurt Abraham in Sarah, nor Abimelech Isaac in Rebecca (Gen. 12 and 10). "And he reproved kings for their sakes." And he says the very same thing, Pharaoh and Abimelech.

"Touch not my anointed, and do no evil to my prophets." He speaks of the patriarchs themselves: Let the Jews be ashamed, therefore, who say that unless someone is anointed with royal ointment, he cannot be called Christ. For they say this because our Lord is not Christ: because he was not anointed with royal ointment. Behold,

before the law the patriarchs, not anointed with royal ointment, are called Christs: for they are Christs who are anointed with the Holy Spirit. Therefore our Lord is also rightly called Christ. Which they deny, going against the Scriptures.

"And he called a famine upon the land." It often happens that those things which are thought to be contrary, these are done for utility by the providence of God. For unless Joseph's brothers had been jealous of him, if they had not sold him: how would he have descended into Egypt? If the famine had not happened, how would the patriarchs have descended into Egypt, and been recognized by their brother? How would Pharaoh be struck with ten plagues? How would they go out from Egypt? How in the desert would waters come out from the rock: how would we understand spiritually the mysteries which were done in figure in the desert? If Judas had not betrayed the Lord: how would we be saved? If the Jews had not crucified him, and been incredulous: how would we believe? Joseph, therefore, went into Egypt, to prepare a lodging and food for his brothers.

"He sent a man before them." He speaks of Joseph himself. "Joseph was sold for a servant." A well-born and holy man is sold.

"They humbled his feet in fetters." Because he would not consent to the Egyptian mistress. "They humbled his feet in fetters," but they could not humble justice: for when he was sixteen years old, he was loved by the mistress, and constituted in such an age, which is more given to pleasure,

he would not consent to iniquity, but rather feared the danger of his soul.

"The iron pierced his soul." He calls sin itself iron, which kills the soul. Otherwise: Because he was in danger, accused by the mistress of such a crime. For the mistress burned for him, as it is written: "All adulterers, their hearts are like an oven" (Hos. 7). "Until his word came." He speaks of the word of the Lord himself, who delivered him.

"The word of the Lord enflamed him." For unless he had been enflamed by the Holy Spirit, he could not have overcome lust. For the Spirit of the Lord enflamed him, and extinguished the fire of lust. "The king sent and loosed him." According to the letter Pharaoh sent and loosed him. Otherwise: If anyone is tempted by lust, unless the Lord appears and looses him, he cannot escape sin. "The king sent and loosed him: the prince of the people, and let him go." King and prince, the Father is understood, as that: "A great king over all the earth," and that: "The Lord is our prince: the Lord is our judge" (Ps. 46). He himself, therefore, sent his angel who rolled away the stone from the door of the monument, and loosed the napkins of his funeral (Mark 15). He also by paternal power, death being conquered, was sent back from hell. Nothing here is to be felt or thought negligently: because he was raised by angels. For he was made a little lower than the angels: when as man he underwent death (Ps. 8). For in the resurrection as true God, he used angelic ministry. This kingdom will belong neither to principalities nor

to Pharaoh, who is the exterminator, nor to him who is only the prince of those things.

"He made him Lord of his house." Of his Church acquired by his blood. "And prince of all his possession." Which he abstracted from the power of the devil.

"That he might instruct his princes as himself, and teach his ancients prudence." The apostles were the princes and elders of the peoples, and were called "his" from ownership, not from principality, whom he himself instructed with sacred words. For also instructing the princes of the priests and the elders of the peoples more often, he instructed them in the temple, when he opened the divine Scriptures to them.

"And Israel entered into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham." Everyone who begins to see God with the mind, or to supplant vices, descends into tribulation, and dwells among adverse nations.

"And he increased his people exceedingly, and strengthened them over their enemies." Since in seventy-five souls they descended into Egypt, and six hundred thousand went out of Egypt (Deut. 10). See the mystery. Those who once were in a brief number: now increased, are said to be strengthened. Moreover, the just are increased and strengthened by the Lord, lest adverse powers prevail over them.

"He turned their heart, so that they hated his people, and dealt deceitfully with his servants." That is, that they might contemplate their iniquities.

"He sent Moses his servant, Aaron whom he himself chose." The law surely and the priesthood.

"He put in them the words of his signs and wonders in the land of Ham." Attend, O Jew, who understand the things said according to the letter: Did Moses and Aaron in the land of Ham receive the mandate concerning signs, and not rather in the land of Midian? Or in the land of Ham did they do wonders, and not in Egypt? But that you may understand that these things through the law and the priesthood are done even today among incredulous nations: therefore the prophet put the land of Ham.

"He sent darkness and obscured them." They began to explain to him the secrets of the mysteries of God, and the brightness of worldly wisdom was obscured. For so elsewhere: "I will catch the wise in their craftiness" (2 Cor. 1). "And he exacerbated his words." Because they were hard to them: as he reports some to have said in the Gospel: "This word is hard: who can hear it?" (John 6).

"He turned their waters into blood." That they who by seducing had shed the blood of little ones, themselves henceforth instead of water should draw gore. But especially this verse respects heretics. "And he killed their fishes." Who thought that the kingdom was among the fluctuating felicities of this world.

"And their land brought forth frogs in the inner chambers of their kings." In the frogs, the songs of poets are designated, who disagreeing

from the Catholic rule, fill the hearts of earthly kings with the fables of deceptions.

"He spoke, and there came the dog-fly." In the dog-fly, that is, the canine fly, which wallows in filth and dung, he indicates luxury: which for the most part being compressed, buds forth. As Peter, he says, the apostle: "The dog returned to his vomit, and the sow washed from the filth of the mire" (2 Pet. 2). "And gnats in all their borders." In the gnat, the sting of the dialectical art is understood: which although it may seem to have a small sting of deception, nevertheless most gravely wounds human minds.

"He gave them hail for rain." That they might be reproved by divine stripes. "A burning fire in their land." Not illuminating, but burning: because the holy fire illuminates the just, it burns up sinners.

"And he smote their vineyards, and their fig-trees, and he broke every tree of their borders." In the vineyards and fig-trees and the rest of the trees, he shows all the human race smitten with heavenly plagues, for the cause of amendment.

"He spoke, and the locust came and the bruchus: of which there was no number. And it ate all the grass in their land, and ate all the fruit of their land." In the grass and the rest of the fruit of the land, he teaches human chastisement. For power is given to the adverse part, that it may hurt men who will not do penance, as the Apocalypse teaches (Apoc. 9).

"And he smote every first-born in the land of Egypt the first-fruits of all their labour." The

principal vices: which men loved as if they were first-born.

"And he brought them out in silver and gold, and there was not among their tribes a feeble one." By these stripes he smites Egypt, that is, either this world, or human flesh. But the souls are brought out in the silver of lucid confession, and the gold of splendid purity, all infirmity of sin being taken away.

"Egypt was glad at their departing: for their fear lay upon them." For while light cohabited, they could not exercise the works of darkness: because everyone who does evil, hates the light (John 3).

"He spread a cloud for their protection, and fire to give them light through the night." He calls the Holy Spirit a cloud and fire: who both defends us from the heat of the day, and illuminates us in the nocturnal darkness.

"They asked for flesh, and the quail came." For being satiated from this quail, Israel is nauseated. Whence care must be taken, lest he who feels himself free from Egypt, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, should again desire the flesh-pots of Egypt, that is, the concupiscences of the flesh, which generate for him hiddenness or vices. Because no one putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9). "He filled them with the bread of heaven." For just as they were refreshed from the manna flowing from the heavens: so we today in the Church are refreshed by the body of the lamb being accepted.

"He burst the rock, and waters flowed, and rivers went in the dry land." For that precious corner stone was struck, and brought forth immense fountains for us, which wash away our errors, and irrigate our aridities.

"Because he was mindful of his holy word which he had to Abraham his servant." For he fulfilled his promise not of seeds, but of his seed, that is, of Christ. For God born of a Virgin, by his death conquered death: through which now what was promised to Abraham in hope, the Church has received in reality.

"And he brought out his people in exultation, and his chosen ones in joy." For always victors and free men, they celebrate together a song in joy and exultation: like Moses, Miriam, or Deborah.

"And he gave them the regions of the nations, and they possessed the labours of the peoples." Holy souls and bodies, in which sin previously reigned.

"That they might keep his justifications, and seek after his law." That they may live with justice, and diligently understand the mysteries of the law. And let us pray to the Lord, that the noxious nations being destroyed before our face, he himself may become the leader of our journey: that exulting continually in him, we may merit to be led into the land of promise, and being received into his kingdom, we may be able to rejoice with his saints in sempiternal joy: because to him with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM CV.

Alleluia, alleluia. This psalm strengthens the penitent, reproves the negligent, promises mercy again. This rule we ought to hold, wherever two Alleluias are prescribed in a psalm, that we may know one to be from the end of the previous psalm, and the other of that which follows.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. O you who sin gravely, and despair of your salvation, and think that because of the magnitude of your sins you cannot obtain pardon: I command you, that is, I prophesy to you: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. Great are your sins: but great is the Lord, who has mercy on you. Give thanks, therefore, to the Lord. Do penance: do not despair of your salvation: the Lord is kind. Give thanks to the Lord, you who have great sins. Do not trust in your own strength; but in the mercy of the Lord. For his mercy endures forever. See what he says, forever. But in hell, who shall give thanks to the Lord (Ps. 6)? For there is no one who can do penance in hell. While you are in this world, I exhort you to do penance. Give thanks, therefore, to the Lord, because in this world only is he merciful. Here he can have mercy on the penitent: because there he is judge, he is not merciful. Here he is merciful, there he is judge. Here he reaches out his hand to the one falling: there he sits as judge. All this, however, I have said to those who say that there is penance in hell.

Who shall speak the powers of the Lord. No one is worthy to preach the powers of the Father,

except the Son. No one can speak the power of the Father, except he who is himself powerful; he who is powerful can himself preach and speak the powers of the powerful one. He will make all his praises heard. Before our Lord preached in the Gospel, the praises of the Father were not heard in the world. Everything that is written in the old law, if it be understood spiritually, this can be understood of the Father.

Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do justice at all times. Rightly could David say this, and he himself had done judgment and justice: but because he did not do it at all times; therefore he sang. For what does he say? Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do justice at all times. For what does it profit someone to be in continence for twenty years, and afterwards to fall? According to what is written in the prophet: the justice of the just shall not profit him in whatever way he shall have erred: it shall not deliver him, nor save him (Ezek. 33). And the sin of the sinner shall not hurt him in whatever day he shall be converted and do penance. Neither should the just man be secure, nor should the sinner despair of his salvation. For in both of them there is both fear and hope. Who does justice. Our Lord is justice. For our Lord and Savior is called the justice of the Lord. Blessed, therefore, is he who does justice, that is, who "does" Christ. How then do we "do" Christ, that is, justice? If we act justly, justice is conceived in us, and justice is born from us, and we are the mother of justice. Happy and

blessed is he who at all times is both father and mother of justice.

Remember us, O Lord, in the good will of thy people. What the blessed David says is this: I know, O Lord, the old law: perfect beatitude is not in the old Law, but in the Gospel. I know that the former people offended thee, and a new people is created, to serve thee. I know that thy Son will come, and save the whole human race, and those who shall be elect will believe in him. Therefore I ask, since I was born earlier in the old Law, that thou wouldst impute to me a reward with the new people. This seems to be our opinion. Let us read the verses themselves, and we shall find the same sense that we have spoken. Visit us in thy salvation. That is, in thy Son, when he shall come.

To see in the goodness of thy elect. That is, give us a part with the apostles. For though we indeed preceded them in time: they truly shall precede us in spiritual things: that is, that we may see thy goodness, which thou art about to do with thy elect. To rejoice in the joy of thy nation. We are the nation of the Lord; if indeed we are his nation. To the people, he says, who shall be born, whom the Lord has made. That we may be praised with thy inheritance. That is, that with the Gospel we also may have a part, we who were made in the old law (John 8). For Abraham our father saw thy day, and was glad. Let us also see, therefore, and let us rejoice with thy inheritance.

We have sinned with our fathers. As sons we have followed our fathers. We have done what our fathers also did. For he has concluded all un-

der sin, that he might have mercy on all (Gal. 3). We have acted unjustly: we have committed iniquity. Observe diligently what he says: We have sinned with our fathers, we have acted unjustly, we have committed iniquity. Did he say, we have acted impiously? It is one thing to be a sinner and unjust, it is another to be impious. A sinner is frequently overcome by the infirmity of the body: but the impious man denies God. Therefore, because I am not impious, but a sinner, I dare to ask for my sins.

Our fathers in Egypt did not understand thy wonders. They saw, and they did not see. They saw with carnal eyes, and with spiritual eyes they did not see. He did not say, they did not see: but, they did not understand. For they saw the wonders, and they did not understand. For they did not contemplate them with a spiritual gaze. And they were not mindful of the multitude of thy mercy. How thou didst rescue them from the hands of enemies. But today also thou workest wonders, O Lord: when thou deignest to illuminate us, rescued from the darkness of the world.

And they provoked as they went up into the Red Sea: and he saved them, etc. For these things were done in Israel. But it must be observed that, what there was a shadow, in the Church is the truth fulfilled. Therefore baptism or the cross of Christ is foolishness to those who perish. God is therefore provoked by these, when they do not understand. But the learned then shall know the power of God. The sea, however, has two understandings: namely, baptism and the world.

He rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up. The tempestuous world ceases before the people of God, when it has known the fountain of life. And he led them in the depths as in a desert (Exod. 14.) As if they were walking through the dry parts of the desert, so they are occupied by no waves.

And he saved them from the hand of those who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. The liberation and redemption of man was made through the passion of Christ.

And the water covered those who troubled them: one of them did not remain (Ibid.). So also it happens now in our baptism. Man is washed by waters, and the devil perishes with his satellites.

And they believed in his words, and they praised his praise. Because they were victors.

They quickly did, they forgot his works. For many in the Church, by living badly and not thinking rightly about God, lose the grace of baptism. They did not endure his counsel. That they might keep the life, which they first chose.

And they coveted concupiscences in the desert. In the solitude of this world. And they tempted God in the waterless place. For it was a dryness to them, because they did not know the irrigation of the Holy Spirit, in the pillar of cloud which preceded them.

And he gave them their petitions, and sent satiety into their souls. That they might be refreshed by spiritual food and drink.

And they provoked Moses in the camp, and Aaron the holy one of God. Truly the foolish provoke the law and the priesthood: when they do not hear the precepts of God, announced through them.

The earth was opened, and swallowed Dathan, and covered over the congregation of Abiron, and a fire was kindled in their synagogue, and a flame burned the sinners. These things were done according to the letter. But even now the earth devours them and fire kindles, who savor earthly things and recede from the mandates of God, whom the grace of the Holy Spirit does not illuminate; but the flame of sin sets on fire.

And they made a calf in Horeb, and adored a sculpture, and changed their glory into the likeness of a calf eating hay. For in God their glory ought to have been; but having left him, giving glory to a mute and deaf image, they said: These are thy gods, Israel (Exod. 32). So also now if anyone, having left the Church, consults lots and pythons, his glory is changed, and he becomes like a beast: as once Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4).

They forgot God who saved them: who did great things in Egypt. That he might liberate the people, having beaten it [Egypt] with plagues. And wonders in the land of Ham. When, having left the nations, he planted them in their land. And terrible things in the Red Sea. That Pharaoh being extinguished, he might provide a dry passage for the peoples (Exod. 14).

He said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood in the breach in his sight,

etc. Attend to these things, O priest: for the people would have perished, had not Moses broken the wrath of omnipotent God; and when you see the people of God delinquent, sound the trumpet: announce to them their offenses, and stand in the breach before God, that his fury may be turned away from them.

And they set at naught the desirable land. Because they loved this transitory one. And they did not believe in his words. By which he promised the kingdoms of heaven.

And they murmured in their tabernacles. Concerning murmuring the Apostle teaches, saying: Neither murmur you, as some of them murmured, and perished by the serpents (1 Cor. 10). Let us not murmur, therefore, lest demons wound and devour us with poisonous bites.

He lifted up his hand over them: to overthrow them in the desert. And to cast down their seed among the nations, and to scatter them in the regions. For the Jews were scattered in various parts. But also he is scattered through diverse things, who is carried about by every wind of doctrine, and does not consist in a firm station in God.

And they were initiated to Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. They who ought to have consecrated themselves to God, were consecrated to an idol. And they who ought to have hungered for the living bread, ate the sacrifices of the dead.

And they provoked him in their inventions. Because they were perverse. And ruin was mul-

tiplied in them. It is ruin when the walls of houses fall: which is then multiplied when they shall have been overturned from the foundations. Therefore these were demolished with the foundation, that is, with the very letter of the law in which they thought they stood: because they were not established upon the rock.

Phinees stood, and placated, and the shaking ceased. And it was reputed to him for justice, etc. Above he said Moses had stood in the breach: but here he says Phinees [Phinehas] had prayed (Num. 25). Which listen to diligently, priest, to whom souls are commended: unsheathe the sword: slay the fornicators, that is, bring forth the word, insist out of season, in season; reprove, rebuke, beseech with all patience and doctrine (2 Tim. 4): that it may be reputed to you for justice. Because he who shall return the precious from the vile, shall be as my mouth, says the Lord God.

And they provoked him at the waters of contradiction, and Moses was vexed because of them, because they exacerbated his spirit. The waters of contradiction are understood as the waters of baptism: at which the devil and his works are contradicted. After which if anyone shall have defiled himself with vices, the priest is vexed, because he has exacerbated the spirit of God through whom he preaches: as Paul said: Who is burned, and I am not burned (2 Cor. 11)? Concerning this spirit he also testified saying: Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God: in whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4).

And he distinguished with his lips. That he might continually supplicate for them. They did not destroy the nations which the Lord had said to them. Idolatry or diverse crimes.

And they were mixed among the nations and learned their works, and served their sculptures, and it became a scandal to them. For as it is reputed for justice to the priest praying for the people; so to these who were converted in fanatic desires, [it became] a scandal.

And they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons. Their senses and their souls.

And they shed innocent blood, and the blood of their sons, and of their daughters which they sacrificed to the sculptures of Canaan. For then the blood of the soul is shed: when man given to idols shall have receded from the culture of God.

The land was slain in bloods, and was contaminated in their works, and they fornicated in their inventions. For it is infected by the taint of iniquity: when the body of man is defiled by various fornications. Therefore also the wrath of God rages against the impious: whence follows:

And the Lord was angry with fury against his people and abominated his inheritance. Because he left him. And what formerly had been the people of God, was made a troop of the devil.

And he delivered them into the hands of the nations, and they who hated them ruled over them. And their enemies troubled them, and they were humbled under their hands. But you will say, O man: The way of the Lord is not right, who

permits us to be inclined in such great evils. But, I ask, look: because for their own crimes sinners are inclined, and God is endowed with such great piety, that he always deigns to impart help: as it says: Often he liberated. Always he liberates, and you are not corrected? Still the plague inflicted stands at the doors: and you are not amended?

But they exacerbated him in their counsel. Which they had, so that, having left him, they might follow idols. And they were humbled in their iniquities. Now these are humbled not by God, but by their own offenses. But the usual mercy precedes, the prophet saying:

And he saw when they were troubled, and he heard their prayer. For he teaches you also that if having been converted you shall have groaned: the prayers of your humility will immediately approach his high ears.

He was mindful of his testament. Which he struck with Abraham the beginning of our faith. And it repented him according to the multitude of his mercy, and he gave them into mercies in the sight of all who had taken them. For God repents over the penitent concerning the malice which he had spoken, that he would do, and did not do, establishing you in the bosom of Abraham the father whose faith you followed. Therefore also the prophet exulting says:

Save us, O Lord our God. Lest vices rule over us. And gather us from the nations. Because the nation of the Hebrews is dispersed in [various] regions.

That we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise. In the Son truly: because the name of the Son is thy praise.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from world unto world, etc. Meritedly blessed for worlds, through whom the worlds were made, and not only made, but also redeemed. Who also now deigns to recreate us in salvation, that is, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom is with himself and the Holy Spirit honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM CVI.

Alleluia. This psalm is known to narrate every cause of the human condition, which it either took by offending, or received by repenting: or the multitude of the mercies of God (as it says in the present: who is wise, and will keep these things; and then he shall understand the mercies of the Lord): but also it clearly opens the repulsion of the Jews and the vocation of the Gentiles.

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good, because his mercy endures forever. Therefore confess your sins to him: because he is good and dismisses sins. But if he were not good, he would not say to you, give thanks; and, give thanks to him: because his mercy endures forever. Here is mercy: elsewhere above is justice. Because his mercy endures forever. As long as you are in the world, give thanks.

Let them say who are redeemed by the Lord, whom he redeemed from the hand of the enemy. Properly he speaks of the vocation of the Gen-

tiles. For this psalm has their mystery: who are redeemed in the passion of the Lord. Let them say who are redeemed. For he himself is the Savior and Redeemer and Price. Let them say who are redeemed. He himself redeemed: he himself gives the price his own blood. But why did he give the price his own blood? That he might redeem us from the hand of the enemy. For we were held captive in the hand of the devil. But for this reason he came and redeemed us, that he might liberate from the hand of the devil. Whom he redeemed from the hand of the enemy, that he may destroy the enemy and the defender. The enemy man oversowed tares. But the enemy is the devil. The enemy is he himself and the possessor. Therefore he holds us with his hand: not because he loves, but because he hates. Whom he redeemed from the hand of the enemy. Great majesty and great power of the blood of the Lord, which loosed the hand of the devil. For as there are some animals which squeeze something enclosed within themselves, which both physicians and physicists say, so that unless it be broken, it is not divided from them, nor does it let go of that which it holds closed within: but if oil should be sent in, immediately it is dissolved, and what had been tightened is dissipated and divided into parts: so also the blood of Christ loosed the most hard hand of the devil. The devil did not want to let us go. The Lord shed his blood as it were an oil of mercy, and through it he liberated us. From the regions he gathered them. See how great is the hand of the devil. Whom he redeemed from

the hand of the enemy. These, however, whom he redeemed from the hand of the enemy, were held in the hand of the enemy in all regions. From the regions he gathered them. In the whole world the hand of the devil possessed us.

From the rising of the sun and the setting, from the north and the sea. He seems indeed to have said four climates [regions]: the East, the West, the South, and the North: these are the four climates of the world. But the psalm does not contain it thus. For here it has: From the rising of the sun and the setting: behold two climates: From the north, that is, from the septentrion: behold three climates. And the sea. The sea truly is in the west. Therefore see that he named the west twice, and the south not even once. Why therefore did he name three climates, and one he would not mention? We read in Habakkuk: God shall come from the south (Hab. 3). Concerning the Savior it is said: that God was born in the south. For from the position of Jerusalem, Bethlehem is placed in the south. Therefore it is said, God shall come from the south. But if God shall come from the south: how is it now said, From the rising of the sun and the setting, and from the north? The south [Auster] and the south wind [Notus] is silent. From the rising of the sun and the setting. Amen, amen I say to you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down in the bosom of Abraham: but the children of this generation shall be far away (Matt. 8). From the rising of the sun and the setting: namely foreigners. And from the north.

The north wind [Aquilo] is a most hard wind: by name however it is called right [dexter]. From the north, it says, evils shall burn over the earth (Jer. 1). The sea is read in Numbers, and in Exodus, and in all holy Scripture, and wherever you hear "sea", according to climates the west is always understood. For from the position of Jerusalem this great sea, which is so called, is in the west. See therefore the mystery of the Scriptures. In this place the west is named twice, and the south wind not once. Why is this said? Because the people of the Jews is not written as to be called in this psalm, but only the Gentiles. Finally what does it say?

They wandered in a wilderness in a waterless place: they found not the way of the city of habitation. Hungry and thirsty. And that you may know that it is written properly concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and concerning the expulsion of the Jews, it is written in the following parts of the same psalm: He turned the rivers into a desert, namely, of the Jews. They wandered in a wilderness in a waterless place. We have said what the waters were, we have said what the rivers were. They found not the way of the city of habitation, hungry and thirsty. Let us explain how the people of the nations was in the desert, where there were no waters, that is, in a waterless place, and how they found not the way of the city of habitation, hungry and thirsty. Concerning those of whom it is said, 'they found not,' it is manifest that they sought the way of the city of habitation, but they did not find it. They sought

therefore the way through which they might come to the city: hungry they sought, and thirsty. Their soul fainted in them. They have failed in their search with scrutiny (Psalm 63). They failed, they sought, and they found not, and in their hunger and thirst, they found not the way of the city of habitation. Hungry and thirsty. There were many who promised this way which would lead to the city. Socrates promised, Plato promised, Aristotle promised. The woman with an issue of blood [Haemorrhousa] who flowed with blood (Luke 8), sought many physicians, and could be healed by none. They found not the way of the city of habitation. Their doctrine created more a hunger for truth than a satiety. The woman with an issue of blood spent her whole substance on physicians. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. But because she had lost her entire substance, that is, the Church gathered from the nations: because her soul fainted in her, she cried to the Lord when she was troubled. The touch of the fringe of the Lord was the cry of the believer.

And they cried to the Lord when they were troubled, and he delivered them out of their distresses. To the Lord, it says, when I was troubled I cried, and he heard me (Psalm 11). Then we are heard by the Lord, when not a simple voice, but tribulation cries to the Lord.

And he led them into the right way, that they might go into a city of habitation. Because 'they found not the way of the city of habitation,' therefore he led them into the right way. Therefore it shows that before they indeed found ways,

but crooked ones, and not right ones. And he led them into the right way. The Way led them into the way. The Lord and Savior himself led them into the right way: he made them walk in himself: he himself is both the leader and the way. And he led them into the right way, that through this way, that is, through the Lord Savior, they might go into the city of habitation, into his Church which had been founded upon him, both the rock, and the way, and the leader. At the same time it is to be considered, because in this psalm for the third time it is said:

Let them confess to the Lord his mercies, and his wonderful works to the sons of men. For he hath satisfied the empty soul, and the hungry soul he hath filled with good things. Those who were empty of his grace, and suffered a hunger for the word, he satisfied with heavenly good things.

Such as sat in darkness and the shadow of death: bound in beggary and iron. For the human race was bound with the chains of crimes, and delivered over to the prison of the devil. And why did this happen? See what follows.

Because they provoked the word of the Lord. Those things which he had commanded, they did not keep. And they irritated the counsel of the Most High. Which he had given so that they might choose life.

And their heart was humbled in labors. Because they were not exalted in the works of God. They were weakened and there was none to help. Because they were not firm in God: nor did they seek him, who is the true physician.

And they cried to the Lord while they were troubled, and he delivered them out of their distresses. The human race failed after original sin: again and again not observing the law handed down through Moses, but from this necessity also he delivered them.

And he brought them out of darkness, etc. And on account of this:

Let them confess to the Lord his mercies, and his wonderful works to the sons of men. And why either his mercies are to be confessed, or his wonderful works preached, the following things teach.

Because he hath broken the gates of brass, and burst the iron bars. For 'the dayspring from on high hath visited us' (Luke 1), and illuminated the darkness of errors, and burst the chains of the law, so that we might serve with free will.

He took them up from the way of their iniquity. The devil therefore had barred with the strongest bolts the brazen valves of his houses, so that the human race might not be able to go out from his right. All which things, as we have said, the Lord by his visitation crushed, taking him up into himself. For they were humbled because of their injustices. That they might be exalted in him.

Their soul abhorred all manner of meat, and they drew nigh even unto the gates of death. And they cried to the Lord when they were troubled, and he delivered them out of their distresses. But see in what manner he delivered them: because

every word of life, which the prophets foretold, they abhorred and drew nigh to death.

Then he sent his word, and healed them. The Son himself, who in the beginning was the Word: who in the Gospel heals every sickness and every infirmity among the people. And he delivered them from their destructions. In which they had immersed themselves.

Let them confess to the Lord his mercies. By which the Most High humbled himself, by which God was made man: by which the Immortal is subjected to death for the life of mortals. And his wonderful works to the sons of men. Because he broke the brazen gates and bars of hell: because he returned victor to the world above: because he returned to the heavens.

And let them sacrifice the sacrifice of praise. Let goats and calves cease: because God requires a sacrifice from a pure heart. And let them declare his works with exultation. With joy let all the choirs declare: how he saved them by his visitation.

They that go down to the sea. That is, the world. In ships. In the Churches, which carry Christ, and are beaten by the waves of this world. Doing business in many waters. In peoples. But these things are also to be referred to the apostles: These have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For in deep darkness, through their preaching the light of truth shone forth, and they saw, while the Lord worked, the light of the most true Trinity shine in the densest darkness.

He said, and the spirit of the storm stood up. The worldly temptation ceased. So also the Lord sleeping in the ship, when he had been awakened by the disciples, commanded the wind, and the sea was silent (Matt. 8). And its waves were exalted. They were suspended, lest they should harm: that is, the movements of this diabolical temptation, which the wicked stir up over the just.

They mount up to the heavens. They are lifted up in their prides, to the injury of the saints. And they go down even to the depths. They are humbled in confession. And that you may understand that this is said figuratively of evil men, it follows: Their soul shall pine away in evils. For the waves of the waters have no soul. But the soul pines away: when, beaten by heavenly scourges, it recognizes that it has sinned and brought injury upon the saints.

They were troubled, and reeled like a drunken man. For their sense had nothing joyful, nothing stable, nothing sober. And all their wisdom was swallowed up. By the wisdom of the true God: just as once the dragon of Moses swallowed up the dragons of the Egyptians (Exod. 7).

And they cried to the Lord when they were troubled, and he delivered them out of their distresses. That leaving luxurious drunkenness, they might follow the wisdom of God.

He settled its storm into a breeze. So that it might now come not with fire and hail, but with the sweet breath [flamine] of the Holy Spirit. And

its waves were silent. Doing penance, they were converted into tranquility.

They were glad because they were silent. Those being at rest, these are glad. And he brought them into the haven of their will. From these resting waves, they applied their whole will to be led to him: who, mitigating the waves, is the true haven. And he delivered them out of their distresses. Lest they should be shaken by these surges.

Let them confess to the Lord his mercies. By which he protects the human race. And his wonderful works to the sons of men. Because he wonderfully restrained these waves.

Let them exalt him in the church of the people. In the congregation of the faithful. And praise him in the chair of the elders. Not in that chair in which the Scribes and Pharisees sat. who reading the law, did not understand the Lord announced in it, but in that in which either the prophets or the patriarchs, contemplating him with a spiritual eye, knew him in miracles, or sang of him in oracles.

Because he hath turned rivers into a desert, and the sources of waters into a thirsty land: a fruitful land into saltness, from the malice of them that dwell therein. Worthily to be exalted, worthily to be praised, is he who in the Church which before had been deserted and held in hatred, placed apostles, who both might console her with their discourse [alloquio], and fertilize her with an overflow [alluvio]. He gave also into the souls of the thirsty his word, the outgoings

of preachings, and the land of the body, which before had brought forth the thorns of bitterness, he filled with eternal fruits.

He hath turned the desert into pools of waters. Providing baptism in the Church. And a land without water into sources of waters. Establishing preachers in the aridity of the nations.

And there he hath settled the hungry. That they might be refreshed with heavenly goods. And they made a city of habitation. They exhibited their souls safe from the incentives of vices: in which the fruit of the spirit might dwell.

And they sowed fields, and planted vineyards, and yielded fruit of produce [nativitatis]. These things are referred to the apostles, who cast the seed into the hearts of believers, from whom they receive the fruit of eternity, that is, a hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold (Matt. 13).

And he blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly. Because they did those things which were pleasing to him. So also in the hand of Joseph God blessed all things, because he kept himself from evil thoughts and concupiscences (Gen. 41 et seq.). And he hath not let their cattle [jumenta] decrease. The irrational men among them have not decreased into lower things, but have been repaired into better things. Therefore, having explained the calling and redemption of the nations, he returns to the expulsion of the Jews, saying:

They were made few. For the reason that the works of God had not been multiplied in them. And they were vexed with the tribulation of evils

and sorrow. Because the wicked persecuted the Innocent One.

Contempt [contentio] was poured out upon their princes. So that they who had despised the Lord, should themselves be despised. And their own vain idols seduced them, namely those which they were adoring. And he led them in a trackless place [invio], and not in the way. Seducing them from the way of the Lord, they led them into the trackless place of Satan. Finally, these being led in the trackless place, let us see what God has done for his people.

And he helped the poor man out of his poverty [inopia]. He satisfied the Christian people with eternal banquets. And he made families like sheep. So that hearing the voice of the true pastor, they might follow by faith.

The upright shall see, and shall rejoice. Those by whose preaching they were converted. And all iniquity shall stop its mouth. The devil, or the Jews, or the heretics: who had presumed to speak iniquity on high.

Who is wise and will keep these things, and then he will understand the mercies of the Lord? For if you wisely consider and spiritually understand, you will see in this psalm for the fourth time mercies sought and mercifully granted: which may he deign to grant to us also sought by flowing piety, to open to us when we knock, and not to deny when we ask. To him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 107.

A song of a psalm for David himself.

A song [canticum] is always referred to the sense: a psalm indeed is referred to corporal things. But that we may speak more clearly, a song is referred to theory [contemplation]: a psalm however to practice, that is, to works. Since therefore in the title it is written: 'A song of a psalm': rightly and consequently in the second verse he says: I will sing and give praise in my glory.

My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready. I am ready not only in work, but also in heart and sense. My heart is ready, in sense: my heart is ready, in work, that is, in practice. Since not only in heart and sense, but also in work am I ready. Therefore also for the second time I say: I will sing and give praise in my glory. I will sing, that is, in my heart, and give praise. Just as the psaltery is composed of many strings, and if one string should be broken, the psaltery is destroyed, so also in our acts, if we shall have transgressed one commandment, our psaltery is broken. Therefore he said: I will sing and give praise in my glory. In other codices it is read, in thy glory. But it is better to read according to the Hebrew, in my glory. What he says, is this: 'I will sing and give praise in my glory': This, Lord, which I praise to thee, which I sing to thee, I do not a favor to thee, but to myself. For in another psalm it says: Because thou hast no need of my goods (Psalm 15). What therefore I do, I do for myself. What

therefore I serve thee, is my glory. We fast: do we give anything to God? We do this for our sins. We lie in sackcloth. What by this do we provide to the Lord? This only we provide to him, that we may save our souls. For he himself desires this. Just as a good and merciful physician: if he shall have healed someone, indeed both he rejoices and he who was healed: so also our Lord.

Arise, psaltery and cithara. O psaltery, O cithara, thou hast been made and thou hast been created, that thou mightest praise God: arise and praise, why dost thou lie still? O monk, who standest in body, why does thy soul lie still, and thou dost not praise the Lord? Cursed is the man who does the work of God negligently (Jer. 48). If thou art a psaltery, if thou art a cithara, why art thou deaf, and dost not glorify God? I will arise at daybreak. God cannot be blessed and praised in darkness: but in light he is blessed. I say a wonderful thing: Even if we rise at night, we bless God in the light. Night is never for a Christian: always for a Christian the sun of justice rises. And these things indeed we say according to the Jews. But according to a higher sense, it is the Lord who sings: My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready. I am ready here: I am ready in the future. I save both on earth; I save both in the heavens, that is, I save both angels and men. Arise, psaltery and cithara. The Lord speaks to his body: 'Psaltery and cithara,' who didst descend into hell and didst lie still, arise and praise the Lord. And thou seest what he says: Not he himself who moves the cithara and the psaltery praises; but the cithara

and psaltery themselves, they themselves bless the Father. For he is God, and by others is he blessed and praised. But his body and the man whom he took up, he himself praises the Lord. But that you may know that the prophet speaks from the person of the Lord, and I do not speak this from myself, see what follows.

I will confess to thee among the peoples, O Lord. Understand the 'peoples' as the Jews. And I will praise thee among the nations. He speaks of us. For he calls those Jews, who first from the Jews believed. And see the order: First he praises God among the peoples, and afterwards he praises the Lord among the nations. For first they believed from the Jews, and afterwards they believed from the Gentiles.

For thy mercy is great above the heavens. There is no creature which does not need the mercy of God. All of us need the mercy of God. Gabriel, Michael, the Seraphim, the Cherubim, the Powers, the Dominations are indeed holy, but they need the mercy of their Creator. I do not detract from the angels, but I preach the Creator, since the angels themselves gladly hear their Creator preached. And otherwise we can say, 'Because thy mercy lifts up from the earth to the heavens.' And thy truth even unto the clouds. Where are the Jews, where are those like the Jews, who are understanding only according to the letter? How is the truth of God even unto the clouds? The Son of God says: 'I am the way, the truth and the life' (John 14), and he descended upon the lands, and conversed with men (Baruch 3). And

how, 'thy truth even unto the clouds'? Manifest is the sense, that he speaks of the apostles and of the saints, that they should not rain their shower upon the Jews, but upon the nations, as it is written: 'I will command my clouds, that they rain no shower upon Israel' (Isaiah 5). In these clouds therefore is the truth of God. If however in these clouds is the truth of God, how does Montanus say, and the Cataphrygians say: 'what was not revealed to the apostles, has been revealed to us'?

Be thou exalted above the heavens, O God. God is not exalted, except above the heavens: he is not exalted above the earth. When we are earthly, we do not exalt God. If however from earthly we shall have been made heavenly, then we exalt God, and our Lord when he was on earth, did not exalt us. Someone may say: 'Thou speakest rashly.' Since he himself says in the Gospel: 'When I shall have been exalted, I will draw all things to myself' (John 12). See what he says: 'When I shall have been exalted in heaven, then I will draw all things to myself.' First indeed is that sense, but I understand another thing. When I shall have been exalted, when I shall have been crucified, then I will draw all to myself. That thy beloved may be delivered. O wonderful understanding! Therefore the Lord is crucified, and exalted, that his beloved may be delivered. That thy beloved, he says, may be delivered. Be thou exalted above the heavens, O God. It has been done what we asked. He was exalted, and we have been delivered. God hath spoken in his holy place [or in his Holy One]. Either in the temple,

or in each one of the saints, or in the prophet. He is heard in Moses, he is heard in an apostle; and more truly I say: He hath spoken in his Son. What therefore hath God spoken? These things which follow.

I will be exalted and I will divide Shechem [Sicimam]. Therefore, he says, I am crucified, that I may divide Shechem. Shechem is interpreted in our language, 'shoulders.' Shoulders however are interpreted, 'works.' This sense therefore is: Therefore I am crucified, that I may divide my works to my saints. Therefore I am crucified, that I may lay my sweet yoke, and my light burden upon the necks of men. Thou hast done, Lord, what thou hast promised. Thou wast exalted and thou hast divided Shechem. And I will measure out the valley of tabernacles. Truly our Lord and Savior entered into this valley of tears, into the place of our humility, that is, into this world: in which, however holy anyone shall have been, he does not yet know according to what it behooves to know. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part (1 Cor. 13).

"Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine." Our Lord and Savior rejoices, having many riches. Gilead is interpreted as "transmigration." Therefore, he rejoices when the people from the Gentiles have migrated and come to him. Manasseh is interpreted as "from oblivion." See therefore what he says: That son who received the substance, and consumed it, and was forgetful of me, is now mindful of me (Luke 15). And he is called Manasseh, that is, "from oblivion": be-

cause he was not forgotten, but returned to his father. "And Ephraim the taking up [susceptio] of my head." Ephraim is interpreted as "fruitful." Ephraim, he says, "the taking up of my head." He has put "taking up" here for a crown. For what is placed on the head is a crown, and in the Scriptures it is called by various names. In another place it says: "His truth shall compass thee with a shield" (Ps. 90). And in another psalm: "Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion" (Ps. 102). For just as he put "shield" there for a crown, so also here he has put "taking up" for a crown. See therefore what he says: Thou hast become Gilead, thou hast become Manasseh, that is, thou hast migrated to the Lord, and after oblivion thou hast returned to thy father. Be Ephraim, be fruitful. Have good works, and afterwards thou shalt be the crown of the Lord.

"Judah is my king." See in how great glory is he who performs penance. For Judah is interpreted as "confession." "Moab is the pot [lebes] of my hope." A great mystery is recognized in few words. I ask you, attend diligently. Indeed, it profits both me who speak and you who hear. Moab is interpreted as "from the father." Ab is called "father"; Mo, "from." Who is this "from the father"? He who lost his father, who left his father: who did not return to his own father, nor is he worthy to be called Manasseh. Who is this Moab? An enemy of the Lord, from whose race even to the fourth generation and the tenth and even forever he shall not enter into the Church of the Lord. Who is this Moab? He who is born from

an impure commingling in a dark cave. For from Lot and his daughters two were born, Moab and Ammon, and Moab is the elder son (Gen. 19). See therefore how the mystery is hidden in the letter. In darkness, in a cave: not in the sun, not in the light. Moab therefore is interpreted as the "devil": who has forgotten his father. Finally, Absalom also, who persecuted his father, is interpreted as the devil. This Moab therefore, how is he the pot of the Lord's hope? Lebes is interpreted as "pot" [olla]. How is the pot the hope of the Lord? Is it then believable that Moab, who is interpreted as the "devil," should be the pot of the Lord's hope? How is he the hope of the Lord? Let the Apostle say: "Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1). The devil is, as it were, the interrogator [quaestionarius] of the Lord. Those who do not walk rightly toward God are delivered to the devil. Why? That they may perish forever? And where is the clemency of God? Where is the merciful father? Where is he who makes his sun to rise upon the just and the sinners, and rains upon the sinners and the just (Matt. 5)? What he says is this: I have delivered, he says, sinners to the devil, so that being tortured by him, they may be converted to me. It is also said in Jeremiah: "What seest thou, Jeremiah? A seething pot," he says (Jerem. 1). See therefore that flesh is put into that pot. This is written in Ezekiel: "And put," he says, "the flesh into the pot, that they may become soft" (Ezech. 24). That hard things may be converted to God: that from a stony heart may become a

heart of flesh. And where previously it could not be written because of hardness: afterwards let it be written because of softness. "I will kindle," he says, "this pot, and I will boil out the flesh and the bones, until they lose all moisture and filth." And see afterwards what is said: "And let them learn," he says, "that I am the Lord." Great mercy, and a great sacrament. Flesh is put into the pot, that they may be boiled out and learn that he is the Lord. There are many things which might be said of Moab and the pot, but now it is long.

"Into Edom [Idumaea] will I stretch out my shoe." Edom is interpreted as "earthly" and "bloody." Merciful God wants to possess not only heavenly things, but also earthly. "To me the foreigners [alienigenae] are made friends." He speaks of us, who have believed from the Gentiles.

"Who will lead me into the fortified city?" No one, Lord. For it is thou who sayest: "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the Gentiles there was not a man with me" (Isai. 63). "For all have turned aside, they are become unprofitable together: there is none that doth good, no not so much as one" (Ps. 13). Who therefore will lead me into the fortified city? No one, Lord. Indeed, even Peter, who had promised to die for thee, afterwards denied thee. What is this fortified city? Hell [Infernus], where the impious are shut in: from which it is not permitted to go out. And truly from that city, unless the Lord as victor, no other has gone out. And truly that is a fortified city. Moses could not go out from that city. Jacob likewise

entered into this city, and did not return. Finally he says to his sons: "Mourning I will descend to the lower parts" (Gen. 37). But he descended to the lower parts [inferos] because paradise was not yet opened by the thief. That city is fortified for going out; but it is open for entering. "Who will lead me even into Edom?" Where there is a place of punishments and of blood. For Edom is interpreted as "bloody." The place of the slaying of souls, where many souls are killed. For no one descended as victor into hell, except thou alone, Lord.

"O God, who hast rejected us." He did not say, "Who rejectest us," but, "Who once rejected us." "And wilt not thou, O God, go out in our virtues?" These are to be read interrogatively. "And wilt not thou, O God, go out in our virtues?" Thou who hast suffered for us, why dost thou not help us, but sufferest us to be trodden under foot by the most cruel devil? "And wilt not thou, O God, go out in our virtues." See what he says: He did not say, "thou wentest not out," but, "thou wilt not go out, O God, in our virtues." This he wants to say: When we labor, then God helps us. "For it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy" (Rom. 9). See what he says: He did not say, "it is not of him that lieth down, nor of him that sleepeth," but, "it is of God that showeth mercy." But see what he says: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God showing mercy." If therefore we shall not have willed and run, God will profit us nothing. It is ours to will and to run, and after-

wards God shows mercy. For the sleeping athlete loses the victory.

"Give us help from tribulation." He did not say, "give us help from delights," but, "from tribulation." "To the Lord when I was in tribulation I cried, and he heard me" (Ps. 119). He did not say, "when I was in delights I cried," or, "sleeping I cried." Wilt thou be heard by the Lord? Be in tribulation: cry out, and thou shalt be heard. If anyone therefore is not in tribulation, he cannot invoke the help of the Lord. "For vain is the salvation of man." "Cursed is the man who hath hope in man" (Jer. 17). It is not necessary to interpret this. This sentence is open to all. Someone hoped in the emperor, hoped in a prince, in a father, or a mother: in some business suddenly his spirit was withdrawn in whom he hoped, and his salvation vanished. He did not say, "vain is the salvation of man," but the salvation of him who hopes in man.

"In God we shall do virtue." Let us have no hope, except in the Lord alone. Let us not say: "If that should happen to me, or that, whence have I to live?" I answer thee what is greater. If persecution should happen, whence hast thou to live? Always for the Christian there is persecution, always nakedness is set before him. No one therefore ought to despair of this life, no one should fear, no one ought to say: "If I shall have grown old, whence have I to live? if I shall have been made weak, whence do I live?" Thou hast Christ, and thou fearest? If he feeds the birds of the heaven, dost thou doubt that he can feed thee? The devil feeds his own men, and Christ will

not feed his own servants? The devil makes the judges of this world rich, and Christ cannot make it so that thou dost not beg? The devil gives gold and gems, and Christ cannot give bread? Let us cast away all solicitude from our hearts, and let us say: "In God we shall do virtue." He himself will be our virtue: he himself our bread: he himself will be our ruler. "And he himself will bring our enemies to nothing." He himself crowns us: he himself fights with us: rather, however, he himself will conquer in us. For what do we say? "In God we shall do virtue." For when we shall have been strong, "he himself will bring our enemies to nothing." He did not say: "he will fight," or "he will kill": but, "he will bring to nothing." Therefore he will bring them to nothing, so that, if they should wish, he may make them strong, and glorify them. Let us therefore bless God: to whom be glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 108.

"To the end, a Psalm of David." What it says, "to the end": let us understand it to be said not of the present, but of the future. But if it is said of the future, it is a prophecy concerning Christ.

"O God, be not silent of my praise." This is: Judas betrayed me, the Jews persecuted, and crucified, and thought to lose me to the end. But thou, O God, be not silent of my praise. The universal Church through each single day praises the Lord, and the prayer of the Lord saying: "O God, be not silent of my praise" is fulfilled. See of what dignity are the priests. The priests speak,

and in the priests God is not silent of the praise of his Son. "Because the mouth of the sinner and the mouth of the deceitful is opened against me." Let us see how the mouth of Judas the traitor was opened against the Lord. He comes to the Lord, that he may betray him, and says: "Rabbi," that is, "master" (Mark 14). Behold "the mouth of the sinner, and the mouth of the deceitful." I by my clemency wish to save him, and I offer him a kiss, and I wish to overcome his malice, and he remains in doing evil, that he may betray me. Specially it is understood of Judas: generally however of the Jews, in that time when they were saying: "Crucify him, crucify him" (John 19). Such a mouth of the sinner was opened against the Lord. But that you may see that he spoke of all the Jews, you shall know from what follows. For what does he say?

"They have spoken against me with a deceitful tongue." I was being crucified for them, and they were insulting me. My wounds were their medicine, and I seemed to them a derision. "And with words of hatred they have compassed me." Not that they may believe, but that they may fight. "And they fought against me without cause [gratis]." Without cause is understood in two ways: that is, without a reason. For I had not sinned, and I did not deserve that they should war against me. But what worthy cause was there that they should fight against me? Because I had healed their sick, because I had raised the dead, because I had done other signs. See therefore that they fought against him without cause.

And it is understood otherwise. They wished to extinguish and delete my name, and yet they could not. When anyone persecutes someone, and profits nothing, and does not fulfill his desire, he persecutes without cause.

"Instead of loving me, they detracted from me: but I prayed." For the benefits which I had conferred on them, they themselves did contumelies to me. But I, what did I do? I prayed. These are the weapons of the Lord: let these be also our weapons, prayer. If ever therefore someone persecutes us, and hates us, let us say: "Instead of loving me, they detracted from me." But I, what did I do? I prayed: that I might conquer them? Far be it. The Lord was not praying that he might conquer. But what did he say? "But I prayed." What was I saying? "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do" (Luke 23).

"And they have set against me evil for good." Placed on the cross, I was asking for those crucifying me, and they were saying: "Vah! thou who destroyest the temple, and in three days rebuildest it, save thyself" (Mark 15). "If the Father loves thee, let him come now, and deliver thee" (Matt. 27). I rose from the dead for them, and they say: "His disciples came by night, and stole him away" (Matt. 28). "And hatred for my love." Consider, O Christian; consider, O monk; if the Lord received his persecutor and traitor with a kiss, and prays for those crucifying him: what ought we to do for our brothers?

"Set thou a sinner over him." Since I prayed for them on the cross, and they saw my wounds.

I gave them a place of penance, and they do not perform penance, and they do not wish to have me as king: let them have the devil as king. They do not wish to have Jesus as king: let them have Barabbas as king, which is interpreted as "son of the father," that is, of the devil. Who was this Barabbas? Seditious and a robber. And truly they have Barabbas as king, and even to this present day a seditious man and a robber, who kills the Jews themselves. Barabbas the robber, who is delighted with blood, was shut in before the Lord was crucified: before the Jews crucified him. They denied the Lord, and Barabbas was released (John 18). For from that time Barabbas began to have power over them, and that demon who had been cast out of the man, and from that generation, and was walking through the desert, and could not find a place, brought with him seven other demons worse than himself (Luke 11), and entered into the synagogue, and the last state of that man became worse than the first. Finally even the Synagogue of the Jews before it crucified the Lord, was indeed a sinner, but had only one demon. It crucified the Lord, and eight demons entered into it together. Therefore it was fulfilled what he said: "Set thou a sinner over him, and let the devil stand at his right hand." Since he stood at his right hand, therefore the Synagogue had a dry right hand, as it is written in the Gospel. But let us pray that the Lord may stand at our right hand, and the devil at our left (Luke 6). It is written in Zachariah: "And the Lord showed me Jesus the great High Priest, standing before the

angel of the Lord, and Satan stood at his right hand, that he might fight with him" (Zach. 3). If therefore the devil stands at the right hand, how does he say now concerning Judas, "and let the devil stand at his right hand"? But see what he says: The devil was standing at the right hand of Jesus, that he might oppose him, that is, he wished to oppose his right hand. Here however he does not say that he wishes to fight; but that he had already conquered Judas. The devil there desires to fight against the right hand: here however he has dominated the right hand of Judas. But this also is to be considered. In that time he was standing at the right hand of the Lord, that he might oppose him, when Jesus had filthy garments. For so it is written also there: "And Jesus had filthy garments." As long as the Lord Jesus has filthy garments, so long does the devil stand at his right hand, as long as he bears our sins: in our sins the devil opposes him. But when it is said in Zachariah: "Take away his filthy garments, and clothe him with change of garments," immediately Jesus says to the devil: "The Lord rebuke thee, Satan, may he rebuke thee who hath chosen Jerusalem." All this we have said for this reason: because it is written: "And let the devil stand at his right hand."

"When he is judged, let him go out condemned." Let him not come for judgment, but for condemnation. For where there is judgment, there is condemnation: but where there is condemnation, the sentence is already manifest. "And let his prayer become sin." The penance of

Judas became a worse sin. How did the penance of Judas become a worse sin? He went and perished by hanging. And he who was made the traitor of the Lord, here also stood forth as his own slayer. For the clemency of the Lord I say this: because he offended the Lord more by this, that he hanged himself, than because he betrayed the Lord. It behooved that his prayer should be unto penance, and it was turned into sin. Thou seest a heretic praying, thou seest a Jew, thou seest a Manichean: although they fast, although they pray, yet their prayer is turned into sin.

"Let his days be few." His days were made few: but his nights grew. For he was taken away in the midst of his days. The sun receded from him, and behold darkness was multiplied to him. "And let another take his bishopric [episcopatum]." This was more clearly interpreted also in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1). But not only was it said of Judas in that time; but even to this day it is said, and even to the day of judgment. If Judas himself lost his apostleship, let priests and bishops guard themselves, that they themselves also lose not their priesthood. If an apostle fell, more easily can a monk fall. Virtue does not perish, although a man fall and perish. Nevertheless the Lord gives his denarii under interest. If he shall not have doubled them, his money is taken away, and will be given to him who has. The money of the Lord cannot be idle.

"Let his children be orphans, and his wife a widow." See that they are sacraments which are said. Whom do you think the children of Judas

are? The Jews. And they are called Jews not from that holy Judah, but from this traitor. From that holy one we are spiritual Jews: from this traitor, however, these are carnal Jews. Finally there are two apostles who are called by the name of Judah. The eleventh apostle is he who is called Judah of James. But the twelfth and the last is he who is called Judas Iscariot. From that Judah of James, therefore, we are called spiritual Jews; from this Iscariot, however, those are called carnal Jews. That Judah our father is called "of James," that is, Judah the son of the supplanter. For we have supplanted the people of the Jews and received their firstfruits; but those are called from Iscariot, which is doubtful whether it signifies his father or his village. For the rest, however you shall have interpreted it, it is interpreted as "reward" and "price." Therefore Judas who was about to betray the Lord, and to receive a price, took his name from the price. Although he returned the price to the priests of the Jews, yet they condemn him, since they do not wish to receive the price of blood. See the dissension of the Pharisees and the unhappiness of Judas. If you bought the blood of Jesus well, why did you not receive your money? But if you do not wish to receive it because it is the price of blood: you show yourselves to have shed the blood unjustly and iniquitously. But see what they do. That money, he says, they do not put into the treasury [corbonam], but they buy with it a field, and they call it Acheldemach, which is interpreted as "the price of blood" (Matt. 27). Why do they buy it? For the burial of strangers.

We are blessed for whom the field is bought with the price of the Lord's blood. "And let his wife be a widow." The Synagogue, which first was made the wife of God, of which he said: "And he gave her a bill of divorce" (Deut. 24). And again: "I received her, and said to her: Return to me" (Jer. 3). That Synagogue therefore received a divorce from the Savior, and was made the wife of Judas the traitor. Finally what did she do? She did not receive a dowry, but gave a dowry to her husband. But again that most miserable Judas who betrayed the Lord, does not wish to receive the evil dowry; but he returned to the harlot wife the evil dowry which he received from her. And what does he say? "Thou hast displeased thy former husband, he has divorced thee, and cast thee out, and given thee a bill of divorce." "I do not wish to have thee as a wife." "Thou gavest me a price, and thou hast deceived me." "And thou who hast killed the Lord thy God, wilt kill me also." For I cannot find in Scripture that Judas had either a wife or children.

"Let his children be moved and pass over, and let them beg." Diligently consider: indeed the things which follow are difficult. From that time from which the Lord was crucified, from then always the Jews are moved, they do not stand in their place. Finally it is said also of Cain: "And Cain went out," he says, "from the face of God, and dwelt in the land of Nod" (Gen. 4): but Nod is interpreted as "commotion." Because Cain had gone out from the face of God: rightly he did not stand, but dwelt in the land of Nod, that is, in

commotion. Thus therefore also these, since they crucified their God and Lord, being moved shall be transferred. For they are not in their places; but are divided in the whole world. He speaks here of the beggary of spiritual riches. For they have not prophets, they have not the Law, they have not a priesthood, they have not a sacrifice, but they are made truly beggars.

"Let the usurer search all his substance." You gave him money, Lord: you gave it to him just as to the others. But what did he do? He did not bind it in a napkin, and he did not dig it into the earth, and he was negligent; but where he had the talent and the money of the Lord, he received a price from the enemies of the Lord, and sold his Lord (Luke 19). Therefore I say to you: Lord, exact from him the interest of your money. "And let strangers plunder his labors." The Lord acts as a usurer, he clearly exacts it, and what happened? Strangers shall plunder his labors. Either we understand this generally about all the Jews: because they were devastated by the Romans. Or specifically, because Judas was plundered by demons, and the people themselves.

"Let there be none to help him, nor let there be any to have mercy on his orphans." At that time the people of the Jews had no helper. Answer me, O Jews. You were in Babylonia: you had prophets there, Daniel, Ezekiel, and truly you were idolaters. For seventy years you were in captivity, and afterwards you came into your own lands. Behold now four hundred years, why has no prophet been sent to you? At that time you worshipped

idols, and God had mercy on you. Now, however, you do not worship idols, why has the Lord forsaken you? Behold, it is four hundred years. But then you forsook the Lord, and worshipped idols: now, however, you crucified and killed the Lord, and therefore there shall be no helper for you.

"In one generation let his name be blotted out." O prophecy, O mystery of prophecy! "In one generation let his name be blotted out." After the passion of the Lord, forty-two years passed, and that people was blotted out. Since the perfect age comes in the fortieth year. After the passion of the Lord, therefore, in the forty-second year Jerusalem was destroyed. See therefore that in one generation his name was blotted out. But even in this is the mercy of the Lord. They crucified him, and he gave them forty-two years for penance. I say simply: Therefore he killed them after forty-two years, because of those who crucified the Lord, none of them remained. Judas is cursed, so that in Judas the Jews may be cursed.

"May the iniquity of his fathers return into memory in the sight of the Lord." They sinned in the desert, you forgave them. Now he reckons to them that they sinned then, because they crucified the Lord. Or let us interpret it otherwise: And he reckons to them the cruelty of their homicides, and forgives them nothing. "And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out." Who is the mother of Judas? Jerusalem, which rejoices in blood, which killed the prophets and her own Lord.

"Because he remembered not to show mercy." You see how great the mercy of the Lord is. He

sees him coming with the servants; he sees him coming with clubs, and he offers him a kiss. He comes to betray, and the Lord gives a kiss, so that he who did not fear the master might be overcome even by mercy.

"And he persecuted the poor and beggarly man." Who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor (2 Cor. 8). The Lord calls himself poor and a beggar, and who glories in his riches? You have consolation, you poor, and the Lord is poor with you. "And to put to death the broken in heart." What is it that he said, "to put to death the broken in heart"? What he said in the Gospel: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." And again when he said: "Father, if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me" (Matt. 26). Otherwise: This was a grief to me, and I was saddened for those persecuting me: because they would not do penance. I was hanging on the cross, and with my blood I was washing their filth, and they themselves would not do penance. These were the tears, this the compunction: because I could not save those persecuting me.

"Deliver me, for I am needy and poor." The Lord called himself poor, so that he might console the poor. He became poor with men, so that at least no one would despise a poor man. "And my heart is troubled within me." See what he says: "And my heart is troubled within me." It is the same as what he says elsewhere: "I am troubled, and I did not speak." That I am troubled belongs to man; but to overcome trouble and anger, this belongs to great virtue. Therefore the

prophet also says: "Be angry, and sin not" (Psalm 4). To be angry belongs to men; not to remain in anger belongs to the Christian.

"I am shaken off like locusts." I indeed had come, that I might protect my people, and I said: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who killest the prophets, and stonest those who are sent to thee: how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings!" (Matt. 23). I had come as a hen to protect them: but they received me with a most hostile mind. I had come as a mother, and they killed me as if their own murderer. "I am shaken off." What is this? they persecuted me, they cast me out. They persecuted me from Nazareth. I came into Capernaum, they persecuted me. From Capernaum I went into Bethsaida, and from there they persecuted me. I came into Jerusalem, I did not wish to withdraw from my people, and from there they persecuted me, and so they held me as if locusts. And what did I do? Was I angry, did I defend myself, did I curse them, and did I forsake them? I did none of these; but what did I do? I prayed for them.

"My knees are weakened from fasting." Have consolation, O monk, in fasting: for the Lord also did this. I say that when a monk fasts, he becomes stronger by fasting. And when his knees are weakened by fasting, then he is especially strengthened. "And my flesh is changed because of the oil." I seem to say a difficult thing, and I interpret according to the letter, so that I may edify the hearers. For the letter edifies me. It is good to fast: it is good to flee delights. Before

I come to the spiritual understanding, I wonder in the letter, that he says he eats oil. It is far from other desires. I said all this because he said: "And my flesh is changed because of the oil." I have interpreted this otherwise. Moreover, what he says is this: Oil is an image of brightness: oil is as it were the food of light. So therefore the Jews also received from me oil, they received life, they received light. Let no one think that he speaks of oil for mercy: in Hebrew it signifies intelligible oil. He is changed, not into joy, but into sadness: not that he may be found more beautiful, but that he may appear more foul. Therefore he says: "We saw him, and he had no beauty" (Isa. 53). Why? Because his flesh was changed because of the oil. He did not have the delights of the body, but of the Spirit of God. And we therefore when we fast, when our faces are pale: when we seem foul, let us know that we then appear more beautiful to Christ. Such soldiers Christ loves, who are free for fasts. Our provisions and food is fasting. Why? Because in fasting is victory, and in victory a triumph. Finally the Apostle also: "Not in fullness, but in infirmity he glories" (1 Cor. 4). For when I am weak, then am I strong (2 Cor. 12).

"And I became a reproach to them." For they called me a Samaritan, and said: "In Beelzebub the prince of demons he casts out demons" (John 8). "Is not this the son of Joseph the carpenter? Are not his brothers and sisters all with us?" (Luke 11). And again: "Thou who destroyest the temple, and in three days buildest it up" (Mark 15). And again: "Let us see if Elias comes to save

him." He called: "Eli, Eli": which is, "My God, my God" (Matt. 27), and they thought he meant Elias. See the unlearned Jews. Did the Son of God seek help from Elias? "They saw me, and moved their heads." Why did they move their heads? Because they had already moved their feet.

"Save me according to thy mercy." He says also in the Gospel: "I have power to lay down my soul, and again to take it up" (John 10). And again: "No one takes it from me." And how does he ask for mercy? He himself asks for mercy, and he himself bestows it. He as man asks, and as God bestows.

"And let them know that this is thy hand, and thou, Lord, hast done it." What is it that he says: "And let them know that this is thy hand, and thou, Lord, hast done it"? Let the Jews understand that they did not prevail against me: but my will and thine was done that I should suffer, and I willed to suffer: therefore I say according to what I am as man: My God, to do thy will, I willed: and thy will was mine that I should suffer, not theirs. Therefore not snares and strength did it: but I and thou willed that I should suffer. For thou hast struck thy shepherd, and the sheep are dispersed. This is written in Zechariah: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep shall be dispersed" (Zech. 13). That I should suffer, it was my will and thine. What thou willed, I also willed. It was necessary that scandal should come, but woe to him through whom it comes (Matt. 18).

"They will curse, and thou wilt bless." Even today this is done: They curse in the synagogue, and the Lord blesses in the Church. "Let them

that rise up against me be confounded: but thy servant shall rejoice." They rise up against me: but I thy servant shall rejoice. Why thy servant? Since he who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant (Phil. 2).

"Let them that detract me be clothed with shame." It greatly profits us to understand what we say: The mercy of God appears in this, in saying, "let them be clothed." He does not say, let them perish: he does not say, let them be blotted out forever. But what does he say? Let them be confounded, that is, let them understand their error, and be confounded, and let them fail in penance. He who is clothed with shame is near to salvation: for if anyone is truly confounded, he begins to repent. Consider, O monks, if ever you have anything against your brother, you ought always to pray to the Lord for him. The Lord is crucified, and he prays for those crucifying him. You, however, if you hear an evil word, will you not hold your anger? Let not the sun go down upon your anger (Eph. 4). "And let them be covered with their confusion as with a double cloak." A *diplois* is a kind of mantle. Finally also in Hebrew it is called *MAIL*. A *diplois* therefore, because it is a double mantle. Therefore I say to you: Lord, my enemies are the Jews: they persecuted me, they crucified me, they did all evils to me, they blasphemed me. Forgive them: since I who suffered, pray for them. And what do I pray? Let them be ashamed and confounded, and so be saved. They stripped me of my tunic, and

lost their own. Give them confusion, give them ignominy, and let them have a double mantle, that is, let them not have a simple confusion, but a double one, so that they may do penance more. He does not speak against the Jews, but for them he speaks. For he is the Creator, both of them and of us, for he did not completely root them out. Do you want to know? Peter was of them, and all the apostles were of them. We are engrafted into their root. We are branches, they the root. We ought not to curse the roots, but we ought to pray for our roots. We who are engrafted into the root, let us beseech the Lord, that just as these branches are made safe, so also the root may be saved. Perhaps someone may say: Do you pray for blasphemous Jews? I pray to the Lord for them. For if he himself has mercy on his persecutors, how much more does he have mercy on me?

"I will confess to the Lord exceedingly with my mouth." This is said after the resurrection, and it is sung of the future Church. "And in the midst of many I will praise him." For not in Judea alone, but in the whole world, in the Church I will praise thee.

"Because he stood at the right hand of the poor." The devil stood at the right hand of Judas. Moreover, the Lord stood at my right hand. "That he might save my soul from the persecutors" (Matt. 26). He will save, he says, the soul. And elsewhere he says: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." He who is sorrowful, had feeling. For an insensible soul has not feeling. An insensible soul has not feeling, nor pain. For where there is

pain and sorrow, there is feeling. If therefore he had sorrow, if he had pain, therefore he had also the feeling of pain. If therefore they wish to say to us: For this reason we do not say that he had feeling, so that he may not seem to have sin. Let us answer them: Did he have a body as also we, or did he not have? If they say, He had: let us answer them: Therefore he had also the passions of our body. Let each one understand what I say. But if they deny that he had the passions of the body, then we say to them, that neither did he have a body. And let us say to them: Just as he had a true body, as also we, and did not have the sin of the body, so also he had a true soul, and did not have the sins of the soul. Let us therefore confess that he had a true body, and a true soul. For if the Lord did not take up all things which are man's, he did not save man. But if he took up a body, but did not take up a soul, therefore he saved the body, but did not save the soul. We, however, wish our soul to be saved more than the body. Jesus therefore took up both body and soul, that he might save both, that he might save the perfect man, just as also he created him. If therefore they say: that for this reason the Lord did not receive feeling, so that he might not sin: and they think this, that whoever has human feeling, cannot overcome it. Let them tell us: Did John the Baptist have feeling, or did he not? At that time in which he was in the desert, did he sin? Certainly they say that he did not sin. Finally also our Lord says: "Amen I say to you, there has not risen among those born of women a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt.

11). Did Peter have feeling, or did he not, and the other holy apostles? If therefore the apostles overcame human feeling: did the Lord fear to receive feeling, lest he should be overcome by it? And while they wish to glorify the Lord, they detract from him. How do they detract from him? So that the Lord might seem to fear what the apostles did not fear. Let us therefore give thanks to almighty God, and let us say: In thy feeling thou hadst no sin. "And the prince of this world came, and found in thee nothing" (John 14). Thus therefore grant to us, that as in thy feeling thou didst overcome the devil, so also in our feeling overcome the devil, that just as thou didst create us perfect, so also thou mayest save us perfect. For thou art the Creator, thou art the Master, thou art the Lord, thou art also he who suffered for us: who livest and reignest for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 109.

Psalm of David himself.

This psalm contains the voice of the seer speaking of Christ. The prophet therefore says: "The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand."

It is David who speaks, a prophet, a holy man, a king. What therefore does the King say? What do the King and prophet say? "The Lord said to my Lord." The Savior explained this place in the Gospel, saying: "If Christ is," he said, "the son of David: how in the spirit does he call him Lord?" (Matt. 22). You see therefore what he says: If he

is the son of David, how do you say: How in the spirit does he call him Lord? Let someone say: Therefore is he not the son of David? He said this concerning the Pharisees, who confessed Christ as a simple son of David. I say this same thing to the Jew and to Photinus: If he is the son of David, how does he call his son Lord? But to him who confesses the Lord God, and the Son of God (for example, the Manichean, who denies that he is the son of David), among him I prove that he is the son of David. To us therefore he who is the Son of God, is himself also the son of David. Not one the Son of God, and another the son of David. I do not make two persons in God and man, but he himself who is the Son of God, is himself also the son of David. "The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand." In Hebrew the first name, of the Lord, is written with these letters: with which it is written concerning God alone. But the second name of the Lord is written with those letters with which men are accustomed to call a Lord: just as a Lord is called by some from a servant, and kings are called Lords. See therefore what he says: "The Lord said to my Lord." To this Lord, to whom it is commanded that he should sit, God does not sit, the assumption of the body sits. To this one therefore it is commanded that he should sit, who is man, who was assumed. This we say against the Arians, and against those who say: The Father who commands that he sit is greater than he to whom it is commanded. All the Gospels resound concerning the person of the man, and now an approval is not necessary:

because all things whatsoever seem base, are referred to the man, are referred to the flesh. Now let us speak of the Psalm:

"The Lord will send forth the rod of thy power out of Zion." In Hebrew it does not have so much "rod" as "sceptre," that is, the insignia of royal power. "The Lord will send forth the rod of thy power out of Zion." For out of Zion goes forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2). "Rule thou in the midst of thy enemies." He did not say: Kill thy enemies: but what? "Rule thou in the midst of thy enemies." Make thy enemies so that those who had been strangers, may begin to be thine. "Rule thou in the midst of thy enemies": thy enemies, concerning whom it is written in the sixty-seventh psalm: "The tongue of thy dogs from the enemies by him." These are the enemies, who were in a strange power. Now therefore the Psalmist prays this: Rule over thy enemies, deign to be the Lord of thy enemies.

"With thee is the beginning in the day of thy power, in the brightness of the saints." An obscure verse. Let us see the day of the power of the Lord: so that when we know the day, then we may know what the beginning is, and how this beginning is with him, and has been with him: how this same beginning in the day of his power, is in the brightness of the saints. This beginning therefore which is with the Lord in the day of his power, is therefore with the Lord, that the saints may shine. "With thee is the beginning in the day of thy power." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"

(John 1). This was in the beginning with God. The Father is the beginning, but also the Son is the beginning. For the beginning has not a beginning. For if it should have another beginning, it now ceases to be the beginning. Whatever therefore we give to the Father, this we give also to the Son. For if the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and all things of the Father are the Son's, and all things of the Son are the Father's, and the beginning of the Father is the beginning of the Son. Therefore what he says is this, at that time in which thou didst suffer and say: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23): thou didst speak as if from the affection of man, not as if weak didst thou ask. For with thee was the beginning, with thee was the divinity, but for this reason didst thou beseech help, so that, having received help, thou mightest give to thy saints, and they might shine. Let this which is said: "Receiving thou mightest give," cause a scandal to no one: he speaks according to man. For if he assumed the body of man, it is necessary that he also take up the words of man. Christ is man, and truly he is man: we speak according to the assumption of the flesh. If therefore he is man according to the body, thou seest the body, and art not scandalized, and dost thou wonder if he speaks with the words of man? But if the baseness of the body scandalizes thee, and the cross, and the injuries, and the slaps, and the scourges, and every injury of the cross: if this scandalizes thee, return to the beginning, and thou wilt not be scandalized.

For the Father says to the Son: "From the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee." Dost thou wonder if our Lord and Savior, who truly assumed man, speaks according to man: when God the Father himself, who did not assume man, speaks as a man: "From the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee." I have not a womb: but I cannot otherwise indicate myself as Father, unless I speak with the words of man. "From the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee." "From the womb," from my substance. "From the womb." Hear, Eunomius: hear, Arius. If the Lord is a creature, if a workmanship: does an artisan beget his work? Does an artisan call his work a son? An artisan carpenter made a bench: did he beget it from his womb? does he say to it: From my womb have I begotten thee, O bench? He certainly does not say this. But what does he say? I made thee with my hand. But when "womb" is said, a son is signified, and a son not adopted. For even adopted sons are called. "As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God" (John 1). There he gave them power. Here, however, he begot from the womb: from his nature, from his bowels, from his substance. "From the womb," that is, from the marrow of his divinity. All whatever the Father is in divinity, he gave to the Son whom he begot. "From the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee." "Before the day-star." This figure is called in Greek *synecdoche*, which grammarians call the whole from a part. When therefore it is said, "before the day-star," he names one crea-

ture, and indicates all creatures. When he says, "before the day-star": let us so understand it as if he had said, before the moon, before the sun, before every creature. "From the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee." "Before the day-star." Before this day-star which is seen in the world, the true light was begotten. Whence the psalm says in another place: "In thy light we shall see light" (Psalm 35). The speech is to the Father: O Father, in the light of the Son, we shall see the light, the Holy Spirit. "From the womb before the day-star have I begotten thee."

"The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent." The Lord hath sworn. This which he says, "he hath sworn": not to him who was begotten before the day-star: but he swore to him, who after the day-star was born of a virgin. "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." It is superfluous for us to wish to interpret concerning this verse, since the holy Apostle has disputed most fully to the Hebrews. For he himself says: "This is Melchizedek, without father, without mother, without genealogy" (Heb. 7). And it is interpreted there most diligently, why without father, without mother, without genealogy. And it has been said by all ecclesiastics, that he is called without father according to the flesh: without mother he is called according to God. This alone therefore let us interpret: "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." Let us say this alone, why he said "according to the order." According to the order: by no means wilt thou be a priest according to the Jewish victims;

but thou wilt be a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Gen. 14). For just as Melchizedek, king of Salem, offered bread and wine: so also thou wilt offer thy body and blood, true bread, and true wine. This Melchizedek gave to us those mysteries which we have. He himself is the one who said: "He who shall eat my flesh, and drink my blood" (John 6). According to the order of Melchizedek, he delivered to us his sacrament.

"The Lord at thy right hand." I see a new thing. It is said in the beginning: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand": and now it is said to him, "The Lord at thy right hand." If he himself sits at the right hand of the Father, how again does the Father sit at the right hand of the Son? For when it is said: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand": it is most clearly said, that the Son sits at the right hand of the Father. But when it is said: "The Lord at thy right hand," this is said, that the Father sits at the right hand of the Son. All this is said for this reason, that the Son may be equal to the Father. There are many things which may be said. But the devil stands at the right hand of a sinner. Moreover, that dispute is another. Whoever is a sinner, the devil stands at his right hand. But someone will say: How also to Joshua the son of Josedech in Zechariah is the devil said to stand at his right hand: and the devil stood at the right hand of the Savior (Zech. 3)? You see that there is a question. But at that time when the devil was standing at the right hand of the Savior: "Jesus," he says, "had filthy garments." He was carrying

our sins, wrapped in our vices: therefore the devil was standing at his right hand. "He hath broken kings in the day of his wrath." "All these things have been delivered to me." In a moment, he says, of an hour he showed him all the kingdoms of the earth. The kingdoms of the world, the devil shows. And what does he say? "All these things have been delivered to me." "If falling down thou wilt adore before me, they shall all be thine" (Matt. 4). In the day of war therefore, in the day of contest, he will break the kings of his wrath.

"He shall judge among the nations." See the differences: kings are broken, he will judge nations. "He shall fill ruins." Our Lord ascended onto the cross, and many ruins were made. This one was placed for the ruin and resurrection of many, and for a sign which shall be contradicted (Luke 2). "He shall fill ruins." Of those not believing, who did not believe the apostle spies (Num. 21 and 22). For Moses also sent spies into the world; and because the people did not believe the spies, therefore they fell in the desert. Even to this day the bodies of those not believing fall in the desert of this world. "He shall shatter heads in the land of many." "He shall fill ruins," of those not believing: "he shall shatter heads," of those who are doubtful: of those who have not perfect faith. "He shall shatter heads in the land of many": not of all. For if he had said, of all, none of us would have hope. "Of many," it is said, so that others may be left.

"He shall drink of the torrent in the way." Who drinks of the torrent, in the way? He to whom it

was said: "The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand." He who heard: "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." He who "hath broken kings in the day of his wrath: shall fill ruins: shall shatter heads in the land of many." What else does he do? "He shall drink of the torrent in the way." Let us see the way first, so that afterwards we may see the torrent in the way. This world is called the "way," through which he walked. Finally it is written in the Gospel: "Be at agreement with thy adversary while thou art in the way" (Matt. 5), that is, while thou walkest in this world, and by the way thou goest to him who is the true way. Whence it is also said in the hundred and eighteenth Psalm: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way." They are blessed, who in this way of the world are undefiled, and in this world. Therefore the priest according to the order of Melchizedek: since he came in the way of the world, and walked in our way, he himself also drank of the torrent, which was in the world. A torrent does not have natural waters, it does not have waters which always flow through: but it has waters from storms, from rains, from a whirlwind, from tempests. A torrent is never in the mountains, but always in the valleys, in precipitous places. It conceives foreign waters, and brings them forth, and goes along swelling. "He shall drink of the torrent in the way." A torrent never has clean water, but always turbid. This is said: because the waters of this world are always turbid, always full of storm. Do you want to know how he drank of

the turbid torrent? He himself says: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death" (Matt. 26). And it is said in the Gospel: "And he began," it says, "to be sorrowful and to be troubled." Therefore our Lord also drank of the torrent of this world turbid waters, sad waters, waters which have no joy. He took the cup, and filled it from the torrent of the world, and because the waters were turbid, he says: "Father, if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me." He drank therefore of the torrent of this world: but he did not drink as if in his own house, but in the way, hastening to go to other things. "He drank of the torrent in the way."

Therefore he drank of the torrent, because he was in the way. "He drank of the torrent." If the Lord drank of the torrent of this world, how much more the saints? Do you want to know that the saints drink of the torrent? It says also in another place: "Our soul hath passed through a torrent" (Psalm 123). "He shall drink of the torrent in the way." We have spoken of the torrent, let us also say a testimony. "Our soul hath passed through a torrent." Do you want to know also another torrent? The holy prophet Elijah, when Jezebel was persecuting him: when he received food, and passing for forty days went into the wilderness: "He was," it says, "in the desert, and drank of the torrent Chobar" (3 Kings 19). Truly you hearing of the torrents of this world, do not despair. Frequently this torrent fails. It seems indeed to swell: it seems to have many waters: but quickly it fails, if thou shouldst endure. And Elijah indeed drank water in the desert, at that time in which

he was in sadness, in which he was in distress. He had left Judea, and had gone into Mount Sinai: for Jezebel was persecuting him, and for that reason he was drinking of the torrent Chobar. Truly because he persevered even to the end, therefore the water of the torrent failed. And it is said to him by the Lord, because the water of the torrent had failed: "Go," he says, "to the widow in Sarepta of the Sidonians," etc. Behold, Elijah also drank of the torrent. But the Lord and Savior himself drank, and the cup from the torrent Cedron. For so the Scripture relates, when they came and apprehended him. "They came," it says, "and apprehended him in the torrent," etc. (John 18). You see how humble the place of the torrent is, how rugged. Cedron in the Hebrew language is interpreted "darkness." You see therefore that the torrents of this world are in darkness. The Lord therefore when he is betrayed, is not betrayed again on Mount Olivet, he is not betrayed in the temple: but he is betrayed in a torrent, and a torrent of darkness, that is, Cedron. For all who hate the light, love darkness. "He shall drink of the torrent in the way."

Because therefore the Lord drank of the torrent, and tasted death, therefore the Father exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name. Then now it is said: "He shall drink of the torrent in the way." And because he drank of the torrent in the way, "Therefore hath he lifted up his head." And what does he say? "When I shall be exalted, I will draw all things to myself" (John 12). He was exalted, and he exalted us.

His head was exalted: moreover he shattered the heads of the dragon, and they were broken in the sea. "Therefore hath he lifted up his head." He did not say: therefore his head was lifted up, that is, exalted by another: but he who had humbled himself, himself exalted it. For he himself says in the Gospel: "I have power to lay down my soul, and I have power to take it up again" (John 10). "Therefore hath he lifted up his head." He exalted himself, who is the head of all. Or certainly what he says: "he lifted up the head," he did not exalt himself. "Therefore hath he lifted up his head." For he was always high. But when he says: "he lifted up the head," he exalted our head: who bent down could not look to heaven, but to the earth. Do you want to know that he himself exalted the head? And that woman whom the devil had bound, he himself liberated (Luke 13). He exalted the head of her who had always been bent over: and she adored him. To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 110.

Alleluia. This psalm is written first according to the order of the letters; although many think that the twenty-fourth psalm and the thirty-sixth were also written in Hebrew according to the order of the letters: but in those, some letters are either missing or redundant, and sometimes because while one verse is short, another is greater by an infinite length. From which I think this was effected more by the observation of those reading than by the study of the Writer.

Finally even the Seventy interpreters, because some scruple was arising in them, were unwilling to put the Hebrew letters in the translation.

"I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart." If David had not been simple, and had had guile, he would not have said: "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart." Not with lips only, but with the whole heart. "In the council of the just and the congregation: great are the works of the Lord." He says "of the upright," of those who before were sinners, but now are truly just. For it is not to be wondered at. You see that an elephant and a camel, and similarly a fly and a gnat, have the same mobility, and spirit, and limbs.

"He hath given food to them that fear him." In famine he fed Elijah: in the desert, he rained manna upon the people of the Jews (Exod. 16), and that which is said was fulfilled: "He hath given food to them that fear him." This according to the letter. But he gave food, the bread which descended from heaven (John 6): on which, if we are worthy, we are fed. For how many martyrs were consumed by famine, and now are with the Lord?

"Holy and terrible is his name." Holy, to the saints; terrible, to sinners. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." In those who do not fear the Lord, wisdom is not. Or those who have not wisdom, have not fear.

"His praise continueth for ever and ever." Since in the title "Alleluia" was pre-noted, the psalm justly ends in praise. For "Alleluia" is interpreted "praise the Lord."

PSALM 111.

Alleluia. This psalm provokes us to be founded in the habitation of the eternal house through the fear of God.

"Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." I have frequently said, that all things which are interpreted in the person of the just man, are referred to Christ. For if the saints are a type and figure of the Savior: if anyone is truly holy, for example: Isaac is a type of the Lord Savior, Joseph, Solomon, David, and the other saints. Therefore also this blessed man who is now described, is indeed referred to the just man. And truly it is said of the just man: but that just man is a type of the Just Man. "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." Meanwhile we have dismissed the psalm, now let us speak of the just man: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." The hundred and eleventh psalm is alphabetical. Since both the hundred and tenth, and this one itself is under the alphabet. The first verse is written from *aleph*: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." The second, from *beth*: "In his commandments he shall take great delight." The third, from *gimel*: "His seed shall be mighty upon earth," and so on until the twenty-second letter *thau*. Let us therefore discuss the individual verses with your prayers. "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord": is the beginning of the psalm: he does not yet say: "Blessed is the man who loveth the Lord." For it belongs to men beginning to fear, but to the perfect to love

(1 John 4). Since perfect love casteth out fear. Therefore he speaks of the beginning, that is, of the holy man beginning. Let us see therefore the order of the Psalm: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." He who fears the Lord, what does he do? Does he hear the words of God, is he learned in the law? He does not say this. What does he say? "In his commandments he shall take great delight." He who fears the Lord: he who is blessed: does his commandments willingly. "In his commandments he shall take great delight." See what he says: He did not say, he does his commandments. For many do them even out of fear, and have no reward. For he who fears Gehenna, and for that reason does not commit fornication, does not have as great a reward as he who does it because of the love of God. In his commandments he shall will, that is, he wills exceedingly, that is, he desires to do his commandments. Just as someone, if he should be in heats, thirsts: so he desires the commandments of the Lord. In the commandments of the Lord he shall will exceedingly. Anxiously he does not do his commandments, but he wills: and he wills not transitorily, but "exceedingly." The third verse is:

"His seed shall be mighty upon earth." I who have done the commandments of God with my will, am worthy that I should become the father of the saints. We speak briefly, lest the speech be drawn out too long. "The generation of the upright shall be blessed." May the Lord grant, that you also who hear me, may be the generation of the upright.

"Glory and riches are in his house." Glory and riches. Do we think that the glory and riches of the world are spoken of? Does anyone do the will of God and his commandments for this reason, that he may obtain the riches of this world? And certainly he does not do the commandments of God unless he has despised the riches of the world (Psalm 111). "Glory and riches are in his house." It is the glory of believers, just as the Apostle says: "Are not you my glory and riches?" Riches, concerning which the Apostle himself says: that you have been made rich in all knowledge and justice. "And his justice continueth for ever and ever."

"To the upright of heart a light has arisen in darkness." We once were wandering in darkness: we were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death: but a light has arisen for us, according to Isaiah (Chap. 58). "He is merciful, and compassionate, and just." Merciful and just. If thou art a sinner, do not despair of pardon: he is merciful. But if thou art proud, and trustest in the mercy of God, be not negligent, for he is just. "He is merciful, and compassionate, and just." See what the prudence of the Psalmist has done: Justice is simple: mercy is double. "He is merciful, and compassionate, and just." Because the Lord is merciful and compassionate, let the just man also imitate his Lord, let him also be merciful.

"A good man is he who showeth mercy and lendeth." Does someone think he speaks of gold and silver, and of money? The just were so far from having what they might lend to others,

that they themselves received food from others. Therefore, if I have nothing to give, am I no longer just? If I do not give alms, shall I not be counted in the number of the just? How many of the saints have given alms, but have fallen in holiness. The perfect did not give alms, because they had nothing from which to give. Not to give alms is the crime of him who has. But he who has nothing from which to give alms is free. However much he wished to give, so much has he given: because he gave by his will. Yet even the saints have from which to give alms. Peter also says: "Silver and gold I have none: but what I have, I give thee" (Acts 3). In the name of the Lord Jesus, rise up and walk. Which is greater, to give money, or to make the weak man whole? "A good man is he who showeth mercy and lendeth." What are these alms, what is this which the just man lendeth? The second verse shows. "He shall order his words with judgment." He did not say: his gold, and silver, and money he orders with judgment: but, "he orders his words with judgment." This is mercy, if a holy man teaches others who are not holy. "He shall order his words with judgment." We have understood, therefore, what are the moneys which are lent. Truly this which he says, "he orders his words with judgment," this is what is said in the Gospel, "lest we cast our pearls before swine" (Matt. 7). This is, that each one should know to whom he bestows, what he can receive, what he cannot. Wherefore the holy man says: "In my heart have I hidden thy words, that I may not sin against thee" (Ps. 118). I have

not given them to whomsoever I pleased. I have not cast your holy thing to dogs, nor given pearls to swine. Great, therefore, is the danger of the teacher, to pour out the words of the Lord to swine. There are many things which might be said of the psalm. But because we are excluded by the hour, let us bless the almighty Lord, and let him who has such moneys bestow them on those who have not. But let him who has not, receive them gladly. And may the Lord grant to me also, that I may have these riches; that I may both give to those who have not, and heap up riches for those who have, so that I may have that blessedness both in speaking and in hearing. For blessed is he who speaks into the ears of one who hears. For what does it profit me to speak, if another does not receive my words? What does it profit to pour in wine, if as soon as it is poured, it is spilled? You see that in the Gospel that water is put into the water-pot, and is turned into wine, and is kept lest it perish (John 2). "He showeth mercy," that is, in the heart, and he believes in work. It is good to bestow earthly substance: but it is better in announcing mercy, that is, that you should consign to oblivion who has done evil to you, that is, that you should forgive him who has sinned against you. "He has ordered his words with judgment," that is, he is his own judge. He says within himself. The Lord said: "If you forgive, it shall be forgiven you: if you give, it shall be given to you" (Matt. 6). Because he who thus judges himself here in the present, God crowns him in the future. "Because he shall not be moved

for ever." Such a one shall not be moved: because he is founded upon a rock.

"The just shall be in everlasting remembrance." That just man is always in the memory of God. "He shall not fear the evil hearing." From him, "depart, you cursed" (Matt. 25)!

"His heart is ready to hope in the Lord." That is, his hope is always ready in God. "His heart is strengthened." His soul in faith. "He shall not be moved." From that very faith to infidelity: because he is founded upon a rock, that is, upon Christ. "Until he look down upon his enemies." That is, he looks down upon vices and sins, all heresies, or the power of enemies.

"He hath distributed, he hath given to the poor: his justice remaineth for ever and ever." "He hath distributed," that is, he has divided. He did not say: Give everything to one man, but he says: "Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor" (Mark 10, and Luke 18). Because through many he has divided those things, or distributed: because the prayer of many is more than that of one man. "His justice remaineth for ever and ever," that is, those very works of his remain. "His horn shall be exalted in glory." That is, his kingdom shall be exalted in glory, that is, he shall be with God.

"The sinner shall see." How shall he see, since the Prophet says: "Let the impious be taken away lest he see the glory of God." Yet there follows: "Let them see and be confounded" (Zech. 12). And elsewhere. "They shall look on him whom they have pierced," that is, they shall see that form

of a servant and man, which he deigned to take upon himself from our humanity: but that glory which the saints shall have, they shall neither have, nor see, and as much as they shall see, they shall see for their punishment. "And shall be angry." That is, against themselves; for the reason that they did not do good things. There shall be late repentance for them. They shall say: "These are they whom we had in derision: behold, they are numbered among the servants of God." The abundance of riches has profited us nothing: "the Sun has not risen for us." "He shall gnash with his teeth and pine away." By the gnashing of teeth, cold is understood, as that: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 5, and Luke 13). Because both cold and heat shall be there, and no rest. "The desire of the wicked shall perish," that is, all the good things which they had here in the present. Let us, therefore, diligently hear the words of God: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 112.

Alleluia. This psalm teaches us that, having laid aside the old malice, we should glory in the praises of God like newborn infants. For it says:

"Praise the Lord, ye children: praise ye the name of the Lord." Here children are provoked to praise: concerning whom the Savior says in Isaiah: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me" (Isa. 8). For out of the mouth of infants and sucklings, full praise is perfected unto God.

"Blessed be the name of the Lord." Whom every creature blesses. Was it perhaps not blessed before? It was always, but yet before it was only in one nation of the Jews that they blessed and believed in him: but now in all nations he is both believed in and blessed. "From this time forth for evermore." From this, that is, from when men began both to believe and to praise. And "now," that is, in the present: and "for evermore," that is, without end. For even before it was always blessed.

"From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same." That is, from the beginning of our birth until death. "The name of the Lord is worthy of praise." As I said above.

"The Lord is high above all nations." Was he not high before? He was in Judea, now above all nations. He says through the prophet: Because he wished to reprove the Jews, and to choose the nations. "And his glory above the heavens." That is, his glory is above the Saints.

"Who is like unto the Lord our God?" As if he should say: None is such. As that: "Who is like among the sons of God?" And elsewhere it says: "There is none like unto thee among the gods, O Lord" (Ps. 85). "Who dwelleth on high, and looketh down on the low things in heaven and in earth." "On high," that is, in the saints. Does he not also dwell in the humble? He dwells: because he looks down on the humble: as that: "Upon whom shall I look, but upon him that is humble and trembleth at my words" (Isa. 66)? When are the saints high? When they contemplate heav-

enly things. And then are they humble on earth: when they humble themselves in the active life, they are lifted up in the contemplative. And those who are humble here on earth are high with God. Why did he not say, he dwells in the humble: but said, "he looketh down"? Therefore, because where he looks down, there he dwells, and where he dwells, there he looks down.

"Raising up the needy from the earth." It is understood both of the head and of the members. "Raising up," that is, God the Father raised up Christ, who became needy and poor for us. And we who are needy, that is, without our father the devil, without our mother gentility, are raised up by Christ. "And lifting up the poor out of the dunghill." What he called "earth," that is also "dunghill," and what he called "needy," that is also "poor." Because he raised us up from the earth and the corruption of our sins: as that: "Why art thou proud, dust and earth?" (Ecclus. 10).

"That he may set him with princes, with the princes of his people." God the Father set his Son in the heavens at his right hand. And he shall have dominion over the princes, that is, over the nine orders of angels, according to that: "I am the prince of the host, or the prince of the virtues." And moreover, he set the saints and his members with those same nine orders of angels.

"Who maketh the barren woman to dwell in a house, the joyful mother of children." The barren woman, this is the holy Church. Whence it says in the prophet: "Rejoice, thou barren one," etc. (Isa.

54). At first the holy Church was barren: because she did not beget children, except a few: the Synagogue had God as husband, but yet she begot few (Acts 2 et seqq.). Afterwards the Church, which before had been barren, in one day or two, brought forth great offspring, when she begot eight thousand. And it says in the prophet: "Who are these, or who hath begotten these for me?" (Isa. 49). Make me space and cities where I may dwell. And the Lord said: "I will do it" (Ps. 18). "Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth," that is, in the whole world. "Who maketh the barren woman to dwell in a house," that is, in the Church. And she herself is barren, and she herself is mother, and they themselves are children, and she dwells in herself. This is the unity of the Church: it is one thing and many members: but many are one body, as Paul says, and there she shall rejoice in herself, that is, in unity (Rom. 12).

PSALM 113.

Alleluia. This psalm contains the voice of the prophet, showing that those things which are told in it historically are to be understood as spoken spiritually.

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people." This psalm commemorates according to history when the children of Israel went out of Egypt (Exod. 13). But it pertains more to the sense, when we were liberated from Egypt, that is, from the darkness of the ignorance of our sins through baptism. "The house of Jacob from a barbarous people." Those

Israelites were liberated from a barbarous people, that is, from those nations which were dwelling in Egypt. And according to the sense. "The house of Jacob," they understand the supplanters of vices. These were liberated, and we the spiritual house of Jacob were liberated from those infidels, who remained in infidelity (Gen. 32). "House of Jacob." At first he was called Jacob, afterwards Israel. Whence he said: "I have seen the Lord face to face, and my soul has been saved." And the Lord said to him: "No longer shalt thou be called Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name." And we first ought to be Jacob, that is, supplanters of vices: that afterwards we may be able to be Israel, that is, souls seeing God, and contemplate God with the eyes of the heart: according to that: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5).

"Judea was made his sanctuary." In Judea at first was the sanctification of God. But "Judea" is interpreted as "confession," that is, in those who confess the faith of the Trinity, and come to baptism, where is the sanctification of God. "Israel his dominion." And it is the power of God, that we may deserve to be Israel, that is, that we may be called souls seeing God. Israel reigned in her.

"The sea saw it and fled." The sea saw it and fled, when Moses came with his people (Exod. 14). And how did it see? That is, it understood the will of the Creator, and gave place to that people. Otherwise, according to the sense: The sea, the gentiles, saw the holy preachers, the supplanters of vices, and the souls seeing God, and they fled,

that is, they could not resist the apostles, because God was in them. "The Jordan was turned back." That the Jordan was turned back is not read in history (Josh. 3), except when they entered into it with the ark: as if that water had walked backward, so it stood like a wall, and that other water walked through into the sea. What therefore is understood by this? Jordan is interpreted as "their descent." Those are understood who come to baptism. When they saw the martyrs suffer many persecutions, they were turned into the sea, that is, they denied in gentility. Afterwards the Lord through his preachers called them: "Turn ye to me, and I will return to you" (Zech. 1). And many were afterwards turned to God. That water walked through into the sea, that is, they are the infidels who walked through into the sea, that is, into the sea of perdition.

"The mountains skipped like rams, and the hills like the lambs of the flock." The holy preachers exulted, when they saw those converted, who before were blasphemers. "They skipped like rams," that is, the princes of the flocks, who beget children, that is, the holy apostles. Whence one of them said: "Through the Gospel I have begotten you" (1 Cor. 4). Or preachers of higher merit are understood, who now beget children through their preaching. Whence Paul said: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4).

"What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest; and thou, Jordan, that thou wast turned back?" The prophet asks through himself, and he

himself answered, as if he should say: What was it to thee, gentility, that thou fleddest? "And thou, Jordan," that is, and you, Christians, what was it that you were turned back? Why? You saw the holy preachers, that is, the mountains: you saw the rams, that is, the supplanters of vices, and the souls of those seeing God the Father, and therefore you fled?

"Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye hills like the lambs of the flock." It is a repetition.

"At the presence of the Lord the earth was moved, at the presence of the God of Jacob." The prophet explained this in another place when he said: "He looked, and the earth was moved" (Ps. 69). And after a little while he says: "At the presence of the Lord," and the rest. "The earth was moved," that is, at the presence of God, because God was in his preachers. Gentility was moved; "at the presence of the God of Jacob," that is, at the presence of him whom Jacob adored.

"Who turned the rock into pools of water." The rock, Christ, and according to history, from the rock came forth rivers (Exod. 17). Before Christ came in the flesh, such great waters, that is, such great doctrine, had not yet burst forth: afterwards there came forth from Christ four rivers, the four Gospels, and they watered the whole world. "And the stony hill into fountains of waters." It is a repetition. The stony hills are what the rock is. The rock is called a stony hill. "And the stony hill into fountains of waters." Much doctrine concerning Christ. The Red Sea, which

is so called because that water of the sea was like blood, which figured baptism.

"Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to thy name give glory." Those good Jews say: Not our merit liberated us, but thy power: that thy name may be glorified among all nations. Or the preachers of the New Testament say likewise. When they perform virtues, God performs them through them: that his name may be glorified and praised through himself.

"For thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." Thy mercy and thy truth do this. "Lest the Gentiles should say, Where is their God?" For this reason God does these wonders, lest the Gentiles should say that God could not have saved them. Or now in the New Testament he likewise acts in his saints.

"But our God is in heaven: he hath done all things whatsoever he would." God is in heaven above. The saints say to those infidels, who adore idols: You touch your gods with the hand, and discern them with animal eyes, but our God is in heaven above. In heaven and in earth, "he hath done all things whatsoever he would." In those who lead a heavenly life, and are yet shut up in earthly flesh, he has fulfilled his wills.

"The idols of the gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men." It is called an idol because it is made to the likeness of some dead man. "Silver and gold." Why did he not say, of stone, or of brass, but of clay, or of wood; but of silver and gold? Because the Holy Spirit foresaw what kind of answer they would give when they

were rebuked for it. Therefore he put gold and silver, because they would say: I do not adore a wooden God, nor one of stone, nor of brass; but a God of gold and silver. You say to him: If you had adored gold and silver, it would not be such an error. And they say to him: We do not adore gold, nor silver. He answered: Not gold and silver, but my God I adore. What is this image, and that power which is in it? You say to him: The devil is there. He says: Far be it. I do not want to adore the devil. How do you not adore the devil, since in another psalm we read: "All the gods of the gentiles are demons" (Ps. 95)? He says: Nor do I adore this. What then do you adore? I adore the sun, the moon, the stars. These are my gods, they save me. You say to him: If the sun is your God, why does it not always shine for you? You say to another, who adores the moon, or to this one who adores the sun: The sun is whole. You adore the moon, why does your God wax and wane, and shine by night? Why does it not always shine for you? And in the sea when you are submerged, why do your moon and your stars not liberate you, and give light over you? Why does he add: "the works of the hands of men, silver and gold"? Men dig it from the earth, and cultivate it, and color it, and thus it turns out beautiful. Therefore from your hands you make your God whom you adore. These things were said to refute the wicked.

"They have eyes and shall not see: they have ears and shall not hear: they have noses and shall not smell." "They have hands and shall not feel: they have feet and shall not walk: neither shall

they cry out through their throat." "For there is no spirit in their mouth." You say to him: Even if you had adored a beast, although it was evil, yet at least it has eyes, or feet: but this which you adore, neither sees, nor hears. Why does he add: "Neither shall they cry out through their throat"? Because beasts cry out with a voice, but their cry is confused. You do not understand, nor can you comprehend by letters, or by syllables, how you comprehend the voice of a man.

"Let them that make them become like unto them, and all such as trust in them." Like, that is, if he does not amend his eyes, because he saw that gold, that image. But even in the soul he is made like, while he does not amend, because he neither sees, nor understands, nor discerns, while he believes the error more. Therefore he is called like. "And all who trust in them." Not only those who make, but also those who trust.

"The house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord." The house of Israel, the twelve tribes of Israel. Aaron, the tribe of Levi did not hope? He did not hope in such dead gods, but in the Lord. "The house of Israel," the house of souls seeing God hope in the Lord. And Aaron, mountain of strength, that is, those who are strong and high in merit, hope in the Lord. "He is their helper and protector." Those gods are of no use, according to the word of Jeremiah: they do not liberate a man from war, they do not appoint a king, but this one defends them and protects them, according to the word of Daniel (Dan. 2 and 3), truly he

himself is their God, and he himself changes the times, and removes kings, and appoints them.

"The house of Aaron hath hoped in the Lord: he is their helper and protector." "They that fear the Lord have hoped in the Lord." Excepting these, the house of Israel and Aaron, all who fear and love him, he protects them and defends them.

"The Lord hath been mindful of us, and hath blessed us." He hath been mindful, because he liberated the children of Israel. And us, because what he promised, he fulfilled in work. He sent his Son, who took on flesh, and liberated us. This I say, that God is mindful. "And he hath blessed us," that is, with every spiritual blessing.

"He hath blessed the house of Israel: he hath blessed the house of Aaron." "He hath blessed all that fear the Lord, the little with the great." That is, those higher in merit, and the lower.

"May the Lord add blessings upon you." Other preachers. At first they were few, afterwards many preachers were made in the world.

"Blessed be you by the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Blessed: that is, you saints are blessed by the Lord.

"The heaven of heaven is the Lord's: but the earth he has given to the children of men." The heaven of heaven, as the song of the psalm says, and the psalm of the song. This heaven is subject to that higher heaven, where the firmament is, and from there it has light. And the earth again is subject to that aerial heaven: from there it has rain and every necessity. According to the sense,

the higher heaven is the holy apostles, who heard the preaching from Christ himself, and received the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and from there were instructed. The heaven again is the successors of the apostles, to whom they preached, and the Lord illuminated them in their souls. "But the earth he has given to the children of men." These are those simpler ones who only believe in the incarnation, who eat milk, and are nourished through preaching, and they who were earthly, are made heavens.

"The dead shall not praise thee, O Lord." That is, sinners. For "the sinner, when he is come into the depth of evils, contemneth" (Prov. 13). "Nor any of them that go down into hell." That is, the inhabitants of hell.

"But we that live, bless the Lord." We faithful who live, that is, who have faith and works, they praise God. "From this time now and for ever." From this, that is, when we begin to understand. "Now," in this manner. "For ever," without end.

PSALM 114.

Alleluia. This psalm contains the voice of a faithful soul journeying away from God, who after long labors is received by him.

"I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer." He did not say: I will love; but, "I have loved." He did not promise to do it, but testifies that he has done it. "I have loved." Why have I loved? "Because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer." "I have loved" is of past time: "will hear" however, of the future. For he did not

say: because I loved that the Lord heard me; but, "I have loved," that the Lord "will hear" me.

"Because he hath inclined his ear unto me." Since we are small and humble, and cannot extend and exalt ourselves: therefore the Lord inclined his ear, and deigns to hear us. Finally, because we are men, and cannot become gods: God was made man, and inclined himself, according to that which is written: "He bowed the heavens also and came down" (2 Sam. 22). "And in my days I will call upon thee." Here it is asked how he may call upon him in the days, and not call upon him in the nights. And how he says in another place: "At midnight I rose to give thanks to thee" (Ps. 118), when the saints are more accustomed to pray in the night. And in another place it is said: "In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places, and bless the Lord" (Ps. 133). How does he say, "and in my days I will call"? He did not say, I called; but, "I will call," in the future. For while we are in this world, we call in the night. In the future, in the day, we call upon the Lord: therefore he said, "in my days." For to sinners it is night: but to me it is day.

"The sorrows of death have compassed me." The sorrows of death seem to me to be foul thoughts, when the soul thinks, and desires to sin, because it travails with sins, it is near to death. "And the perils of hell have found me." O we unhappy, and miserable, and to be bewailed: because sin always seeks us! But if sins always seek us, let us hasten so that they do not find us. Moreover, this is the difference between the

sorrows of death, and the perils of hell. The sorrows of death are evil thoughts: the perils of hell are evil works. Or as I might say: one is in theory, the other in work, that is, in practice. For there is sorrow and travail: but here the peril is near to death.

"I met with trouble and sorrow." He says a new thing. He does not say, I found rest: he does not say, I found satiety. If however he had said, Tribulation found me, sorrow found me, there would be no question. But now what does he say? "I met with trouble and sorrow": as if seeking, thus he found. For nothing is found unless it is sought. The saint does not seek rest, but tribulation. For he knows that "tribulation worketh patience: and patience trial; and trial hope; and hope confoundeth not" (Rom. 5). Something of this kind is also said in Jeremiah (Jer. 6 and 14). I have called upon tribulation, he says, and misery. For, he says, by your bitter word I shall laugh, that is, in this world, what else do I want but tribulation, that in the future I may have rest and happiness? And therefore, he says, I now endure bitterness, that afterwards I may deserve sweeter things. And the people of the Lord going out from Egypt came to Mara, which is interpreted "bitterness", and from Mara to Sinai, which is interpreted "temptation" (Exod. 15). And again Jeremiah: "I sat alone, because I was filled with bitterness" (Jer. 15).

"O Lord, deliver my soul." The property of the Hebrew language the Greek and Latin cannot express. For "O" in Hebrew has ANNA. Now Anna

is interpreted "I beseech", and "I pray". And what he says, is this: I beseech, O Lord, deliver my soul. For it is not the affection of one calling, but of one praying. For he is placed in immense danger. "The Lord is merciful and just, and our God sheweth mercy." Lift up your ears, sinner. The Lord is merciful, but do not be negligent: for there follows, "and just." If you are much a sinner: hear, the Lord is merciful: if you are negligent: hear, he is also just. But it seems to be as if equal, the Lord is merciful and just. For example, he is merciful in ten parts, and just in ten parts, and this I say for the sake of the simpler ones. Someone might say: If my sins be weighed, can I not have as many good things as I have evil? Now however it is said, that he is merciful and just. He is merciful to sinners, just to the good. My sins begin to weigh me down, and he overcomes in his mercy. Therefore he placed "just" once, and secondly, "merciful." He could also have spoken in the past. "And our God," he says, "sheweth mercy," that he may always show him to be merciful.

"The Lord is the keeper of little ones." If anyone is great, and exalts himself, and is proud, the Lord does not keep him. If anyone thinks himself great, the Lord does not show him mercy; but if anyone humbles himself, the Lord shows him mercy, and keeps him. Indeed he says: "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." And again: "I was humbled, and he delivered me." We understand this in two ways: "I was humbled, and he delivered me." Either I sinned, and he

saved me, or, when I was proud, and he humbled me, and saved me.

"Turn, O my soul, into thy rest." When it is said, "Turn into thy rest": therefore it had rest before, which it lost. For no one turns back, except he who proceeds there where he was before. For God created us good, and left us to our own free will, and placed us all with Adam in paradise. But because by our own will we fell from that beatitude, and came into the valley of tears, therefore the just man exhorts his soul, that it may turn back to that place from which it descended. "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest." For this place is a place of tribulation, it is a land of fighters. This place is of tears, where it is not permitted to walk secure. For wherever anyone may be, there is danger. If in the desert, there are scorpions: if in the cities, the eye of a harlot is the ruin of a man: if in the sea, robbers and pirates. All these things I speak mystically. For now there is no danger for a holy man to be killed by robbers, since the martyrs conquered by their own blood. "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest: for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee." Whither, he says, do you turn, O soul? Into paradise. Not because you are worthy, but it is the mercy of the Lord. That you should go out of paradise, was done by your own fault, but that you should return, was of the mercy of the Lord. And let us say to our soul: "Turn into thy rest." Our rest is Christ our God. If ever we should be in anguish, and thought begins to captivate us into sin, let us say: "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest."

"For he hath delivered my soul from death." He has not yet returned to paradise, and already he says he has returned into security. He said, "Turn, O my soul, into thy rest," and as if secure he says, "for he hath delivered my soul from death." How has he delivered my soul from death? For me my God suffered, for me my God was crucified, and I say: "O death, where is thy victory? O hell, where is thy sting?" (Hos. 13; 1 Cor. 15). "My eyes from tears." I have wept, that I may laugh: I have mourned, that I may rejoice for ever. He who in the present does not weep, in the future shall shed tears. For "blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5). On the contrary however it is said: Woe to you that laugh, for you shall mourn. "My feet from falling." Because my feet did not stand upon the rock, therefore "my feet were almost moved, my steps had well nigh slipped" (Ps. 72). My feet are delivered from falling. Why? Because my soul is turned into its rest.

"I will please the Lord in the land of the living." I seem, he says, to men to be just, why do I not have good works? I seem to men to be holy, why do I not have good words? These things David says: this the saints say, this the apostles speak: for the sinner does not speak these things. What does the just man speak? Because I do not have good words and works, and I seem holy, and am praised by men. But I know my own conscience. I know with what kind of thoughts my heart fluctuates: I know how great lusts come to me, and I see "another law warring against the law of my

mind, and captivating me in the law of sin" (Rom. 7): therefore I say: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Ibid.) And therefore I say: "From my secret sins cleanse me, O Lord: and from those of others spare thy servant" (Ps. 18). From those of others. It is not mine what I travail with. I do not want to think evil things, and I think them. I do not want to think evil, and as if unwilling and captive I am drawn into evil thought. But since it is not in my power, either to think or not to think those things which are evil: therefore I say, they are indeed alien things which come into my heart. But since as if a necessity is imposed upon me: therefore I say, "From my secret sins cleanse me." They are indeed alien sins, but because I receive them: I say in alien sins, Spare me thy servant: But why have I said this? Because the prophet said: "I will please the Lord." He did not say, I please, but "I will please." For from this which I do, I cannot be perfectly just. Therefore the Apostle also says: "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," and "now we see through a glass in a dark manner" (1 Cor. 13). Therefore now we have used a long discourse: because in the present world no one can be perfectly just, neither David, nor the apostles, nor any of the saints. For "no one is clean from sin, not even if his life be of one day" (Job 15). Indeed the apostles and saints dared not say, We are holy: nor did they dare to say, I please: but "I will please." He who is solicitous for the future, confesses concerning the past what he did not do. "I will please the Lord": Where shall I please?

"In the land of the living." For this region of the dead...

PSALM 115.

Alleluia. The fifth and sixth editions join this psalm with the preceding ones: but Symmachus and the Seventy interpreters divide them.

"I have believed, therefore have I spoken." In the Hebrew the hundred and fourteenth psalm, and the hundred and fifteenth, are one psalm. Therefore he said: "I have believed, therefore have I spoken." What did you believe? what you have spoken? The prior psalm ended thus: "I will please the Lord in the land of the living." Therefore the prophet says: "I have believed, therefore have I spoken." What have I believed? That "I will please the Lord in the land of the living." This I have believed, and this I have spoken. But what have I spoken? "But I have been humbled exceedingly." O great intelligence of the divine word! I believed, he says, that I shall please the Lord, that I shall be an angel; that I shall be in the heavens, and I was not proud: I am not elated, but "I have been humbled exceedingly." That I shall be in the land of the living, is of the mercy of the Lord. But I know myself, that I am earth and ashes. Therefore I say: "But I have been humbled exceedingly." Now what is earth and ashes?

"But I said in my excess: Every man is a liar." In the Hebrew it has otherwise. "I said in my excess: Every man is a lie": which is called ZECAM. "I will please the Lord in the land of the living": but I know myself, according to the condition of the

body, to be nothing. For there is no truth in our substance, but it is a shadow, and as it were a lie. I speak in the corporal substance, not in the soul. And what he says, is this: "I will please the Lord in the land of the living." But thinking on human life, and considering diverse errors, I do not find truth in this world. Since "we know in part, and we prophesy in part" (1 Cor. 13). Therefore I say: Everything that we see, everything that we understand, is a lie. How then is it a lie? He called it a lie here, as if a shadow, as if an image: just as it is said in another place: "Surely man passeth as an image" (Ps. 38). The same intelligence is said now: "every man is a liar," that is, every man is a shadow. This however we say according to the Hebrew truth. But let us speak also according to the Seventy interpreters. For someone might say, what is it to me what is held in the Hebrew? I follow the Church. "I said in my excess: Every man is a liar." Does David speak the truth, or does he lie? If it is true, "every man is a liar," and this which he says, "every man is a liar," is true, therefore he himself also lies, because he himself is a man. But if he himself also lies, therefore this which he said, "Every man is a liar," is not true. Whichever way you turn, it comes to the contrary. And since he himself is a man, therefore he himself lies; that every man is a liar. Therefore he lies in another way. You see therefore, that they are the syllogisms of the philosophers. Finally, according to this sentence is woven the syllogism of Aristotle. Finally you say: Speak to another: if you lie, and you say the truth that you lie: therefore you lie.

See how the sentence is turned to the contrary. For what does he say: O you who speak with me: if you lie, and you say the truth this very thing that you lie: therefore you lie, and in the same discourse it happens that he says the truth, and lies. Therefore it is read in the Apostle: "Beware lest any man cheat you by philosophy" (Coloss. 2).

"What shall I render to the Lord, for all the things that he hath rendered to me?" (Ps. 115:3). Since he said, "I will please the Lord in the land of the living," and I believed this very thing, on which account I have spoken, and I was humbled exceedingly, and I said, every man is a lie, every man is a shadow, every man is an image? for such great benefits, by which I will please the Lord in the land of the living, what have I worthy that I may render to him? I am earth, I am ashes: he promised me, that I will please him in the land of the living: he made me a teacher. "I believed, therefore have I spoken." What have I worthy, that I may render to him for such great benefits? Whatever I shall give to him, is his own, and I rather return it to him than give it. I have nothing else that I may render to him, unless I pour out my blood for him, unless I exist as a martyr for him. This is the only worthy retribution, to render blood for blood, so that having been liberated by the Savior, we may willingly pour out our blood for the Savior.

"I will take the chalice of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord." In the Hebrew it has it thus: "I will take the chalice of Jesus." This

very thing the Angel also interprets. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus" (Luke 1): for he shall save his people. Therefore I will take the chalice of Jesus. What is this chalice of Jesus? "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me" (Luke 22). And "can you," he says, "drink of my chalice?" And immediately it follows: "My chalice indeed you shall drink" (Matt. 20). But why did I say this? So that we may understand the chalice of passion to be martyrdom. Martyrdom is a great thing. How is it a great thing? Because he renders to the Lord what he received from the Lord. Christ suffered for him, and he suffers for his name. Since we said that a martyr has nothing else that he may render to the Lord, and the Lord counts it to him according to the quality, because he sees his servant has nothing else that he may render to him. For what is similar? God suffered for men, the Lord for the servant, the just for the sinner. What equality is there? But since the servant has nothing else that he may render to the Lord: God, as if merciful, receives martyrdom for an equal thing. Just as if some rich man had fed some poor man: it happened however that the same rich man came with his family, and he came by chance into the house of the poor man and the poor man had nothing that he might set before him, and his family, and he only said to him, enter into the house of your client, and showed his will, because he has nothing else that he may give, and the poor man did more, just as that widow who contributed two mites (Luke 21). "I will take the chalice of salvation," or of "Jesus." And this very

martyrdom, he says, is not of my virtue, but of the grace of God. Therefore I cannot drink it, unless I shall have called upon the name of the Lord. Jesus conquers, he is crowned in his martyr.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Let the Jews now answer: since they say every human body is unclean in the law. Finally if anyone should die among the Jews, whether a prophet, or any kind of saint, if anyone should touch him even a priest, he is unclean until evening (Lev. 19 and 21). This according to the letter is written in the law. Let us say to them: If the body of the dead is unclean, how is it now said: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints"? If the body of the saint dying is precious, how is it unclean? Therefore here it is said of the evangelist, it is preached of the martyr.

"O Lord, for I am thy servant: I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid." And I have already said in the hundred and fourteenth psalm, where it has: "O Lord, deliver my soul," that in the Hebrew it has: ANNA, which is interpreted "I beseech," or "I pray." And here it has it thus in the Hebrew: "I beseech, Lord: for I am thy servant, I am thy servant." It seems to be of humility what is said. It is of great dignity, and of merit to be a servant of the Lord, and not a servant of sin. Because I do not have, he says, a man as lord, because I do not have sin as lord (Rom. 6). For sin does not reign in my mortal body; therefore I am your servant. A great merit. Finally it is said of Moses: "but not so my servant Moses." And Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob are called servants of

the Lord. Therefore also the Apostle thus begins: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ."

"Thou hast broken my bonds: I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise." Truly it is of great happiness to go to the Lord: so that one may not have a defiled conscience. Whosoever of the saints dies by his own death, although he be a saint who has worked mercies, has done signs, has cast out demons, he does not go to the Lord secure: his conscience dreads when it sees the Lord. But a martyr, even if he has sinned after baptism, nevertheless washed by the second baptism of martyrdom, goes secure to the Lord. "Thou hast broken my bonds." For each one is bound by the chains of his own sins, but in my martyrdom you have broken the bonds of my sins, and from the bonds you have folded for me a crown of victory. "For where sin abounded, grace did superabound" (Rom. 5). "I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise." After martyrdom, where does he sacrifice? In the land of the living. I will sacrifice, he says, a sacrifice to you. What kind of sacrifice? A goat, or a calf? Those were Jewish, and have passed away. "I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise." This is the praise of martyrs. For just as the martyrs praise the Lord purely in the land of the living, so also the monks who day and night sing psalms to the Lord, ought to have the same purity of the martyrs, since they themselves are martyrs. For what the angels do in the heavens, this the monks do on the earths.

"I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of all his people." What are the prayers of martyrs?

What are the prayers of the saints? I will hold, he says, and I will not let thee go. I will adore, he says, the Lord, whom reading in the Gospel, and finding him crucified: in the heavens I see him reigning with the angels. "In the sight of all his people." Before the whole assembly of the saints. "In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." Of that same heavenly city, which is our mother: of which we have already been made citizens and domestics. Through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our peace. Who may deign to grant us, that the carnal war being compressed, and the peace of his charity having been bestowed upon us: and having been made sons in the heavenly Jerusalem, we may deserve to be joined to his saints according to our merits. To him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 116.

Alleluia. This psalm is held small in the number of verses, but it is great in the sacrament of the spiritual mystery. Nevertheless it holds the apostolic voice, which according to the evangelical norm is contained in the number of four verses.

"Praise the Lord, all ye nations." You who, having left the idols, have approached him through faith. But that all nations were about to praise and adore the Lord, the Magi coming from the East began this, offering gifts to the man born and to the king and to the Lord, just as Matthew the evangelist says. "And praise him together, all ye people" (Matt. 2). Those who were converted

from the Jews, which that title foretold, which Pilate placed over the Lord's cross, written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin: "King of the Jews," just as John the evangelist testifies (John 19).

"For his mercy is confirmed upon us." We have often testified that with God future things have already been done (Acts 2). Therefore then the mercy of the Lord was confirmed, when he poured out the Holy Spirit upon the believers, according to the promise which Luke the evangelist commemorates, saying: "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but stay you in the city until you be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24). "And the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever." The truth of the Lord remains, when the just in the heavenly Jerusalem are built up like living stones: or the impious are delivered to these, to the eternal fire and to the worms, which never die. Just as Mark the evangelist says: "Their fire shall not be extinguished, and their worm shall not die" (Mark 9). But let us suppliantly pray the Lord, that he may grant the efficacy of praising him, and confirm his mercy upon us: sending in us the Holy Spirit, who burning out the harmful things, may illuminate the profitable. To him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for all ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 117.

Alleluia. This psalm sometimes contains the voice of the Church founded by the vocation of Christ, or of the people slain for the name of Christ magnifying God.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." This confession does not pertain to the remission of sins; but to the praise of the deity.

"Let the house of Israel now say, that he is good: that his mercy endureth for ever." That house, which before had been blinded by crimes, now with a serene mind contemplates the glory of God.

"Let the house of Aaron now say, that he is good: that his mercy endureth for ever." Which before had sacrificed to idols: but now enticed by the goodness of the Most High, carries the priesthood of its soul.

"Let them now say that fear the Lord, that he is good: that his mercy endureth for ever." You, who before feared mute and deaf idols, now sing of the mercy of the almighty Lord with the reverence of fear.

"In tribulation I called upon the Lord: and the Lord heard me in enlargement." In the straits of tribulations he heard me in the enlargement of joys.

"The Lord is my helper: I will not fear what man can do unto me." The devil certainly is placed as both man and male often in the Scriptures.

"The Lord is my helper: and I will despise my enemies." Either the heretics, or the Jews.

"It is good to hope in the Lord, rather than to hope in man." In God alone we ought to hope, and not in man, whose salvation is vain (Ps. 59). For

another prophet says: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man" (Jer. 17).

"It is good to trust in the Lord." Who bestows eternal life. "Rather than to trust in princes." Whose power glides away with this world.

"All nations compassed me about: and in the name of the Lord, I have been revenged on them." The nations of tribulations, to be sure, were walling me in, but in the name of the Lord I resisted them.

"Surrounding they compassed me about: and in the name of the Lord, I have been revenged on them." By whose standard I was fortified.

"They compassed me about like bees." Like bees a honeycomb, so that they might take away the sweetness which Christ had infused in me. "And they burned like fire among thorns." They themselves burned in their envy while they were not able to burn me out. "And in the name of the Lord, I have been revenged on them." When those things which they had brought upon me, were poured back upon them.

"Being pushed I was overturned that I might fall: but the Lord supported me." Who trusting in him, sought him alone as helper.

"The Lord is my strength and my praise: and he is become my salvation." I will sing to him, I will call him my virtue: in him all my praise consists, who in this death of tribulation is become my salvation for me.

"The voice of rejoicing and of salvation, in the tabernacles of the just." In the hearts, to be sure, of the martyrs and of the rest of the saints, who

have been made the tabernacle of God through the Holy Spirit dwelling in them.

"The right hand of the Lord hath wrought strength." That he might grant me victory in my passion. "The right hand of the Lord hath exalted me." From the humility of diverse passions, by his virtue I was elevated.

"I shall not die, but live: and shall declare the works of the Lord." The people of the martyrs speaks these things: whose victories are sung together in all the Churches.

"The Lord chastising hath chastised me: but he hath not delivered me over to death." The Lord chastises us for emendation in many stripes, so that he may prove and keep us from perpetual death.

"Open to me the gates of justice: and entering into them I will give praise to the Lord." Blessed is that people of the Church or of the martyrs, to whom the gates of justice are opened, that is, of eternal life, in which it may continually confess and praise God.

"This is the gate of the Lord, the just shall enter into it." The Lord Jesus Christ is the gate of the Father, through which one enters to him, the Lord himself saying thus: "I am the door, if any man enter by me, he shall be saved." And again: "No man cometh to the Father, but by me" (John 10). Through this gate therefore one comes to the Father, but no one enters into it unless he be just.

"I will give thanks to thee, for thou hast heard me: and art become my salvation." In which you

have either healed the wounds of sin, or against the wicked enemy, you are become my salvation.

"The stone which the builders rejected." Our Lord Jesus Christ, the true stone found in the letter of the law, was rejected by the Jewish builders, that is, those clinging to the letter. "The same is become the head of the corner." Joining two walls into the head: one of the circumcision, the other of the uncircumcision, in one new man, that is, in himself.

"By the Lord," the Father. "It hath been done." Our Mediator and his. "And it is wonderful in our eyes." Not in the eyes of those, who rejected him; but in ours, who have received him by believing.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice in it." This cornerstone is itself the day of salvation, in which we have either risen from death, or the sorrow of sin having been laid aside, we rejoice in newness of life.

"O Lord, save me." Coming to thee. "O Lord, give good prosperity." Make that journey prosperous, by which I may return to thee after many labors. "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Christ the Lord in the name of the Father, just as he himself says: "I am come in the name of my Father" (John 5), etc.

"We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord." The saints from the heavenly Jerusalem bless the little ones of the Church. "The Lord is God and he hath shone upon us." For by his resurrection he hath illuminated our darkness.

"Appoint a solemn day." Exhibit yourselves as temples and altars to God, in which you may

celebrate sacred solemnities. "In the thickets." In many virtues: in which either the Lord himself, or his angels are frequented. "Even to the horn of the altar." Even to the Lord himself, who is the strength of the soul, which you have made his altar.

"Thou art my God, and I will give thanks to thee." Remission having been accepted through the confession of sins, now I will confess your praises, "Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee." Because by thee I have been lifted up from humility.

"I will give thanks to thee, for thou hast heard me." That you might associate me with your saints in the heavenly Jerusalem.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." In these words the psalm takes its end, from which it took its beginning: to wit that from the beginning of our belief even to the end having confidence in our God, we may perseveringly confess his praises, according to that word of the Lord: "He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved" (Matt. 10 and 24). Who may deign to bestow upon us confidence in hoping in him: to him be glory with the eternal Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 118.

Alleluia. This psalm contains in itself a great mystery. Concerning which we have spoken somewhat in the prologue, but since there are contained in it law, commandments, justifica-

tions, testimonies, judgments and ways: it is necessary to discern what the difference is between them. The law therefore, which was given through Moses, ought to be understood spiritually in Christ: because the Apostle although he calls it holy, nevertheless describes it to be a shadow of things to come (Heb. 10). The commandments are those, in which the keeping of the Lord's precepts is assigned, according to that: "Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery," and the rest. Justifications are those, by which God through his love and that of neighbor, commands the tares of hatred to be plucked away from the heart of men. Testimonies are those, in whose presence the order of holy observations is committed to us. Just as Moses invokes heaven and earth as witnesses (Deut. 4). And Paul to Timothy: "I testify to thee," he says, "before the living God, and in the sight of his elect angels," and the rest (2 Tim. 4). Judgments however are when he shall either honor the just with splendid merits, or damn the transgressors with eternal punishments. For the ways are the apostles and prophets, through whom one comes to the true way, which is Christ. Thus therefore the psalm begins, "Blessed are the undefiled": which on account of the prolixity of the sayings we have decreed to explain in three homilies, the Lord granting it. All this psalm is written according to the order of letters, so that from one letter eight verses begin, and again from the following eight others are completed. And this is woven similarly even to the end. Josephus however reports in the

books of the *Antiquities* that this psalm, and the canticle of Deuteronomy, were composed in one meter, and he thinks the elegiac meter can be detected in both: that to wit the prior verse consists of six feet, the lower one less by one being finished in a pentameter.

ALEPH.

"Blessed are the undefiled in the way." This to be sure in the way of the world, through which we step. "Blessed are the undefiled." Misery is opposed against beatitude. Blessed is called immortal in our language, or laudable or glorious. Those are blessed, who deserve to enter into eternal life; and those are miserable, who descend into hell. How does he say, "undefiled": because a man cannot be without small sins: just as Saint John said: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1). And the prophet says: "He that walketh without blemish, and worketh justice" (Ps. 14). Without blemish, that is, without mortal crimes. But nevertheless he makes a discretion between blemish, and blemish, that is, because even if we cannot be without small ones: nevertheless we ought not to fall into greater ones. "In the way: who walk in the law of the Lord." In the way, in Christ, as he himself says: "I am the way and the truth" (John 14). "Who walk in the law of the Lord," that is, in his commandments. "Who walk," that is, persevere. "Who walk in the law of the Lord." Who, the concupiscences of the flesh

having been tamed, also trample the honor of earthly glory.

"Blessed are they that search his testimonies." So that they may understand when they have sinned, that they have trespassed before witnesses. "They seek him with their whole heart." And not lightly, nor sluggishly.

"For they that work iniquity have not walked in his ways." For the ways are the apostles and prophets, through whom one comes to that way, which said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life," as we have already said. For in this way the impious do not step: because they follow the way of Satan.

"Thou hast commanded thy commandments, O Lord, to be kept most diligently." Not with a lukewarm heart, nor with a dissolved mind, but strongly and attentively he teaches us to keep his commandments.

"O! that my ways may be directed to keep thy justifications." For unless our ways be directed by the Lord himself: we shall be weaker to keep his justifications, on account of the fragility of the flesh.

"Then shall I not be confounded, when I shall look into all thy commandments." To omit some things, and to observe others is not fitting: but it behooves to keep all equally, lest we be confounded in the future judgment.

"I will praise thee, O Lord, with uprightness of heart." Because it is not perverse in the part of heretics. "In that I have learned the judgments

of thy justice." So that I might praise thee with a directed heart.

"I will keep thy justifications: O! do not thou utterly forsake me." And if for a time we are forsaken, let us not however be utterly forsaken so that we perish.

BETH. "By what doth a younger man correct his way? by observing thy words." Here the prophet not only corrects a long-lived age: but also teaches youth to be instructed, and so to keep the divine words, that even if an old fault has been bewailed: now let no thought consent to any trespassing. "With my whole heart have I sought after thee: let me not stray from thy commandments." Not in part, but from his whole heart he confesses that he has sought God, lest he be cast away from his commandments: because he casts away no one who came to make sinners safe. "Thy words have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against thee." In the secret of the heart he stores up the sacraments of God: when he avoids a heretic after two rebukes (Titus 3), when he does not expose the holy thing of God to dogs. Or when he does not cast his pearls before swine (Matt. 7). He does nothing negligently in those things which are of God: because he knows it is a curse to be he who shall do the work of the Lord negligently (Jer. 48). "Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy justifications." Because I know the justifications of vain glory, which the Pharisee brought forth in the temple, did not proceed from thee (Luke 18). "With my lips I have pronounced all the judgments of thy mouth."

The Apostle calls the judgments of God incomprehensible (Rom. 11). Therefore this man what things he heard, and learned from the prophets: those only he announced with his lips, but to believers, and not to the unworthy. "I have been delighted in the way of thy testimonies, as in all riches." For just as the earthly man is delighted in fields and vineyards: so this man is made joyful in the testimonies of God from a pure conscience, who, the world having been despised, has been enriched by God.

"I will be exercised in thy commandments, and I will consider thy ways." Exercise is the assiduity of work. And this man: unless he had been exercised in the commandments of God, he could not consider his ways; that is, the apostolic and prophetic doctrines.

"I will meditate on thy justifications, I will not forget thy words." I meditate on these things, I am exercised in these, so that not delivering those to oblivion, I may be able to fulfill them entirely and perfectly.

GIMEL.

"Give bounteously to thy servant, quicken thou me: and I shall keep thy words." He prays constantly that it be rendered to him on account of that which he serves God. And because he knows that he is not a servant of sin: he opts to live in him, who is life: and to keep his words while the present life revolves.

"Open thou eyes, and I will consider the wondrous things of thy law." Wipe away from the

eyes of the heart the veil of the letter, and make me contemplate the wondrous things of thy law with a spiritual sense. For in thy light we shall see light (Ps 35).

"I am a sojourner in the earth, hide not thy commandments from me." So also the Apostle says: "While we are in the body, we are sojourners from the Lord" (2 Cor 5). The prophet says that he, placed in the body, is a sojourner from the heavenly frequentation: because he knows these commandments are contained in the thrones and dominations: which he implores that they be not hidden from himself.

"My soul hath coveted to long for thy justifications, at all times." So that whether I eat, or whether I drink, or whether I do anything else: I may always long for them, meditate on them, apprehend them.

"Thou hast rebuked the proud." So that thou mightest lead them back to the holy humility, which thou hast taught. "Thou hast rebuked the proud." So he did to the devil, and to Adam, who raised themselves up in pride. Or now through thy teachers thou rebukest the adversary powers, the members of the devil, heretics or evil men, who act against the commandments of God. Thou hast rebuked them through thy saints. "Cursed are they that decline from thy commandments." Cursed are those who decline from the commandments of God, but then the evil ones shall be about to receive the malediction fully, that is, the heretics or the rest: since he shall be about to say: "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting

fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25).

"Remove from me reproach." Of sin and judgment. "And contempt." Of mortal judgment. "Because I have sought out thy testimonies." Not with idleness and sleepiness, but strenuously and vigilantly.

"For princes sat, and spoke against me: but thy servant was exercised in thy justifications." What the prophet speaks in himself in this verse, he sees as future in the apostles and the rest of the martyrs, who suffered many things before kings and presidents, the Lord also foretelling this (Matt 10, Mark 13, and Luke 21). Who although they were affected by diverse punishments, nevertheless even unto the section of their necks they always exercised themselves in the justifications of God.

"For thy testimonies also are my meditation." In these pressures to be sure. "And thy justifications my counsel." Because they promise eternal life.

DALETH.

"My soul hath cleaved to the pavement: quicken thou me according to thy word." I understand the soul joined to the mortal body: therefore lest the trespass prevail, I ask to be quickened by thee: knowing that the concupiscence of the flesh worketh death.

"I have declared my ways to thee." How does he say, "I have declared to thee," when elsewhere he says, "declare thou to me." Does God not know

or is he ignorant of anything: since he himself is present everywhere, and foresees all things, and is within? But that which he says, "I have declared my ways to thee," this is as if he should say: "Tell thou first thy iniquities" (Isa 43), that is, thy works: what thou hast done against the commandment of God: declare it through confession or penance, so that thou mayest be justified in the words of God.

"I have declared my ways, and thou hast heard me: teach me thy justifications." I have confessed the ways of my sin, and thou hast remitted: now indulge doctrine, because I may be instructed in thy justifications.

"Instruct me in the way of thy justifications." I shall grasp spiritually the justifications which the letter of the law brought forth. "And I shall be exercised in thy wondrous works." In the apostles and other ecclesiastical doctrines, which are figured in it.

"My soul hath slumbered." In the station of this mortal habitation. "Through weariness." Of corporeal infirmity. "Confirm thou me in thy words." So that the sleep of sin having been taken away, I may vigilantly be instant in these.

"Remove from me the way of iniquity." That desire through which one comes to sinning. "And have mercy on me in thy law." For with thee the law is instituted, so that thou mayest always have mercy.

"I have chosen the way of truth." Christ the Son of God, whom foreseeing that he would come into the world I hear saying: "I am the way,

the truth, and the life" (John 14). "I have not forgotten thy judgments." Those judgments, which bringing forth in the Gospels, he says: "This is the judgment, that every one that believeth in the Son of man, may have eternal life" (John 3).

"I have cleaved to thy testimonies, O Lord, put me not to shame." And because cleaving to these, I have deserved the indulgence of previous crimes: I beseech that thou mayest not suffer me to be put to shame from a repetition of sin.

"I have run the way of thy commandments." When I suffered many things on account of the word for the hope of future beatitude. "When thou didst enlarge my heart." When in the amplitude of the holy Scriptures thou didst insinuate to me the mystery of the blessed Trinity. Or thou didst enlarge my heart: that is, in the breadth of charity, in hope, in faith.

HE.

"Set before me for a law, O Lord, the way of thy justifications." The prophet speaks in the person of the Church, "Set before me for a law," that is, thyself: because Christ is the law. As if he should say: Set thyself before me, that is, give. "And I shall always seek after it." The law itself, that is, the commandments, or thyself.

"Give me understanding, and I will search thy law." That is, thy commandments. "Understanding," so that I may not be "as the horse and the mule, who have no understanding" (Ps. 31). The Church asks, that she may understand the discretion between good and evil, between life and death, between the letter and the sense. That

I may understand and preach and fulfill in work. "And I will keep it with my whole heart." That is, from whole love.

"Guide me in the path of thy commandments." A path is smaller than a way, that is, a strait and narrow way, that is, the higher commandments which lead to life: because "wide and broad is that which leadeth to death" (Matt. 7). "For this same I have desired." The voice of the Church. As if the Church should say: I have not coveted anything else, nor have I been delighted, except in thy commandments. Therefore I ask that thou mayest guide me into thy commandments, that is, make me to understand.

"Incline my heart unto thy testimonies." The voice of the Church: The proud do not incline the heart in the testimonies of God, because they hope that they are higher, and understand better concerning the precepts of God, than the Church. "And not to avarice." That is, vanity: because those proud ones do not incline the heart in the testimonies of God; but in vanity or avarice. Incline my heart, the Church says, that is, in humility, like that: "Learn of me because I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11).

"Turn away my eyes that they may not behold vanity." Turn away my eyes, that is, my senses, that they may not behold vanity, that is, defection. As if he should say: So that in this vanity, which is defection, I may not have my eyes, that is, my senses fixed. But what, he says? "Quicken me in thy way." This is, in thyself. Or in thy commandments quicken me, in the soul.

"Establish to thy servant." To the Christian people. "Thy word." Thy commandments. "In thy fear." That is, holy fear.

"Cut off my reproach which I have suspected." The Church says, that is, take away, cut, sever, the reproach which I have suspected from others. That reproach which the gentiles were saying: Thou art a worshipper of the crucified: thou art an adorer of one who died badly: thou art a venerator of one who was slain, and they were saying: Behold our God, whom you say is handmade. Where is your God? Let him come. "Which I have suspected." What were they suspecting? That the Church observed a fallacy, since it adored Christ. "Because thy judgments are pleasant." That is, clear: joyful to those who love and desire, that is, not to the unwilling, but to the willing they are clear and pleasant.

"Behold I have coveted thy commandments: in thy equity quicken thou me." It is one gift, O Lord, of thy mercy, that keeping the holy words, we may be quickened in thy equity, that is, when we confess thee equal to the Father and to the Holy Spirit.

VAV.

"And let thy mercy also come upon me, O Lord." So that thou mayest remit trespasses. "And thy salvation according to thy word." This is the salvation, the word which thou didst promise through another prophet, saying: "I will not the death of a sinner, but that he be converted and live" (Ezek. 33). This is, that thou mayest come to redeem us: according to what thou didst promise

to Abraham, as it was said: "In thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22).

"And I will answer a word to them that reproach me." The Church says. As if she should say: If thou comest to redeem us, I will answer to those who reproach me concerning my faith how I believe, and they say: "Where is your God?" Behold our God, or their idols which they worship. "Because I have hoped in thy words." Constantly I will answer to these who call my hope vain which I have in thee, because their hope is empty.

"And take not thou the word of truth utterly out of my mouth." I shall not consent to the sinning, lest I hear: "Why dost thou declare my justices" (Ps. 49)? "For in thy judgments I have hoped exceedingly." Hoping in these, I have always brought them forth in the Churches of the peoples.

"And I will keep thy law always, for ever and ever." In "always," he shows all time of the present life. In "for ever and ever," he shows to be sure the future age.

"And I walked at large." For I have been enlarged in the keeping of thy law. "Because I have sought after thy commandments." Diligently searching them out. To this end I sought them out, that I might believe and understand.

"And I spoke of thy testimonies in the sight of kings, and I was not confounded." Knowing that he who confesses thee in the world, thou wilt confess him before the Father and his angels (Matt. 10). We to be sure if we stand before kings and presidents on account of the Lord, as the

martyrs did, whether we announce the word of truth, or whether we fight for justice: we ought not to be confounded, but constant.

"And I meditated on thy commandments which I loved." So that the work of meditation might perfect the fruit of love.

"And I lifted up my hands." That is, I elevated. "To thy commandments which I loved." Clean from sin, and alien from the effusion of innocent blood. "And I was exercised in thy justifications." So that what things were indicated in these through the letter, I may be able to perceive spiritually.

ZAIN.

"Be thou mindful of thy word to thy servant, O Lord: in which thou hast given me hope." Deign to make me such a one, that I may be held fit who, mindful of thy word, among the pressures of this age, through the hope of eternal goods, may deserve to be comforted, as follows:

"This hath comforted me in my humiliation: because thy word will quicken me." Since to one placed in straits, it supplies the food of eternal life.

"The proud did iniquitously altogether." Who, the humility of divine precept having been left behind, were extolled in the vanities of this age. "But I declined not from thy law." Because as they were approaching damnation, I was raised up in it.

"I remembered thy judgments." I did nothing unworthy in this life, fearing lest I be condemned

by these. "Of old, O Lord." From the beginning of this life. "And I was comforted." Knowing myself safe from the judgment of death. "I was comforted," the Church herself says: because God came to redeem his members. As if she should say: From the beginning I knew, and I understood through the Holy Spirit, that thou wert about to come in the flesh.

"Fainting hath taken hold of me, because of the sinners that forsake thy law." The voice of the Church. It shows the affection of pity, so that she grieves over the prevarications of the iniquitous, according to that of the Apostle: "At the grief of one member all the members suffer together" (1 Cor. 12). And therefore she wills not anyone to sin, but desires all to acknowledge the way of truth (1 Tim. 2).

"Thy justifications were my songs: in the place of my pilgrimage." The prophet teaches us, in the pilgrimage of this world, to sing incessantly spiritual songs once received by the ear, because "while we are in the body, we are sojourners from the Lord" (2 Cor. 5).

"I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law." For it behooves human fragility, that although always, nevertheless more intensely in the night time it should make memory of the Lord's name: when it is either pressed by the recollection of riches, or is tormented by the fire of concupiscence, and especially to pray for this, that if it has begun to keep the law of God, it may not be pulled away from the same in anything.

"This hath been done to me: because I have sought after thy justifications." This law has been made a consolation to me, and not a scandal: so that I might be able more diligently to search thy justifications. We also suppliantly beseech the Lord: that he may insinuate his justifications to us, open ways, declare wondrous works, and if any shadow of the law should hide anything, that he may reveal it, the Paraclete illuminating, so that if we do not attain the palm of beatitude, at least we may follow after pardon for our trespasses. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, honor, and power, and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The discretion of justifications, commandments, laws, and ways we have already described in the previous homily (homil. 2): now let us return to the chapter of the eighth letter.

HETH.

"Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep thy law." He who leaves the pride of the world, the heights of honors, and the boastfulness of riches, and places his treasures in heaven, of this man God is made the portion: just as Peter says to the paralytic: "Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, this I give to thee: In the name of Jesus Christ arise, and walk" (Acts 3). O great treasure, O egregious heap of happy riches, that he who keeps the law of God, and whose portion is God, should cure the morbid things of infirmities!

"I entreated thy face with my whole heart." Well the prophet with his whole heart entreats the face of God, who knows that he has a clean heart. For "blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5). "Have mercy on me according to thy word." Through which thou didst promise that thou wouldst not overwhelm the sinner in death, but wouldst comfort him with mercy.

"I thought on my ways." That they were right. "And turned my feet unto thy testimonies." My senses into thy precepts: so that I ought to observe, and fulfill in work.

"I am ready, and am not troubled." "I am ready," to preach: "I am not troubled," to sustain tribulation on account of Christ. "That I may keep thy commandments." The iniquitous darts of those reproaching have not troubled me.

"The cords of sinners have ensnared me: but I have not forgotten thy law." The prophet says that he is hedged about by the reproaches of the sinning, yet he says that he is not unmindful of the divine law: knowing that "we must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14).

"At midnight I rose to give praise to thee, for the judgments of thy justice." For he knows that at the time of midnight he can either suffer dangers, or follow after rewards, because just as at midnight the angel struck Egypt (Exod. 11), so at midnight the wise virgins are introduced to the bridegroom (Matt. 25). And there are many other testimonies concerning midnight. Therefore here

at that time he rises with judgment and justice, so that he may attain what he would ask.

"I am a partaker with all them that fear thee, and keep thy commandments." David was a partaker in the kingdom with all men who sustained tribulation; and now the Church is a partaker with those who fear God with holy fear, and fulfill his commandments. She is a partaker with them in faith, hope, charity.

"The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord." When he "maketh his sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust" (Matt. 5). "Teach me thy justifications." Lest I become like those who "having the key of knowledge, neither enter in themselves, nor suffer others to enter in" (Luke 11). He did mercy, when he came to redeem us. Thence the earth is full, that is, the holy Church. "Teach me thy justifications." This is, thy commandments, so that I may understand them and preach them, and fulfill them in work.

TETH.

"Thou hast done goodness with thy servant, O Lord." The voice of the prophet in the person of the Church. "Thou hast done goodness," when thou didst come in the flesh, and didst redeem us; when thou didst fulfill that which thou didst promise to Abraham and the rest of the fathers, as that: "and in thy seed shall all the nations be blessed" (Gen. 22). "With thy servant": the Christian people. "According to thy word." The Son is the Word of the Father. "According to thy

word"; so that thou mightest not punish me in anger when I sin, but mightest comfort me with mercy. "Teach me goodness and discipline and knowledge." The voice of the Church. He ought to have said knowledge first, and afterwards discipline; because a man cannot be good unless he has knowledge. What kind of goodness does he say he does? Because he gives rain upon the earth, and makes his sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and rains upon the just and the unjust. "And discipline," that is, so that he ought first to measure in himself, and perform discipline, and afterwards in others. "And knowledge," that is, so that he may have discretion, and know how to discern between good and evil, between life and death, between body and soul. "Teach me," so that I may understand to fulfill thy commandments in work. "Because I have believed in thy commandments." Therefore teach me, because I have believed in thy precepts; that is, I have fulfilled them in work.

Before I was humbled I offended, therefore I have kept thy word. When sin precedes, we are humbled, and through this we are instructed, so that we may keep the divine words.

Thou art good, O Lord. Because no one is good but thou alone. "And in goodness teach me thy justifications." In that they are good, just as thou also art good.

The iniquity of the proud hath been multiplied over me; but I with my whole heart will search thy commandments. For when the divine scourges rebuked me, and the proud of the world

provoked me, saying: Where is thy help, where is thy hope, where is the goodness of thy God; I searched thy commandments more vehemently, seeking consolation in them.

Their heart is curdled like milk. Although milk by its nature is sweet, yet when corrupted by a fault it is curdled and becomes sour. So also the proud, that is, heretics, first had a sweet heart for the holy Scriptures; but perverting them in the drunkenness of their own sense, they have become curdled and most bitter. "But I have meditated on thy law." Through which thou humblest the proud, through which thou grantest grace to the humble.

It is good for me that thou hast humbled me; that I may learn thy justifications. The voice of the Church says: It was good for me that thou didst humble me; because through this I learned to fulfill thy commandments in operation. "It is good for me that thou hast humbled me, that I may learn thy justifications." Because they are learned not in pride, but in humility.

The law of thy mouth is good for me, above thousands of gold and silver. The law of the mouth of God is Christ; who came "not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it" (Matt. 5). Whom the prophet, foreseeing, desires above all treasures; because he commands not only that friends be loved, but also that enemies be forgiven.

IOD.

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me, give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments. For it is a great thing that a man

should understand himself to have been made and fashioned by the hand of God, and to have been composed according to his image. Which if he shall have known, he ought to ask for knowledge, so that he may understand and keep his commandments; lest receding from them, he who was the image of God should begin to be the image of the devil.

They that fear thee shall see me, and shall be glad. The voice of the Church, that is, so that those who fear God may see their own understanding, and have joy: because the Church, when she sees others observing the commandments of God, has great joy. Afterwards they shall thus rejoice in turn, both here and in the future. "Because I have over-hoped in thy word," that is, I have hope in Christ.

I knew, O Lord, that thy judgments are equity: and in thy truth. Thy equity is, that thou shouldst rebuke sinners for their trespasses: Truth, that thou shouldst humble the proud from their prosperities. Therefore because thou hast humbled me, so that thou mightest correct:

"Let thy mercy be done now, that it may comfort me." The voice of the prophet in the person of the Church. The prophet foresaw through the Holy Spirit that Christ would come in the flesh, who was mercy, so that he might redeem us according to what he had promised, and might comfort me. He fulfilled what he promised; because he says in another place: "Many are the mercies with God, and our sins are many" (Ps. 143). Thence he says: "Thy mercies are many."

"According to thy word to thy servant." According to what thou didst promise, I come to redeem thy servant, the Christian people, who serve thee specially. "Let thy mercy be done now that it may comfort me, according to thy word to thy servant." For thou didst promise, that after the humility of affliction, thou wouldst grant the protection of consolation.

"Let thy mercies come to me and I shall live, because thy law is my meditation." Now I meditate on thy law, but I cannot come into eternal life, unless I shall have been changed therein by thee.

"Let the proud be confounded, because they have unjustly done iniquity in me." Let them be confounded in their sins, and let them know that they have acted iniquitously against the just. "But I will be exercised in thy commandments." Showing them what things it may behoove them to do. "But I." The voice of the Church. "I will be exercised in thy commandments." While those aforementioned have thus done: I there exercise myself in thy precepts.

"Let them that fear thee turn to me, and they that have known thy testimonies." This is so that, I teaching, they knowing them may become converted to thee.

"Let my heart be made immaculate in thy justifications, that I may not be confounded." And because from the heart proceeds a multitude of vices, as the Lord says in the Gospel: therefore the prophet asks that he be made immaculate in the justifications of God, so that the sentence of

damnation in judgment may not confound him (Ps. 118). So also we ought to suppress various thoughts, lest they prepare confusion for us when we shall have desired to fulfill them. "Let my heart be made immaculate." Here heart is placed for the soul. As if he should say: Let my soul be without mortal sin. "In thy justifications that I may not be confounded." This is, so that I may not have eternal confusion.

CAPH.

"My soul hath fainted in thy salvation." In Jesus, because he came to save his people from their sins. "And I have over-hoped in thy word." That in the beginning God was with God, so that he might come to human redemption.

"My eyes have fainted into thy word; saying, When wilt thou comfort me?" Attend. I receive this consolation that thou comest from the heavens in the fainting of spiritual eyes.

"For I have become like a bottle in the frost: thy justifications I have not forgotten." The Lord in the Gospel said: "No one puts new wine into old bottles" (Mark 2): signifying that the human breast filled with long-standing vices cannot contain the commandments of God. Therefore we also, if we grow warm with natural heat so that we sin: when we receive the commandments of God, this heat is suddenly extinguished, and we shall be like a bottle in the frost, the heat of sin having been cooled in us.

"How many are the days of thy servant; when wilt thou execute judgment on them that perse-

cute me?" Few are the days of this life. Thou, O Lord, crush in thy judgment Satan with his satellites, swiftly under our feet, who persecute us.

"The iniquitous have told me fables, but not as thy law." He heard many things from heretics and nations which do not agree with the commandments of God.

"All his commandments are truth." For they are encompassed by no falsehood. "The iniquitous have persecuted me, help me." I sustain heavy wars against principalities and powers, and therefore I do not ask that this contest be removed; but that I be helped, knowing that no one can be crowned except him who shall have lawfully contended.

"They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I did not forsake thy commandments." Corporal vices would have greatly humbled me on earth: unless I had kept the divine commandments.

"According to thy mercy quicken me." Into eternal life; because I no longer live for myself: but Christ lives in me. "That I may keep the testimonies of thy mouth." Either those which thou didst command in the Law; or those which thou didst bring forth in the Gospels.

LAMED.

"For ever, O Lord, thy word remaineth in heaven." In that heavenly man who, having left the earthly image, has been made heaven.

"Thy truth is unto generation and generation." One generation is of the Law and the

prophets: the other of the Gospels. In these generations the truth of God remains: because they brought forth nothing of falsehood. "Thou hast founded the earth, and it remaineth." Not that which passes away with the heaven; but that in which the word of God is multiplied.

"By thy ordinance the day persevereth; because all things serve thee." He who, having left the darkness of the world, lives in the light of God; he perseveres in God, who is the true day. And all things which he performs by his ordinance, he deputes to him to be served.

"Unless thy law were my meditation, then perhaps I should have perished in my humility." He gives an example, so that even if we be humbled in various persecutions, we may meditate on the law, lest we perish.

"For ever I will not forget thy justifications: because in them thou hast quickened me." Transferring me after many contests into eternal life.

"I am thine, save me, O Lord, because I have sought after thy justifications." I am thy servant, and thou art my God. From thee I ask to be saved, because my belly is not my God, nor am I given to vain glory, but to thy justifications.

"Sinners have waited for me, that they might destroy me, but I have understood thy testimonies." Adverse powers impugn me with a long contest, but I, understanding thy testimonies, have received consolation from them.

"I have seen the end of all consummation." Christ surely, who is the end of the Law, and the consummation of the prophets. The prophet

foresaw in spirit that he had consummated all things which were written of him in the Law, and the prophets, and the psalms. Since he himself in his passion said: "It is consummated" (John 19). "Thy commandment is exceeding broad." For he foresaw that time as spacious from that in which he commanded through the Law and the prophets that he would come, until he should proceed through the Gospel.

MEM.

"How have I loved thy law, O Lord: all the day it is my meditation." In this it appears that he loves the Law of God: because he is known to meditate on it every time of his life. But he said "day," for the reason that it may shine from the splendor of divine light.

"Through thy commandment thou hast made me wiser than my enemies, because it is for ever to me." The enemies of the prophet are the Jews, who do not understand spiritually. Than whom the prophet says he is wiser, because in these commandments which he has kept for ever, he foresaw the Lord who was to come.

"I have understood more than all my teachers, because thy testimonies are my meditation." Then the scribes and Pharisees were teaching, having the key of knowledge: but he understands more than these, who saw that the mystery of ointments, and of feasts and holocausts, was to be fulfilled in the Gospels.

"I have understood more than the ancients: because I have sought thy commandments." More than the priests and princes I seek all the

commandments of the law: because in the New Testament I wait for that to be done which I see figured in the Old.

"I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep thy words." From the precipice of criminal mire I have always inhibited myself, so that I might more easily be able to keep the word of the commandments.

"I have not declined from thy judgments, because thou hast set a law for me." I received the law of the commandments from thee, so that if I should decline from these judgments: I should be condemned in the eternal judgment.

"How sweet are thy words to my throat! above honey and the honeycomb to my mouth." Honey having passed, or other food, through the palate, has no further savor: but thy words, O Lord, whether in the mouth, or in the throat, or in the secret of the hidden breast, are always sweet to those meditating on them. For just as visible honey keeps away bitterness from our throats: so by the Lord's words the bitternesses of our crimes are mitigated.

"By thy commandments I have understood, therefore I have hated every way of iniquity." Drawing the aforementioned sweetness of the commandments, I hated the way of iniquitous bitterness.

NUN.

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet, O Lord." If in the nights of this world the light of the word of God should shine in us: our feet do not fall into the snares of cords and the precipices of pits,

which the hand of diabolical art prepares for our stumbling-blocks. "And a light to my paths." So that with this light going before, while we walk the paths of this life: we may be led into that which is the true way. "I have sworn and have determined to keep the judgments of thy justice." First he swore, so that he may not be dissolved from this custody. Then he determined, so that he may confirm what he had sworn, knowing that nothing in the judgments of God is published except through justice.

"I have been humbled exceedingly, O Lord: quicken me according to thy word." He learned the humility which Christ taught: who is "meek and humble of heart." Therefore now he entreats, that just as he after the humility of the servile form was exalted into the glory of God the Father, so also this man may be transferred from this corporal humility into eternal life.

"Make the free-will offerings of my mouth well-pleasing, O Lord." The voice of the Church. As if she should say: Let my vows which I offer to thee be well-pleasing to thee, that is, acceptable and delectable. "And teach me thy judgments." This is, thy commandments, so that I may understand and fulfill them.

"My soul is in thy hands." This is, in thy senses: because I am ready that I may work. And in another place he says: "My soul is in my hands." How does he say "in my hands"? In that I am ready to sustain martyrdom on account of Christ.

"Sinners have laid snares for me." See that the snare is placed beside the way, and if thou

shalt have gone out from the way, thou shalt fall into the snare. What are these snares, except the gins of the devil, or the suggestions of the demon? Vices also and sins can be understood. "And I have not erred from thy commandments." The voice of the Church. I have not erred from thy commandments, but have kept them in operation.

"I have acquired thy testimonies by inheritance." Thy testimonies and thy precepts, this is my inheritance for ever, both here and in the future. "Because they are the exultation of my heart." Thy testimonies, this is exultation: because the Church delights and exults in the commandments of God.

"I have inclined my heart." I was not proud, but humble, and therefore "I have inclined my heart," that I might understand thee: because the proud do not incline their heart to humility. To what have I inclined my heart? says the Church. "To perform thy justifications." This is, thy commandments. "For ever on account of the retribution." Of eternal life, so that I may deserve to perceive it.

SAMECH.

"I have hated the iniquitous, and have loved thy law." The voice of the prophet in the person of the Church. How does he say, "I have hated the iniquitous," while the Lord says: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you" (Luke 6)? And elsewhere: "Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. 5). And here how does

he say, "I have hated"? But according to the law of the Old Testament he can defend himself, just as it was said: "Thou shalt love thy friend, and shalt hate thy enemy" (Levit. 19). But now it is to be understood: "I have hated": the vices and sins. "And I have loved": that is, that nature, because it is not lawful to hate a creature of God, but sin. Just as elsewhere he says: "With a perfect hatred I hated them" (Psal. 118). And hatred not perfect. Why? Because "he who hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3). "And I have loved thy law," that is, thy law which thou didst command, I loved, and fulfilled in work.

"Thou art my helper and upholder." "Helper," in the present: "upholder," in the future. "And in thy word I hope." This is, in Christ, because the Son is the Word of the Father.

"Decline from me, ye malignant, and I will search the commandments of my God." The voice of the prophet in the person of the Church: wishing he says: "Decline from me, ye malignant." If thou shalt wish to perform penance perfectly: thou oughtest to segregate thyself from the consortium of sinners or of all evil men, and flee into another place, so that thou mayest be able to perform it perfectly. "Decline from me, ye malignant": these are demons, vices, and sins: or adverse powers. Because while they themselves prepare gins for thee, and most wicked suggestions: thou canst not search the commandments of God, so that thou mayest understand them well. But if thou shalt wish to perform penance:

thou oughtest to segregate thyself from their consortium.

"Uphold me according to thy word." David says: Uphold me from the flesh according to what thou didst promise, that from my flesh thou mightest take flesh and redeem me. "And I shall live." This is in the soul if thou shalt have redeemed me, both here and in the future. "And do not confound me from my expectation." Concerning this that I have expected that salvation, when thou shalt have come I may not be confounded, so that I may not have confusion either here or in the future.

"Help me." He asks for help. "And I shall be safe." In the soul, if thou shalt have come so that thou mayest help me. "And I will meditate on thy justifications." That is, on thy commandments. "Always." Without end.

"Thou hast despised all them that depart." That is, thou hast looked down upon. "From thy justifications." Why? "Because their thought is unjust." Therefore thou hast despised them: because they depart from thy commandments, and their thought is unjust: of heretics, Jews, or of all evil men, both against Christ and against the Church.

"I have accounted all the sinners of the earth as prevaricators." Desirously the prophet says in the person of the Church: because before the coming of Christ they were prevaricators: who were held under debt on account of the prevarication of the first man Adam, and all were descending to hell: even the infants themselves

were descending to hell: because on account of that debt they were accounted as prevaricators: unless they had been washed through baptism. And now, those who are not baptized descend to hell. "I have accounted as prevaricators." Because not all sinners are prevaricators: but "all prevaricators" are sinners. "Therefore I have loved thy testimonies." Lest in these I should appear a prevaricator.

"Pierce my flesh with thy fear: for I am afraid of thy judgments." I fear the future judgment: therefore piercing to thy cross all the concupiscences of the flesh, I am ready to live with thee, to die with thee, to be buried with thee, so that in the future I may deserve to rise again with thee. But we also, O Lord, entreat, that pierced in thy fear, the lamp of sacred light going before, absolved from the cords of sin, and made thy portion: we may be able to walk that way, which, having been freed from the punishments of the evil, may make us co-heirs with the angels. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ: to whom is with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit honor and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The blessed prophet always exhorts us with salutary counsel and sacred word: so that the justice which he kept in work, we ought faithfully to execute and indissolubly retain. Who, so that he may more easily excite sluggish and inert minds to keeping these things, teaches what merit we may acquire for the justice of that same keeping, saying:

AIN.

"I have done judgment and justice: deliver me not to them that calumniate me." Continually in this mortal body a troop of vices persecutes us: but if the measure of the judgments and justifications of God remain in us, so that with prudent counsel we do those things which agree with these: we shall not be delivered into the hands of these persecutors.

"Uphold thy servant in good." Because I no longer know how to serve sin. "That the proud may not calumniate me." The devil and his ministers.

"My eyes have fainted into thy salvation." In Jesus, who in Hebrew is called Savior. "And into the word of thy justice." In that Word which was in the beginning with God: who came not to destroy the justifications of the law, but to fulfill them.

"Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy." That thou thyself mayest perfect my vows. "And teach me thy justifications." So that I may be able to perceive them, as I have often desired.

"I am thy servant: give me understanding that I may know thy testimonies." Let me learn them from thee, and not from heretics or Jews: because for me no time is idle from the exercise of thy servitude.

"It is time to do, O Lord: the iniquitous have destroyed thy law." The Jews surely who did not understand it spiritually. But the time will come when the Lord will cause its hidden things to be opened by the Evangelical preaching.

"Therefore have I loved thy commandments: above gold and the topaz." For just as gold excels the price of all metals: so the topaz, containing in itself the beauty of all gems, surpasses the honors of all. Therefore the prophet loves the commandments of God above all these things: because in these he understands the coming of the Lord, who is to redeem the world, to have been announced.

"Therefore was I directed to all thy commandments: I have hated every iniquitous way." Nothing from the ways of iniquity has approached: but as I have walked with integrity: so I have hated all things which were tarrying in the ways of iniquity.

PHE.

"Thy testimonies are wonderful, O Lord: therefore my soul hath searched them." I have seen one thing to be done in these, another to be figured. And therefore because it is wonderful to me: having more diligently searched, I know all things, thou declaring them: as follows.

"The declaration of thy words giveth light, and giveth understanding to little ones." The words of God are the writings of the prophets and of the Law which are declared in the Gospels: while the Word made flesh dwells in us, and by many virtues shows God. But the understanding of these is attributed to our littleness, who have been reborn in innocence: the Lord saying thus: "I confess to thee, O Lord, Father of heaven and earth: because thou hast hidden these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones" (Matt. 10).

"I opened my mouth and drew in the spirit: because I desired thy commandments." I opened a clean heart, and made myself worthy of the desire of thy commandments, into whom the Holy Spirit would be diffused.

"Look upon me and have mercy on me: according to the judgment of them that love thy name." That thou mayest reward me with that judgment with which the rest who love thy name.

"Direct my steps according to thy word." And not according to corporal wills. "And let no iniquity have dominion over me." Because I have been delivered to thy service.

"Redeem me from the calumnies of men: that I may keep thy commandments." Calumnies are, when the crime of impiety is objected to just men. And from which he asks to be redeemed by God, so that he may keep his commandments.

"Make thy face to shine upon thy servant." Confirm me with the effigy of the image of thy glory. "And teach me thy justifications." So that what I see in them through a glass, I may behold with certain contemplation.

"My eyes have sent forth springs of water: because they have not kept thy law." This saint always performs true penance, and does not cease to wash away old sins with flows of tears: so that thou mayest understand, unless thou shalt have performed true penance, those things which thou hast done are not easily forgiven thee. For true penance is, continually to wash

away committed things with weepings and not to repeat those washed away.

SADE.

"Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right: thou hast commanded justice thy testimonies, and thy truth exceedingly." All things which we suffer thou commanding, are just, right, and true: because either they press on for our sins: or they happen so that we may be manifested as approved. "Thy zeal for thy house hath made me pine away." When the house of God is made a den of thieves by evil inhabitants: or when I shall see bodies dedicated to God polluted by the wallows of crimes. "Because my enemies have forgotten thy words." For forgetting the precepts of the Law, they made thy house a den of thieves. "Thy word is exceedingly refined by fire, and thy servant hath loved it." Because just as it consumes sin: so also it illuminates the sinning one, if he be converted. "I am very young, and despised: thy justifications I have not forgotten." Although David says these things from his own person, who, younger than the other brothers, as if despised, was directed to feed the sheep, then chosen for the kingdom: yet these things are to be referred to the Christian people, who first despised, and cast out from the house of the father, recollecting the justifications of God, the first-born of the former having been received, was made first. "Thy justice is justice for ever." Which that former people did not know to be always perpetual. "And thy law is the truth." To

them it was a shadow: now it is truth to the people of the Church. But the prophet, enduring many things for this truth, says: "Tribulation and anguish have found me: thy commandments are my meditation." However much he be troubled in punishments, coarcted in bonds: the voice always free meditates on the commandments of God assiduously. "Thy testimonies are equity for ever: give me understanding and I shall live." So that for the understanding of them, I may be able to take everlasting life.

COPH.

"I cried with my whole heart, hear me, O Lord: I will seek after thy justifications. I cried to thee, save me, that I may keep thy commandments." This cry to be not of the corporal voice, but of the spiritual mind, we have often warned: through which the just are heard by God: or he opens a pious hearing to their prayers. "I prevented in maturity and cried: because I hoped in thy word." Old vices he prevented by youthful chastity, who through the maturity of a lively mind, never removed his hope from the words of God. "My eyes have prevented unto thee at break of day: that I may meditate on thy words." Light did not find him asleep, but wakeful strenuously, and meditating around the divine words with the intention of spiritual eyes.

"Hear my voice, O Lord, according to thy mercy," etc. Unceasingly he emits the groaning of a spiritual voice, so that he may be transferred from this mortality into eternal life.

"They that persecute me have drawn nigh to iniquity: but they are gone far off from thy law." For everyone who iniquitously draws nigh to the saints so that he may harm them, is elongated from the law of God.

"Thou art near, O Lord: and all thy ways are equity." Thou art not held by places, but through the truth of the commandments thou glidest into the hearts of the saints.

"From the beginning I have known of thy testimonies." From Adam in all the patriarchs and prophets. "Because thou hast founded them for ever." In the Gospels, in which we also have been founded upon the mentioned foundation: just as we have often remembered the apostle Paul to have said.

RES.

"See my humility and deliver me: for I have not forgotten thy law." I am humbled to thee, I entreat that I be delivered by thee, so that I may be exalted: because I am mindful of thy law by which thou didst say: "He who shall have humbled himself, shall be exalted" (Luke 14).

"Judge my judgment, and redeem me: quicken me for thy word's sake." I have judged myself to know nothing, except Jesus Christ, who was promised to come for the redemption of the world. According to this judgment, therefore, let me be quickened by thee in thy words.

"Salvation is far from sinners: because they have not sought after thy justifications." Our salvation is Christ, who is elongated from the negligent Jews: for the reason that they do not

understand him figured in the justifications of the law.

"Many are thy mercies, O Lord." Because they rescue from many dangers. "Quicken me according to thy judgment." Lest there be found in me what the judgment of death may consume.

"Many are they that persecute me and trouble me: I have not declined from thy testimonies." Let them rage with hatreds: let them impugn with injuries: I am erected by thy testimonies, not inclined.

"I beheld them that did not keep the covenant, and I pined away: because they kept not thy words." There was a covenant for Israel with God, which he said to Moses: "All things whatsoever the Lord hath said, we will do" (Exod. 24). But also now we make a covenant in baptism, so that we may renounce the devil and his works. For the transgressors of this covenant, therefore, the prophet pines away. And Paul who said: "Who is on fire, and I am not on fire" (2 Cor. 11)?

"See that I have loved thy commandments, O Lord: quicken me in thy mercy." He loved them: not through fear, but through the affection of good will. Therefore he asks to be quickened in them.

"The beginning of thy words is truth." So that the new man reborn in Christ may live. "And all the judgments of thy justice are for ever." So that henceforth knowing himself to have been created to the image and likeness of God, he may do nothing unworthy of his judgments and justices.

SIN.

"Princes have persecuted me without cause, and my heart hath been in awe of thy words." I have been in awe of that word by which he says: "He who shall have denied me before men, I also will deny him before my Father, who is in heaven" (Matt. 10). Therefore he persisted strong in passion.

"I will rejoice at thy words: as one that hath found great spoil." The strong one having been bound, and his vessels plundered (Luke 11), I rejoice in that evangelical word which says: "When they shall persecute you and speak evil, and shall say all evil against you for justice' sake, rejoice and exult: because your reward is great in heaven" (Matt. 5).

"I have hated iniquity, and abhorred it: but I have loved thy law." While he hates iniquity, and loves the justice of God: he extends himself in a greater duty, saying:

"Seven times a day I have given praise to thee: for the judgments of thy justice." Seven times he praises God through the day; because his mind enduring in full splendor, hastens to that seventh day, that is the sabbath of sabbaths, which is eternal rest.

"Much peace have they that love thy law, O Lord: and to them there is no scandal." He who loves God, it is necessary that he have peace with the brothers. For he loves God with a false love, who is scandalized in a brother.

"I looked for thy salvation, O Lord, and I have done thy commandments." Expecting the Lord Jesus the salvation of all: those things which had

been commanded in the Law and the prophets, I have done.

"My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and hath loved them exceedingly." With the strenuousness of custody he has applied a strong love.

I have kept thy commandments and thy testimonies: because all my ways are before thee, O Lord. He keeps the commandments and testimonies who walks in the ways of God: nor does he do anything in act, word, or thought which may be held unworthy of divine contemplation.

TAU.

Let my prayer draw near in thy sight, O Lord; give me understanding according to thy word. I entreat that my prayer be made near to thee, O Lord, so that receiving understanding from thee, I may pray for nothing else except what is fitting.

Let my petition come in before thee, O Lord: deliver me according to thy word. So that dignantly assuming it through the odor in the night of this life, it may be delivered from this corruption of carnal concupiscence.

My lips shall utter a hymn: when thou shalt teach me thy justifications. If my lips shall have been unlocked by thee through a pure conscience, then I shall bring forth a worthy hymn of praise: which, imbued by thy justifications, I am taught.

My tongue shall pronounce thy words, because thy commandments are equity. There is nothing else in thy words, O Lord, except peace, except equity, except life. This I believe with the

heart, this I speak with the lips, this I pronounce with the tongue.

Let thy hand be made to save me: because I have chosen thy commandments. When he says: "Let thy hand be made," he designates the Lord Savior, who was made for him of the seed of David according to the flesh, through whom all things were made, and are governed. Here we ought to accept the right hand. Moreover, he asks for the Savior to come, through whom he knew himself to be saved. Furthermore, what he says: "I have chosen the commandments," he testifies that he has postponed all dangers for the love of the Lord.

I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord, and thy law is my meditation. I had longed to see him himself, whom I believed at those times was yet to come from the virginal womb. And so that he might show this knowledge to have proceeded from the divine Scriptures, it follows: "And thy law is my meditation." For in the prophets he had longed for Christ the Lord to be born: of whom the Law and the prophets spoke.

My soul shall live, and shall praise thee, and thy judgments shall help me. The infirmity of earthly corruption having been absorbed, he confesses that he lives to God through the help of his judgments.

I have gone astray like a sheep that was lost, seek thy servant, because I have not forgotten thy commandments. He says that he was, and now is not, a wandering sheep: he entreats that he be carried back on the shoulders of the shepherd: so

that now joys may be granted to the angels for his finding. Moreover, the Lord was not sent, except to the sheep of the house of Israel that were lost (Matt. 15). Whom we suppliantly entreat, so that having been made doers of his judgments, keepers of the commandments, and searchers of the testimonies, the lost sheep having been found (Luke 15), restored to the Ecclesiastical fold by the industry of the benign shepherd, carried back on his sacred shoulders, we may deserve to glory in the fellowships of the holy angels: to him be glory with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit for all ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 119.

A song of degrees.

The fifteen Psalms of degrees lead us to the summit through certain advancements: so that in the courts of the Lord we may be able to say: "Behold now bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, in the courts of the house of his God" (Psalm 133). And because it has been most widely disputed by many concerning these: it is foolish to wish to say small things for great.

In my trouble I cried to the Lord, and he heard me. Three things are quickly explained in one verse; anguish, prayers, hearing: because no one is troubled, except he who desires to live piously in Christ. It is necessary, therefore, that we proclaim to the Lord not with the elation of voices, but with the humility of the heart, if we desire to be heard.

O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips. From the Jews, who not only do not believe in Christ the Lord, but even do not fear to blaspheme him with unclean lips. And from a deceitful tongue. From the doctrine of the heretics, who strive to disturb us from the right line of faith.

What shall be given to thee, or what shall be added to thee for a deceitful tongue? The Lord has deigned to interrogate with the affection of piety the soul faithfully proclaiming to him: as to what may be given to it, or what may be added for a deceitful tongue? Many say in this place, the preposition having been changed: "What shall be given to thee against a deceitful tongue?" they wish to say, so that the soul may hear it as if from the doctrine of God.

Sharp arrows of the mighty with desolating coals. Instead of "desolating coals," the Hebrew has ἀρχευθίνοις (juniper). I think that the "desolator" and the coal in Isaiah is the one which is brought to his lips (Isaiah 6), so that he might purge the vices which he had contracted by speaking, or by keeping silent about even the best things. And here, therefore, he entreats for a similar coal: so that a coal from the altar of God may be given to him, which may make a solitude of sins in his lips, that is, may present him alien from vices.

Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged. He whose conversation is in heaven, sojourns in this body, and this sojourning seems long to him, because what he has received through hope, he does not contemplate in species. And

therefore, as if groaning like wheat among the chaff, he says: "I have dwelt with the inhabitants of Cedar." "Cedar" is interpreted as "darkness." This man dwells, therefore, with those inhabiting darkness, but he is not obscured by the darkness: just as the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (John 1). My soul hath been much a sojourner. For I was desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ.

With them that hated peace, I was peaceable. Fulfilling that of the Apostle: "If it be possible, having peace with all men" (Philip. 1, and Rom. 12). He is, therefore, with those hating peace: peaceable for this reason, so that he might preach peace more freely to them. And when I spoke to them, they fought against me without cause. He was announcing peace; but the enemies of peace not only did not receive it, but even impugned the preacher of peace himself with their wickednesses.

PSALM 120.

A song of degrees.

This psalm contains the second ascension, whose title is: "A song of degrees." For there are several, signifying (as you have already heard in the first of them) our ascent, which is made in the heart to God, from the valley of weeping, that is, from the humility of tribulation.

I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains. Certainly he raised his spiritual eyes to the heights of the books: namely of the Prophets and the

Law. From whence help shall come to me. From whence I suspect the Lord, the helper of all, to come.

My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth. I wait for help from him, through whom the Father placed heaven and earth. Hence now this man received a response of consolation from the Holy Spirit for his faith. For he says:

Let him not suffer thy foot to be moved. He does not suffer the stability to be removed, by which thou art firmed in him. Neither let him slumber that keepeth thee. For God protects and defends the one remaining in him with watchful custody.

Behold, he shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel. Moreover, he is kept by God without any intermission: he who shall have looked upon him with the intention of spiritual eyes.

The Lord keepeth thee. He himself who made heaven and earth, because the gods who did not make it, perish from it.

Behold, he shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel. And he is kept by God without any intermission: who shall have looked upon him with the intention of spiritual eyes.

The Lord keepeth thee. He himself who made heaven and earth, because the gods who did not make it, perish from it.

The Lord is thy protection: upon the hand of thy right hand. He protects thee, lest the enemy part should impede thy right work, that is, the good.

The sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night. The just man can neither be elevated in prosperous things: nor be cast down in sad things. What is signified in the day and night, this also is signified in the sun and moon.

The Lord keepeth thee from all evil. From all the snares of the enemy. May the Lord keep thy soul. Lest the part of the adverse power dominate it.

The Lord keep thy coming in. Through which thou hast entered to know the Father. And thy going out from henceforth and for ever. So that when thou shalt have withdrawn from the body, thou mayest be protected by his custody: lest thou be precipitated into that chaos where the rich man is seen burning, but mayest enjoy eternal rest in the bosom of Abraham with Lazarus (Luke 16).

PSALM 121.

A song of degrees.

This psalm is the third step of ascension, containing the voice of the man: whose conversation is held in heaven.

I rejoiced in these things which were said to me. They had been said to me through the Law, and the prophets and the apostles. But also I say those things which I had contemplated through a glass, and now I see face to face (1 Cor. 13). And what, thou askest? We shall go into the house of the Lord. That is, into the celestial Jerusalem, so

that we may be made citizens of the saints and domestics of God.

Our feet were standing in thy courts, O Jerusalem. Firm in its amplitude. But lest thou shouldst think it this earthly one, hear what he has subjoined:

Jerusalem, which is built as a city. As yet, he says, the building of this city is not filled: but daily it is built of living stones upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, from the highest corner stone itself Christ Jesus (Ephes. 4): just as the Apostle says. Whose participation is in the same. In one body of the Church, through Christ.

For thither did the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. Not obnoxious to sin, but "the tribes of the Lord": which knowing the Lord did not delay to follow: which is to be referred to the gentiles. A testimony to Israel. So that it may condemn him: because he did not know him shown in many miracles. But the tribes of the gentiles immediately received him known. So also the queen of the South, or the Ninivites, shall rise in the judgment of this testimony, and shall condemn him (Luke 11). To confess to thy name, O Lord. For they confess, because in thy name every knee shall bow of things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (Philip. 2): and because thou, Lord Jesus Christ, art in the glory of God the Father.

Because there have sat seats in judgment. The seats of God are the apostles: upon whom the Lord rests. These seats shall sit upon twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel: just as he himself says in the Gospel (Matt. 19). Seats upon the

house of David. Governing and admonishing the Church of Christ by their precepts.

Pray for the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. Interrogate what things may pertain to the peace of this city, and follow it: so that through the love of peace you may follow the fruit of eternal beatitude. And abundance to them that love thee. He who, having left behind falling things, loves God above all: he himself enjoys an abundance of celestial goods.

Let peace be in thy strength. The Lord Christ is our peace: who binds us in one bond of charity: whose strength, if it should grow strong in us, he also himself glides into our breasts. And abundance in thy towers. In these the prophet asks for an abundance of celestial goods to be made, who over-topping in merit, just as very strong towers, both fortify this city with strength and decorate it with height.

For my brethren and my neighbors' sake, I spoke peace of thee. So that namely they also may exhibit themselves perfect for the consummation of this building.

For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I have sought good things for thee. By preaching peace to the neighboring brethren, who makes them a city of the eternal king, for whom he sought these good things: so that from the university of the city, he might pass into its one habitation, who says: Father, I ask that where I am, they also may be with me. I in them, and thou in me: so that they may see my glory: because

thou hast loved me before the constitution of the world (John 17).

PSALM 122.

A song of degrees.

This psalm opens the fourth step of the Songs of degrees: in which that faithful man, who just now was lifting up his eyes to the mountains, now profiting already in the ascent, erects them to the inhabitant of the heavens himself, saying: To thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven. It is to be noted that through each psalm there are certain advancements of the degrees. He who in the first had said: "In my trouble I cried to the Lord," and in the second had narrated that he had raised his eyes to the mountains: had also rejoiced, because an entrance into the house of God had been promised back to him: now has profited to a greater thing, so that he raises his eyes to God himself. Who dwellest in heaven. Ascending to where he was to lift up his eyes, unless he was desiring to ascend to where he was tending?

Behold as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress: so are our eyes unto the Lord our God until he have mercy on us. And we are servants, and we are handmaids: he is Lord and mistress. Let your charity attend. It is no wonder if we are servants and he is Lord; but it is a wonder if we are handmaids, and he is a mistress. But neither is this a wonder, because we are handmaids, for we are the Church: nor is that

a wonder, because he himself is also a mistress: because he is the power and wisdom of God. Hear therefore the Apostle saying: "But we preach Christ crucified: to the Jews indeed a scandal, but to the gentiles foolishness: but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1). Since we are subjected to many kinds of persecutions, it is necessary that we always contain the intention of our eyes fixed in the help of God without any vice, until he bestow mercy upon us.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, because we are greatly filled with contempt. That is, with desperation, because the saints are despised by evil men.

And our soul is greatly filled: a reproach to them that are abundant, and contempt to the proud. He does not say so much in riches, but those who abound in malice, they despise the poor of Christ. The rich despise the poor, and the proud despise the humble, and they themselves speak many reproaches against the holy Church.

PSALM 123.

A song of degrees.

This psalm is the fifth step of ascension, teaching that faithful man to profit, who through the elevation of spiritual eyes to the inhabitant of the heavens overcoming all the snares of diabolical immission, thus begins saying: Unless the Lord had been in us: let Israel now say. Well does the Lord dwell in us, if we look up to him with the

contemplation of a holy mind. Unless the Lord had been in us, when men rose up against us: perhaps they had swallowed us up alive. The impious have not endeavored to devour our flesh; but to swallow up souls through the instigation of crimes; but we have been rescued from these through him who was in us. To whom for this reason thanks are to be returned: because by his grace we have been saved. When their fury was enkindled against us: perhaps the water had swallowed us up. The commotions of evil minds, who seek to swallow up the saints of God, are compared to waters; but with the Lord dwelling in the saints, they flow down and run down below.

Our soul hath passed through a torrent. It has better in the Hebrew: "A torrent hath passed over our soul": because namely many whirlwinds of temptations have passed over his soul, nor could they kill it, the just man saying: "Unless the Lord had been in us: let Israel now say. Perhaps our soul had passed through an intolerable water." The word ἀνυπόστατον among the Greeks is ambiguous: and it can sound as what subsists, and as what may be intolerable, that is, what no one can bear. For which also Aquila and Symmachus, and Theodotio, and all the interpreters agree with one voice: translating "proud waters" and "arrogant" for ἀνυπόστατον.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us to be a prey to their teeth. The teeth of these torrents is the numerosity of vices, from which we are rescued by the grace of God, lest we be captured.

Our soul is escaped as a sparrow out of the snare of the fowlers. Snares are stretched for us in concupiscences and various deceits of diabolical astuteness; but with Satan crushed under our feet, as a sparrow we fly away from them from the one capturing. For thus it follows:

The snare is broken, and we are delivered. For if the Lord dwell in us: he himself (as we have said) will break these snares, lest they impede us.

Our help is in the name of the Lord: who made heaven and earth. This is the name which is above every name. By the help of this name, the snares of death are conquered, if we remain fixed in him.

PSALM 124.

A song of degrees.

This psalm is held as the sixth in the songs of degrees, which from the voice of the prophet exhorts us, that, having left behind secular causes, we should have all confidence in God alone, saying:

They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Sion: he shall not be moved for ever. Sion, the Church: moreover the mountain according to Daniel, Christ the Lord (Dan. 2). Therefore they who place all hope in him, are not moved for ever: because they are made conformable to the body of his glory. Who dwelleth in Jerusalem. In the Church itself our mother, which is above, free (Galat. 4).

Mountains are round about it. The custodies of the holy angels, prophets, and apostles, which in the manner of mountain height over-top all in sanctity. And the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth now and for ever. Just as he himself deigned to promise, saying: "Behold I am with you even to the consummation of the age" (Matt. last). For the Lord will not leave the rod of sinners upon the lot of the just. For "rod" in the Hebrew, it has "sceptre." This is therefore what we ask: lead us not into temptation, which we cannot suffer. That the just may not stretch forth their hands to iniquity. That they may not think: what does it profit me that I am just, if the iniquitous always persecute me? "That they may not stretch forth," this is, that they may sustain the evil, and not do evil things.

Do good, O Lord, to those that are good, and to the upright in heart. Who are either good in work, or are held upright in faith. But such as turn aside into obligations, the Lord shall lead out. For "obligations," Aquila has interpreted διαπλοκὰς (entanglements): Symmachus σκολιότητας (crookednesses), the fifth edition διεσταμμένα (distorted things). With them that work iniquity. These who turn aside from the precepts of God, are led out with those who know not God, so that they may be struck with a similar sentence. Peace upon Israel. Christ the Lord is our peace (Ephes. 2), who taking away the wall of enmity from the midst of the Jews and gentiles, made both one, which before was divided.

PSALM 125.

A song of degrees.

This psalm, the seventh of the degrees, brings forth a song or ascent in which the faithful soul exults in the Lord against the captivity of crimes, and says: When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion. For the old captivity of vices had pervaded the whole world; but with the sun of justice shining upon us, it was put to flight. So also the Church, which is specifically called Sion, appeared. We became like men comforted. For "comforted," all the editions equally have translated "dreaming." And beautifully dreaming; for the joy is not yet full, with the rest remaining established in captivity.

They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy; going they went and wept, casting their seeds. The saints of God therefore have sown in tears of confession, and in various torments, the word of God among the gentiles: going and weeping over the hardness of their heart, which in the future they shall carry with the fruits of the sheaves, the Lord saying to them: "Amen I say to you, that you shall weep and lament: but the world shall rejoice, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16). Therefore let us also, crying out in tribulation, lift up the eyes of the mind to God the helper, so that he may rescue us from the cruel teeth of the envious: may take away from us the sceptre of iniquitous domination, so that having bestowed usual mercy, while we are absolved from the captivity

of vices: we may be connected to the building of the celestial Jerusalem as living stones.

PSALM 126.

A song of degrees of Solomon.

Therefore this psalm is pre-noted with the title of Solomon: so that the fabricator of the temple himself may teach that he is not able to consummate the building of it without the help of the Lord.

Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. We are, according to the Apostle, the temple of God: who unless we be built through our Lord Jesus Christ upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets (2 Cor. 6), the building of the philosophers and the rest of the secular teachers will be vain.

Unless the Lord keep the city, they have labored in vain that keep it. The faithful soul is accepted as the city of the eternal King, which is frequented by good citizens, that is, honest morals, which the custody of no one can defend, except of him who not slumbering protects Israel.

It is vain for you to rise before the light. He who rises before the light, feels for the nocturnal darkness. So also he who, having left the light of the Gospel, shall have passed to the above-mentioned dogma, remains in darkness: nor can he enjoy the clarity of the Lord's resurrection. Rise after you have sat, you that eat the bread of sorrow. You who rest in humiliation, be elevated, you who have remembered yourselves either to

have been born, or to live in sins, and desire to pass to God. Or, "you that eat the bread of sorrow." For "sorrow," Theodotio and the fifth edition have interpreted "idols": but the sixth, "error." The sense, therefore, according to the simple intelligence is this: without cause you run to the temple at daybreak, and you believe yourselves to adore God, you who adore idols likewise, and feed on unclean bread.

When he shall have given sleep to his beloved: as if someone had asked, when this might be done, it is said to him: "When he shall have given sleep to his beloved." The beloved are the saints, who after the sleep of the present life, seem to slumber here: so that in the resurrection they may deserve to arrive at eternal life. Behold the inheritance of the Lord are children the reward the fruit of the womb. When the saints shall have departed from this world, the sleep of rest having been accepted, then they shall become the inheritance of the Lord, because they no longer lie under temptations. But also the Lord himself born of the Virgin, was made the fruit of the womb. Whose assumed humanity received this reward: so that the gentiles called in children, might be his inheritance. He gave them, he says, power to be made children of God who believe in his name (John 1).

As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the children of them that have been shaken out. He calls "shaken out" those who are unencumbered and girded for battle, which word the Seventy interpreters also translated in the books of Ezra.

Blessed is the man who hath filled his desire with them. For "desire" in the Hebrew, it has "quiver." So that because he had pre-sent arrows in comparison of the saints, consequently he might bring in the quiver to be filled with arrows. He shall not be confounded when he shall speak to his enemies in the gate. The gate, the door or entrance: he himself is the one who says: "I am the door by me if any man shall have entered, he shall be saved" (John 10). Therefore he who of the children of them that have been shaken out is fixed in Christ, shall not be confounded in the day of judgment: when he shall have reproached the enemies of the Law of God for disobedience, and through perversity, or all their malice.

PSALM 127.

A song of degrees.

This psalm in the ninth step of ascension, or song, insinuates the fear and love of the Lord, saying: Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, that walk in his ways. Who joining themselves with fear to the love of God, are exercised in those things which the prophets, apostles, evangelists have preached.

You shall eat the labors of your fruits: blessed are you, and it shall be well with you. The labors of the fruits are when a man is exercised in the world, so that he may be able to arrive at the fruit of eternity. For one walks laboriously through these ways of God, as he himself says: "Strait and narrow is the way that leads to life" (Matt. 7).

But this labor is fulfilled with eternal fruits, when a man is enriched with that celestial bread. For with this desire even he was compuncted, who said: "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14).

Your wife as a fruitful vine: on the sides of your house. The wife, according to Solomon (Prov. 7), is taken as wisdom, which being brought into the house of the cleansed soul as a beautiful vine, is extended on the sides of our works.

Your children as olive plants, round about your table. The acts of the good ones standing round about the celestial doctrine, with the fatness of peace and the overshadowing of virtue.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed, who fears the Lord. With these riches indeed he is enriched.

May the Lord bless you from Sion. Who reigns in the Church. And may you see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your life. In that celestial mother, of whom we have expounded in other psalms; in whom the saints are to see the good things of perpetual life. And may you see your children's children. Seeking the retribution of good works. Peace upon Israel. May our peace, Jesus Christ, continually look upon the mind that sees him.

PSALM 128.

A song of degrees.

This psalm brings forth for us the tenth either song or ascent, which beginning from the

prophetic voice teaches to resist incessantly the attacking wickednesses, lest they overcome us. Often have they fought against me from my youth. This man says that he is attacked from the beginning of his age; but he is silent about those by whom he is attacked: so that it may be understood that the battle is sent by the devil. You will be able to notice this more easily either from the probation of Job, or from the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Let Israel now say, Often have they fought against me from my youth, for they could not prevail against me. Therefore he who is Israel, he can say it, because he is attacked all the days of his life. But this battle does not prevail against him: because the Lord fights for him. The sinners have built upon my back, they have prolonged their iniquity for themselves. To one continually running to God and tending toward greater things, machines of wickednesses are built from behind, because they cannot be exposed in the view. But when they do not reach the effect, they prolong it for themselves: by envying for that reason, they provoke sin and divine retribution upon themselves. For it follows: The just Lord will cut the necks of sinners. For "necks" in the Hebrew it has "bonds" or "chains," so that the sense may be: Those who had surrounded me with their snares, and also held me bound; but, with the Lord helping, all the knots have been loosed. Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Sion. The Church, which is the body of Christ, of which we are members. Let them be as grass upon the tops of houses: which withers

before it be plucked up. These things are not said of buildings placed upon a rock, but of those which are placed as if to fall more quickly upon the sand: which looks to the works of the flesh: in which not only is no grain of goodness found: but even before they come to any increase, they are dried up. With which he that reaps has not filled his hand. Who has not received the reward of his work worthy of retribution. Nor he that gathers the sheaves, his bosom. Who through the purity of conscience, and if he has less, nevertheless applied a good will. And therefore he brings back sheaves from God as if he had given much: just as the widow from the two mites (Mark 12). And they that passed by said not: The blessing of the Lord be upon you. The saints of God did not bless them: who holding this world for nothing, passed over to the celestial and eternal things. We have blessed you in the name of the Lord. So that, having left behind the unfruitful and dry works, you may sow those things which may fill both the hand of the reapers and the bosom of those gathering sheaves.

PSALM 129.

A song of degrees.

This psalm itself opens to us the eleventh step of ascension, and song: which bringing forth the effort of the faithful soul tending toward higher things: while it complains that it is as if immersed in the deep, it provokes us to understand the celestial things, saying:

From the depths I have cried to you, O Lord: Lord, hear my prayer. He cries from the depths who knows the height of the riches of the wisdom of God: who suffers persecutions: who deprecates him with a merciful sigh.

Let your ears be attentive: to the prayer of your servant. Not here does the prophet ask for a carnal ear: knowing God to be incorporeal: but the power by which he deigns to hear his own, he demands.

If you should observe iniquities, O Lord: Lord, who shall sustain it? For if the fragility of the human race, transgressing your laws, should be struck immediately by your vengeance, who will be able to escape?

Because with you there is propitiation. For you will reconcile us to the Father through the cross. And because of your law I have sustained you, O Lord. The law is spiritual, and containing the words of life: which we ought to sustain, lest sinning against it we be judged through the law (Rom. 7).

My soul has sustained the Lord, etc. From the morning watch even until night. From that morning hour in which he was placed in the Lord's vineyard, he fixed his hope on that hour: in which he may receive the denarius of reward. From the morning watch. Let Israel hope in the Lord. From that which the light of truth shone upon him, let him unceasingly contemplate celestial things.

Because with the Lord is mercy. When he deigned to become man for us. And copious with

God is redemption. When he redeemed us not with gold, nor with silver, but with his precious blood.

And he himself shall redeem Israel from all their iniquities. For the Son himself, with the fullness of the gentiles entering in, shall save the remnant of Israel, their iniquity having been forgiven.

PSALM 130.

A song of degrees.

This psalm is held as the twelfth in this ascension, or song, or step, which from the person of the prophet teaches us the humility which Christ was to bear in the flesh, saying: Lord, my heart is not exalted. But in the contrition and humiliation of it I have offered to you an acceptable sacrifice. Nor are my eyes lifted up. So that they might desire transitory and falling things.

Neither have I walked in great matters: nor in your wonderful things above me. What wonderful things seemed great to men, in these I did not walk, lest they should overwhelm me.

If I did not think humbly: but have exalted my soul. He is humble indeed in heart, but exalted in sense. I thought humbly in the world: but I have exalted my soul in heaven.

As one that is weaned from his mother: so will you reward in my soul. He feels nothing childish in himself: because exceeding the food of milk, he has arrived at the perfect man: he now prays to

be nourished by that bread which has come down from the heavens.

Let Israel hope in the Lord: from this time forth and even for evermore. He teaches that our hope should be enclosed by no end of time: so that through the hope of the present life we may take the good things of the future age.

PSALM 131.

A song of degrees.

This psalm is held as the thirteenth in the songs of degrees: which through the ascension of progresses, teaches us about the coming of the Son of God from the prophetic voice, saying: Remember, O Lord, David. The Son of the omnipotent God, about to assume flesh for the redemption of the people, wished himself to be called David: being called by his name indeed, from whose stock he was to assume even a body. And all his meekness. He did not contend, nor cry out: but as a meek lamb he was led to the victim (Isa. 53). As he swore to the Lord: he vowed a vow to the God of Jacob. He placed the oath and the vow on account of the firmness of the speech, lest we should doubt to follow: but what he wished in the meantime, is worthy to be considered. Remember, O Lord, David, and all his meekness. As he swore to the Lord. For that which is "as": in the Hebrew it has "who": so that the sense may be: Remember, O Lord, David, and all his meekness, who swore to the Lord, and made a vow to the God of Jacob.

If I shall enter into the tabernacle of my house: if I shall go up into the bed of my couch: if I shall give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, and rest to my temples: until I find a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. The tabernacle of the house indicates the celestial seat: but in the couch of the bed, in the sleep of the eyes, in the slumber of the eyelids, or in the rest of the temples, he demonstrated eternal rest, which is never broken off. In which things he promises that he will not return: unless he first constructed a place worthy for God the Father in man or the congregation of the Church by his resurrection.

Behold we have heard of it in Ephrata. The region of Bethlehem is called Ephrata even until today. Other Scriptures are also witnesses of this thing. Ephrata itself is Bethlehem. Where the Church was first heard of, that is, in which Christ the Lord assumed flesh. In this also Rachel, the beloved of Israel, rests (Gen. 35), who bore the type of the Church. We have found it in the fields of the wood. In the gentiles, which before were the dens of the devil: but now are fruitful fields, worshipping the Lord.

We will enter into the tabernacle of God. We who are gathered through the Lord into the one house of the Church. We will adore in the place where his feet stood. In which the Apostolic preachings are heard: which like feet sustain the whole body of the Church.

Arise, O Lord, into your rest. Now you have fulfilled the oath, you have rendered the vow: now you have found a place for God: now you

have brought forth the Church from your side: arise now from the lower regions, return into the tabernacle: going away into rest: of which things you have spoken above. And not only you, but, You and the ark of your sanctification. Namely the assumed body, by which the divinity was covered. From which the words of life, from which the celestial bread, from which the way, the truth and the life has been shown to us.

Let your priests be clothed with justice. So that clothed with the breastplate of justice, they may not be wounded by the darts of the enemy. And let your saints exult. In celestial goods.

For the sake of David your servant turn not away the face of your Christ. For the sake of him who from the seed of David took the form of a servant: let not the clarity of your image be turned away from the saints, in whom Christ himself dwells, but let it illuminate them.

The Lord has sworn the truth to David, and he will not frustrate him. To the God-man the Father swears the truth, which he does not make void, but fulfills, saying: Of the fruit of your womb I will set upon your throne. We are the fruit of his womb, whom he generated spiritually as if from a womb. Who if we keep the following things, shall sit upon his throne, and not only we, but also our children. For he says:

If your children will keep my covenant, and these my testimonies which I shall teach them, and their children even for evermore, they shall sit upon my throne. If we keep his covenant, he will make us sit in the heavens: just as the

Apostle says (Eph. 1): They shall sit upon his throne. But also they themselves shall sit upon his throne to whom it was said: "You shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19). Also our children shall sit, that is, the good works which we have wrought on account of the love of him shall be remembered in his sight.

Because the Lord has chosen Sion: he has pre-chosen it for a habitation for himself. The ecclesiastical crowd concordant to himself, or souls sanctified by celestial sacraments for you.

This is my rest for ever and ever: here will I dwell because I have chosen it. The soul which through the glory of the resurrection and the cleansing of sin, has been made a house and rest for him.

Blessing I will bless her widow: her poor I will satisfy with bread. For "widow," that is, χήρα, both the Hebrew volumes and the Seventy themselves have θήραν: but on account of the novelty of the word, and the change of one letter, it gradually obtained that χήρα should be read for θήραν, especially because in the following versicle the poor followed. θήραν Symmachus and Aquila have interpreted as "provisions."

Her priests I will clothe with salvation, and her saints shall exult with exultation. For he himself clothes us either with justice or with salvation: when he makes us conformable to his body: who is our justice and salvation, preparing for us eternal tabernacles.

There will I bring forth the horn of David. The kingdom of Christ, which is shown in those to whom it was said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5). I have prepared a lamp for my Christ. John the Baptist or the precursor of our Lord and Savior is called the prepared lamp by God the Father: who announced that he was about to come into the darkness of this world: for thus even the Lord himself calls him, saying: "He was a burning lamp" (John 5), and the rest.

Her enemies I will clothe with confusion. The unbelieving Jews when they shall see the Lord in his majesty. But upon himself my sanctification shall flourish. For "sanctification," NESER () is had in the Hebrew: which Aquila interprets as "consecrated," and it signifies a plate of gold, which was bound on the forehead of the high priest: having the name of the Lord engraved.

PSALM 132.

A song of degrees.

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity. He says two things: good and pleasant. Martyrium is good, but it is not pleasant: for it has punishments and penalties, and there is always pain in torments, and certainly in pain there is no pleasantness. Behold how good and how pleasant. Again, pleasure is pleasant. As if he should say: To eat sweet food seems to be pleasant, for it compels to lust. Here therefore he placed two, and that which seemed

to him to be contrary, namely good and pleasant, he joined in one speech. Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity. Brethren in mind, not in body. Esau and Jacob were brothers, and because they dwelt together, it was a cause of discord for them. Therefore what he said here, brethren: he does not say brethren in body, but spiritual brethren. Brethren of whom the Savior also spoke, and said to the women: "Go, tell my brethren" (Matt. 28). Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity. Properly this psalm fits cenobiums and monasteries. For although it may also be understood of Churches, but there by the diversity of purpose there does not seem to be such great concord. For what fraternity is there there? Certainly one hastens to go home: another to the circus, another in the Church thinks about usury. But in monasteries, as there is one purpose, so there is one mind. Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity. Truly good, truly pleasant. We have left one brother, and behold how many we have found. My secular brother (what I speak of mine, I speak of each) does not love me so much as my substance. But the spiritual brethren: who certainly neglect their own things, do not seek others. Just as we also read in the Acts of the Apostles: because the multitude of believers had one heart and one soul (Acts 4). And they had, he says, all things in common. Rightly they had all things in common, who possessed one Christ. We have said many things, but let us hasten to the rest.

As the ointment upon the head: which descended into the beard, the beard of Aaron. O if there were time, that we might dispute about each thing, the day could not suffice for us. We read in Exodus, how the sacerdotal ointment is made (Exod. 25, 30). Then we read how there was another ointment with which kings were anointed, there was another ointment with which prophets were anointed. And why should I say more? All ointments had their diversities and their mysteries. Do we wonder about the saints? The leper after he has been purged, after he has been sprinkled with hyssop, and with the blood of a hen, and one hen is dismissed into the desert, and he himself has his own ointment. Nothing is sanctified, except through ointment. Therefore also the young maidens say in the Song of Songs: "Your name is as ointment poured out. After you we will run in the odor of your ointments" (Cant. 1). As the ointment upon the head which descended into the beard, the beard of Aaron. He said beautifully, "upon the head, which descended into the beard of Aaron." The beard is an indication of virility. For nature distinguishes the woman and the man by this sign: the beard therefore is an indication of virility. The head therefore is called the divinity, that is, the deity. But the beard indicates the man. That, he says, we may arrive into a perfect man, who is Christ (Coloss. 1). See therefore what he says: As the ointment, as the blessing of the ointment from the head, that is, from the speech of the divinity descended into the beard, descended into the

perfect man, who is Christ, afterwards that same ointment descended into the skirt of his garment. So the blessing, and the dew of mount Hermon descended upon mount Sion. But ointment is placed here for blessing. "You have loved justice," he says, "and hated iniquity: therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows" (Psalm 44). See what he says: "You have loved," he says, "justice, and hated iniquity." It does not suffice to love justice, but on the contrary to hate iniquity. See what he says: "And you have hated iniquity." For these virtues, what did he receive? "Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows." This is said to Christ: Therefore you are anointed, that you might anoint others. You are anointed with the oil of gladness above your fellows, that is, more than your Apostles. For you had the fountain of the ointment: they had the drops. As the ointment upon the head. May the Lord grant also to us this ointment of divinity: which comes into the beard, that is, into the perfect man Aaron, into Aaron the priest. But "Aaron" is interpreted as "mountainous." You see that this priest is not from the valleys, but is from the mountains. The beard, he says, of Aaron. Because the ointment on the head, came into the beard, from the Word God it came to the man, whom he deigned to assume. And what does this anointed beard, and this perfect man profit us? Let us see what progresses he has.

Which descended into the skirt of his garment. If we are the garment of Christ, we clothe

his nakedness with our faith. Behold he hung naked on the cross: a scandal to the Jews, to the gentiles foolishness (1 Cor. 1), and yet he is clothed by our faith and speech and confession. Noah lay naked in his house, and his ignominy appeared: the elder son mocked, and the younger covered (Gen. 9). And why do I say all this? That I may show that we are the garment of Christ. I say a new thing to you: rather not new, but from the Scriptures. We are the garment of Christ, and when we have clothed him with our confession, again we put on Christ himself. For the Apostle also says, that our garment is Christ (Galat. 3). For when we are baptized, we put on Christ and are clothed. Do you wish to know how we clothe the Lord? We read in Jeremiah: "Take," he says, "to you a loincloth, and go," he says, "to the Euphrates, and put it in a hole of the rock. And I did," he says, "what the Lord had commanded me. And after some days I returned to the Euphrates, and behold," he says, "the loincloth had rotted, which was useful for no use. And the Lord spoke," he says, "to me: observe diligently: Just as," he says, "you have had the loincloth about your loins, so also I have had this people about me, says the Lord" (Jerem. 13). Why did I say all this? That I might show that believers are the garment of Christ. Which descended into the skirt of his garment: which descended into the beard, the beard of Aaron. It is not of this time to speak of the sacerdotal garments. For indeed the high priest has eight kinds of garments. It is long now to speak of the ephod, of the tunic. It is long to speak

of the rational, of the manifestations, of the little chains, of the zone, of the breeches, of the fringes, of the cord, of the little bells, with which virtues the priest ought to enter the temple of the Lord, and into the holy of holies. And we therefore if we wish to be of the sacerdotal garment, either we are the superhumeral, which is interpreted ephod, that we may have good works, and carry the mandates of Christ on our shoulders, or certainly we ought to be the interior tunic: which tunic is tight, and adheres to the body: it is not loose: it is not poured out, but it sticks entirely to the body. You see therefore that whoever is interior, and an interior tunic, is joined more closely to the body. But if anyone is the rational, which is called λογεῖον; he is not placed except in the breast. Observe the order of Scripture: Whoever is the rational, λογεῖον, is both reason, and is placed in the breast. Furthermore it can be that someone has prudence, has λόγον, has speech. Whoever therefore is truly a priest, ought to have δηλώσεις, that is, manifestations, that is, that whatever he has conceived in mind, he may bring forth, and teach all. And all these things are in vain, if chastity has not been increased and adorned. Therefore there is a zone, and it girds the loins, it binds and mortifies. Then it is said, that he has breeches, so that whatever in us is ignominious and sordid, as if by this girdle it may be cleansed and mortified. Then it is said that we ought to have a poderis (long robe), which may adorn as it were our feet. In that same poderis there are various flowers: there are pomegranates

there, there are also fringes there. I think that that woman flowing with blood touched that fringe, and was healed (Matt. 9). Then consider also these things: that at the extreme feet, between the pomegranates there were also little bells, and the high priest did not enter into the holy of holies, unless those little bells rang out. The little bells and those pomegranates, are diversities of virtues which each have their own voices, and the exit itself from the holy of holies is vocal. For whether we eat, or whether we drink, we do all in the name of the Lord (1 Cor. 10). We promised smaller things, and we have said greater things.

As the dew of Hermon, which descendeth upon mount Sion.

The dew of Hermon. We read in a certain apocryphal book, that at the time when the sons of God were descending to the daughters of men, they descended upon mount Hermon, and there entered into a covenant as to how they should come to the daughters of men, and associate them to themselves. It is a very manifest book, and is counted among the apocrypha, and the ancient interpreters have spoken of it: but we have said some things: not for authority, but for commemoration.

As the dew of Hermon, which descendeth upon mount Sion. I read in the book of a certain person, who confirms his heresy from that apocryphal book. For what does he say? "The sons of God," he says, "who were descending from the heavens, came to Hermon, and lusted after the daughters of men." "They are angels," he says,

"descending from the heavenly places, and souls which have desired bodies." For indeed bodies are the daughters of men. Have you seen how the dogma of the Manicheans arises? For just as the Manicheans say that souls desired human bodies, and were associated with the pleasure of bodies: so also these who say that angels desired bodies, that is, the daughters of men, do they not seem to you to say the very same thing as the Manicheans? It is long now to speak against them: but I only wished to judge from what volume they confirm their dogma, as if by occasion of this verse.

Hermon in our language is interpreted anathema (ἀνάθημα), that is, condemnation. Therefore the dew of the Lord was formerly in the people of the Jews, who were afterwards anathematized, and that blessing which formerly descended upon the anathematized people, afterwards descended upon mount Sion, that is, into the Church. We, if however we are of the Church (but I call the Church the truth of dogmas, the confession of Christ), we are in the building. And how many saints are in the desert, how many of us are not in the Church, and those who are not of the Church, are conversant in the Church of Christ. If therefore we are in the Church, if we have the faith of the Church, the faith of the apostles, the faith of Christ, the truths of dogmas, we are the mountains of Sion. We do not wish to be the valleys of Sion, but the mountains of Sion. For Sion has its valleys, it has also a plain. Whoever is a sinner is a valley of Sion: he is not a mountain of

Sion. Someone may say: You speak from your own sense. Let us call Isaiah as a witness, at that time when Sion had sinned, after many visions, where it is said: "The vision against Edom: the vision against Moab: the vision against Edom and the sons of Ammon" (Isai. 13 ff.), at the last is placed: "The vision of the valley of Sion" (Ibid. 22). For because it had descended from the sublimity of faith: therefore it fell from the mountain into the valley. Let us therefore first flee the valley of Sion: let us come to the plain, from the plain let us come to the hills: from the hills let us come to the mountains. Let us follow Christ in the mountains. For indeed our cousin is like a roe, and a young hart leaping over the hills, and jumping through the mountains (Cant. 2). Whence also according to the truth of the ascension, he did not ascend into heaven after the resurrection from the valley, but from the mountain. Unless we be mountains in virtues, we cannot ascend to heaven. For there, that is, in the mountains of Sion, in virtues, in faith, in confession, in the truth of dogmas, there is blessing.

And life even for evermore. Our life is Christ. He who confesses Christ, shall receive life for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 133.

Behold now bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. The last psalm of the song of degrees. The first psalm of degrees had been: "To the Lord when I was in trouble I cried, and he heard me"; in the second he had ascended: "I have lifted up

my eyes to the mountains." In the third: "I was glad in these things which were said to me"; in the fourth: "To thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven." See how by little and little he ascends through the degrees, and arrives at more sublime things. It is long, if we should wish to say the beginnings of each of these psalms of degrees.

He came to the thirteenth psalm, rather he came to the twelfth, and after every virtue, he placed humility. For in vain do we have virtues, if those same virtues be not crowned by the humility of the Lord. For what did he say? "Lord, my heart is not exalted: nor are my eyes lifted up." Since therefore he had shown himself humble, he requests the advent of Christ. And what does he say? "Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness." And again in another place: "For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of thy Christ" (Psalm 131). Since he has received Christ, after the faith of Christ he gathers the Church. And what does he say? "Behold how good, and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell in one." "Behold how good, and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell in one."

What does the newest psalm say? "Behold now bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord." Since it is good, and pleasant for brethren to dwell in one, and you are likewise gathered together: "Behold now bless ye the Lord." Now bless ye the Lord, after the advent of Christ: because you are gathered together in him. Now bless ye in the last psalm of degrees: because you are gathered together in the summit of virtues.

Before therefore you arrived at the fifteenth degree, that is, at the high place, you could not bless the Lord. Therefore now I say to you: "Behold now bless ye the Lord." When it is said, "behold": in a certain way the thing is pointed out with the finger. "Behold now bless ye the Lord." Who should bless the Lord? "All ye servants of the Lord": who are not servants of sin, but servants of the Lord. Do we think it is a small thing that is said: "Therefore I am a servant of the Lord"? It is a supreme virtue to merit this. How? As he vindicates dignity, who says: "Therefore I am a servant of the emperor, and no one dares to approach the servant of the emperor": so it is an infinite dignity to say that one is a servant of the Lord. Whence also the Apostle glories in the servitude of the Lord, and writes in the beginning of his Epistles: "Paul, a servant of Christ." And of Moses it is said: "And not so my servant Moses: to whom I have spoken face to face" (Exod. 33). See what he says: "To others I have spoken in vision and in enigma: but not so to my servant Moses, to whom I have spoken face to face" (Hebr. 3).

Let us set an example: Let us say there is some very rich master. This one has a household: he has also servants who minister to him. Do the servants who are in the villas have as much confidence as those who minister daily? To those there is great dignity, who see the face of the master, and minister to him. Finally, the other servants, who do not see the face of their master, if they wish to obtain anything, ask their fellow servants.

Why did I say all this? Our Lord Jesus has also himself a large household: he has some as if before his face, who minister to him: he has others in the fields. I think those are monks and virgins, who minister before the face of their Lord: but the seculars are those who are as if in the field, of his household. Finally, those who are in the fields, ask these to pray the Lord, if they have anything necessary. As much dignity therefore as they have, who daily see the face of the Lord: so much punishment they have, who neglect the ministry of the Lord. For bad servants are accustomed, when they are in the fields, to fear the master more: because they do not see him. But if they begin to see him daily, they despise him, and familiarity produces pride. And we therefore ought not from custom to despise the goodness of our God.

Bless ye therefore the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord: because you are not servants of sin, but servants of the Lord. "All ye servants of the Lord," who have only the Lord as God. "All ye servants of the Lord," whom anger does not command: in whom lust does not reign: in whom other sins do not reign: whom vices do not dominate, they are dominated by the Lord. "All ye servants of the Lord." It seems to have stopped here. But see the increase. It does not suffice only to be servants of the Lord, unless those same servants stand. For there are some who stand: others who fall: others who sit: others who lie down. Therefore those who fall, who sit, who lie down, they cannot praise the Lord. Praise ye, you who stand. But

someone may say: Others also stand. Many are the Churches: many are the congregations. Who therefore stand? Do the Arians stand? The Eunomians and other heresies name Christ: do they therefore stand? Lest therefore he should seem to give them license of praising the Lord, see what he says:

You who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. So that according to what the Apostle says: "Until," he says, "I come, that you may know how you should dispose the house of God," which is the Church (1 Tim. 3). The Church does not consist in walls, but in the truth of dogmas. The Church is there where true faith is. Moreover, fifteen or twenty years ago, the heretics possessed all the walls of the Churches here. For twenty years ago, the heretics possessed all these Churches. But the true Church was there, where true faith was. Therefore bless ye the Lord, you who are servants of the Lord. "Praise is not beautiful in the mouth of a sinner" (Ecclus. 15). Therefore you praise, who are servants of the Lord, and who are servants, and stand. You who stand? "He set," he says, "my feet upon a rock" (Psalm 39). And to Moses: "But thou, stand here with me" (Exod. 34). "God has stood in the synagogue of gods." And you who stand, not anywhere: but, "in the house of God, in the courts of the house of our God." In the Hebrew volumes it is not had, but it is in the following psalm. For how does it follow in that same psalm? "Praise ye the name of the Lord, praise ye the Lord, ye servants. You

who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God" (Psalm 134/135). Since therefore that psalm has: "You who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God": therefore someone thought that also in the psalm itself which preceded: "You who stand in the house of the Lord": he ought to add: "in the courts of the house of our God." But what "in the courts of the house of our God" may signify, and what may be the difference of the house and of the courts, will be discussed in the following psalm when it shall have been read.

In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places. This world is seated in wickedness (1 John 5), and our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of these darknesses (Ephes. 6). Whence the Apostle also says: "The night is passed: and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13). Therefore this age is night. But the future age is day. Whence the Apostle also says: "As in the day," he says, "let us walk honestly" (Ibid.). How we are to live in the day, that is, in the future age: if we live now.

In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places. Whether we wish it or not, we are in the nights. As long as we are in this age, we are in the nights. Night has darkness. But the nights of these darknesses are the sins of men. See therefore what he says: "In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places." While, he says, you are in this age, and in these nights, lift up your hands. Do not let them down, but lift them up. Lift them up with Moses (Exod. 17). If you lift

up your hands, Amalek is conquered. But if you let them down, Jesus is overcome. And at the same time consider the mystery. If we lift up our hands, Jesus conquers. If we lift up our hands in good works, through our good works Christ overcomes the devil. But hands are interpreted as works. Whence it is written: "The word of the Lord was made in the hand of Haggai": "The word was made in the hand of Jeremiah the prophet." Surely the word of God is not made in the hand, but is made in the mouth. But see the mysteries of Scripture: God does not come to the word without a good work. Moreover, even a homicide confesses Christ, and the Lord does not come to him: because his hands do not merit the advent of the Lord. Whence it is written in another place: "In the hand of the tongue are death and life" (Prov. 18). Does therefore the tongue have hands? Say, why is it said: "In the hand of the tongue are death and life"? See what he says: God does not hear the tongue, nor words, but works: that whoever speaks anything, should also do it. It is commanded us therefore in the newest psalm of degrees: "In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places." Lift up, he says, your hands: because Jesus lifted them up on the cross. In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places. Why did he wish to add and say, "to the holy places"? Even heretics seem to lift up hands, and gentiles seem to lift up hands, and Jews seem to lift up hands: for they also do almsdeeds: if they see a poor man, they stretch out the hand. When a Jew has given alms, does he not seem to you to lift up the hand?

He lifts up the hand indeed, but he does not lift it up to the holy places; because he does not confess Christ. But you who are in the house of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God: who are servants of the Lord, to whom he had said: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in one" (Psalm 132): so lift up your hands, that you lift them up in the holy place, that is, that you confess Christ, and whatever you do, you do for Christ.

Virtues, according to the quality of the one doing them, are diverse. As if he should say: A Christian does alms: also a gentile does, also a Jew does, and another Christian who is a holy man does. You will find some among the Christians who therefore give alms, that they may be praised by the people. If ever a poor man asks for a morsel, they look around here and there, and unless they see a witness, they do not give the money. If he be alone, he contracts his hand: he does not give willingly. O thou Christian, a poor man asks thee that thou shouldst give him money: why dost thou not give in secret, but givest in public? If thou seekest God as a witness: why dost thou require human eyes? Thy almsdeeds among the unskilful seem to be almsdeeds: but with God they are an injury. For thou dost an injury to thy brother. For thou wishest to show the beggar to others seeing it.

When therefore we give, let us not give as if of our own, but of the gift of Christ. We ought not to give as if to a beggar, but as if to a brother. We give

carnal things; he gives spiritual things: the poor man gives more than he receives. We give bread, which is consumed in that same day; he for bread will return to us the kingdoms of heaven.

Therefore I say this, that what we do, we should do in the holy place: or what we do, let us do for Christ's sake.

Moreover, many gentiles who do alms, if they see anyone having a cut hand: if they see him having a cancerous and putrid foot, immediately their mind is pained. The human soul is overcome by natural mercy. And what does he say? "Behold I, if I were such, what should I, miserable one, do?" "And it can be that I be such, who will give to me?" "And I ought therefore to give to this one: that also some one may give to me, if I shall be such." That one indeed gives bread to the poor man; but in the poor man he has mercy on himself, not on him. That mercy is not the mercy of Christ; but it is mercy of oneself.

Everything therefore that we do, let us do for Christ's sake, let us do in the holy place. Whether we eat, or whether we drink, let us do all in the name of Christ (1 Cor. 10).

We read the Scriptures. We learn the psalms, we hold the Gospels, we explain the prophets: we ought not to do this so that we may glory among the brethren, but that we may please Christ: that his speech may resound in our mouth. Men are accustomed, and monks are accustomed, and silly women are accustomed to have this contest among themselves: that more of them may learn the Scriptures; and in this they think they are

better, if they shall have learned more. He has learned more, who does more. Moreover if what thou learnest, I do: my works hold the Scriptures more than thy speech which resounds vainly.

In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places. Lift up your hands on the cross: lift up the standard. In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places. And when you shall have lifted them up in the holy place, and shall have done those things which are holy, let Christ be as it were the medicine of your good works. And bless ye the Lord. Whence the Apostle also says: "In every place lifting up immaculate hands" (1 Tim. 2): and bless ye the Lord. Whatever you do, refer it to the Lord. Let the hands be lifted up: let the mouth resound Christ. And in the nights lift up your hands. Give alms to the poor, and bless the Lord: give thanks to the Lord, because he has given to thee whence thou shouldst give to thy brother. Do thou rather give thanks to Christ when thou shalt have given, than the brother who shall have received from thee should give thanks to thee.

The poor provide a great benefit to us. Almsdeeds extinguish sins which we cannot now wash away otherwise. What is written? "As water extinguishes fire: so almsdeeds extinguish sins" (Ecclus. 3). Almsdeeds provide this, which baptism also does. Just as baptism dismisses sins to us: so also almsdeeds dismiss sins to us. As water extinguishes fire, so almsdeeds extinguish sins. For the fires of Gehenna are prepared for sins. But almsdeeds extinguish these.

May the Lord bless thee out of Sion: who made heaven and earth. Thou blessest the Lord, and the Lord blesses thee. Out of Sion, from the watchtower, from the Church, from true dogmas, from pious faith. May the Lord bless thee out of Sion. The Holy Spirit speaks this verse, or surely the prophet speaks in the spirit. And what does he say? O thou who through fifteen degrees hast ascended to the last, who hast done these and those things: who blessest the Lord: who in the nights liftest up thy hands, etc., and blessest the Lord, receive thou also a reward. May the Lord bless thee out of Sion. What thou hast given, receive. Thou hast given alms: thou hast done virtues, from God thou shalt obtain reward and blessing.

May the Lord bless thee out of Sion. Sion from the heavenly Jerusalem in the mother of the first-born, where there are future joys, where there are archangels, where there are the other virtues, where there are apostles, where there are prophets, where there are holy Martyrs, where follow the multitudes of Angels and of Saints, whithersoever the Lamb goeth (Apoc. 21).

Finally John also saw the holy city deposited from heaven, built with gems, having twelve gates. It was all golden, it had golden walls: it had also streets of diverse gems. In this city Christ reigns: in this city the inhabitants themselves are both dwellers and gates; they themselves are both the house and the dwellers. Do you wish to know that they are the house? Christ dwells in them: Christ walks about in them. "I will dwell,"

he says, "in them and will walk about" (Levit. 26; 2 Cor. 6).

See how great the holy soul is: it contains Christ, whom heaven does not contain. See what he says: "I will dwell," he says (Ibid.). But it can be that someone dwells narrowly. "I will dwell and walk in them." Wherever he walks about, surely it is a wide house. Where does he walk about? "You are," he says, "the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells in you." Let us prepare our temple, that Christ may come and dwell in us: that our soul may be Sion, may be a watchtower, that it may be placed in the summits: that it may be above, not below. We read in Zechariah the prophet: "And the angel," he says, "who spoke in me, said to me" (Zech. 1). If an angel spoke in the prophet, how much more does he dwell in us! He has us both as houses and as interlocutors.

May the Lord bless thee out of Sion, who made heaven and earth. If thou art holy, hear what he says: "who made heaven." If thou art a sinner: "who made earth." He made both heaven and earth. Meanwhile let us speak according to the letter. This says for the distinction of idols. "The gods," he says, "who have not made heaven and earth, let them perish from the earth." But the Lord made the heavens. For distinction of idols he says this. This meanwhile according to the letter.

Moreover, according to spiritual understanding, just as it is said to the sinner: "earth thou art, and into earth thou shalt go": so also to the holy it is said: "heaven thou art, and into heaven thou shalt go." Why did I say all this? That I might

prove the saints to be heaven. "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the works of his hands" (Psalm 18). "And let the waters that are above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord" (Psalm 148). "The heavens of heavens to the Lord: who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 113).

Although we be earthly, although we walk upon the earth, yet our conversation is in heaven. There we have our citizenships. Who made heaven and earth. Although thou art a sinner, do not despair: the Lord can do all things. Many from earth become heavens; and many from heaven, earth. Unhappy Judas was heaven, and was made earth. Paul the apostle at that time when he was persecuting the Church (Acts 7), was earth. He confessed, and was made heaven. Neither should he who is heaven be secure: nor should he who is earth despair of life.

Jacob at that time when he was fleeing into Mesopotamia from his brother, came to Luza: and there, he says, he placed a stone at his head (Gen. 35). Under his head that same stone was Christ. Never did he place a stone at his head, except at that time when he fled the persecutor. As long as he was in the house of his father, and had the refreshments of the flesh, he did not have a stone at his head. He departed from the house naked, he departed with a staff, and immediately in that same night he found a stone, and placed it at his head.

He who had such a pillow in which he was refreshed, see his vision. He saw, he says, a ladder

reaching from earth to heaven, and he saw, he says, angels descending and ascending. He saw angels from heaven come to earth, and others from earth ascend to the heavens. Do you wish to know that that stone which was at the head of Jacob, was Christ the corner stone? "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner" (Psalm 117). That stone which is written in the book of Kings, Eben-ezer (2 Kings 7). This stone is Christ. Eben-ezer moreover is interpreted, "stone of help." "Jacob arose," he says, "in the morning." And what did he say? "This," he says, "is the house of God." And what did he do? He took, he says, oil and anointed the stone. Unless we understand the mysteries of the Scriptures; of what reason was it, that he should anoint a stone with oil? May the Lord bless thee out of Sion: who made heaven and earth. Concluding with a blessing the fifteen psalms of the songs of degrees, he admonishes us from the prophetic voice, saying:

PSALM 134

Praise the name of the Lord. Which through faith you have known to be above every name. Praise the Lord, ye servants. Who have ceased to be servants of sin.

You that stand in the house of the Lord: in the courts of the house of our God. Who are immovably planted in him.

Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good. For he quickly grants pardon to the penitent: fulfilling also our hope by his goodness. Sing ye to his

name, for it is sweet. For the harsh perversity of heretics has not proceeded from him; but through that very sweetness we have been rescued from the squalor of gentility.

For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself. Him, namely, who having supplanted the people, snatched away his blessing. Israel for his own possession. He who after many struggles, deserved to see God with his mind (videns Deum).

For I have known that the Lord is great. The Son revealing him, we know the Father, as he himself says: "No one knoweth the Father, but he to whom the Son will reveal him" (Luke 10). And our God is above all gods. Above all holy ones and angels, who are worthy to be called gods.

All things whatsoever the Lord pleased he hath done, in heaven, in earth, in the sea, and in all the abysses. According to the will of his goodness, it pleased God to work wonders in lofty souls, in parched minds, in the waves of the world, and in the depth of malice, as follows.

Bringing forth clouds from the end of the earth. From earthly humility raising up apostles and prophets. He hath made lightnings for the rain. That they might pour out first the light of the knowledge of God, then the rain of doctrines.

Who bringeth forth winds out of his stores. Directing holy angels from heavenly secrets: who might bring strength and increase to these in clouds and rains. Who slew the first-born of Egypt: from man even unto beast. The principal vices and crimes of the world.

And he sent forth signs and wonders in the midst of thee, O Egypt. Terrifying the world in his passion, whether in darkness, or in the shaking of the earth. Upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants. Fastening the devil or his principalities to his cross.

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings. Innumerable vices, which had oppressed the world.

Sihon king of the Amorites. Those who curse God (exsecratores Dei) have with them a tree without fruit: who, being smitten together, are cast into eternal fire. And Og king of Bashan. A wall of confusion (maceria confusionis), which stood in our way lest we should know God. And all the kingdoms of Canaan. He slew the kingdoms of commotion, which moved us away from God and dominated us.

And gave their land for an inheritance: for an inheritance to Israel his people. God destroyed and overthrew all these things: and he adopted us through the knowledge of himself into an inheritance, and allowed that we should rule over those who had not afflicted us.

Thy name, O Lord, is for ever. While he remains in perpetuity, may this be to us an everlasting inheritance. Thy memorial, O Lord, unto all generations. That what the shadow of the old Law prefigured: in the other age, that is, in the Gospels, may be recognized.

For the Lord hath judged his people. The unbelieving Jews: who are even now already judged, since they did not believe. And he will be

comforted in his servants. In those who believe, surely.

The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men, they have a mouth and speak not, etc. He commemorates the execrable things of the Gentiles, mocking them: because since they have the life of no member, they wished to ennoble them with the metal of gold and silver. And therefore he added:

Let them that make them be like to them, and everyone that trusteth in them. Let them be confounded in those in whom they believe: but let us be comforted, who, made to the image of God, adore him.

Bless the Lord, O house of Israel. The congregations of the saints: beholding God with the eyes of the mind. Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron. The perfect order of ministers.

You that fear the Lord, bless the Lord. That as you fear his majesty, so you may praise him with charity.

Blessed be the Lord out of Sion: who dwelleth in Jerusalem. He himself, our Lord Jesus Christ: to whom with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 135

Alleluia. This psalm opens the mercies of the Lord shown to the human race in diverse necessities, saying:

Give praise to the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Confess your sins, and

praise him who through mercy grants indulgence to the one remaining in him.

Give praise to the God of gods. To him who gave to those believing in him the power to become sons of God.

Give praise to the Lord of lords. This refers to the Son, and "to the God of gods" to the Father. To the Father therefore and to the Son we give praise. For the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father.

Who alone doth great wonders. First he said, "Give praise to the God of gods," and again, "to the Lord of lords": and since he mentioned two persons: now he says, "Who alone doth great wonders," that he may not say two gods. For it is written: "There is one God, from whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus through whom are all things, and we through him" (1 Cor. 8).

Who made the heavens in understanding. These are the heavens that show forth the glory of God: who are clothed with the heavenly image and are heavens, who are not clothed with the earthly image in understanding, in wisdom. For Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. As also in Proverbs Wisdom herself says: "When he made the heavens, I was with him" (Prov. 8); and so forth.

Who established the earth above the waters. Although the earth be said to hang above the waters, that is, with weightless mass: nevertheless he founded our earth, and established it in baptism. He did not say he lifted it up, or exalted it, or made it ascend into the heavens. For Baptism

dismisses sins, and as if from a prison delivers: but the kingdoms of heaven it cannot bestow. For unless someone shall have entered through works and faith, he cannot be secure.

Who made the great lights. According to the letter he speaks of the stars: although we behold them as small, yet they are great. For just as we, if we ascend into a high mountain, and see a man in the valley below, he seems to us as some small thing: so also the stars are great, but from the height they seem small to us. For the star which is seen in Britain, everywhere also itself appears. But he says this to those to whom he said: "You are the light of the world" (Matth. 5).

The moon and the stars to rule the night. He placed the Church or her doctors under the night of the old Law: namely that what that Law announced in the letter, they might spiritually fulfill and observe.

Who smote Egypt with their first-born, and brought out Israel from the midst thereof: with a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm. By the power of his might, the world having been beaten, he brought us out from its works.

Who divided the Red Sea into parts, and settled Israel through the midst thereof. For in many steps one climbs through the waves of this world, that he may be able to approach him whom he beholds with his mind.

And overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. If we be Israel, God fights for us, and we shall be silent, and he overthrows the devil with his satellites: lest they prevail to harm us.

Who led his people through the desert. Always the people of God is led across through the deserts of this world, until it be introduced into the land of promise. Who brought forth water out of the rock. From Christ the Lord, who is the stable rock, either Baptism proceeded, or the cup of eternal life flowed.

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings. Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan he slew. He speaks of all the kingdoms of sin smitten by Christ: "Who smote great kings." First he smote Pharaoh, who is understood as the devil, and so his host, as we explained in the previous psalm.

And gave their land for an inheritance: for an inheritance to Israel his people. To the Christian, surely.

For he was mindful of us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever. That he might visit us by his coming.

And he redeemed us from the hand of our enemies. Pouring out his blood as our price.

Who giveth food to all flesh. Offering himself as the living bread, and giving life to this world.

Give praise to the God of heaven. Render to him the praise due to him: who changes you from earthly things into eternal ones.

Give praise to the Lord of lords. Who constituted you either judges or lords of the world. He himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 136

PSALM 136

A psalm of David on account of Jeremiah.

This psalm, brought forth from the prophetic voice, teaches that the minds of men are captured by sins: after the example of that earthly Jerusalem which, led out into captivity by the nations, wept. Let the souls, therefore, which after many errors are converted to the Lord, say:

Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept: when we remembered Sion. Unless someone is sick, he does not know how much health is worth. And again, the lame man does not know how much he is worth who is sound in his feet. Similarly also the blind man the one seeing. Why was all this said? Because the psalm says: "Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept, when we remembered Sion." Babylon is interpreted as "confusion." Therefore Babylon is this world. The sinner therefore who fell from paradise, came into the valley of tears, that is, into Babylon, into this world. Rather, however, the prophet says from the person of him who fell: "Upon the rivers of Babylon." Moreover, the river of Babylon is when you see someone beautiful for an hour, and falling sick he loses his beauty, and his flower withers: this passes like a river, and the waters succeeding each other, coming and receding, perish, and again others arise, and they themselves perish: so also in this world where for a moment or some time we are either enriched, or we are strong, or we are beau-

tiful, and after a little while it passes like water and perishes. There therefore we sat, and wept, when we remembered Sion. Although indeed by our vice we fell from paradise: yet we remember our former happiness, and we do not forget. And he who went down from Jerusalem into Jericho, which is interpreted as the "moon," that is, which is always changing (this moreover is understood as the present world), fell among thieves, and the Samaritan took him, and cures him with oil and wine, mixing austerity with mercy (Luke 10).

On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments. The willow has such a nature: it is indeed a wood without fruit, and it is said that if anyone receives a potion from it or eats of it, he does not produce children. There therefore we hung up our instruments. Moreover, the instrument (organum) of man is the body. For just as an instrument is composed of many pipes, but sends out a melody with one modulation, so also we have the touch of our instrument; through it, that is, through works, we render melody, song, and hymn to God. Similarly also through hearing, and through smell, and through taste, and through sight, and through all these virtues, as if from one instrument, we render hymn and song to the Lord. It is said again that the willow has no root. But if a branch is cut off and planted near water, it immediately grows green. So moreover also the sinner, although he has sinned, although he has fallen: yet if he be near the waters, that is, if he reads the holy Scriptures and hears the divine word from a holy man,

his soul grows green, and is converted to repentance.

For there they that led us into captivity required of us the words of songs, etc. The demons who deceived us and led us captive, now as if mocking us and glorying say to us: "Render to us a word from your faith: just as when you were in Jerusalem you said a hymn to God." They who have sinned and been deceived respond and say:

How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land? Constituted in sins, we who have fallen from Jerusalem into Babylon? Therefore no one can praise the Lord unless he be holy. For the sinner ought not to sing to the Lord, but to mourn his sins.

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten. Therefore because he has sinned and fallen, he remembers his former conversation and Jerusalem, and proposes to himself: that unless I shall always be mindful of thee, and always have thee in my mind, "let my right hand be forgotten," that is, my works. He did not say the left, but the "right." For the left is always in oblivion. Dost thou wish therefore to be always in the memory of the Lord? do the works of the right hand.

Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I do not remember thee. That is, let me have neither works nor speech: if the memory of thee be not continually turned in my heart.

Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom, in the day of Jerusalem. Edom is interpreted as "earthly" and "bloody." Who therefore is he but

the devil? See therefore what he says. This is said from the person of Adam: Lord, remember how the serpent devil, who is understood as Nebuchadnezzar, deceived me and dragged me, and cast me out of paradise. Remember and repay him, and let him suffer the penalty which he by his malice brought upon me: dragging me, he led me into Babylon and into the Assyrians.

Daughter of Babylon, miserable. The daughter of Babylon is the soul, which is always in motion, and in confusion, and not having a stable state, but is in vices and sins, which is truly miserable. Blessed be he who shall repay thee the payment which thou hast paid us. Blessed is he who shall repay her what she herself did. For example: she cast me out of paradise: I through abstinence lead her back to the same place. She deceived me through fornication: I through chastity lead her back into Jerusalem, and from vices into virtue. Therefore I do it not as an enemy, but as a friend.

Blessed be he that shall take and dash thy little ones against the rock. Little ones are called thoughts. As if he should say: I saw a woman, I lusted after her: immediately if I shall not have cut off that concupiscence, and as it were held the foot and dashed it against the rock while the concupiscence is small, it cannot afterwards be cut off when it shall have grown. Blessed therefore is he who immediately cuts it off, and dashes it against the rock. Moreover, the Rock is Christ.

PSALM 137

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. As are the wounds, such also is the plaster. For just as the body has diverse wounds: so also the soul has its passions and its wounds, and diverse wounds, and against sin we ought to do such a repentance. If someone confesses for all his sins: he confesses to the Lord with his whole heart. As if he had said: Someone has committed fornication, he confesses for fornication. But since he is either a miser, or wrathful, or a detractor, or a blasphemer, and has very many vices, he does not confess with his whole heart. But if someone does penance for all the vices and passions of his soul, he can say: "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart." For thou hast heard all the words of my mouth. This verse is not found in the Hebrew. For the rest, what he says is this: therefore I will praise thee with my whole heart, that is, for all my vices and sins: because I have not confessed to thee for one vice only, and thou hast heard me.

I will sing praise to thee in the sight of the angels. See the advancement of the penitent, because after confession and penance, he deserves to sing with the angels. But he who sings, no longer does penance, but gives thanks and blesses. I will worship towards thy holy temple. If this is the temple which now is seen deserted, in which it is necessary to worship: therefore the Jews ought not to worship, since the temple is overturned. But the "temple" he calls the holy and heavenly Jerusalem.

For thy mercy and for thy truth. Let the sinner hear of mercy, but the just and the proud hear of truth.

Thou shalt multiply strength in my soul. Thou shalt multiply, that is, in the soul lying under many solicitudes.

May all the kings of the earth give glory to thee, O Lord. The kings of the earth are those who rule over sin. Therefore let them give glory who rule over sin. For neither of the kings of this world is it written: "The heart of the king is in the hand of God" (Prov. 21). Dost thou think the heart of the most impious Julian was in the hand of God? Far be it; or of Nero, or of Maximian and Decius the persecutors? Far be it. But he says this to those who rule over sin, because those who conquer vices and the passions of the soul, and rule over sin, their heart is in the hand of God. For they have heard all the words of thy mouth. Because they have kept thy commandments.

And let them sing in the ways of the Lord. The philosophers of this age have not sung in the ways of the Lord, but we sing in the ways of the Lord, that is, in Moses and in Isaiah and in Jeremiah, and from these ways we come to that way which says: "I am the way."

PSALM 138

Lord, thou hast proved me, etc. Thy knowledge is become wonderful to me. Symmachus interpreted this more clearly: "Thy knowledge goeth beyond me," that is, I cannot know thy se-

crets, and into the depth of thy wisdom my mind cannot enter.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy face? How moreover can I comprehend thy knowledge, since in thee are all things, and there is nothing which flees thee, and thy spirit is everywhere? From which we understand that it is God who is wholly everywhere.

If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art present, etc. No height is higher than thee: no depth deeper than thee: the east and the west are contained in thy hand.

And I said: Perhaps darkness shall cover me: and night shall be my light in my pleasures. In the Hebrew the sense is this: "And I said: Perhaps darkness shall cover me": on the contrary, however, the night itself was light before thee: because nothing can hide from thee. Which Symmachus interpreted better, saying: "And night sits as light around me." But the following verses also signify this same thing.

For darkness shall not be dark to thee, and night shall be light as the day: the darkness thereof and the light thereof are alike to thee. That is, all things which are thought hidden from thee are so clear, that they are more manifest than light.

Thou hast protected me from my mother's womb. The Fifth Edition translated it thus: "Thou hast fashioned (conflasti) me from my mother's womb."

Thy eyes did see my imperfect being. He placed "imperfect" here for "unformed": that

God knows even the elements of man before they are formed in the womb. And in thy book all shall be written. And that no one is born without the will of God: lest anyone should escape his knowledge.

Days shall be formed, and no one in them. Symmachus translated this place thus: "the days in which they were formed, not even one of them is missing." And the sense is: all the time of age to which the courses have already been deputed from the beginning of this life, runs to a certain end, nor is one day more or less than thou the creator hast willed to be. Moreover, according to the Seventy interpreters, and a higher understanding, the sense is: Thou formest all in the day, thou willest all to be sons of God, but there is no one among men who does not become subject to sin, and through this begins to be a son of the night, nor does anyone of them perfect his whole time of life worthy of the light of that day. Whence also the Apostle speaks to those who had ceased to be sons of the night: "But we, brethren, are not sons of the night, but sons of God" (1 Thess. 5).

PSALM 139

Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man, etc. The devil cannot deceive us as much as through the instrument of man: from this the prophet prays to be delivered.

Who have devised iniquities in their hearts. He speaks of heretics.

The poison of asps is under their lips. Because they seem to have words of friendship, but they are full of deadly poison.

They have set a stumbling-block for me near the way. This is, bringing forth testimonies from the Scriptures, which as it were seemed to have some reason, they will try to deceive me.

I said to the Lord: Thou art my God. If thou art not holy, thou canst not say this verse. He in whom sin does not reign says this: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance" (Psalm 15).

Deliver me not, O Lord, from my desire to the sinner. The Scripture says: "But if anyone shall see a woman to lust after her, he hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5). Therefore the prophet says: Do not deliver me to the devil from my concupiscence; but it is well for me to judge in work, and not in thought.

THE HEAD OF THEIR COMPASSING: THE LABOR OF THEIR LIPS SHALL COVER THEM.

Just as a serpent, when it sees someone coming to strike it, makes a circle of its whole body, and hides its head in the middle, where it knows it has its life; so also these heretics, through the discourse of philosophers, and of Aristotle, and of others, seem to hide themselves and as it were protect and defend themselves. But the man of the Church, as if with a rod, that is, in the Cross, looses the circle, and finds the hidden head, and strikes him there; that is, he brings forth testimony from the Scriptures.

The upright shall dwell with thy face. What is the face of God except Christ? Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Philipp. 2).

PSALM 140

Lord, I have cried to thee, hear me. Moses was standing with the people, and Pharaoh was following behind his back, and on all sides there was distress for him. In that time he wept to God. And immediately God said to him: Why criest thou to me? While he prayed with silence, he was heard. Moreover, the Scripture does not mention that he spoke, but only that he wept. And the blood of martyrs always cries to the Lord, and is heard. And the Lord spoke to Cain: The blood of thy brother criest to me (Gen. 4). And in the Apocalypse of John, the souls of the just under the altar said to the Lord: How long, O Lord, dost thou not defend us (Apoc. 6)? At the same time, moreover, let us consider that the souls of the just are the altars of the Lord. Give ear to my voice, when I cry to thee. That is, see and consider, O Lord, what I ask: for I do not ask with a corporeal desire, either gold, or anything else of this kind: but that I may obtain thy mercy. Therefore he says, give ear, that is, listen diligently, because I ask nothing foreign.

Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight. That is, let my prayer reach thee directly, not having any filth, or vices, or diabolical thoughts. Moreover, incense is the prayers of the saints. This, moreover, we know from the Apocalypse: when the twenty-four elders held thuribles, and said (Ibid. 8): These are the prayers

of the saints. The lifting up of my hands, as evening sacrifice. The lifting up of hands points to the Lord. And in the lifting up of hands we see the Creator. See, moreover, that he did not say, the extension of my hands. For extension is not lifting up. But someone extends, both behind the back and to the side, that is, into vices: just as the Lord says: And when you shall extend your hands to me, I will not hear you (Jer. 15). An evening sacrifice, the eleventh hour, that is, in the Gospel, I lift my hands. And again the Apostle: Lift up your hands to prayers (1 Tim. 2). And Moses, when he lifted his hands, Jesus (Joshua) conquered: when he put them down, he was conquered (Exod. 17). If I understand the Scriptures according to history, and according to the letter: Moses has his hands downward. If, however, spiritually, he lifts his hands on high.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: and a door of circumference about my lips. Death and life are in the power of the tongue. And again: "Amen I say to you: that of every idle word that you shall speak, you shall render an account in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12). Therefore, the Prophet asks this, that everything he speaks may not be idle, but holy and worthy of God. And a door of circumference about my lips. He asks for a door of circumference as if a wall around the whole house, so that he may be conquered in nothing. For Jeremiah says: "Death has entered through your windows" (Jer. 9). Now we have five windows, that is, sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. If, therefore, I see a woman to lust

after her, I have already committed adultery with her in my heart (Matt. 5), and death has entered through my window, that is, through sight. If a pipe, or an organ, or a reed should as it were dissolve me, death has entered through my hearing. If, however, I touch something soft, and am dissolved by the softness of the body, death has entered through my touch, and other things similarly. Therefore the prophet prays for a door of circumference, that is, that his whole house may be fortified, so that the adversary may not have a place from which to enter and dominate men. For it is said in the Epistle of Saint Peter: "Our adversary the devil as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5). The devil does not fight quickly against someone through great vices, but through small ones, so that he can enter in any way whatever and dominate the man, and afterwards he impels him into greater vices. He enters not through fornication, not through avarice, but through lesser vices.

Incline not my heart to evil words; to make excuses in sins. O most unhappy human race, who excuse sins, saying: "I was overcome by nature": when it is in our power both to sin and, with the Lord helping, not to sin. We always excuse ourselves and say: "I did not want to sin: the flesh conquered me. That woman came to me, she sent, she touched me, she said that to me, she called me"; and for that for which we ought to have done penance and said: "Lord, I have sinned," we excuse ourselves and join sins to sins. We all have the same body, but different

labors. God is no respecter of persons. Do you wish, therefore, to know that both we and the saints have the same body? The Apostle Paul says: "But I see another law fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin" (Rom. 7). And again after these things: "Therefore I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway" (1 Cor. 9). And again: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7). Therefore we have different labors. And as much as one labors, so much reward also shall he receive.

With men that work iniquity. From the common part it is understood: "incline not my heart with men that work iniquity." And I will not communicate with the choicest of them. Just as the Lord has his holy elect, so also the devil has his elect. Understand for me the leaders of heretics, and you will not doubt about their elect. For if he had said "the elect," and not with the sub-distinction "of them," he would have excluded the elect of God. I will communicate is understood in two ways: either I shall consent, or I shall become second, that is, unclean. For you know the Scripture calls two things unclean. The Apostle says: "That he may confound both" (Eph. 2), that is, two men into one new man. Two, the inner and the outer, that is, I shall make the unclean holy. And again: Noah in the ark brought in seven clean things with him: but the unclean two by two (Gen. 7).

The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth: and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12). Blessed is he who is corrected, for the Lord will not judge twice for the same thing. The anger of God is great when he is not angry with us (Nahum 1). For he reserves us like a calf for the slaughter. For he says to Jerusalem: "Many are thy sins, and many thy iniquities: therefore I am not angry with thee" (Jer. 3), that is, when thou wast only an adulteress, I was jealous of thee as if loving thee: but when thou hadst many lovers, I despised thee, and I am not angry with thee (Ezek. 16). Just as a man is jealous of his wife when he loves her: if, however, he is not jealous, he hates her, and he does not follow the words of him who says: "I will visit their iniquities with a rod" (Psalm 88). And again: "And I will not visit their daughters when they shall have committed fornication" (Hos. 4). The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me. Place here some master, or father, or physician. If the physician sees putrid flesh in the body and says, "what do they concern me?" know that he is cruel. If, however, he cuts them away and applies a cautery, he is merciful: because he heals the man. Similarly also a master, if he lets the boy go and does not require discipline from him, hates him. If, however, he requires it, and the physician cures; that which is thought to be harshness is clemency. Ahab is rebuked by the Lord concerning Naboth (3 Kings 21): when he killed him, and took his vineyard, and shed

just blood. Elijah the prophet was sent to him, who said: "Thou hast killed, and hast taken possession": immediately struck in conscience he submitted his neck and eyes, and this an impious man, and a king clothed in purple. And afterwards the Scripture says: that hearing this he put on sackcloth beneath the purple. And God seeing him said: "Because Ahab has reverenced me: I will not bring evils upon him." See, therefore, how much the sackcloth and fasting availed, and how much a small tear washed away blood. So, therefore, it is necessary to be clothed in sackcloth and to fast, that no one may see. Correct is understood in two ways: either he will reprove, or he will teach. But let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head. My people...

For my prayer also shall still be in their good pleasures. He says this: They indeed were wise; I, however, prayed for them that they might be converted. Their judges are swallowed up, joined to the rock. As he says elsewhere: "Blessed is he who shall take and dash his little ones against the rock" (Psalm 136). Moreover, the rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10). Now the little ones are the lesser and small thoughts before they grow. And now these heretics, although through Aristotle and Plato they seem to contemn the simplicity of the Church, nevertheless when they come to the Scriptures, they will immediately be swallowed up by the rock, that is, by Christ, and will be converted to him. For "swallowing up" is used for victory: as the Apostle says: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is thy victory?

Where, O hell, is thy sting?" (1 Cor. 15). Moreover, he calls the swallowing up itself a victory, which victory he had in swallowing up.

They shall hear my words, for they have prevailed. The Lord himself says: Because they came to me, they were conquered, and they were delighted with my words, and they were converted to me, and they are in my Church. As the thickness of the earth. Everything thick is near the earth. And the soul which sins cleaves to the earth. For from the beginning the Lord made all things thin (subtle). By his own vice, therefore, each one is thickened and led down to the earth. Let us give an example: just as a swelling wound in the body is full and thick, and when the physician comes he cuts it, and heals it and makes it thin, and then it is reduced to its nature, as it was also created. Therefore he says: As the thickness of the earth is broken up upon the ground, and is saved.

Our bones are scattered by the side of hell. In the twenty-first psalm he says: "All my bones are scattered." If we understand it according to the letter, it does not stand. For indeed he was only crucified. When thou shalt see Arius, or Eunomius outside the Church; understand the bones of the Lord to be scattered by the side of hell. The "bone" which is strong, is the leaders themselves who seem to be something: they are led away by heretics through their multiloquence, and through philosophy and contention.

Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me. Heretics or demons always stretch out

snares for us. For vices are neighbors to virtues. They have set a snare for me in almsgiving, if I stretch out my hand so that men may see: and as if doing good, I come into vice and into sin. If, however, I shall give a tunic to a brother so that another may see, they have set a snare for me. Nets are always stretched out for deer, and snares are set for them where the hunter has discovered their tracks. Now the deer is taken for the holy man: because he is high, and has large horns, and kills serpents. Therefore he says elsewhere: "Who hath made my feet like the feet of harts" (Psalm 17). For he is said to be of such virtue, that he is able to draw serpents out of their caves with the breath of his nostrils, and thus eat them. Those serpents, therefore, set stumbling-blocks for us, that is, the demons in our very tracks where we walk: In virtues, in almsgiving, so that we do them before men on account of vainglory. In fasting, in prayer, in wearing sackcloth: and showing them to men. For he who is clothed in sackcloth ought to mourn his sins: not to glory and show it to men. And from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity. That is, so that I may not stumble.

The wicked shall fall into his net. Above he said, "keep me from the snare which they have laid for me," concerning many; now, however, concerning one: The wicked shall fall into his net. Just as the Lord sends a net, and catches a multitude of fish, and has apostles as fishermen gathering and bringing to him those very ones who believe through them, so also the devil

has demons who are subject to him, who both deceive men and bring them to him. I am alone until I pass. Jeremiah says: "I sat alone, for I was filled with bitterness" (Jer. 15). That is, in penance, I alone avoid these deceits. And Moses says: "I will pass and see this great vision" (Exod. 3). If he shall not pass, that is, through all vices, he cannot see the great vision. Now it is a great vision: because the bush was burning, and was not consumed: The thorns were burning, that is, sins. With this fire Isaiah also is cleansed: for this is the coal which touched his lips: which was upon the altar (Isa. 6). The prophet David also mentions this coal: "Sharp arrows of the mighty, with desolating coals" (Psalm 119). This coal is a desolator, it makes a solitude, and purges the sinner.

PSALM 141

Of understanding for David. A prayer when he was in the cave. This title is prefixed according to history, indeed, when David was fleeing from the face of Saul, hidden in a cave in the desert of Engaddi (1 Kings 24). And Saul entered, being ignorant, as if for his own cause. But since it has in the prefix: Of understanding for David: we ought to understand the psalm spiritually. Indeed, the true David is taken for the Lord, and Saul is understood as the devil. Now the cave is in this world: and that the devil does not send anything of good into this world; but dung, and if there is anything putrid. Moreover, this world is understood as a cave, because it does not have

perfect light, in comparison to the future, but the Lord, coming into this world, shone as if some light. Therefore the Apostle says: "Who is the brightness of his glory" (Heb. 1). Therefore, just as David entered into the cave hiding himself from Saul: so also the Lord entered into this world, and suffered persecution.

I cried to the Lord with my voice: with my voice I made supplication to the Lord. I pour out my prayer in his sight. He speaks all these things in bodily humility, that he may manifest himself a true man, as we have often said. And before him I declare my trouble: when my spirit failed me. Neither present trouble, nor the failing of spirit hinders him: but he does not cease to cry continually with the prayer of a spiritual voice. Then thou knewest my paths. The doctrines which I teach.

In this way wherein I walked, the proud have hidden a snare for me. We have declared in other psalms that the snares of temptations were often hidden for him by the Jews in the way of this present life.

I looked on my right hand. That they might be led from the left to the right. And beheld: and there was no one that would know me. God covered with flesh.

Flight hath perished from me. His flight perished, when having been betrayed by the Jews, he often voluntarily offered himself again, nor was he recognized by them. And there is no one that hath regard to my soul. They take the body to crucify it: but they do not require the soul, that is, they do not touch it.

I cried to thee, O Lord. From the Cross. I said: Thou art my hope. Commending my spirit into thy hands (Luke 23). My portion in the land of the living. In the saints who are transferred into it, just as he said to the thief: "Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Attend to my supplication: for I am brought very low. Deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than me, etc. He asks to be led out from the cloisters of hell by the Father, so that his resurrection may be an honor to the Father's name. Which confession he shows by whom it is to be confessed, saying: The just wait for me. The Apostles or the rest of the saints, whose expectation I satisfy when I shall have risen. Until thou reward me. That brightness which I had with thee before the world was made (John 17). And we humbly deprecate and ask, that having received the voice of our cry, having been led out from the prison of hell, thou mayest command us to be transferred there from death, where thou hast prepared a place of light and rest for the hanging thief: because to thee is honor and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 142

A psalm of David, when his son Absalom pursued him.

This psalm contains the voice of him who for human redemption emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, that he might rescue us from servitude (Philipp. 2).

Hear, O Lord, my prayer. Humble words and full of humility and mercy. Give ear to my supplication in thy truth. These are the words of one who is confident. In thy truth, that is, in thy Christ. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14). And hear me in thy justice. And in thy Christ. That is, I do not trust in myself, but I ask for thy truth and justice, that it itself may have mercy on me.

And enter not into judgment with thy servant. Behold he has most manifestly shown that he waits for the mercy of God, saying: And enter not into judgment with thy servant. Here it is as if someone should judge between God and the prophet, just as it is written in the fiftieth psalm: "That thou mayest be justified in thy words, and mayest overcome when thou art judged." And therefore God enters into judgment, that he may punish justly. Cyrus also, king of the Persians and Medes, did such a thing to the king of the Armenians, when he transgressed his friendships. He conquered him and took him captive: and he made his own kinsmen, and wife, and children judge between them: that he might either have mercy or punish justly. For in thy sight no man living shall be justified. "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob: the God of the living, and not of the dead" (Luke 20). Therefore not even the patriarchs themselves shall be justified in the sight of God. For the stars are not clean in his sight (Job 25).

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul. This does not need interpretation. No one doubts that

it is the devil. He hath brought down my life to the earth. This is what he says. Before I had wings, and I flew: now, however, the enemy has persecuted my soul: and he has caught me, and bound my feet and hands, just as a bird is caught by a man, so that it as it were seems to be dead: because it does not have the license of its wings to fly. So also, he says, the enemy has bound me with the conscience of my sins.

He hath made me to dwell in darkness as those that have been dead of old. If as those who have been dead of old, he is not yet dead, because he stands in penance. If, however, anyone sinning does not do penance, he is dead to the world, and not "as if" dead, but perfectly dead. Therefore the enemy thought this, that I would not do penance for the sins which he himself suggested to me to do. And my spirit is in anguish within me. Tell thou first thy sins, and thou shalt be saved (Isa. 43). And again: If thou shalt only sigh for thy sins, thou shalt be saved (Ezek. 18). My heart within me is troubled. Because of my conscience, because I have sinned.

I remembered the days of old. I was mindful of my former days, when I had confidence: now, however, it is night for me.

I stretched forth my hands to thee. Bound by the enemy, I can do nothing else except do penance, and lift my hands to thee. My soul is as earth without water unto thee. As earth without water thirsts and seeks rain: so also my soul desires and thirsts for thee, its God.

Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit hath fainted. My soul hath fainted, and my flesh hath fainted: only the spirit has remained in me, and it itself has fainted; but, hear me speedily, O Lord, and have mercy on me.

Make the way known to me, wherein I should walk. Make thy Christ known to me, who said: "I am the way" (John 14).

Thy good spirit shall lead me into the right land. Here the most impious Arians propose to us, and say: "Good Master, what good shall I do that I may be saved?" Who says: "Why callest thou me good? None is good but one, that is, God" (Luke 18). Therefore if the Son is not good, but the Father: the Father is greater than the Son. Therefore, according to thy sense, most impious Arian, who is greater? The Son, or the Holy Spirit? Certainly thou sayest, the Son. Here, therefore, it says: Thy good spirit shall lead me into the right land. Therefore if the Spirit is good, who is lesser, as thou sayest: much more is the Son good, whom thou sayest is greater. In the Gospel, moreover, it has it thus: "And one of the scribes coming, tempting him, said: Good Master," and he said: "Why callest thou me good, and confessest not" (Matt. 19)? Just as if someone tempting his bishop, whom he contemns, should say to him: "Bishop," and he responds: "To thee I am not a bishop, depart from me." Elsewhere, moreover, have you not read: "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep" (John 10)? Now what is better than the Son, who for our sake put on flesh, and suffered, and descending from his majesty, was

in blood for nine months in the Virgin's womb, was in the cradle, suffered to grow through the moments, and to be beaten, and buffeted, and crucified? What is better than this?

PSALM 143

On account of those who are ignorant of the Latin language, although we have said many things concerning the Gospel, yet we ought also to say some things concerning the Psalter: so that while others are satisfied, others may not return fasting. Since, however, the psalm is long, and if we should wish to linger on individual verses, the day would pass: we ought briefly to repeat the sense of each one rather than the words.

Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to fight, and my fingers to war. He who interprets briefly attains this, that he himself may not have praise, and yet that those who have heard may retain whatever is in the interpretation. Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to fight, and my fingers to war. Let us lift up hands in holy places without thoughts and disputes; let us lift them up in every place. And when we shall have lifted up our hands, our prayers to God are weapons against the devil. Who teacheth my hands to fight, and my fingers to war. This is our lyre, this our cithara. In this we sing to the Lord.

My mercy, and my refuge: my support, and my deliverer. My protector, and in him have I hoped. God is called by so many names. As many as the benefits, so many are the names. Who subduest

my people under me. This can be said from the person of Christ, that is, from the assumed man. It can, however, be said from the person of the apostles, because it is said: Who subduest my people under me. A holy Father in a monastery also says this, and giving thanks to God he says: "Blessed be the Lord my God, who subduest my people under me." For they are not subject to me; but they are subject to thee. Therefore they serve me, that they may serve thee.

Lord, what is man, that thou art made known to him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him? This very thing is also said in the eighth psalm: "What is man that thou art mindful of him: or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Lord, what is man, that thou art made known to him? Does he speak of the fragility of the body and the human condition? And what does he say? If thou lookest at the flesh, what is man? If at the Spirit, man is something great. Let us not despise the flesh, but let us contemn the works of the flesh. Let us not despise the flesh, which reigns with Christ in heaven. "Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15). Not flesh and blood, but the works of the flesh. "Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God," and how do they reign in Christ, and how do we sit with Christ in the heavenly places? Lord, what is man, that thou art made known to him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him? He gives thanks to God, and what he says is this: As far as the human condition is concerned, man is nothing. "Vanity

of vanities, and all is vanity," says Ecclesiastes. If all is vanity, then also heaven, then also the angels. If heaven and the angels are vanity: how great a vanity is man! And if the angels are vanity, if heaven is vanity: why then did God work vanity? It is vanity in comparison to God: otherwise, in itself it is not vanity (Eccles. 1). Lord, what is man, that thou art made known to him? It is a great happiness for man to know his Creator. In this we differ from the beasts, because we understand our Creator; they do not understand. But also the very state of the body seeks its artificer. Other animals look at the earth, and where the belly is, there also are the eyes. Otherwise our eyes are raised to heaven, and if the mind has been blinded, yet with unvanquished eyes let us see heaven.

Man is made like to vanity: his days pass away like a shadow. Truly our days are like a shadow. I was a little infant, I was a boy, I was a young lad, I was a youth, I was a man, that is, I was of perfect age, I was of middle age. While I know it not, I am an old man. Death creeps upon old age. I am changed daily, and I do not feel that I am anything. Not even for one moment of an hour do we stand in our state, but we are always either growing or decreasing. Therefore man is changed through the moments, and while he knows it not, he perishes. I, an old man, remember what I was as a little infant, what I did, how I played, how I ran hither and thither: now I see myself weighed down with too much weight. His days pass away like a shadow. Our life seems to be a shadow, and

it has no substance. Now that which has no substance, quickly perishes. Because therefore man is so miserable: because he is so weak, what do we pray for then? What do we ask? What does the prophet say here? What is it that he prays?

Lord, bow down thy heavens and descend. Thou shalt not be able to save this vileness of man, unless thou thyself shalt put it on. Lord, bow down thy heavens and descend. Thy erring sheep shall not be able to be healed, unless it be carried back on thy shoulders (Luke 15). Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. "Amen, amen, I say to you: if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed: you shall say to this mountain: Pass, and it shall be removed" (Matt. 17). There it was said concerning the lunatic: concerning that mountain, which could not be removed by them. It is written in Jeremiah: "Give glory to the Lord our God, before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains" (Jer. 13). Why have we said all this? Because it now follows: Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. The mountains that reign: the mountains that are raised up through pride: who say: "The rivers are mine, and I have made them." Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. He did not say, they shall be inflamed; but, they shall smoke. Let the mountains have the sign of punishment: not of brightness, not of splendor.

Flash forth lightnings, and thou shalt scatter them. See what he says. He did not say, thou shalt destroy them; but, thou shalt scatter them. We read in Genesis, at that time when they were

building the tower, God said: "Come, let us go down and confuse their tongues, lest at any time they should have agreement among themselves, but let them be dispersed" (Gen. 11). This is for their benefit.

Send forth thy hand from on high. "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. 53). Send forth thy hand from on high. "Lord, bow down thy heavens and descend." This is said to the Son: Bow down thy heavens and descend. And how did he say: Send forth thy hand from on high? If he descended, how does he send his hand from on high? But although he is on earth, yet from heaven he sends his hand: for he does not depart from heaven. Deliver me, and rescue me from many waters. Because thou hast descended, because thou hast bowed the heavens, and hast sent thy hand from on high, and hast deigned to assume human flesh, and many have believed in thee: instead of one water, there began to be more waters. You may see various heresies dispersed in the whole world. Deliver me, and rescue me from many waters: and grant me the living fountain. For there is "one God, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4). Deliver me from many waters. For those many waters do not beget thy children, but strange children. Whence follows: Deliver me from many waters, and from the hand of strange children. For they are not thy children, who are born in many waters; but they are strange children.

Whose mouth hath spoken vanity. They promise knowledge to themselves, and they lift up their mouth against their Creator. "They have set their mouth against heaven." Whose mouth hath spoken vanity. Their knowledge is a knowledge of vanity. And their right hand is the right hand of iniquity. Both are condemned, both the mouth and the hand, both the knowledge and the works. Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, that is, knowledge. And their right hand is the right hand of iniquity. The right hand, in work. They say they have a right hand: but they are entirely on the left. It is a right hand of iniquity, and it is not of equity. Whence also it is said to such a left hand: "Let the devil stand at his right hand." He who has such a right hand, and a right hand of iniquity, the devil standeth at his right hand (Ps. 108).

To thee, O God, I will sing a new song. A new man, a new song. To thee, O God, I will sing a new song. "Sing ye to the Lord a new song" (Ps. 95). How beautifully he did not say "I sing," but I will sing. He promised in the future: for in the present he knows there is a contest, not a song. An army never sings, unless when it has conquered. Therefore because in the present I fight: I have no leisure to sing. When he have conquered, then I will sing. Upon the psaltery of ten strings I will sing to thee. Then I will stretch out both hands, and I will sing to thee with vital strings. My prayer is thy psaltery.

Who givest salvation to kings, etc. To which kings? "The heart of the king is in the hand of God" (Prov. 21): those who reign in their own

body, who subject their own body, and bring it into servitude, lest preaching to others, they themselves should become reprobate (1 Cor. 9). These are the kings of whom Wisdom says in Proverbs: "He giveth a kingdom to kings" (Prov. 8).

Deliver me, and rescue me from the hand of strange children. The verses which were said above are repeated again. Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is the right hand of iniquity. Whose sons are as new plants in their youth. "From the hand of strange children." Let us see what kind the children of heretics are. Whose sons are as new plants in their youth. From the hand of strange children. Mark diligently what is said concerning the heretics.

Their daughters decked out: adorned round about after the similitude of a temple, etc. They called the people happy that hath these things. They said this. What do I say? Happy is the people whose Lord is their God. Therefore we shall briefly discuss each point with your prayers. Whose sons are as new plants in their youth. Their planting is not old, but it is new. For it is not from the old law: it is not from the prophets: it is not from the apostles, but it is from new teachers. Their daughters, as new plants in their youth. In their youth: they are always young. Although there are many old heresies, yet they are changed daily, and new ones are found daily. The heresies themselves are new, although they may be old: yet since they renew their doctrines daily, they are new. For they are not content with the error

of the old teachers, but they themselves find new things daily: whose sons are as new plants in their youth. Concerning the Church, what is said; concerning those who fear the Lord? "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, that walk in his ways." What is said of them? "Thy children as olive plants round about thy table." Those children are around the table of Christ: they are not far from the table of Christ. There it is not said, "daughters"; but only, "sons." Otherwise heretics have also daughters, they have also the weaker sex, pleasures, delights. Their daughters decked out. The speech is decked out (composed), and the sense is sordid. In the holy Scriptures thoughts are always called sons: words, daughters. See then what he says: Their thoughts, that is, the sons, are new. But their words, that is, of the heretics, which they have from worldly wisdom, are decked out: for they have decked out words, a praised speech. Their daughters decked out. They seem indeed to be decked out, but because they are daughters, and not sons, they have no strength. Adorned round about after the similitude of a temple. He said beautifully, similitude of a temple. They do not have the true Church, but a similitude of the Church.

Their storehouses full: flowing out from this into that. They are ready for contending. If you hold them to one testimony, they pass to another. If you hold them to the Scriptures, they flee to Aristotle. If you hold them to Aristotle, they pass over into Plato. Their storehouses full: flowing out from this into that. A storehouse (cellarium)

is properly so called, which has riches composed (stored up). Heretics have storehouses. For they have prepared words with which they may contend. Otherwise those of the Church are simple: they have nothing prepared. They open their mouth, and it is filled by the Lord: according to what is said: "Open thy mouth, and I will fill it" (Ps. 80). And, "Think not what you shall answer them: for your Father shall give you in that hour what you shall say" (Matt. 10). You see that we have no prepared storehouses: but our riches are placed under (ready). Someone says: Give a testimony how the saints have no storehouses. "Behold," he says, "the birds of the air, for they have neither storehouses nor barns: and your heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matt. 6). Those birds are especially monks: they have no storehouses, they have no warehouses: but they have the Lord of warehouses and storehouses, Christ himself. They have no barns, but the Lord of barns. They have not the riches of the devil, but they have the poverty of Christ. What does the devil say? "All these things are mine: if falling down thou wilt adore me, I will give them to thee" (Matt. 3). What does Christ say to his own? "He that shall not sell all that he hath, and give to the poor, cannot be my disciple" (Matt. 13, and Luke 12). The former promises kingdoms and riches that he may kill; the latter promises poverty that he may save. We do nothing great, if we leave our own things. Christ left the Father, and the kingdoms of heaven for our sake. Let no one think that I blaspheme: because I said, he left the Father. I

speak according to the dispensation (economy), according to which he is sent: according to what is said: "The Father who sent me, is greater than I" (John 10, and 14). God is not sent: God is not subjected to servitude: but the dispensation is sent. If God is everywhere, and all things are in God: how is God sent to anything, when...

Their sheep fruitful. They have many children. For great is the number of heretics. Their sheep fruitful. Whence also it is said in Hosea the prophet: "Lord, give them" (Hos. 9). What wilt thou give them? "A sterile womb and dry breasts." Concerning whom is this said? Concerning the teachers of the heretics: who applaud themselves in the number of their disciples. Their sheep fruitful, abounding in their goings out. He did not say in their goings in, but in their goings out. For they do not enter into the Church, but they go out from the Church, that is, "they went out from us, but they were not of us." "For if they had been of us, they would surely have remained with us." Abounding in their goings out. Daily they go out from the Church: abounding in their goings out. What is said of the Church? "All the glory of the king's daughter is from within" (Ps. 44). Their oxen fat. Pharaoh also saw fat oxen in his dreams (Gen. 41): the Israelite people are thin, the Egyptians fat. For you see the teachers of the heretics doing nothing else, but studying for riches. They study for riches, and they contemn the poor Christ. Their oxen fat. He says beautifully, fat oxen: "whose God is the belly, and glory is in their confusion" (Phil. 3).

There is no breach of wall, nor passage. Does it not seem obscure to you what is said: There is no breach of wall, nor passage, nor clamor in their streets? You will with difficulty find unlearned heretics. For all their teachers are instructed in worldly science. There is no breach of wall, nor passage. If ever they are in disputes, when they have begun to dispute with thee, their words are so brief: so concluded with skillful speech, that it is difficult to escape from thence. For when they have bound thee with their syllogisms, and have shut thee in, and have woven and built a syllogism for thee like a wall, thou canst not turn: thou canst not pass: thou art held shut in. There is no breach of wall, nor passage. And when they have held thee there as if shut in a certain circle: then thou wilt not be in the narrow way, which leadeth to life: but in the broad way, which leadeth to death (Matt. 7). Nor clamor in their streets: The clamor of Jesus recalls to himself, and says: "He that thirsteth, let him come and drink" (John 7). The clamor of Jesus is in the narrow way: in the streets of the heretics it is not.

They called the people happy that hath these things. Many not knowing, think such to be happy. Otherwise for us there is Christian simplicity: we do not want Platonic eloquence: but we want apostolic simplicity. That fisherman holds a net, he has muddy feet, and has hands calloused from work. Happy is the people whose Lord is their God. Happy is the people, who has Christ instead of all riches. They have sons and daughters, and storehouses, and fruitful sheep,

fat oxen, and sleek and beautiful ones. Otherwise we do not have a multitude: but we know that saying in the Gospel: "Wherever two or three shall be gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18). "Fear not, little flock"; because it hath pleased God to dwell in thee. Let not the monks say: Behold such great multitudes, the cities are full, the whole world; is no one then saved, except he who is in monasteries? Behold such great multitudes: are we then alone saved? When therefore thou shalt have thought these things, hear: "Fear not, little flock": it is said in the Gospel, that one soul is saved: that two thousand swine should perish (Mark 5). Why do I say all this? Because more precious is the soul of one saint, than infinite multitudes of sinners. From the whole world he chose twelve apostles, from the twelve one departed: eleven remained. The cross came: ten fled: Peter alone remained: one with one. And that one himself fled, and would that he had fled, and not denied. Therefore let us say, the whole human race perished: Because it had perished, therefore the crucified Lord said: "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the Gentiles there is no man with me" (Isa. 63). At that time was fulfilled the psalm: "Save me, O Lord, for the holy one hath failed" (Ps. 11). "There is none that doth good, no there is not so much as one." He who had promised, saying: "If it be necessary for me to die, or to go to prison, I will not deny thee": denied (Mark 14). Why do I say all this: Because a monk ought not to look at the multitude of sinners, but at the conversation and

paucity of the saints. The whole of Judea was led into captivity. Nebuchadnezzar had come, such a [multitude] of men...

PSALM 144.

A praise of David himself. This psalm, from the prophetic voice, contains the praise of God: as he himself speaking to him says:

I will extol thee, O God my king: and I will bless thy name for ever; yea, for ever and ever. He extols God because he knows him equal to the Father: king, because he knows the judge of the world.

Every day I will bless thee: and I will praise thy name for ever; yea, for ever and ever. And for this he especially praises: because he hopes to become conformed to his name: that is, to Christ the Lord, in the world to come.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: and of his greatness there is no end. Because he is infinitely great, infinitely to be praised.

Generation. Which faith has brought forth. And offspring. Which the passion of Christ has procured. Shall praise thy works, and shall declare thy power. Since they are either made by thee, or are protected by thee.

They shall speak of the magnificence of thy majesty, and of thy holiness. Thou wilt have us to be holy, saying: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 19, 20). This we also speak to others. And they shall tell of thy wondrous works. Which thou workest daily in the Church.

They shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and shall declare thy greatness. Power is

terrible, when it takes vengeance on the impious, as on Pharaoh. Greatness is, when the just are raised up, as Israel.

They shall publish the memory of the abundance of thy sweetness. Because thou deignest to cherish them. And shall exult in thy justice. Because thou takest vengeance on the impious.

The Lord is gracious and merciful: patient and of great mercy. And holy in all his works: because that which was made in him, is life.

The Lord is sweet to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. For by his mercy he makes and protects every work.

Let all thy works, O Lord, confess to thee: and let thy saints bless thee. That through the saints who bless thee continually, thou mayest be understood to be the creator and founder of all.

They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom. That it may be desired by all. And shall tell of thy power. That it may be feared by all.

To make thy power known to the sons of men: and the glory of the magnificence of thy kingdom. Lest an excuse through ignorance be offered.

Thy kingdom, O Lord, is a kingdom of all ages. For all ages roll on by the dominion of thy kingdom. And thy dominion endureth throughout all generations. The ecclesiastical generation being dilated in the offspring of the future age.

The Lord is faithful in all his words. Since he fulfilled all things which he spoke through the prophets. And holy in all his works. That as he is holy: so also we who are his works, may be made holy in him.

The Lord lifteth up all that fall. Lest they be merged in eternal ruin. And setteth up all that are cast down. Whom the sting of corporeal pleasure has precipitated, if they do penance.

The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord: and thou givest them meat in due season. The interior sight of the saints is received in that future time of retribution.

Thou openest thy hand, and fillest every living creature with blessing. Which sustained curses and reproaches in the world for thy name's sake.

The Lord is just in all his ways: and holy in all his works. As has already been said above.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth. What does he himself say? "I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off" (Jer. 23).

He will do the will of them that fear him: and he will hear their prayers, and save them. While he rescues them, either from the instigation of the devil, or from the heat of sin.

The Lord keepeth all them that love him: and all the sinners he will destroy. He loves those, who have preferred his love to worldly loves. But those he destroys, who have set the love of the world before his love.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord. Now, and in the future time of retribution. And let all flesh bless his holy name for ever; yea, for ever and ever. That which he says: All flesh, is not to be referred to insensible things: but to the whole body of the Church, which we are, who ought to praise, bless, extol, and preach God, through whom we live, through whom we are nourished

and are. To whom with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 145.

Alleluia. Of Haggai and Zechariah. This psalm, prescribed from the name of two prophets, speaks from the voice of one, saying:

Praise the Lord, O my soul. This psalm has the title of Haggai and Zechariah. But this we ought first to know, that it is not found in the Hebrew, but in the Seventy interpreters. But let us also speak concerning the Vulgate edition of Haggai and Zechariah. Because the restoration of Jerusalem is mentioned here: The Lord shall reign for ever: thy God, O Sion, unto generation and generation: they think it is said as if concerning the restoration of Jerusalem, which was made under Haggai and Zechariah. Praise the Lord, O my soul. He did not say, praise, O body: but, praise, O soul: not that he condemned the body, but he condemned the works of the flesh. Praise the Lord, O my soul. The soul itself exhorts itself. As if David should say: Praise the Lord, O David: so also the soul itself says to itself: Praise the Lord, O my soul: I will praise the Lord in my life. See what he says: It exhorts itself, and it responds. What does it say? It says to me, Praise the Lord, O my soul. I myself respond: I will praise the Lord in my life. At present I cannot praise, I am pressed down by sins. As often as I open my lips in the praises of God: so often the conscience of sins glues them together. I will praise the Lord in my

life. He said beautifully, I will praise: not, I praise. When I shall be with my Lord, then I will praise the Lord in my life. Now I am in death, I cannot praise. I will praise the Lord in my life. Our life is Christ. Let us praise the Lord in life. I will sing to my God as long as I shall be. See what he says: When we do anything justly, we are: but when we sin, we cease to be. There are many things that could be said: but the discourse hastens to the end.

Put not your trust in princes: nor in the children of men, in whom there is no salvation. This he says generally to all: Put not your trust in princes. Not in the emperor, not in the prefects, not in the judges of the world.

Put not your trust in princes. Who are the princes? The children of men. Who are the children of men? Those in whom there is no salvation.

His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return into his earth. Now when he shall have returned into his earth, what will happen? In that day all their thoughts shall perish. All the confidence of princes shall perish, and all their thoughts shall perish. Put not your trust in princes. Today he was, tomorrow he is not. Today an army precedes him, and at evening he lies in the sepulcher. After such great magnitude, such great brightness, no times intercede: in the same moment is the operation of Christ. In the children of men, in whom there is no salvation. Who are the princes? The children of men. If the men themselves are nothing, what are their children? His spirit shall go

forth. Whose? the man's. His spirit shall go forth. Here he puts spirit for soul. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23). His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return into his earth. The spirit shall not return into its earth: for the spirit is not of the earth, but the spirit goes forth, and the man shall return into his earth. In that day all their thoughts shall perish. We ourselves who are now [not] princes, how many things do we daily think and say, tomorrow I will do that, I will destroy my barns, and again tomorrow I will build them! It is said to me: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast prepared?" (Luke 12). This he says concerning those who trust in princes. Otherwise what is said concerning the saint?

The Lord looseth the fettered. If this bread shall have refreshed our soul: that is, the divine word and heavenly doctrine: immediately our feet, which had been bound together, are loosed. The Lord looseth the fettered. And Lazarus was bound, and he said: Loose him (John 11). The Lord looseth the fettered. And the daughter of Abraham had been bowed down and bound for eighteen years, she is loosed, and looks up into heaven. See what is said there in the Gospel: Behold, he says, there was a certain woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years, and she could not, he says, lift up her neck (Luke 13). Because she had a spirit of infirmity, she could not lift up her neck. The Lord looseth the fettered. The fetters themselves are also the works: since

the same sins which take hold of our necks also bind our feet. Whoever is fettered cannot run. Whoever is fettered cannot run in the stadium of Christ. For the feet are weighed down by fetters, and are pressed into the earth, and are fixed in the earth. The Lord looseth the fettered. See the order. He giveth food to the hungry. First we hunger: then we receive food. But when we shall have been filled, our feet, which had been fettered, are loosed. But when they shall have begun to walk freely, what follows? The Lord enlighteneth the blind. See what he says: If he were speaking of these blind ones, he ought to have said: The Lord enlighteneth the blind. But he did not say this, but according to the Hebrew and Greek truth, what did he say? The Lord maketh the wise blind. If he were speaking of these eyes of the flesh, he ought to have said: The Lord enlighteneth the blind. But now it is said, The Lord maketh the wise blind. If you were blind, he says, you would not have sin. Our heart is blinded by the darkness of sins. Unwisdom and folly are the darkness, not of the eyes, but of morals. When therefore we hungry ones shall have been refreshed, and our feet shall have been freed: then also the eyes of our heart will begin to see the light which they once lost, and to have wisdom. If he shall have been made wise, what follows?

The Lord erecteth them that are cast down. And if thou wert lying down: be secure, the Lord reacheth out his hand. The Lord loveth the just. I see two things: he loves, and he guards. He who loves, loves as his own. But he who guards,

guards him who is placed in danger. The Lord loveth the just. Whoever is just and perfect is loved by him. But whoever is a stranger, and comes to the service of the Lord, he is preserved.

The Lord guardeth the strangers: he will receive the fatherless and the widow. And according to the letter it is profitable, he will receive the fatherless and the widow. O martyr, who art held that thou mayest pour out thy blood for me: be not solicitous concerning thy children, be not solicitous concerning thy wife: they have me in thy stead. Let us speak also according to the spirit: He will receive the fatherless and the widow. He will receive the fatherless, who had lost God as Father through sins. And he will receive the widow. The widow, that is, that soul which had lost Christ as husband. But see what he says, the fatherless and the widow. He did not say, he will guard: he did not say, he will save: but, he will receive: if he returns to the Father, if she returns to the husband. And he will destroy the way of sinners. He did not say, he will destroy the sinners: but according to the first psalm, the way of the impious shall perish. If the way of the just is Christ, the way of sinners is the devil. And he will destroy the way of sinners. Of all sinners therefore the way is the devil, him he destroys: but us he will save, who were walking through it, and have ceased to walk.

The Lord looseth them that are fettered. If that bread has refreshed our soul: that is, the divine word, and heavenly doctrine: immediately our feet, which had been bound, are loosed. The

Lord looseth them that are fettered. And Lazarus was bound, and he said: "Loose him" (John 11). The Lord looseth them that are fettered. And the daughter of Abraham had been bowed down and bound for eighteen years, she is loosed, and looks up into heaven. See what is said there in the Gospel: "Behold," he says, "there was a certain woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and she could not," he says, "lift up her neck" (Luke 13). Since she had a spirit of infirmity, she could not lift up her neck. The Lord looseth them that are fettered. The fetters are the same as the works: since the same sins, which receive our necks, also bind our feet. Whoever is fettered, cannot run. Whoever is fettered, cannot run in the race-course of Christ. For the feet are weighed down by fetters, and are pressed into the earth, and are fixed into the earth. The Lord looseth them that are fettered. See the order. He giveth food to the hungry. First we hunger: then we receive food. Now when we shall have been sated, our feet, which had been fettered, are loosed. Now when they shall have begun to walk freely, what follows? The Lord enlighteneth the blind. See what he says: If he were speaking of these [physically] blind, he ought to have said: The Lord enlighteneth the blind. But he did not say this, but according to the Hebrew and Greek truth what did he say? The Lord maketh the wise blind. If he were speaking of these eyes of the flesh, he ought to have said: The Lord enlighteneth the blind. But now it is said, The Lord maketh the wise blind. "If you were blind,"

he says, "you would not have sin." Our heart is blinded by the darkness of sins. Unwisdom and folly are darkness not of the eyes, but of morals. When therefore we hungry ones shall have been refreshed, and our feet shall have been delivered: then also the eyes of our heart shall begin to see the light which they once lost, and to have wisdom. If he has been made wise, what follows?

The Lord lifteth up them that are cast down. And if thou wert lying down: be secure, the Lord stretches out his hand. The Lord loveth the just. I see two things: he loves, and he keeps. He who loves, loves as his own. But he who keeps, keeps him who is placed in danger. The Lord loveth the just. Whoever is just and perfect, is loved by him. But whoever is a stranger, and comes to the service of the Lord, he is kept.

The Lord keepeth the strangers: he will support the fatherless and the widow. And according to the letter it is profitable, he will support the fatherless and the widow. O martyr, who art held, that thou mayest shed thy blood for me: be not solicitous concerning thy children, nor concerning thy wife: they have me instead of thee. Let us speak also according to the spirit: He will support the fatherless and the widow. He will support the fatherless, who had lost God the Father through sins. And he will support the widow. The widow, that is, that soul which had lost Christ her husband. But see what he says, the fatherless and the widow. He did not say, he will keep: he did not say, he will save: but, he will support (receive): if he returns to the Father, if she returns to the

husband. And the way of sinners he will destroy. He did not say, he will destroy the sinners: but according to the first psalm, "and the way of the impious shall perish." If the way of the just is Christ, the way of sinners is the devil. And the way of sinners he will destroy. The way of all sinners therefore is the devil, him he destroys: but us he will save, who were walking through it, and have ceased to walk.

The Lord shall reign for ever. Because the way of sinners shall have perished, then the Lord shall reign for ever. He did not say: for an age: but, for ages. As long as the way does not perish, Christ does not reign in us. As long as the way of sinners does not perish, Christ does not reign in us. As long as our feet walk in the way of the devil, Christ does not reign in us. I am angry without cause with my brother: I walk in the way of the devil: Christ does not reign in me. I detract from my brother: I walk in the way of the devil: Christ does not reign in me. In whatever sin I shall have walked, I walk in the way of the devil: Christ does not reign in me. My mind is vain, and is distracted into various things. I am in one place, and my mind wanders through the whole world. The world contains angels, it contains kings, it contains armies, it does not contain one monk. Why do I say all this? because of those who wander in the whole world, and cannot sit in one place. Thy God, O Sion, unto generation and generation. Thy God, O Sion. We have frequently said that Sion is interpreted as a watch-tower or the Church, or the soul contemplating God. Thy

God, O Sion, unto generation and generation. In the first generation, of the Jews; in the second, from the Gentiles. In all the Scriptures, and in all the psalms, "generation and generation" is said, that it may signify two peoples. But we can also say otherwise: The Lord hath reigned for ever, thy God, O Sion: in this generation and in the generation to come. Let Christ reign in us, let not sin reign in our body. "The heart of the king is in the hand of God" (Prov. 21). Let us be kings: let us command our body, and subject it, and let our heart be in the hand of God. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 146.

Alleluia. This psalm admonishes us that we should praise the builder of the heavenly city, saying:

Praise ye the Lord, for a psalm is good. This psalm is prenoted with the title ALLELUIA. Those who are ignorant of the Hebrew language, when they see Alleluia prefixed in the title of the psalms, are accustomed to ask what it signifies. This psalm therefore not only in the title, but also in the beginning of the psalm has Alleluia. For where it is said, Praise ye the Lord, in Hebrew it is said, ALLELUIA. For God among the Hebrews has ten names: he is called SABAOTH: he is called SHADDAI: he is called ELOHIM: he is called EL: he is also called IAO: he is called ESER JAJA. But among the other names there is one name which is called IA. Now IA is interpreted as invisible. Where therefore it is said praise (laudate), in

Hebrew it is said Allelu. Thus it is said here Allelu ia: as if it were said Allelu sabaoth, Allelu shaddai, Allelu elohim: so also now it is said Allelu ia. Finally Theodotion, who is one of the Interpreters, wishing to learn the truth of the interpretation says αἰνεῖτε τὸν Ἰά (praise ye the IA). Why have we said all this? that we may know that in this psalm Alleluia is prefixed: Praise ye the Lord. This is the interpretation. When we have gone out it will be considered in our hearts. Otherwise the discourse will be dilated: Praise ye the Lord: for a psalm is a good thing. He did not say, a good psalm: but absolutely, a good thing is a psalm, that is, it is a good thing to sing psalms. To sing psalms, however, not with the voice, but with the heart. How many have a good voice, and since they are sinners, they sing psalms badly. He sings psalms well who sings in the heart, who sings to Christ in conscience.

To our God be joyful praise. Let the praise be joyful not in voice, but in conscience. Finally also Noah offered victims, and the Lord smelled a sweet savor (Gen. 8). There are many things which could be said, but we ought briefly to touch upon the main points, that we may indicate the sense rather than more dilated words.

The Lord buildeth up Jerusalem: he will gather together the dispersed of Israel. How Jerusalem is built, how it is gathered together, has already been said. Since therefore these two verses have been discussed, and we ought not to build upon another's foundation, let us pass to the rest. Let

us see therefore how Jerusalem is built. For in the rest the prophetic discourse described it.

Who healeth the broken-hearted. "A contrite and humbled heart God will not despise" (Ps. 50). And bindeth up their bruises. Do thou break thy heart, and the Lord gathers together thy contritions (bruises). That Samaritan, who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he saw the wounded man lying in the way, bound up his wounds (Luke 10). This is he of whom it is now also said: And bindeth up their bruises. This is said concerning those who do penance. Otherwise concerning those who do not do penance, it is said: "There is no plaster to put on, nor oil, nor bindings" (Isa. 1).

Who telleth the number of the stars. What a sequence according to the letter! and bindeth up their bruises: Who telleth the number of the stars? But when he heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their bruises, those who before had been broken, and afterwards healed, he turns into stars. Who telleth the number of the stars. For many were they who sinned: many are they who are cured. Who telleth the number of the stars. He does not count the wounded, but he counts those who have already been turned into stars. God does not count, except those who are worthy of his number. And calleth them all by their names. Because he speaks of Lucifer, and of Orion whom we see in heaven. And this indeed can be understood: Wondrous is God, who made heaven and earth, and all things that are in them. Otherwise let us so understand it, that it may

benefit us what is done daily. And calleth them all by their names. Do you want to know how from the contrite stars are made? It is written in Genesis: That God led forth Abraham, and showed him the stars, and said to him: "So shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15). And calleth them all by their names. From Abram he calls him Abraham. He was called Abram in Chaldea, and in heaven he is called Abraham. At that time when he was made a star, he is called Abraham (Gen. 17). He who was before Saul, is afterwards called in heaven Paul (Acts 9). John and James the sons of thunder (Mark 3). Thunder is surely in heaven. Thus the stars are counted: infinite saints are counted, and Christ alone cannot be counted.

Great is our Lord, and great is his power: and of his wisdom there is no number. Great power, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1). And of his wisdom there is no number. Christ is wisdom. And the one wisdom cannot be numbered.

The Lord lifteth up the meek. What are these stars? The Lord lifteth up the meek. The meek are turned into stars. "But the just shall shine as the stars of heaven" (Dan. 12): Daniel speaks. But bringing the sinners down even to the ground. See the difference of things. Angels fall to the ground: men go to the heavens. The Lord lifteth up the meek. Meekness calls to heaven: pride drags down to the ground. But bringing the sinners down even to the ground.

Sing ye to the Lord with confession. This David fulfilled: who had provided us an example

of justice, provided also one of penance. For he taught us how we ought to do penance, by doing it himself. See the holy prophet, because not only his justice benefited us, but also his sin.

Sing to our God upon the harp. Let no string of the virtues be broken. Let the whole string-set of virtues sound together. Sing to our God upon the harp. The harp has many strings: if one shall have been broken, the sound cannot be rendered. So also the holy man, although he be holy, if one virtue shall be lacking, he cannot render a vocal sound.

Who covereth the heaven with clouds. This heaven which we see, cannot be covered with clouds. But there is another heaven, and there are other clouds. "And thy truth even unto the clouds" (Ps. 35). Therefore is the truth of God even unto these clouds which, when the wind blows, are quickly dissolved? The truth of God is Christ. "I am the way, and the life, and the truth" (John 14); therefore the truth of Christ is in these clouds, which do not have in themselves the truth of substance. Can it be, then, that truth is there, where the wind has the power of dissipating? "I will command," he says, "the clouds that they rain no rain upon them" (Isa. 5), that is, upon the people of the Jews. The clouds are the prophets. The Lord commanded them that they should not rain rain upon Israel. The word of prophecy has been turned toward us. These clouds, if they shall have been dashed together there, make thunder and lightnings. Who covereth the heaven with clouds. If the clouds are

the prophets and the apostles; how then is the heaven covered by the apostles and prophets? The heaven is the divine mysteries. Since therefore whatever mysteries are divine are called heaven: whosoever shall have been worthy, these the clouds protect. If anyone is unworthy to receive the sacraments, he cannot be covered by the clouds. Who prepareth rain for the earth. Our earth needs rain, and unless it shall have received rain, that is, the fountain of doctrines, it will not bring forth fruit. When the earth shall have been moistened with a fountain of such doctrines, what follows?

Who maketh grass to grow on the mountains, etc. If he were speaking of grass alone: surely grass grows more in the valleys than in mountainous places. For wherever the rain shall have been more abundant, there more grass grows. From the mountains waters flow down into the valleys, and more grass grows.

And giveth to the beasts their food. This Scripture which we read, which we treat of, which we have in our hands, the holy mountains are called in the Scriptures (Ps. 35). Abraham is called a mountain; Isaac is called a mountain; Jeremiah a mountain: the holy prophets are mountains. These mountains have both grain and grass. If thou art a man: thou receivest grain from them: if thou art a beast, thou receivest grass. "Men and beasts thou wilt save, O Lord" (Ps. 35). According to thy faith thou art saved. Who maketh grass to grow on the mountains, and giveth to the beasts their food. If thou art a man, in the holy Scrip-

tures thou receivest spiritual understanding: if thou art a beast, according to the letter after the Jewish manner. I see a great thing. God, who has been praised with such great proclamations, is brought down to viler things, and it is said: And to the young ravens that call upon him. If he were speaking of the birds of heaven, he would rather have named eagles or vultures. And to the young ravens that call upon him. No other bird is named but the young of ravens, and not the ravens themselves, but the young of ravens. The raven is not saved, but the young one that is born of him. We are the young of ravens. For we are born of idolatrous parents. We read in Solomon, that the eye that mocketh at his father, and the discourse of his mother, let the ravens of the valleys pick it out (Prov. 30). He did not say the young of ravens, but the ravens themselves. For he who is a raven cannot be saved. The raven is sent forth from the ark and does not return (Gen. 8). During the flood he is with the rest: after the flood he is cast into misery, that is, at that time when there is tranquility he cannot be in the ark of God. If when there is a flood, the body is in the midst. Tranquility returns, and the raven flees. Who are these ravens? Who are the young of ravens? I think that ravens, of black color, who always pursue the carcasses of the dead: who always with a most hoarse voice prepare brawls, are demons, and whosoever shall have served demons, like ravens they also receive the color of ravens. Therefore our parents, as we have already said, who served idols and demons, were ravens. For they are not found except where

there have been filth, and uncleanness, and the carcasses of the dead. But we who are born of ravens, do not look for carcasses, but for dew. For the young of ravens are said to live on dew. For so the philosophers say, that the young of ravens live on dew. Do you wish to know another mystery concerning the ravens? Elijah is interpreted, the Lord God. Elijah, that is, our Lord and Savior, suffers persecution from the Jews, and is fed by ravens, that is, by the people of the Gentiles. And to the young ravens that call upon him. If thou callest upon him, thou art a young one: if thou art silent, thou art a raven. And to the young ravens that call upon him. We read in the prophet: "and everyone who shall have called upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved" (Joel 2). Therefore if we take it simply of ravens: then shall ravens also be saved? Answer, O Jew, answer thou who followest the Jewish letter only, dost thou say that these ravens are truly ravens? Thou dost not interpret spiritually, but carnally, for thou sayest it is written concerning ravens. If therefore it is written concerning the young of ravens, and here it is said, and to the young ravens that call upon him. And it is written: "Everyone who shall have called upon the name of the Lord shall be saved": therefore also the young of ravens shall be saved in the resurrection. We therefore, the young of ravens, call upon him and are saved. Finally, Paul the apostle also wrote to the Church of the saints, he wrote to those who call upon the name of the Lord (1 Cor. 1).

He will not have pleasure in the strength of a horse. We promised brevity, and by necessity we have been compelled to dispute more broadly: we have lied, but the lie is most useful. Would that Herod had lied and sworn falsely (Matt. 14). And we therefore promised smaller things, and to you who pray we have provided greater things. The hour compels me to be silent: the magnitude of the mysteries compels me to speak. **He will not have pleasure in the strength of a horse.** I hear a horse neighing, and we cannot pass by. It is written in the Psalter: "The horse is a vain thing for safety" (Ps. 32). And in another place: "The horse and his rider he hath thrown into the sea" (Exod. 15). Israel is also commanded not to nourish horses. Finally Solomon, because he brought chariots out of Egypt, was overcome by pleasure (Deut. 17; 3 Kings 10). **He will not have pleasure in the strength of a horse.** **The horse and his rider he hath thrown into the sea.** "Horses maddened after women have they become to me: every one neighed after his neighbor's wife" (Jer. 5): Jeremiah speaks. Therefore over such horses God has no pleasure. We have spoken of the horse: "the horse and his rider he hath thrown into the sea." We have said who the horses are: let us say who the riders are. I think the horses are sinful men, and the riders are demons who ride in them. Whenever therefore we see some brother persecuting and being an enemy, let us know that he is a horse. Furthermore, the rider is the devil, who strikes us with his spear. That one runs, and this one strikes. But even the horse

itself is led by spurs, is pierced, and unwillingly goes mad. **Nor shall he take pleasure in the legs of a man.** See what he says. He did not say, in the head of a man: he did not say, in the hands of a man: but, **in the legs:** which are below. **Nor shall he take pleasure in the legs of a man.** Legs here, as also thighs, are always taken for lust. Finally, also in Ezekiel God is seen from the loins upward as amber: from the loins downward as fire (Ezek. 1). If anyone is above, for him he is golden: if anyone is below, for him Gehenna is prepared. **Nor shall he take pleasure in the legs of a man.** Let us speak according to the letter. Since he had said, "He will not have pleasure in the strength of a horse," and had described him as a man of war: it seems to me here where he said, "not in the legs," he does not call them legs (*tibias*), but greaves (*περικνημίδας*). We see therefore that whatever covers the legs does not please God, but that which is above. God is not pleased in strength, he is not pleased in the legs of a man, but he is pleased in his fear. Strength does not please, fear pleases. He destroys the one who fights, he lifts up the one who asks, he exalts the humble, he casts down the proud.

The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him. One fear casts out many fears. It is better to fear one, that thou mayest not fear many: than to fear many, that thou mayest not fear one. **And in them that hope in his mercy.** They hope not in their works, but in the mercy of judgment. Praise the Lord, for a psalm is good: for they

who hope in his mercy are healed by salvation alone. To whom is glory forever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 147.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Sion. Just now we heard the holy prophet preaching that because of the transgression of the law the Jewish people had been deserted, and how is it now said: **Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Sion.** Then what follows?

For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates. Therefore he speaks of that Jerusalem, of that Sion: **praise thy God, O Sion.** Why? **For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates.** There are no gates, and how are the bars safe? **He hath blessed thy children within thee.** How has he blessed, who said: "Your house shall be left to you desolate" (Luke 13)?

Who hath placed peace in thy borders. Where has peace been placed, which was subverted by war? **And filleth thee with the fat of corn.** Does corn have fat? O Jew, answer. Does corn have fat? If therefore corn does not have fat, and thou art compelled by necessity to understand spiritually, according to this verse the rest are also to be understood. **Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem.** Jerusalem, the **vision of peace**. **Praise thy God, O Sion.** Sion is interpreted as a **watchtower**. You see therefore what he says. **Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem.** Wherever there is a vision of peace, wherever the contemplation of God: there the praise of

God is made. The Church therefore praises the Lord, when she shall have begun to believe in him and to have peace, and shall have begun to see peace, that is, Jerusalem the vision of peace. Thou who wast formerly a servant of idols, hast been made a servant of God. Praise therefore thy God. But when thou shalt have begun already to have knowledge, and to be a watchtower, that is, Sion: praise the Lord, that is, thou praise Jerusalem, thou praise Sion: thou Ecclesiastical soul, thou Church. Let the heretics not praise, let the Synagogues not praise, but thou praise. Why? **For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates.** "The Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the tabernacles of Jacob" (Ps. 86). We have said the gates of Sion are the prophets. Since therefore we know the prophets are called the gates of Sion: let us see what are the bars of the gates. For the gates of the true Church are the prophets. Without the prophets we cannot enter the Church. Manichaeus wished to enter without gates, and did not enter. Marcion does not receive the Old Testament, and without the gates of the Old Testament he could not enter into the Gospel. We therefore receive the gates, the prophets, and through the gates we enter. But let us see what are the bars of the gates. Many robbers, many thieves desire to enter through the gates. "All that came before me were thieves and robbers" (John 10). O if the Lord would also grant to me, that I might be a bar of the gates of Sion! If any of the heretics wished to enter through them into the disposition of the Gospel: I would stand in

the gates, and would prohibit him. **For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates.** Give me some ecclesiastical man, learned in the heavenly Scriptures, if he should see Eunomius coming, Arius coming, wishing to take something from the prophets against us: does he not stand as if a bar? does he not conquer as if a bar? **For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates.** Beautifully he said, **hath strengthened:** so that when thou seest an ecclesiastical man disputing, thou mayest not think it is he who disputes, but he who strengthens the ecclesiastical man. **And filleth thee with the fat of corn.** "Unless," he says, "the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself alone will remain safe" (John 12). But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Our Lord, the grain of wheat, fell into the earth, and multiplied us. But that grain of corn is most fat, it has marrow, it has fat. **And filleth thee with the fat of corn.** Happy is he who in that corn understands the fat. We read the holy Scriptures. I think the body of Jesus is the Gospel: I think his doctrine is the holy Scriptures. And when he says, "he that shall not eat my flesh, and drink my blood" (John 6): although it can also be understood in a mystery: nevertheless more truly the body of Christ, and his blood, is the discourse of the Scriptures, it is divine doctrine. Whenever we go to the mystery, he who is faithful understands, if he shall have fallen into a stain, he is in danger. Whenever we hear the word of God, and the word of God, and the flesh of Christ, and his blood is poured into our ears, and we think of something

else, into how great danger we run! **And filleth thee with the fat of corn.** Most fat is the divine discourse. It has in itself all delights. Whatever thou shalt have wished, is born from the divine discourse, as the Jews hand down; since when they ate manna, according to the will of each one, so it tasted in the mouth (Wisd. 16). As if he had said: He who ate manna, if he desired apples, if a pear, if a grape, if bread, if meats, according to the quality and will of the eater, so also the flavor was in the manna. So also in the flesh of Christ, which is the discourse of doctrine, that is, the interpretation of the holy Scriptures, as we wish, so also we receive food. If thou art holy, thou findest refreshment. If thou art a sinner, thou findest torment. **And filleth thee with the fat of corn.** He does not leave any remains. **He hath blessed thy children within thee.** "But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God" (John 1). **Who hath placed peace in thy borders,** in another psalm we read: "And his place was made in peace" (Ps. 75). "My peace I give to you: my peace I leave to you, not as the world hath peace" (John 14): since indeed the peace of the world is our war. My peace I give to you. Have war with the world, and you shall have my peace. **Who hath placed peace in thy borders.** He therefore who is not in peace with his brother, is not in the borders of Jerusalem. Let someone say: What do I do? My brother does not wish to be reconciled to me, therefore am I outside the borders of Jerusalem? "As much," he says, "as is in you, having peace with all men"

(Rom. 12). "With them that hated peace I was peaceable" (Ps. 119). Thou have peace, if the other is angry. That one has war, and through his war peace is born to thee. Do you wish to know how even war may be peace? Unhappy Judas came to the betrayal, and the Lord reaches out to him the kiss of peace (Luke 22), that one by a kiss creates war.

Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth. Answer, O Jew: if he was speaking of corn, and "filleth thee with the fat of corn," how does he now say: **Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth?** "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1). This Word is sent in the flesh. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (Ibid.). **Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth.** At that time it was fulfilled: "The earth hath yielded her fruit" (Ps. 66). **Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth.** He speaks of the Evangelical preaching, and of the doctrine of the apostles. Finally it follows: **His word runneth swiftly.** For in all the earth his word has been heard, and in the whole world, the apostolic doctrine. One poor man, and now an old man, preached from Jerusalem even unto Illyricum, and **his word runneth swiftly.** Since therefore he had come from Jerusalem, even unto Illyricum, and **his word ran swiftly:** then it follows, and the same word which had predicted says, from Jerusalem even unto Illyricum: "but I wish to go even to the Spains." This the apostle Paul speaks (Rom. 15). See the swiftness of the

discourse. He is not content to run to the east, he desires to run to the west.

Who giveth snow like wool: he scattereth mists like ashes, etc. You see how great is the difficulty, how obscure are the things which are said. **Who shall stand before the face of his cold?** Of whose? Nothing is said. Then it is said:

He sendeth out his word, and shall melt them. Of him of whom he had said: **Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth.** He sendeth forth his word. Who sendeth it forth? God the Father. "And the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We have said the Father: we have said the Son: we cannot believe in a double number, unless the Trinity be completed.

His spirit shall blow, and the waters shall run. You see that where the Father and the Word of God are, immediately the Holy Spirit is also. Let us see therefore from the beginning what is said: **And filleth thee with the fat of corn: he sendeth forth his speech to the earth, his word runneth swiftly.** Suddenly what follows? **Who giveth snow like wool.** The word of the Lord, which runneth swiftly, is so given as snow, and the snow itself is like wool. See the mercy of the Lord. The food of the Lord is turned into a garment for us. John had said of the Lord Savior: "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1). And in another place Isaiah: "As a sheep he was led to the slaughter" (Isa. 53). Of this lamb therefore, and of this sheep, this wool is like snow. Isaiah says: "If your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow" (Isa.

1). "Thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop and I shall be cleansed: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow" (Ps. 50). **Who giveth snow like wool.** Take away, O Lord, my filth: take away whatever of vice there is. Grant thy snow and thy purity to Christian minds. Unless thou givest us the snow of thy purities, we cannot have thy garment. Christ is our garment. If we wish to have the garment of Christ, let us be clean as snow. **He scattereth mists like ashes.** The Latin has poorly translated "mist" (*nebulam*). For that which is called *ὁμίχλη* in Greek: in Hebrew has **frost** (*pruinam*). Finally it thus follows: **He scattereth frost like ashes.** He teaches us, and makes for us a garment like snow, and when he shall have clothed us with his garment, then he grants us nourishment. **He scattereth frost like ashes.** See what he says: **like ashes.** Dost thou wish to be clean? do penance. "I did eat my bread like ashes, and mingled my drink with weeping" (Ps. 101). Dost thou not see how he scattereth his frost like ashes? A great change of things. From ashes snow is made. From penance, the world is made clean.

He sendeth his crystal like morsels. Just as breads are broken, and morsels are made: so also crystal is broken, and turned into morsels. Crystal has this nature, like waters when they are frozen: which we call ice. Between crystal therefore and water there is this difference, which is between water and ice: because water is spread most widely: furthermore crystal is as it were compressed in itself, and reduced into one form.

Whenever water freezes, it makes crystal. Since therefore we cannot take in the whole the flesh of the Word, it is broken, that we may take it in through those parts. Things are obscure, and the difficulty of interpretation does not allow us to speak more broadly. **Who shall stand before the face of his cold?** Of whose? Some say of the crystal, others of the Lord. But it seems to me to be said of God. **Who shall stand before the face of his cold?** What torments are said in the holy Scriptures to be prepared for the sinner? Nothing is hotter than Gehenna, and yet it is cold. Gehenna is of fire. But if anyone shall have grown cold from charity, he is sent into the fire of Gehenna. It is written: because "in the last days the charity of many shall grow cold" (Matt. 24). Whosoever therefore shall have thus become cold, he is sent into the fire. May the Lord grant to us that cold may never enter our hearts; we do not sin, unless charity has first grown cold. Finally what does the Apostle speak? "Fervent in spirit" (Rom. 12). And our God is a fire (Deut. 4). If therefore our God is a fire: for this reason he is fire, that he may cast out the cold of the devil. The north wind is a most cold wind, but by name it is called the right (*dexter*). Beautifully he said, it is called. For it assumed the name to itself, although it be on the left. If therefore anyone's soul shall have grown cold, it is as the north wind, a most cold wind. When therefore does the heat of charity grow cold in our heart? If he shall have sinned, if he shall have grown cold, if he shall have died. Attend diligently to what I

say: If he shall have grown cold, if he shall have died. To grow cold, however, is of the dead, to be warm of the living. If anyone therefore shall have grown cold, and shall have died, God will send his word, and will melt him. May the Lord grant, that even our cold may be melted, that that crystal may be dissolved, and become soft. **He shall send out his word, and shall melt them.** Give me a sinner whom the Lord does not regard: to have no heat, but to be entirely cold, and dead. If at the word of God he shall have been pricked in heart, and shall have begun to do penance, and his most hard heart shall have been softened, at that time it is fulfilled: **He shall send out his word, and shall melt them.** The Father sendeth: the Word is sent: the Holy Spirit anointeth. **His spirit shall blow:** "fervent in spirit." Cold is not expelled, except by the heat of the Holy Spirit. Where are the Eunomians, where the Arians, where the Macedonians, who say the Holy Spirit is not numbered with the Father and the Son? God the Father sends: the Word is sent, and yet full health is not, unless the Holy Spirit shall have blown. **His spirit shall blow, and the waters shall run.** The waters which before were hard, shall become soft. He who before could not hear or give justice, he is now a disciple. Since however we have spoken much, and what follows is manifest: let us pray the Lord, that our hardness may be softened, and our sins may be cleansed, that we may be made as it were fire: so that even the cold of the devil, whatever it is, in our hearts, may be expelled, and we may be warm with the

Holy Spirit. For there is also an evil heat. "All of them are adulterers, like an oven are their hearts" (Hosea 7). But that heat is expelled by the heat of the Holy Spirit. To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 148.

Alleluia of Haggai and Zechariah. This psalm has two Alleluias in the title, and many think this, because they are placed in the title of the psalm. But we ought to know, that one Alleluia is of the end of the previous psalm: the other Alleluia is the beginning of the following psalm. And we ought to receive and know this rule, that all Psalms which have **Alleluia** in the beginning, also have it in the end. But many think that it is the beginning of another psalm. It is not so, but that psalm which has **Alleluia** in the beginning, has it also in the end. Why did I say all this? So that you may know why two Alleluias are prefixed in this psalm.

Praise the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the high places. For the praise of God, the nature of men alone does not suffice, let the heavens also be joined. **Praise the Lord from the heavens.** He did not say, praise, O heavens; but you praise, who are in the heavens, that is, you who dwell in the heavens, thrones, dominations, powers, seraphim, cherubim, and every name that is named, not only in the present world, but in the future. **Praise the Lord from the heavens.** You who are in the heavens, you who are in the high places, **praise him in the high places.**

You high ones, praise the High One. He did not say to the humble and those placed below, praise; but you who are on high.

Praise him, all his angels. Do you see in what degree the angels are? First the thrones are named. Thrones, seats. Let us not think they are chairs, in which God may sit: but certain powers in the heavenly places, in which God may sit always, as it were in his chariot. **Praise him, all his angels.** He who is an angel, praises: he who is a demon, cannot praise. **Praise him, all his powers.** Because we have called the angels to the praises of God, and man cannot know the name of all the powers, I say generally: **Praise him, all his powers.** Thus far of the invisible things: praise him, you who are invisible. Invisible things the human eye cannot look upon. Now he comes to the creatures which we see with our eyes.

Praise him, sun and moon. See, gentiles: see, Manichaeans. The sun praises, it is not praised. **Praise him, sun and moon.** You call the sun God. Behold after how many it praises. **Praise the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the high places.** **Praise him, all his angels.** **Praise him, all his powers.** Your God is placed in the fifth degree praising. **Praise him, sun and moon.** He did not say moon and sun: but, **sun and moon.** That which is greater in light, praises first. See the order of visible things. **Praise him, sun:** after the sun, moon: after the moon, **all the stars.** Not only the morning star (*lucifer*): not only the greater stars, but

the smaller likewise let them praise the Lord. Let someone say: How do the sun, and moon, and stars praise God? In that they do not depart from their office and service. Their service is the praise of God. A great honor thou hast, human soul. The sun, and moon, and stars run for thee, they serve for thee. Angels, thrones, dominations do not have the sun necessary, nor the moon, nor the stars. For they are above the sun and moon in the heavenly places. For the sun and moon, and stars are for our sake: they serve us. The Apostle also says: that the creature itself groaneth, and travaileth in the liberation of the servants of God (Rom. 8). But when the sons of God shall have been assumed, then the creature itself is liberated from this service. Let someone say: How does the sun serve, and is liberated? How the moon? How are the stars liberated? The sun is liberated, that it may not see the Jews: nor the gentiles, nor those blaspheming their Lord. It sees parricides, it sees homicides, and yet it serves the command of him who ordered. For he maketh his sun to rise upon the just and the unjust (Matt. 5). **Praise him, all ye stars and light.** Let someone say: What is light without the sun, without the stars, without the moon? We can say between night and day, or between day and night, that which shines without the sun: although many think it to be the splendor of the sun itself. He says therefore: **Praise him, all ye stars and light.** That as he had said of the invisible things, **praise him, all his powers:** so also he may say of the visible things, praise him, everything that shines.

Praise him, ye heavens of heavens. We speak of many heavens. Finally the Apostle says that he was rapt even to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12). See therefore how great is the brightness, that there may be a heaven of the heaven. And the rest which follow, he said of the visible things.

For he spoke, and they were made. With God, to have commanded is to have acted: his command is the construction. **For he spoke, and they were made**, according to that which is written in Genesis: *And God said, and God made* (Gen. 1). That is, God the Father spoke; the Son made. Let someone say: Therefore he who commands is greater, and he to whom it is commanded is lesser. The Arians say this, the Eunomians say this, and the Macedonians say this. I answer you according to your own sense: O heretic, you say, the Father who commands is greater, and the Son is lesser in that he is commanded by him. If you take this according to human sense: answer me, which is greater, to command, or to act? I say: let a house be made, and another makes the house. To say is nothing great, to act is difficult. Greater therefore is he who acts, than he who prescribes. But this also is impious: for the Son is not greater than the Father. For just as it is impious to believe this of the Son against the Father, so also it is impious to believe that of the Father against the Son. **For he spoke, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created.** One nature commands and acts. God commands, and God acts. A painter commands, that a painter may paint: and the

painter paints what he had commanded to be painted.

He hath established them for ever, and for ages of ages: he hath made a decree, and it shall not pass away. Great is the honor of man, and great the unhappiness. The sun runs for you, the elements serve you: and you ignore your Creator? **He hath made a decree, and it shall not pass away.** He made a decree for the sun. Behold through so many years the decree of God has never passed away. So much has it not passed away, that its course has been comprehended by human observation. **He hath made a decree, and it shall not pass away.** He made a decree for the moon, that through thirty days it may increase and decrease. Does its course ever change? In heaven the decree of God is kept, and on earth it is not kept. He made a decree for the sea, that it should not go out from its shores. The ocean comes swelling with waves, and returns into itself, and remembers the decree of God. The whole world serves God, and remembers his decree, and man alone does not remember. Therefore we say also in the Lord's Prayer: *Thy will be done as in heaven and in earth* (Matt. 6). As in heaven the angels serve thee, and the creature serves, so let man also serve. O unhappy race of men! God descended to you: since you do not wish to ascend to heaven. Is it not enough for you, that you do not receive him: but you kill, you crucify, you blaspheme, you scourge? Is it not enough for you, that you kill, but you do not even do penance that you have killed. He spoke of the invisible

things: he spoke also of the visible things, but of the visible heavenly things: now also of the earth. See the order of the one praising. First the invisible things praise, then the visible things. And the visible things themselves are divided into two: into heavenly and earthly. He spoke of the heavenly things, now he speaks of the earthly things.

Praise the Lord from the earth. Since the angels have praised, the heaven has praised: let the earth also praise. Let us see from the earth who should praise first. **Dragons and all abysses, fire, hail, snow, ice, stormy winds, which fulfill his word: mountains and all hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars, beasts, and all cattle, serpents and feathered fowls.** After so many things what is said? After dragons, after serpents, after fire, after hail, after beasts, and all cattle: O man, you who seem great to yourself, it is said of you, and not of the simple man, but of those men who are greater among men.

Kings of the earth, and all peoples: princes, and all judges of the earth. Then what follows?

Young men and virgins, old men with the younger, let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted, and the rest which follow. O how great mysteries are contained in these! The heavenly things have praised, the invisible things have praised: now he descends to earthly things, and for the praise of God, first the dragons and abysses are stirred up. *Where sin abounded, grace did more abound* (Rom. 5). You who first were a dragon, who had the poison of the serpent: O you who first were an abyss, and

darkness was upon the face of the abyss (Gen. 1). See what he says: Where are the dragons, where the poisons, where the abyss, where the darkness? Do not despair therefore. O you who were a dragon, who were dark, and did not dare to praise God: do penance, and immediately you are converted. Although in the Hebrew it does not have **dragons**, but has *THANINIM*, which is interpreted as **whales** (or sea monsters). Now the whale is said to be of infinite magnitude. Finally, the whale itself is said to be in the abysses. Let us speak therefore first according to the letter. See what he says: Praise those things which are in the sea, and praise those things which are outside the sea. **Dragons and all abysses.** The whole from a part, by synecdoche. Then follows: **Fire.** See the concordant discord of water and fire: they praise God together. **Dragons and all abysses.** All things which are born of water are born of fire, that is, of moisture and heat; nor can fire alone generate without moisture, nor moisture without fire. Nothing is so contrary as moisture to heat, and heat to moisture. Nevertheless, by the will of God, these things which are diverse among themselves, concord in our birth. **Hail, snow, ice, and stormy winds, which fulfill his word.** There are many things to be said, and I cannot linger on each one. **Hail, snow, ice, and stormy winds.** All things which we see in the world serve us. Serpents, abysses, fire, hail, snow, stormy winds seem to be without reason: but they serve us. Yesterday there was a storm, it seemed to us to be contrary:

there was cold: there was moisture: there were rains. This which for the hour seems to us to be contrary, is for our sake: for it brings forth fruit for us. See for what he says: Those and those which fulfill his word. Blush, O man. Serpents, abysses, snow, rains, storm, fulfill the word of God, and you do not. **Mountains and all hills.** Neither mountains are changed into hills, nor valleys into mountains: they keep their nature. **Fruitful trees, and all cedars.** You see the wood as it were dry when its leaves are lost: when summer has come, it sends forth a bud for you: it brings forth fruit for you. The tree brings forth fruit for you, and you do not bring forth fruit for God. **And all cedars.** Imitate the cedar. Cedars strive for the heights: as it were they hasten to go to heaven. And you, imitate the irrational trees. **Beasts and all cattle.** They do not change their nature. All things stand in their order, except only man, to whom all things are subject. **Serpents and feathered fowls.** Nor do those things which are in heaven come to the earth; but there they serve God. Let someone say, you speak according to the history: you do not speak allegorically. If you speak according to the history: why do first the abysses, and snow, and hail, then fruitful trees, and other irrational things praise God, and at the end man? Let us read Genesis, and according to the order of birth, and of creatures, so we shall see all things praise. For there it is written, that first those living things were made which are in the water: then those made which are on the earth: then the winged things were made, and

afterwards he made one man. Therefore as it was first made; so it praises the Lord. But there is another sense: O man, for whose sake were all these things which I have said made? Beasts, serpents, fruitful trees, feathered fowls: all these things praise God in this: that they do not change their nature. **Kings of the earth, and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth. Young men and virgins, old men with the younger, let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted.** Every age, every sex, and every power let it praise him; to whom the Father, having evacuated the powers, gave an exalted name: nor let anyone revoke to himself that which he uses, but to him of whom it also follows:

His confession is above heaven and earth. Because according to the Apostle, all things confess to him: not only the heavenly and earthly, but also the infernal (Philipp. 2). **And he hath exalted the horn of his people.** Of the Church, certainly.

A HYMN TO ALL HIS SAINTS, TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, A PEOPLE APPROACHING TO HIM.

To these is assigned the heavenly hymn, who have been made holy in him: who behold him with the mind: who approach his faith: whom iniquitous perversity does not separate from him: who may deign to deliver us into the kingdom of God the Father, and make us conformable to the brightness of his body: so that now we may sing to him not with a local and transitory song,

but with a perpetual and immovable hymn of the heavenly station, with continual modulation: because to him with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit is honor and glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM CXLIX.

This psalm has been read, which has in the beginning: **Sing to the Lord a new song.** Because both the ninety-fifth psalm and the ninety-seventh have the same beginnings. The ninety-fifth psalm is pre-noted with this title: *A Psalm of David, when the house was being built after the captivity*, that is, after penance, the house of Christ is built. Since therefore he said first: **Sing to the Lord a new song**, and the new people sings a new song, and he blessed: let us run to the rest.

Let Israel rejoice in him that made him. Let him rejoice, who sees God with his sense. For Israel is interpreted here as, *seeing God with the sense*. **And let the children of Sion be joyful in their king.** The children of the Church, the children of the new people, let them be joyful in their king, in Christ, who reigns in them. You see how lightly we touch upon all the main points.

Let them praise his name in choir. Wherever there is a choir, there diverse voices are gathered into one song. For how diverse voices, that is, when they have been gathered together, they effect the choir of the Lord. **Let them praise his name in choir.** Where there is dissension, where there is envy, there is no choir. **Let them praise his name in choir: with timbrel and

psaltery let them sing to him.** This choir has a song, and has a timbrel and a psaltery. Let us crucify our bodies to Christ, and with such a timbrel let us sing to God. **With timbrel and psaltery let them sing to him.** The timbrel has no flesh, but skin. And as long as we are carnal, we are not a timbrel. It is not a timbrel, unless it has no flesh: unless it is stretched. A timbrel cannot be contracted, but extended. And let sins not contract us, but justice enlarge us. Let us run through the rest. **With timbrel and psaltery let them sing to him.** What we say *in choir*, let us say this in the psaltery. The psaltery properly is a kind of musical organ, which is as it were a harp. It has the likeness of a harp, but it is not a harp. Between the psaltery and the harp, this is the difference: The harp is struck from below: but the psaltery is struck from above, which in the common word is called *polyphthongum*. This therefore is the psaltery. Here therefore we are commanded, that in a new song we may sing to God: not from below from the harp, but from above, that is, in the psaltery.

For the Lord is well pleased with his people, and he hath exalted the meek unto salvation. *Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land* (Matt. 5). If therefore it is said there, blessed are the meek: because they shall possess the land, and here it is said **he hath exalted the meek unto salvation**: and these meek ones shall possess the land by inheritance: therefore this land is not from below, but is from above. For what does he say? **He hath exalted the meek

unto salvation.** For if the meek possessed this land, which is from below: he would not say, he exalted.

To bind their kings in fetters. Dost thou wish to free the people? Bind the teachers. To bind the kings. He did not call them teachers, but kings. For they reign in their sins and miseries. To bind their kings in fetters. He said well, in fetters: lest the teachers should run much: lest they should deceive many: but that they may stand collectedly. And their nobles in iron manacles. Thou mayest see their nobles among heretics saying: This man is learned: that one performs signs: this one casts out demons. The saints of the Lord, because they have two-edged swords, that is, of two heads, both of the Old and of the New Testament, bind those teachers, and shackle their feet, lest they be able to run. And their nobles in iron manacles. They bind, they do not kill; they do not slay, but bind. They bind the hands, and lead them captives to the Church with iron bonds. These chains are not made, except from the testimonies of the Scriptures: while I join testimony to testimony. If thou wishest that these chains be not broken, let them not be simple, but woven here and there: for a threefold cord is not broken. But why is all this done?

To execute upon them the judgment that is written. What is the written judgment? That those who first had denied God, may return afterwards to penance. The written judgment, that they may loose their captives, that those whom they had bound, and whom they had led from

the Church, they may afterwards dissolve in the Church. To execute upon them the judgment that is written. I speak with simpler words, that is, that they may so judge them as it is set forth in the holy Scriptures. This glory is to all his saints. Truly it is not glory where there is gold, where there is silver, where there are gems, where there are silken garments. Whoever has these swords, what else has he necessary? See what he says: This glory is to all his saints. Let us pray God that we may have this glory: that the sword proceeding from the mouth of our Savior may arm our hands. He who has this broadsword (romphaea), fears not the sword of the world. I tell you a new thing: Frequently the sword of this world cuts down that sword. Frequently it happens, that the sword of the world gives to us that sword. For if we shall have feared this one, we shall not receive that one. Let us therefore give thanks to him who has this sword, and let us bless him for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 150.

Alleluia. This psalm contains the mystery of the third fifty, that is, that the first through baptism and penance regenerates us to the good of innocence: the second, after judgment, comprises the fruit of innocence: the third, the building of the divine city being completed, and the hope of all the saints fulfilled, exhorts us to eternal congratulation and praise. For it says: Praise the Lord in his saints. Who will place them in the glory of eternity after the judgment has been

celebrated. Praise him in the firmament of his power. Because, all infirmity being removed, he has brought into these the firmament of eternal power. Praise him in his powers. Because potentiality consuming death with immortality, he has bestowed upon them the glory of unchangeable life: which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man (1 Cor. 2). Praise him according to the multitude of his greatness. Because he assigns mansions of celestial bodies distinguished by manifold honor, as the Lord says: In my Father's house there are many mansions (John 14). Praise him in the sound of the trumpet. In which war the slain have conquered: the Lord crushing Satan under their feet. Praise him in the psaltery and harp. Because he has granted them either to fulfill the song of the law from heaven: or after the mortified flesh (Rom. 16), which is taken for the harp, he has quickened in himself. Praise him with timbrel and choir. With the timbrel, because the mortified body has been gifted with immortality. With the choir, because it has been associated with the angelic choirs. Praise him with strings and organ. Because through abstinence from foods, with the inward parts constricted and carnal concupiscences overcome, they have been found worthy of the kingdom of God, to sing the divine praises.

To bind their kings with fetters. Do you wish to free the people? Bind the masters. **To bind their kings.** He did not call them masters, but **kings**. For they reign in their sins and miseries. **To bind their kings with fetters.** He

said well, **in fetters**: lest the masters should run much: lest they should deceive many: but that they may be gathered and stand. **And their nobles with manacles of iron.** You may see their nobles among the heretics say: This man is learned: that one performs signs: this one casts out demons. The saints of the Lord, because they have two-edged swords, that is, of two heads, both from the Old and from the New Testament, bind those masters, and impede their feet, that they may not be able to run. **And their nobles with manacles of iron.** They bind, they do not kill; they do not slay, but they bind. They bind their hands, and lead them as captives to the Church with iron chains. These chains are not made, except from the testimonies of the Scriptures: while I join testimony to testimony. If you wish that these chains should not be broken, let them not be simple, but woven from here and there: *For a threefold cord is not broken.* But why is all this done?

To execute upon them the judgment that is written. What is the judgment that is written? That those who first had denied God, should return afterwards to penance. The judgment that is written, that they may loose their captives, that those whom they had bound, and whom they had led from the Church, they may afterwards dissolve in the Church. **To execute upon them the judgment that is written.** I speak in simpler words, that is, that they may so judge them, as it has been arranged in the holy Scriptures. **This glory is to all his saints.** Truly it is not glory,

where there is gold, where there is silver, where there are gems, where there are silken garments. Whoever has these swords, what else does he have necessary? See what he says: **This glory is to all his saints.** Let us ask God, that we may have this glory: that the sword proceeding from the mouth of our Savior, may arm our hands. He who has this broadsword, does not fear the sword of the world. I tell you a new thing: Frequently the sword of this world cuts that sword. It frequently happens, that the sword of the world gives us that sword. For if we fear this one, we shall not receive that one. Let us therefore give thanks to him who has this sword, and let us bless him for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM CL.

Alleluia. This psalm of the third fifty contains a mystery, that is, that the first [fifty] through baptism and penance regenerates us to the good of innocence: the second, after the judgment, comprehends the fruit of innocence: the third, having completed the building of the divine city, and the hope of all the saints being consummated, exhorts us to eternal gratulation and praise. For it says:

Praise the Lord in his saints. Who will place them after the celebrated judgment, in the glory of eternity. **Praise him in the firmament of his power.** In that, all infirmity being removed, he has brought in the firmament of eternal power to these.

Praise him in his powers. For that, potentially consuming death with immortality, he has given them the glory of immutable life: *which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man* (1 Cor. 2). **Praise him according to the multitude of his greatness.** Because he assigns the mansions of the heavenly bodies distinguished by manifold honor, as the Lord says: *In my Father's house there are many mansions* (John 14).

Praise him in the sound of the trumpet. In which war those killed have conquered: the Lord crushing Satan under their feet. **Praise him in the psaltery and harp.** In that he has granted to them to fulfill the song of the law from heaven: or after the flesh has been mortified (Rom. 16), which is taken as the harp, he has quickened them in himself.

Praise him in the timbrel and choir. In the timbrel, because the mortified body has been given immortality. In the choir, because it has been associated with the angelic choirs. **Praise him in strings and organ.** Because by abstinence from foods, the bowels being twisted back, and the carnal concupiscences being overcome, they have been found worthy of the kingdom of God, to sing the divine praises.

Praise him on high-sounding cymbals: praise him on cymbals of joy. This praise is fulfilled in high-sounding and exulting cymbals, in that the corruption of flesh and blood being driven away, conformed to the image of the Creator, all fullness of hope being completed, they

may shine like the sun in the kingdom of God the Father almighty. **Let every spirit praise the Lord.** In this kingdom therefore not flesh, not blood, not corruption, but the man now made entirely spiritual: may he not cease to praise God in spirit (who is spirit). Who may deign to grant us, that having been made doers of the law in this age, proved in the agony of this life, and found faithful, enriched with spiritual fruits, we may deserve to be joined to these singing together. To him be glory and empire with the eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, both for all ages of ages. Amen.

SECOND EXPOSITION UPON PSALM CXIX.

Let us come to the psalm which was read after the hundred and eighteenth psalm. The hundred and eighteenth psalm (as we have frequently said) is lettered, that is, it is alphabetical: for it begins from ALEPH even to the last Hebrew letter, which in Hebrew is called THAU. And the individual verses begin from individual letters. There are twenty-two Hebrew letters, and eight verses begin from each letter. For example, from the letter *a*, which is called ALEPH, eight verses begin. Again when those have been finished, from the second letter which is called BETH, another eight verses begin. And in the third place, those being finished, from the other which is called GIMEL, another eight verses begin. Therefore the hundred and eighteenth psalm is alphabetical. If we wish to read a letter, we cannot read it unless we

first know the letters. So therefore we also cannot know the Scriptures, unless we first know the alphabet. Therefore the hundred and eighteenth psalm is an alphabetical moral [psalm], and instructs our life. And because now is not the time to speak of the whole psalm, let us speak now of the first psalm of the steps (degrees), which thus begins:

In my trouble I cried to the Lord: and he heard me. Moreover they are called psalms of the steps (degrees), as we have frequently said, because by certain steps we ascend to greater things. Now is not the time to dispute about all the psalms of the steps, and to say how through individual psalms steps are made, that we may come to the highest things. Meanwhile let us speak now of the first step, leaving the mystery of why it is called the fifteenth step; for to say the same thing frequently is a weariness to the hearers. Whence also the Apostle testifies that he spent fifteen days with Peter in Jerusalem, that he might compare both Testaments, both the septenary and the octonary (Galat. 2). There are many things to be said. **In my trouble I cried to the Lord: and he heard me.** Whoever is still in the lowest step, looks back to the highest of the steps, the fifteenth. Whoever shall be in the fifteenth, is already near the temple, and that temple, whose ruins we now see, offended its Lord. And what did the Lord say? *Arise, let us go hence* (John 14). And what does he say in another place? *Your house shall be left to you desolate* (Luke 13). The Lord went out, and the temple collapsed. This

temple therefore has fifteen steps in its circuit. We see some signs: count, and you will see it is so as we say. The Levites therefore, and the priests, each one according to order stood on the steps. For example: He who was the high priest, stood on the first step, that is, on the fifteenth step above. In the second step indeed stood the priests, and among the priests themselves there was diversity. In the third again the lesser ones stood. In the fourth again the Levites stood. And among the Levites there was much diversity: whoever was the last, he was on the newest (lowest) step. Consider that this earthly temple is a figure of the heavenly temple: *For star differeth from star in brightness: so also is the resurrection of the dead* (1 Cor. 15). Happy he who in the fifteenth step in the heavenly Jerusalem, and in the temple shall have deserved to be. Nevertheless, because that is great, and I think that belongs to the apostles and the holy martyrs: let us pray, that at least in the last step of the temple of the Lord we may be able to be found.

O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue. He says this of all heresies. He says it of the Jews, he says it of the Arians, he says it of the Manichaeans, he says it of the other heresies. When the Arian says: The Father is greater, the Son is lesser, what shall we say? **O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue.** When the Manichaean says, and those like the Manichaeans: The Lord did not rise again in the truth of the body, and that you may know it was not a true body, he

entered when the doors were closed (John 20), what shall we say? **O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue.** Greater are the wounds of the tongue, than of the sword. The sword kills the body, it does not kill the soul. The tongue is a bad thing, a great evil: a small member indeed, but it causes great ulcers. How many evils the tongue has, read the Epistle of Saint James (Chap. 3). The tongue has nothing middle; either it is a great evil, or a great good. A great good, if it confesses Christ as God; a great evil, if it denies Christ as God. Therefore let no one think and say meanwhile: I have not sinned in work: if I have sinned, I have sinned with the tongue. What is a greater sin than blasphemy against God? and yet the tongue sins. Why did the devil fall from heaven? because he committed theft? because he committed homicide? because he committed adultery? And these indeed are evils, but the devil did not fall because of this, but because of his tongue he fell. For that which he said: *I will ascend into heaven, above the stars of heaven I will set my throne, and I will be like the Most High* (Isa. 14). Therefore let not monks think they ought to be secure, and say meanwhile: We do not commit great crimes in the monastery, I do not commit adultery, I do not commit theft, I do not commit homicide, I do not commit parricide, and the rest which are great vices. It is a great crime when I detract my brother, with my tongue I kill my brother. *For he who hateth his brother is a murderer* (1 John 3). See what Solomon says: *In the hand of the tongue, death and life* (Prov.

18). See what he says: *In the hand of the tongue.* You see how great an evil the tongue is: and it has a hand. For what does he say? *In the hand of the tongue.*

What shall be given to thee, or what shall be added to thee, to a deceitful tongue? The Holy Spirit answers the prophet who says: *O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue: what shall be given to thee, or what shall be added to thee, to a deceitful tongue?* He answers him, and says, you who say: *O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue*, what do you wish to be given to you? And after it shall have been given to you, what do you wish again to be added to you to a deceitful tongue? See what he says: He did not say, *against* a deceitful tongue, but, **to a deceitful tongue.** If he had said, *against* a deceitful tongue, he would seem to speak of an adversary. See what is the mystery of the Prophet, or rather of the saint constituted in the first step. I speak more simply, for the sake of the simpler ones. What does he say? *O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue.* For example, from the lips of my adversary, who detracts me. But the Lord answers something else. And what did he say? He did not say, what shall be given to thee, or what shall be added to thee, *against* a deceitful tongue? that is, he did not say, what do you desire to be done to you against your adversary? But what does he say? **What shall be given to thee, or what shall be added to thee, to a deceitful tongue?** He did not say, *against* the

tongue: but, **to the tongue.** See what he says **to a deceitful tongue:** to *your* tongue, not the adversary's. For if the adversary detracts you, he does not harm you at all: you kill yourself, if you detract another. For example: If my brother detracts me, how has it harmed me? If he calls me a murderer, if he calls me an adulterer, if wicked, if a liar, how has it harmed me? For of two things one is true: either he speaks the truth, or he lies. If he speaks the truth, that which he said does not harm me: but because I truly did it. If however he lies, his lie does not harm me: but it kills the soul of the one speaking. We are unhappy, we are miserable. When we have someone as an enemy: while we think that we do something against him, we do it against ourselves. We detract him, we go around here and there, we tell everyone about him: do we think that we harm him? We do not harm him, but we kill our own souls, because we lie. *For the mouth that belieth, killeth the soul* (Wisd. 1).

The sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals that lay waste. *The sharp arrows of the mighty.* Now he answers to the Lord, what he asks. Because the Lord had said: *What shall be given to thee, or what shall be added to thee? * Now this one says what he asks: Lord, this I ask: **the sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals that lay waste.** See what he says. The poison of my tongue, and my detraction, nothing can cast forth: except thy arrows, which make a solitude (desolation) of my tongue. My tongue swells, it has poison within: unless it shall have been

pricked by thy arrows, and struck, the poison does not go out. We ought to give an example: if ever there is a wound in the body, and in the wound itself there are already putrid flesh, and there is a cancer, and there should be pus within; unless it shall have been opened, the pus does not go out. And if the pus shall have gone out, unless it shall have been cauterized, the pus is born again. See therefore what he says: Because my tongue swells, and has pus, and has poison, first wound it with arrows, that the pus may be able to go out: then place thy coals, and fire, that whatever evil there shall have been, it may cook out, and make a desert. See therefore what he says: **The sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals that lay waste.** Would that this desolating coal might be given to us. Would that we also might say: *Was not our heart burning in the way, while he opened to us the Scriptures* (Luke 24). And Isaiah says to Babylon: *Thou hast coals of fire, thou shalt sit upon them: these shall be for a help to thee* (Isa. 47). And the Apostles before they received the Holy Spirit, had in their tongue still some human swellings; therefore the Holy Spirit descended in the likeness of fire upon their tongues (Acts 2), that whatever of pus they had, the Holy Spirit might boil away. Let us say also another example: Isaiah when he had seen the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated, what does he say? *Woe to me miserable, because I am pricked, because I have unclean lips, and in the midst of a people having unclean lips, I dwell* (Isa. 6). See, what does he say? *Woe

to me miserable, because I have unclean lips.* And afterwards what does he say? Because he had unclean lips, therefore there is sent one of the Seraphim, and he takes a coal of fire from the altar, and touches his lips and tongue, and purges it. And what does he say? *Behold I have touched thy lips with this, and I have cleansed thy tongue.* And immediately what does he say? *Whom shall I send to this people, and who will go?* O mysteries of the Scriptures! as long as he had a deceitful tongue, and unclean lips, it is not said to him, whom shall I send, and who [will go] there? his lips are cleansed, and immediately he is sent to speak. Therefore he who has unclean lips, cannot prophesy, cannot be sent in the service of God. **With coals that lay waste.** Would that also this solitude (desolation) might be granted to us, that whatever is evil, he might take away from our tongue: so that where there are thorns, where there are briars, where there are nettles, the fire of the Lord may be sent, and burn up all things, and it may become the solitude of Christ.

With those who hated peace, I was peaceful: when I spoke to them, they fought against me without cause.

Unhappy are we, we cannot restrain our tongue from detraction: if someone should offend us, we show as it were a peaceful face, but the heart has poison. We are called monks, and though we may not be such as we ought to be, yet we are called so. At the third hour we pray: at the sixth hour we pray: at the ninth, we make the service of lamps: at midnight we rise: then

at cock-crow we pray. See at what hours we are always awakened for the service of God. See what he says: the third, sixth, ninth hour, the service of lamps, the middle of the night, cock-crow, early morning. All this we do, and we do not consider that if our soul has enmities against a brother, we pray without cause. For what is said in the Gospel? *If thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee* (Matt. 5). See what he says: he did not say, if thou hast anything against thy brother; but, if thy brother hath anything against thee. He seems to impose an unjust thing upon us; for if he had said, if thou hast anything against thy brother, it was in our power what we had. But now what does he say? *If thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee.* I answer him: Lord, this is not in my power, if my brother has anything against me, I have nothing against him. If he has against me, what does it pertain to me? And why wilt thou not receive my gift, and sayest: *If thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee: leave thy gift, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and so offer thy gift?* Behold, I have nothing; if he has, what does it pertain to me? The Lord answers thee: And what does he say? Wicked servant, I understand thy mind: Hast thou nothing against thy brother? hast thou nothing? dost thou love him? Why then dost thou not wish him to be saved? If thou lovest him, go, ask him that he may not have anything against thee, so that he may be able to be saved.

But thou showest that thou dost not love him; because thou dost not wish him to be saved; go, ask him, cast thyself at his feet, entreat him days and nights, say: I have left my gift at the altar, on thy account I cannot offer sacrifices. He is pricked [in heart], and what does he say? If this one who asks me does not offer his gift, I who have been asked, and do not forgive, what am I to do? Therefore also the Apostle says, that we should give our enemies to eat, and to drink (Rom. 12). And what does he say? *For doing these things,* he says, *thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.* Someone may say, enemies do this; therefore they do well to an adversary, that they may heap coals of fire upon his head. But another thing is said: if he should do evil to thee, and thou shouldst do good to him, thou heapest coals of fire upon his head, that is, thou cleansest his vices, and cookest out his malice, so that he may be converted to repentance. See therefore what the holy prophet says. **With those who hated peace, I was peaceful.** He did not say, those who wanted peace: but, **those who hated peace.** They hated peace, and I loved those who hated peace. Therefore also the Apostle says: *As much as is in you, having peace with all men* (Rom. 12). Let us ask the brother. If he is our enemy, let us ask both twice, and thrice, and seven times. Yet even if my brother should sin, how often shall I forgive him, seven times? I say to thee, not seven times, but seventy times seven, that is four hundred and ninety times (Matt. 18). If we should wish to count from morning until evening, we

cannot commit so many sins, four hundred and ninety. Yet what does the Lord say? *If he should sin seventy times seven in a day, and being converted should ask thee, forgive him.* But thou sayest: He is not converted from his whole heart, he lies. Let us leave the judgment to God; he asks me, he entreats, he does not say this truly, God knows; I hear the voice, Christ understands the heart: I receive what I hear, let Christ receive what he knows. Then see thy reward: he lies, thou receivest the truth; his is the destruction, thine is the salvation. Why have I spoken all this? Because in monasteries, and especially in cenobia, these vices are wont to be. We do not blush, we do not grieve: we have left mothers, we have left fathers, we have left brothers, we have left sisters, we have left wives, we have left children, we have left our homelands, we have left houses, we have left our little cells, we have left the cells in which we were born and nourished, and we have left the little servants with whom we were nourished: we have come into the monastery, and for this reason we have left all these things, that on account of a frivolous thing we should make a quarrel with the brothers in the monastery? We have left possession, we have left homeland, we have left the world, and on account of a pen (*calamum*) we make a quarrel in the monastery? If I should hear a bitter word, I cannot bear it: it seethes in my heart: it is written in my marrows for ten or fifteen days, it cannot be taken from my heart, I speak to my brother, who had done me injury, and I promise peace with my lips, and I hold

poison in my heart. Frequently both the eyes and the face are an indication of the mind. When our heart is wounded against someone, we cannot look at him with straight eyes: the face itself and the eyes are as it were the mirror of our soul. What does the Scripture say? *And they could not speak anything peaceful to him* (Gen. 37), the tongue could not lie about what the heart did not contain within. This therefore I say, to yourselves and to me, for neither do I preach for this, that I may make myself as it were secure: the occasion of this little verse compelled us to speak thus. A great evil is the tongue. **Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips and from a deceitful tongue.** Not from another's tongue, but from my tongue deliver [me]. Nothing does the tongue of another hurt me: my tongue is an enemy to me. **Lord, deliver my soul:** deliver me from my tongue, my tongue is a sword: it kills my soul. I think that I hurt my enemy, and I know not that I kill myself. The adversaries fight when I speak to them, and I speak peaceful things. Let them have an inimical mind, but let us have a peaceful mind, since it is written also in Paralipomenon: *And the children of Israel went out to fight with a peaceful mind.* Someone goes to fight, and has a peaceful mind: but the arms of Christians are peace: the peace of Christ, which surpasseth all understanding (Philip. 4). Blessed are the peacemakers: not only those who make peace between those quarreling, but those who make peace in themselves. Blessed are the peacemakers. If others make a quarrel, and I should intervene in the middle, and make

peace between them, and I myself should not have peace in my mind: what does it profit me that they made peace? *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God* (Matt. 5). Blessed are the peacemakers who speak peaceful things to those who hated peace. Blessed are the peacemakers. Christ is peace. For if Solomon is interpreted "Christ": but Solomon is interpreted "**peaceful**": therefore Christ our God is peace. Going to heaven, he left to us a banner, saying: *My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you* (John 14). Let us keep what Christ has given: let us have peace: Let us keep peace, and it keeps us in Christ Jesus: to whom be glory for ages of ages. Amen.

BOOK ON THE EXPOSITION OF THE PSALMS. (C,G,S)

PROLOGUE.

The Psalter is as it were a large house, which indeed has one exterior key at the gate: but in the various rooms within, it has its own keys. Although the one larger key of the great gate is the Holy Spirit; yet each individual room has its own little keys. If someone therefore should cast forth the confused key from the house, if he should wish to open a room, he cannot, unless he should find the key. Thus individual psalms are as it were individual cells, having their own keys. And so the great gate of this house is the first psalm, which begins thus:

PSALM 1.

Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. Some think that the key of this psalm is to be referred to the person of Christ our Lord: so that this blessed man is Christ according to his humanity. The intention is good, but it is ignorance. For if the blessed man is Christ, and Christ gave the law, how is it now said of Christ: *but in the law of the Lord is his will?* Then how is he compared to another tree, and it is said: *And he shall be as a tree which is planted near the running waters?* For if he is compared to a tree, everything that is compared is less than that to which it is compared; therefore the tree would be greater than the Lord, who is compared to the tree. You see therefore that the psalm cannot be interpreted as concerning the person of the Lord. But it is said generally of any just man: although many think it was said of Joseph, he from Arimathea, who did not walk in the counsel of the Jews, and in the way of sinners did not stand, and in the chair of the Pharisees did not sit: yet what others interpret specially of him, we interpret generally of the just man.

Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. We read in Genesis that Adam was cursed when it is said: *cursed is the earth in thy works* (Gen. 3:17). The curse therefore of the first man is now loosed by a blessing. As it were in the old Law one beatitude is placed: but in the Gospel eight beatitudes are named together (Matt. 5). **Blessed is the

man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly.** Blessed *vir* (man), not *homo* (human); but *vir*: the man who shall have reached the perfect man, Christ, who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. He described three general sins of men: for either we think, or we do, or we teach. First we think; then when we have thought, we turn thought into works: when we have already done something of work, it also happens that we teach others what we ourselves had done. **Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly,** who has not thought evil: **and hath not stood in the way of sinners, and hath not sat in the chair of pestilence.** That is, who neither taught others, **and in the way of sinners hath not stood.** It is difficult for someone not to sin. Finally John the Evangelist says: *Because he who denies that he has committed sin, lies, and is a liar* (1 John 1:8). If therefore we all sin, but no one is blessed except he who does not sin: therefore because we all sin, no one is blessed. But see what he says: **and in the way of sinners hath not stood;** he did not say, blessed is the man who did not sin, but blessed is the man who shall not have persevered in sin, and in the way of sinners hath not stood. I sinned yesterday, I am not blessed. If I shall not have stood in sin, if I shall have withdrawn myself, I am already blessed.

And hath not sat in the chair of pestilence. As he said there, "stood", so also here, "sat": as there he who did not persevere in sin is blessed: so here he who did not persevere in evil doctrine

and sit, is blessed. What then? you yourselves see how beatitude is granted triply: if we do not think evil things, if we shall not have persevered in sin, if we do not teach those things which are evil. This is what the prophet says: *Upon three and four sins I will not convert her, saith the Lord* (Amos 1:9). He says this eight times, but Amos speaks this. That is, thou hast thought, I forgave; thou hast done, I forgave; surely thou shouldst not also teach evil? This is what is said: upon three and four sins let him not be angry with thee, saith the Lord. **And in his law he shall meditate day and night.** He said three things which he ought not to have done: not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and not to stand in the way of sinners, and not to sit in the chair of pestilence: He said three things which we ought not to do: he says two things which we ought to do; for it is not enough for us to flee from evil things, unless we follow after good things.

But in the law of the Lord is his will. He did not say fear, but, **his will**; for many do things out of fear, but the fear of the one doing has no reward. **But in the law of the Lord is his will,** so that he may wish to do what the Lord commanded. **And in his law he shall meditate day and night:** Speech cannot explain as much as the mind conceives. **But in the law of the Lord is his will.** Someone says: Behold I wish to do the law of God, therefore I am blessed because I wish; but see what follows: it is not enough to wish the law of God, but, **in his law he shall meditate day and night.** **He shall medi-

tate day and night.** Someone may say: human nature does not endure this, for one must walk, and drink, and eat, and sleep, and those things which are necessary for life must be prepared. How shall he meditate in the law of God day and night? especially when the Apostle says: *Praying without intermission* (1 Thess. 5:17). Can I pray at that time when I sleep? The meditation of the law, therefore, is not in reading, but in doing. Finally it is said in another place: *Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all in the name of the Lord* (1 Cor. 10:31). If I stretch forth alms, I meditate on the law of God: if I visit the sick, my feet meditate on the law of God: if I do those things which are commanded, what others meditate with their mouth, I meditate with my body. The Jews, therefore, meditate with their mouth, our meditation is work. He said, therefore, three things which we ought not to do, he said two things which we ought to do: he who shall have done this, what reward will he merit?

And he shall be as a tree which is planted near the running waters, which shall yield its fruit in its season. And its leaf shall not fall off. Those who say that, just as a tree if it shall have been planted near waters, it must necessarily flourish and is not dried up, because its roots have moisture from which they live, so whoever meditates on the law of God, the meditation itself of the law both makes flourish and gives life, interpret simply to me. These interpret simply; but we, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, reading that the tree of life was planted in par-

adise, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and this tree of life was planted in paradise, and from paradise itself goes forth a fountain which is divided into four heads (Gen. 2). We read also in Solomon (if anyone is pleased to receive the Book), for he speaks there of wisdom: *Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God* (1 Cor. 1:24): therefore where Solomon speaks: *It is a tree of life to all who lay hold of it* (Prov. 3:18), it is said there of Wisdom. But if wisdom is the tree of life, and wisdom itself is Christ. Thou seest therefore that he who is a blessed and holy man, is compared to this tree, that is, to wisdom. You see therefore that this blessed and just man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, who did not do those things, and did these things, **and he shall be as a tree which is planted near the running waters.** That is, he will be like Christ, since he has made us to sit together in heavenly places, and to reign together (Eph. 2:6). You see therefore that with Christ we shall reign in heaven. You see that this tree was planted in paradise, and we all have been planted together with him.

And he shall be as a tree which is planted near the running waters. For from that fountain proceed all the rivers, **which shall yield its fruit in its season.** This tree does not give fruit at all times, but, **in its season.** This tree does not give in the present world, but in the future, that is, in the day of judgment. This tree now has flowers, this tree now buds, and promises future fruits. This tree has two things, it has both fruits

and leaves. It has fruit, the sense in the Scriptures: leaves, the simple words; fruit is in the sense, but leaves are in the words. Whoever therefore reads the holy Scriptures, if he reads according to the Jews, he understands only the leaves; but if he understands spiritually, he takes the fruits.

And its leaf shall not fall off. Yet even the leaves of this tree are useful. Finally if someone understands even according to the history, he has utility for his soul. We read in the Apocalypse of John (which book is not received in these provinces: yet we ought to know that in all the West, and in other provinces of Phoenicia, and in Egypt the book is received, and it is ecclesiastical, for also the ancient ecclesiastical men, of whom are Irenaeus, and Polycarp, and Dionysius, and other Roman interpreters, of whom is also Saint Cyprian, receive the book and interpret it), we read therefore there: *And behold,* he says, *I saw a throne set, and one lamb, and a tree,* he says, *near the river, and on each side of the bank that very tree* (Apoc. 22). That is, it was on this side and it was on that side. *And the tree itself,* he says, *had fruits, and in the year, twelve times in each month it yielded fruit, and it had,* he says, *leaves, and its leaves were for the healing of the nations.*

I saw, he says, *one throne set: for though we believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and there is a Trinity, yet the kingdom is one.* *I saw,* he says, *one throne set, and I saw,* he says, *one lamb standing in the sight of the throne.* It is said of the assumption of the body

of the Savior: *Behold the lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sins of the world.* *And a fountain,* he says, *went forth from under the middle of the throne.* You see therefore that from the middle of the throne a fountain of graces goes forth. Yet that fountain does not go forth from the throne, unless the lamb shall have stood opposite. For unless we shall have believed the incorporation of Christ, we do not receive these graces. *And one high tree,* he says, *had been set.* He did not say trees, but one tree. If it is one tree, how is it on this side of the bank, and on that side of the bank? For if he had said, I saw trees, it could have been that some were on one side, and others on the other. But now one tree is said to be on each side; one river goes forth from the throne of God, that is, the grace of the Holy Spirit. And this grace of the Holy Spirit is in the holy Scriptures, that is, in that river of the Scriptures. Yet this river has two banks, both the Old and the New Testament. And in each side the planted tree is Christ.

This tree therefore in the year, that is, in each month, yielded fruits twelve times. For we cannot receive fruits from that tree, except through the apostles. If someone therefore shall have come to the tree through the apostles, it is necessary that he receive fruits, reap fruits from the holy Scriptures, that is, the divine sense dwelling in the letter. If someone therefore shall have come to this tree through the apostles, he takes its fruits; but if someone should not have been able, he is still weaker, he is not yet a disciple, but is

of the crowd, but is from outside, but is a gentile. He who cannot take fruits, let him take words, that is, leaves for the healing of the nations: for it is written: *And its leaves for the healing of the nations.* If someone is still of the nations, if someone is not a disciple, and is still of the crowd, let this one receive its leaves, that is, let him receive simple words for medicine. Finally it is written, its leaves for the healing of the nations, that is, for medicine. Why have we said all this, and digressed to the Apocalypse? Because it is written, that **it shall yield its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not fall off, and all things whatsoever he shall do shall always prosper.** We have spoken of the beatitude of the just man, we have spoken of his reward. Because he who shall not have done three things, and shall have done two things, is compared to the tree of paradise, that is, to the wisdom of Christ. We have spoken therefore of the holy man, now let us see concerning the contrary man. What is said of the sinner and the ungodly?

Not so the ungodly. All those kinds of rewards which we said of the just man, the ungodly man shall not receive. **Not so the ungodly.** He did not say, "not so the sinners"; for if he had said it of sinners, we were all excluded. **Not so the ungodly.** This is the difference between the ungodly and the sinner: he who is ungodly denies God; he who is a sinner confesses and sins. **Not so the ungodly.** In some [manuscripts] it is read, **not so** this a second time: **Not so the ungodly, not so.** But let us know that

in the Hebrew it is placed once. We have spoken of the holy man, and of his comparison: **And he shall be as a tree, which is planted near the running waters.** Now on the contrary it is said of the ungodly. Just as the just man is compared to a tree, so the ungodly is compared to the dust, which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth. Dust, although it be of the earth, yet it ceases to be earth. **But as the dust which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth.** See what is said: the ungodly shall be so unhappy, that he is not even earthly dust. He seems indeed not to have substance, but he has his own substance. He has nothing solid; but what he has, he has for punishment. He is dispersed hither and thither. He is never in one place. Wherever the wind shall have drawn him, thither his impulse is directed. So also the ungodly who has once denied God, wherever the breeze of the devil shall have drawn him, thither he is led through error. Since we have said what the just man is, and to whom he is compared; what the ungodly is, and to whom he is compared; and we have spoken of the present world: now we ought to know of the future and eternal.

Therefore the ungodly shall not rise again in judgment, nor sinners in the counsel of the just. We read in the Gospel according to John: *whosoever believeth in me, shall not be judged; whosoever believeth not in me, is already judged* (John 3:18). Who then is to be judged, if he who believes shall not be judged, and he who does not believe is already judged? Who shall be judged

in the day of judgment? Let us seek therefore a middle ground between the believer and the non-believer who is to be judged. He who believes shall not be judged. He who believes does not sin, he who truly believes does not sin, he who has true faith does not sin. Finally when we sin, our mind fluctuates in faith; at that time when we sin, when we are angry, when we detract, when we commit homicides, when we fornicate, where is faith? Therefore what he says, "he who believeth in me shall not be judged", for he who is already blessed has no necessity to be judged. He who does not believe in me is already judged, for he is already predestined to punishment. Who then is judged? He who indeed believes, but is overcome by sins; who has good things, and has also evil things; who at that time when he believes, does well, [at that time when] he does not believe, does evil. Let us see therefore now what is said: **therefore the ungodly shall not rise again in judgment.** They do not rise again that they may be judged, because they have already been judged. For he who believeth not in me, is already judged. **Nor sinners in the counsel of the just.** He did not say, "sinners do not rise again", but **they do not rise again in the counsel of the just.** They do not merit to rise again with those who are not to be judged. If they believed in me, they would rise again with those who are not to be judged.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the just, and the way of the ungodly shall perish. **For the Lord knoweth the way of the just.** And what

great thing is it, if the Lord knows the way of the just, if the Lord is said to know those whom he deigns to know? Finally it is said of sinners: *Depart from me, workers of iniquity, the Lord knoweth you not* (Luke 13:27): the Apostle says: *If anyone knows, he shall be known.* **For the Lord knoweth the way of the just** (1 Cor. 14:38). He who is a sinner, God does not know him: he who is just, is known by God. We read in Genesis at that time when Adam transgressed, at that time when he heard the serpent rather than God, when he hid himself from the face of God, the Lord came into paradise after the meal, and walks about (Gen. 3): see what is said, God seeks Adam not at midday, but at evening: for already Adam had lost the sun, because he did not have the midday: at evening, that is, *deilinon* (δελινόν), and he was walking, for God does not stand for a sinner, but walks. He knew that he was in paradise, and he was not ignorant of what had been done, but because Adam had sinned, God does not know him. *And God said: Adam, where art thou?*

We have spoken of how the sinner is ignored by God. On the contrary we ought to know how the just man is known by God. God says to Abraham: *Go out from thy land, and from thy kindred* (Gen. 12:1). He came into Palestine, he was in Hebron, he was in Gerar for a long time; when the son Isaac had been born to him, and he had received the promise, *because in thy seed all nations shall be blessed*, he took Isaac, and offered him to God, and a voice was heard from

heaven: *spare thy son*, and immediately it is written at that time when he had offered his son, what does God say to Abraham? *Behold I have known that thou fearest the Lord thy God.* Thou who hadst spoken for so long a time, now hast thou known Abraham? But because there had been a great faith in offering his son, therefore now for the first time God began to know him. Why have I said all this? because it is written: **for the Lord knoweth the way of the just.** Let us speak also in another way: Christ is the way, and the life, and the truth: let us walk therefore into Christ, and God the Father knows our way.

And the way of the ungodly shall perish. He did not say, "the ungodly shall perish"; but if they shall have done penance, even they shall be saved. At that time when the apostle Paul persecuted Christ, and the Churches, he was ungodly. If therefore the ungodly shall perish, a place for penance is not given. But he did not say, "the ungodly shall perish", but, **the way of the ungodly shall perish.** That is, ungodliness shall perish; not the ungodly man, but ungodliness itself; the man who was ungodly shall not perish, but the man doing penance, ungodliness shall perish. May God therefore grant this to us, that we may not do three things, and may do two things; may we be compared to the tree of life, may we not be ungodly, who are compared to dust; may we not be sinners, since sinners do not rise again in the counsel of the just, and may the evil way perish: and let us bless God, to whom be glory for ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 5.

The fifth psalm is noted with this title: **Unto the end, for her who obtaineth the inheritance, a Psalm of David.** Many think that titles do not pertain to the psalms. And for what reason they estimate this, they know not. If indeed they were not had in the Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin volumes, they would think rightly: but now since they are had in the Hebrew books, and especially this title which is noted in the fifth psalm, I wonder that they wish to say this, that something in the Scripture is without cause. If one iota and one tittle shall not pass from the Law, how much more so many words or syllables! **Unto the end for her who obtaineth the inheritance, a Psalm of David.** The inheritance is not promised in the beginning, but in the end of the world. The Jews thought that they obtained it in the beginning, we obtain it at the end. Whence also the apostle John says: *Little children, it is the last hour* (1 John 2:18). In the last hour therefore is the end. The inheritance is unto the end, **unto the end for her who obtaineth the inheritance.** Who is this who obtaineth the inheritance? It seems to me that it is the Church, for she herself is the one who obtaineth the inheritance. The Psalm of David sings in the beginning, what the Church may receive in the end. The fifth psalm therefore is from the person of the Church. Others interpret many things, many say according to the history concerning the people of Israel, that they wished to return from Babylon into Judea. These inter-

pret this, but they have not interpreted "unto the end for her who obtaineth the inheritance". We therefore, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, strive by your prayers to discuss this psalm from the person of the Church.

PSALM 7.

Names are imposed on individual things, so that from the names even the things may be known. So also the psalms are noted with titles, so that from the titles even the psalms may be understood. The fifth psalm also is noted with this title: **Unto the end, for her who obtaineth the inheritance.** The sixth psalm is noted with this title: **Unto the end, in hymns for the octave, a psalm of David.** In the fifth it is said, "for her who obtaineth the inheritance", in the sixth it is said, "for the octave". But in the seventh, because it too is to be sung under the *Alleluia*, because on that other Lord's day the sixth psalm was read, and we through illness were not able to interpret it, but now the seventh psalm was read. But it has a title of this sort: **A psalm of David which he sang to the Lord for the words of Cush the son of Jemini.**

See the mysteries. Were these then written without cause? In the fifth it is said, "for her who obtaineth the inheritance", in the sixth it is said, "for the octave", in the seventh it is said, "for the words of Cush the son of Jemini". You see therefore how great mysteries are woven together, "for her who obtaineth the inheritance". Because we disputed in the fifth psalm, interpreting from the

person of the Church that the psalm was sung, which obtained the inheritance of Christ. But the sixth psalm properly pertains to the resurrection of Christ, which is the eighth day. For we have both the first day, and the eighth day. For we received the kingdoms of heaven on the eighth day. The eighth day after the sabbath, the first in the beginning. It is long, if we should now wish to speak of the number eight. Since there are eight beatitudes in Matthew: since in the hundred and eighteenth psalm individual letters have eight verses each: how there are fifteen psalms of the steps, how they are seven and eight, how Ecclesiastes says: *give a portion to seven, and also to eight* (Eccl. 11:2): how the east gate in Ezekiel has seven steps and eight; it is long to say how the eighth of the sons of Jesse is David, who received the kingdom. This is what is now said "for the octave", for in the octave we received the kingdom of heaven, whence he says: *Lord, rebuke me not in thy indignation, nor chastise me in thy wrath.* But since we cannot interpret concerning two psalms together, it suffices for us to have disputed concerning the title of the sixth psalm.

Now let us come to the beginning of the seventh psalm which begins thus: **A psalm of David which he sang to the Lord for the words of Cush the son of Jemini.** I know many and certainly most learned men, that they interpreted this title thus: At that time, he says, when Absalom rose up against David his father (I ask you that you may hear more patiently, for we

wish to interpret the Scriptures, not to declaim). At that time therefore when Absalom rose up against David, one of the friends of David named Hushai (*Chusi*) wished to go with David, but David sent him back to Absalom, that he might dissipate the counsels of Ahithophel. At that time when Ahithophel gave counsel, that Absalom should immediately pursue David unprepared, and kill him: Hushai therefore gave counsel, and dissipated the counsel of Ahithophel, and Hushai himself sent a messenger to David saying: *these and these things Absalom prepares.* And David began to flee, and to prepare; at that time when Hushai sent the words to David, David sang this psalm to the Lord, because the counsels of Ahithophel were dissipated.

This they say, and indeed they have related it reasonably: but let us read the Scriptures diligently, for there it is written thus, that this Hushai was the son of the Archite. Hence that Hushai is written with another letter in the book of Kingdoms [Kings]: there *Chus* is written with a *Samekh*, but here *Chus* is written with the letter *Shin*. Then that Hushai [Cush] is the son of the Archite: whence many of the Greeks not knowing read: "Hushai the friend of David". You see therefore that even in the reading the Greeks err. It is therefore most manifest according to the rule of the Scriptures, that that Hushai is the son of the Archite, but this Cush is called "of Jemini". Since we said that that Hushai was the son of the Archite, who is this "of Jemini"? And we, comparing spiritual things with spiritual,

ought to find the rule of this name. Where do we find in the Scriptures, "Jemini"? There is no doubt but that it is one tribe of the twelve, by name Benjamin. But Benjamin is interpreted, "son of the right hand". For at that time when Rachel died in Ephrata (we have seen the tomb with our eyes, we do not seek examples). At that time therefore when Rachel was dying, she brought forth, he says, an infant, and the women, or she herself who was dying, called his name **Benoni**, that is, "son of my sorrow". But on the contrary Jacob the father turned the sorrow of the mother into glory, and calls him not Benoni, that is, "son of my sorrow", but **Benjamin**, that is, "son of the right hand", that is, "of my power". Benjamin therefore is a name composed of two, of son and right hand. For *Ben* is called "son", *Jamin* is called "right hand".

Let us know therefore that the tribe of Benjamin is always called "Jemini". We read in the book of Kingdoms, at that time when it is written of Saul: *And behold,* he says, *a man of the tribe of Benjamin named Saul, the son,* he says, *of Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of Jemini.* And immediately there he is called "a man of Jemini", that is, of the tribe of Jemini, that is, of the tribe of Benjamin. Let us give also another testimony that we may not be able to doubt. That Shimei who [was] on mount Olivet at that time when David was fleeing from his son Absalom, the Scripture says this: *And behold,* he says, *Shimei of the kindred of Saul of the tribe of Ben-

jamin.* And he cast stones, he says, at David, and said: Come out, come out, thou man of blood. At that time when one of his leaders named Abishai says: *I will go,* he says, *and kill him,* what does David say to him? *What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?* And *behold,* he says, *he who came forth from my loins fights against me, and do you wonder if a son of Jemini,* that is, from the tribe of Benjamin, of the tribe of Saul, who was an enemy? Why have I said all this? that I might show the tribe of Jemini to be Benjamin.

We have said what Benjamin is, we have said the name of the father, let us see what "Cush the son of Jemini" is. **Cush** in the Hebrew language is interpreted **Ethiopian**, that is, **black** and **dark**. Of what sort of soul he has, of what sort also a body, concerning which Jeremiah says: *If the Ethiopian shall change his skin, and the leopard his spots* (Jer. 13:23). Therefore here Cush signifies his enemy Saul as black and an Ethiopian. And he says this, as the Ethiopian cannot change his skin: so also this one cannot change his manners. He came into my hands, he could have killed him, whose blood he could have shed: I wished to overcome him by benefit, but his malice cannot be conquered. For as the Ethiopian cannot change skins, so also his malice cannot be changed. Finally what does he say: **Lord my God, if I have done this,** that is, if I have done him any evil. **If there be iniquity in my hands, if I have rendered to those retributing me evils.** See what he says: I rendered good things for evils, he [rendered] evil things for good.

It is manifest therefore that the psalm is against Saul.

PSALM 9.

Joshua the son of Nun fought in the desert, and while Moses was praying, he overcame: one fought, the other conquered in prayer. So also I, according to that which is written: *open thy mouth and I will fill it*: I indeed seem to speak, but there are others by whose praying I speak. The ninth psalm, which was sung by you to the Lord, is great in verses, great in mysteries. Since we cannot dispute concerning all things, it suffices for now to speak concerning the title. Since we cannot enter the house, for the palace of the king is great, nor can we know all the mysteries of the king, let us in the meantime, as it were in the title of the house, in the vestibule itself, show whose house it is. **Unto the end for the hidden things of the son, a psalm of David.** "Unto the end", which is said, does not pertain to the Jews, but to us who have believed unto the end. That former one was the son, we are the latest. We therefore who are unto the end, ought to hear this psalm, because it pertains to those who are unto the end. **For the hidden things of the son.** What are these hidden things of the son? The mystery which in all ages past had been hidden, has been opened to us at the end. **For the hidden things of the son**, in Hebrew has it otherwise: for in Hebrew it has *ALMOTH*, which is interpreted, "for death": for *al* is called "for", *moth* is called "death". Therefore

it is said "for death", therefore "for the death of the son" is written in Hebrew. See therefore the Seventy Interpreters who interpreted for Ptolemy the gentile king, and it was hard to speak of the death of the son, for they knew that it was said of the Son of God. They saw it was written and yet they feared to say that the Son of God was to die. Let this in the meantime have been disputed concerning the title, and the whole psalm is said concerning the death of the Savior.

It is said of the Jews: *In this snare which they hid, their own foot is caught:* then of the calling of the Gentiles: *all the nations that forget God.* And finally against the devil: *God is not in his sight, he sitteth in ambush with the rich.* Unhappy are the rich with whom the devil sits. Finally see what is said of the devil: *he sitteth in ambush with the rich.* For whoever is rich, unless he shall have spoiled the poor, he cannot be rich; therefore he said: *he sitteth in ambush with the rich.* Whenever the rich persecute Christians, let us say: the devil sits in ambush with the rich.

He lieth in wait that he may catch the poor man, to catch the poor man while he draweth him. *In his snare he shall humble him.* This the ungodly, this the devil. The poor man not only in riches, but also in spirit, for *blessed are the poor in spirit.* *In his snare he shall humble:* whom? The poor man is understood. See what is said: "He shall humble", not "he shall kill": but when he shall have humbled the poor man, the humiliation of the poor man is the ruin of the devil.

For what follows? *He shall bow himself, and fall when he shall have lorded it over the poor.* Does it not seem to you that the devil in persecution, when he would kill Christians, when he would slay Martyrs, is slain in that he slew? *He shall bow himself and fall when he shall lord it over the poor?* The slain Martyr goes into heaven, he who kills is humbled and shall fall. Let this in the meantime have been briefly disputed concerning the psalm "for the hidden things of the son", and this was said in the Old Testament: for in the Old Testament it is said hiddenly of the son, now in the Gospel let us read manifestly of the manifest things of the son.

PSALM 78.

Since we have been made poor: since thou wast made poor for us, therefore we also have been made poor. *The prayer of the poor man when he was anxious, and poured out his prayer before the Lord.* Since thou wast made poor, when thou wast rich, and we have been made poor: **Help us, O God our Savior.** In Hebrew it has: **Help us, our Jesus:** for wherever "Savior" is, in Hebrew it has "Jesus". Finally Gabriel when he came to Mary: *And thou shalt call*, he said, *his name Jesus, for he shall save his people.* **Help us, our Jesus.** See what he says: "help". He who says "help", also himself strives to be delivered, for neither does he help us while sleeping, but while laboring. **For the glory of thy name, Lord, deliver us:** because thy new name has been called upon us, which is blessed among

the nations: **And be merciful to our sins for thy name's sake.** Thou the Savior, as Christ, and we Christians, have mercy on us for thy name's sake.

Let the groaning of the fettered come before thee. Those who follow the dogmas of Origen are accustomed to say this: "the groaning of the fettered," that is, of the angels who they say are shackled in bodies. For just as if fetters were placed on the feet, they weigh down the body and do not allow it to run, so also our bodies enclose souls, that is, they weigh down angels on the earth. And with what words do they approve of this? "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). And that which is said: "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ. To return, and to be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23). "See," he says, "what the Apostle says." Whoever says, "I desire to return," certainly says it to that place where he had been before. "Let the groaning of the fettered come before thee." But I will answer you simply, with rustic and ecclesiastical simplicity. For so the apostles answered, so they spoke, not with rhetorical and diabolic words: "For it is better to return and to be with Christ." Because it says so in the Greek; it does not have "to be dissolved," but "to return." "To return and to be with Christ." Where Adam my father was, there also I desire to be; from where he was cast out, I desire to return. In Adam we all were cast out from paradise; let the groaning of the fettered come before thee.

For why should I not understand this simply as having been said of the martyrs, who were shut

up in prisons? For how many were also sent into the mines? But I say that God truly hears the voice of those fettered ones.

According to the greatness of thy arm, take possession of the children of the slain. We are all (if indeed we are worthy) the children of martyrs. The Apostle, when he was in prison, was fettered; all the apostles, when they were in prisons, were fettered; all the martyrs who were killed were fettered in prisons. Therefore it is now said: "Take possession of the children of the slain." "Render to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom." It seems to me that he does not pray against them, but for them; that is, "give them thy sabbath"; for "sabbath" is interpreted as "rest." What he says is this: make them rest in their malice, or certainly otherwise, repay them here, and do not repay them in the future.

But we are thy people and the sheep of thy pasture. Where he says "sheep," he signifies innocence. Sheep have no one but a shepherd. "We will give thanks to thee forever." "We will give thanks," either we perform penance, or certainly what is better, we glorify. "Unto generation and generation," in the first people and the second people. Although according to history it is said otherwise in Ezekiel, yet according to spiritual understanding we say this, because these two nations, that is, two rods, are joined in Ezekiel, and become one kingdom. "Unto generation and generation we will announce thy praise." It is the voice of the apostles. Peter in the people of

the circumcision; Paul and Barnabas among the nations.

PSALM 127.

Blessed are all they that fear the Lord. Those who fear the Lord, what reward have they, what crown? Let us see what praise they have, what reward. Blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee. I have already spoken of beatitude; I ask what that beatitude is. He who fears the Lord, what beatitude does he have? Thy wife as a fruitful vine, on the sides of thy house. Thy children as olive plants, round about thy table. I think that by the favor of Christ we all fear God. Therefore do we not have this beatitude? For it is written, he who fears the Lord has this beatitude: thy wife as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house; thy children as olive plants, round about thy table. Therefore also he who has one son and two, is he not blessed? For what does he say, thy children as olive plants, round about thy table. Unless we have so many children that they gird our table, shall we not have the beatitude of one fearing the Lord? Isaac did not have this beatitude; for he had two sons, one most wicked, Esau, for whom it had been much better if he had not been born. But he had one son, Jacob: therefore did he not have beatitude? Because one could not go around the table. Virgins therefore do not fear God. For what is said, that he who fears the Lord may understand beatitude? Thy wife as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house; thy children as olive plants, round about thy table. John did not have

this beatitude. John certainly, both the Evangelist and the Baptist: for each was a virgin. Paul did not have this beatitude, who says: I would that all men were even as myself (1 Cor. 7:7). You see therefore that wife and children are to be understood spiritually; otherwise, unless we understand them spiritually, the angels do not have this beatitude, because they have us as children. Let us return therefore to the order of the reading.

Blessed are all they that fear the Lord. Just as one cannot say, The Lord is my portion, except he who has no other portion in the world; so he does not fear God who fears anything else besides the Lord. Finally the Savior himself says: Fear not them that kill the body; but fear him that can kill both body and soul into hell (Matt. 10:28). You see therefore that he fears something else besides God, who does not fear God. He who fears the Lord, what signs has he? he who walketh in his ways. There are many ways, and many ways lead to one way. Finally it is said also in Jeremiah: And stand ye in the ways of the Lord, and ask for his eternal paths, and ye shall find the way, and shall walk in it (Jer. 6:16). See what he says: and stand in the ways, and ask for the eternal ways of the Lord, and ye shall find one way, and walk in it. See how through many ways we come to one way. This is said also in the Gospel in other words under another meaning of the parable concerning that merchant who had many pearls, who sold them, and bought one most precious pearl. What he says is this: Have ye many pearls, and stand in the ways. This is, stand in the ways,

and ask for the eternal paths of the Lord. Beautifully "eternal," lest we should think that by the coming of Christ, the Law and the prophets were finished. But see what he says. Stand in the ways, in the Law and the prophets, and stand in the ways. Do not so believe in one way, that you leave the many ways; but stand in the ways, ask for the eternal paths of the Lord. Ask for the paths of the Lord, what Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel said, what the rest of the prophets said. Ask for the paths: it is better said in Greek tribous (τρίβους); for a path (semita) is so called from this, that it is worn (trita) by the heel of those walking. And what is said is this: ask for the paths, that is tribous, because forsooth the foot of the Lord has worn them. If indeed the Lord also walked in them. But when thou shalt have asked for the eternal paths of the Lord, then through those paths ye shall find one way which says: I am the way, the truth, and the life; walk ye in it. See the mysteries of the Scriptures, see in the simple words of the Scriptures many sacraments, in ways, in paths, in the Law and the prophets. He did not say, Walk, but stand. Stand, lest you leave the Law, nor the prophets. Nevertheless, when you shall have found those ways, through those ways, walk in that one way.

Thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands. Many not understanding have interpreted this place otherwise: Thou shalt eat the labors of thy fruits. Finally the Latin copies have it so, thou shalt eat the labors of thy fruits. But we read in the Hebrew thus written, thou shalt eat the labors

of thy hands. For who eats the labors of fruits? Certainly it ought to be understood on the contrary, because one eats the fruit of his labors, not the labors of fruits. Since therefore in the Hebrew it is thus written, thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands. I think that also in Greek the Seventy Interpreters in this place translated well; for hand in the Hebrew language is called JAD; in this place, however, they do not have JAD, but CHAAPH; Chaaph moreover is interpreted as karpos (καρπὸς), not karpos [fruit], but some part of the hand; since karpos is called in Greek arera (?). [Note: likely referring to the wrist or palm]. In this way we have spoken concerning the interpretation. Thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Behold the man, and his works. Therefore we also shall eat the labors of our hands. In the hands, works are understood. Thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands. Someone may say, therefore after the resurrection we are going to eat. For this is said of the blessed man: Thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands. I say this simply. Since man is composed of two substances, that is, of soul and body: the soul is immortal, the body however is mortal. That which is mortal, so that it also has mortal foods. That which however is immortal, that is, the soul which is immortal, also has immortal foods. Do you wish to know that the soul also has its own foods? The Lord and Savior says when he was hungry. What does he say? My food is to do the will of him who sent me (John 4:34). Do you wish to know what foods the

soul has? The prophet also tells us: Taste and see that the Lord is sweet (Ps. 33:9). For just as the body, unless it receives its foods, dies: so also the soul, unless it receives spiritual foods, dies. Why do I say all this? Because some are accustomed to say, I have no necessity for the holy Scripture, it suffices me only to fear God. And we have said this for that reason, that just as there are foods of the body, so the holy Scriptures are the foods of our soul.

Thy wife as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house. Solomon says that he wished to take wisdom, namely as a spouse (Wisdom 8:2). He says also in another place concerning Wisdom: Love her, and she shall embrace thee. Encompass her and she shall keep thee (Prov. 4:6). Let us therefore also take this wife, and let us have her in our embraces. Let us never dismiss her from our bosom. Let her never flee from our hands. If this wife shall have been always in our embrace, we shall make sons from her; not daughters, but sons. Finally here also it is said, thy children as olive plants, round about thy table. Could he not have said, thy daughters? or could he not have said ta tekna sou (τὰ τέκνα σου), so that both males and females could be understood? But see what he says, thy sons. He who has wisdom as a wife does not make daughters from her, but sons. He has nothing soft, nothing delicate, nothing tender, nothing effeminate in his mind. Do you think that the saints are written for another cause not to have had daughters, but sons? Let us read Genesis, for there the order of generations

is preserved. Holy Abraham had Sarah as a wife; he had Hagar as a concubine; he had afterwards Keturah. From two wives he creates sons. He does not make daughters. Let us come to Isaac. And Isaac makes two sons, he has no daughters. For he was holy and had nothing soft in himself, and tender, and effeminate, but everything manly and rigid. Blessed Jacob has twelve patriarchs as sons. And he has one daughter named Dinah, which is interpreted as cause of brawls, a quarrel. Finally he had one daughter and twelve sons. And on account of one daughter such great wars arise in Shechem. Jacob had never said, I fear, you have made me hateful. He speaks to Levi and Simeon: Levi and Simeon, into their council let not my soul come (Gen. 49:6). Why? Because as men, they wished to act for the cause of a woman. Why have I said all this? Because the saints do not have daughters, but only have sons. I tell you a new thing, new to those who do not know it. Otherwise to those who read the Scriptures, and read them diligently, it is not new; but things which they know. Jacob had twelve patriarchs as sons: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Levi, Issachar, Asher and the rest up to the twelfth. Read in Genesis, and you will never find that any one of those twelve patriarchs made a daughter, but all sons. I tell you one thing lest perchance you should forget. Asher had a daughter Sarah. Jacob had twelve sons and one daughter. Thus among the twelve patriarchs, one patriarch had only one daughter. Why have I said all this? that we ought to understand sons and daughters in

the Scriptures spiritually. Thy wife as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house. Just as a fruitful vine has many clusters, so also our wife, that is, wisdom our wife, who is a spouse. Finally it is written in another place: Come, my sister, my spouse (Cant. 5:1). Lest in that which he had said, spouse, you should understand something shameful, sister is joined; so that all shameful love may be excluded. Come, my sister, for let it be a holy love, and therefore I call thee sister and my spouse. Therefore I call thee spouse, that I may have a wife, and from thee make many sons, many sons as it were clusters from the vine. Just as the vine has diverse clusters. And indeed there is one root. But far and wide hither and thither it spreads its shoots, and the shoots themselves have their fruits, and in the fruits themselves are clusters, and one cluster is larger, another smaller, some grains are larger, others smaller; so also from wisdom, which is our wife: if however we shall have never dismissed her, many clusters are born, that is, many virtues; holy thoughts, illustrious works. Thy children as olive plants round about thy table. We read in another place: And wine cheereth the heart of man (Ps. 103:15). We read also in the Canticle of Canticles: Come, brethren, drink and be inebriated. And the wine which cheereth the heart of man. This wine does not cheer the heart of man; but it overwhelms, and makes insane. Finally it is written, that those who are powerful should not drink wine (Prov. 31:4). The Apostle also writes, that we ought not to drink wine and eat flesh (Rom. 14). Again it is

said to us: And wine cheereth the heart of man. But spiritual wine is meant, which if anyone shall have drunk he is immediately inebriated. All of you, so that you might dismiss your possessions, and your parents, and children and kinsmen, you have drunk wine, and being inebriated for Christ you have begun to be insane. Does it not seem to you to be drunkenness? does it not seem to you to be spiritual insanity, to despise delights, to seek after squalor, to flee cities, to follow after deserts, not to know affections, to ignore the proximity of the flesh, and only to know Christ? Finally the apostles were inebriated with this wine, and therefore it is said to them: They are full of new wine (Acts 2:13). For they had not been inebriated from the old Law, but from the Gospel. Noah therefore I think was so inebriated with this wine. Thy children as olive plants. Our children are compared to nothing else except olive plants. He did not say to the old olive, but to the new olive plant. Just as there concerning the drunkenness of the apostles, it is not said of old wine, but of new wine: so also here it is said a new olive plant, which is all green in the youth of the Gospel. A new olive plant full of light. Oil has this nature, that it seasons foods, that it provides fuel for light, that it restores the body anointed after a long journey as if to its former labor and health. Finally whoever shall have been weary and is anointed, as it were receives his former vigor. Do you think wine and oil are now said without cause? Honey could not be said, nor other spices, nor another tree, but only the vine

and the olive. Wine and oil. In wine, austerity; in oil, mercy. Finally he who was descending from Jerusalem to Jericho, who had been wounded, the Samaritan, that is, the guardian, pours into him nothing except wine and oil. Wine, the austerity of the precepts, typical wine; so that whatever of evil humor there is it may boil out and consume. Since however human fragility cannot bear the truth. For if thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, Lord, who shall stand (Ps. 129:3)? For if the Lord should be only just, we cannot live. Therefore to his justice, that is, to the wine, the oil of mercy is joined.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. We have already spoken much; let us hasten to the end. "The Lord bless thee out of Sion." Concerning this Sion and how another prophet says: "Sion shall be plowed like a field" (Jer. 26:18). The Lord also says: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent to thee" (Matt. 23:37). Finally, when the Lord had approached Jerusalem and seen it, he wept. But when did he weep over it? He wept indeed for its impending ruin, as though it were to perish. Finally, what does he say? "Arise, let us go hence." And in another place what he says: "Your house shall be left to you desolate." Therefore, this which he says, "the Lord bless thee out of Sion," he does not say of this Sion which we see to be desolate. The gates themselves, and the field itself, and the ruins themselves signify the wrath of the Lord. Even if we are ignorant, our eyes themselves cry out

the wrath of the Lord. "The Lord bless thee out of Sion." "Sion" is interpreted as "watchtower." "Jerusalem" is interpreted as "vision of peace." If our soul shall have a watchtower. If it shall be on high. If it shall not think of earthly things, but of sublime things. If our soul shall have the vision of peace, that is, if Christ, who is true peace, shall dwell in it: he himself blesses us. If Christ shall dwell in us, we too shall be Sion. We too shall be Jerusalem.

"And see thy children's children." I speak to you. If I shall have instructed you by my discourse, I have seen my children; if you shall have instructed others, I have seen my children's children. Let us, therefore, pray the Lord that we may have children, that we may have grandsons, and that we may always have a great progeny. Let us hasten to make such children. This union is holy. I tell you a new thing: without a wife's embrace, more such children are born.

"Peace upon Israel." "Israel" is interpreted as "mind seeing God." See, therefore, what is said: "peace upon Israel." Upon those who have a mind seeing God. If my mind shall have the vision of God, if I shall always see Christ, I shall not see others. Whoever has Christ in himself, has peace in himself. "My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you" (John 14:27). Although there are many persecutions, although there are many who persecute...

PSALM 128.

Often have they fought against me from my youth, let Israel now say. Often have they fought against me from my youth. Two things are said. Both 'often have they fought against me,' and 'from my youth have they fought against me.' Therefore if I shall have begun to serve the Lord in middle age, for example, at forty years, I cannot say, 'they have fought against me from my youth.' But what do I say? they have killed me from my youth, they have wounded me from my youth, they have trodden me down from my youth. He however who begins to serve the Lord from childhood: and is often fought against by the devil and his angels, and yet is not conquered; what should he say? 'Often have they fought against me from my youth: for they could not prevail over me.' The athlete unless he has contended lawfully, is not crowned, unless he has received a blow, unless he has a bruised face, unless blood has been poured out from his face. The bruise merits the crown, the pain merits joy. 'Often have they fought against me from my youth.' Let the virgin of the Lord say this little verse. Let the monk say it who from a small age began to serve the Lord. I however who at forty or fifty years began to serve the Lord, how can I say: 'Often have they fought against me from my youth'? Let the virgin therefore say this. Let the monk say it, whole in body and spirit. And what should he say: 'Often have they fought against me from my youth'? Someone may say: O monk, how did the demons and the devil fight against thee? Men indeed were seen who were attacking, but I understood the

devil in the men. When therefore men persecute them, let us not be angry with the persecutor, but let us condole and bewail them: because it is another who persecutes in the persecutors. If a demoniac, who has a demon, should come and give me a blow, and strike me with his heel, do I then get angry with him? He strikes with a fist, and I weep and bewail the one striking. For I see that he is more badly struck by him who works in him, than I am by his hand. As often therefore as we suffer anything, and sustain some temptations, let us understand him to be there and those, who generate temptations for us, in the men. Someone may say: Affirm this same thing from the Scriptures: for we ought not to speak anything unless it shall have been adorned and approved from the Scriptures. Judas was a traitor, but Satan entered into him, and he himself betrayed in the traitor. The wife of Potiphar at that time when she held Joseph, her servant, the mistress the servant, the very rich woman the poor little one, the citizen the stranger, she was holding Joseph, but the holy man in the hands of the woman understood that it was the devil holding him. Why do I say all this? So that when we suffer anything from men, we may not be angry with the men: but may bewail them. And let us see that insidious one who works in them. 'Often have they fought against me from my youth: for they could not prevail over me.' They fought against me in shameful thoughts: they fought against me in anger. I yielded to the thoughts; but [perchance it should be added 'not'] I yielded to the tempta-

tions; but I did something which the thought was compelling me to. If anger overcame me, and I did injury to a brother, I cannot say: 'For they could not prevail over me.' For they could prevail over me.

"The sinners have built upon my back." Pay careful attention to what the Scripture says. He is a holy athlete, and no one is crowned unless he has contended lawfully; for you know that there are many kinds of athletes. For some are athletes, others indeed are as it were Pammacharii [all-around fighters], some contend for days, others indeed are runners, that is, those who run in the stadium. Finally, the Apostle also says that he runs so that he may reach the crown (1 Cor. 9:26). And what is said in another place: "Forgetting the things that are behind, I stretch myself forth to those that are before" (Phil. 3:13). See, therefore, what the Scripture says. "The sinners built upon my back." Thus I have always run, and I have run so much, that my adversary never precedes me, but is always found behind my back. He never comes before my eyes; for he could not endure the light of my eyes; but he was always persecuting that part which is blind, which has no eyes. "The sinners built upon my back." Whenever anyone slanders the brethren, he builds behind the back. "The sinners built upon my back," but I did not see their snares; they built behind my back, and I was gazing at paradise with my eyes. They were preparing snares for me, and I was desiring to see the crown. "They have prolonged their iniquity." What did he say, "they have prolonged their in-

iquity"? If I have sinned, and after my sin I have performed penance, my iniquity is short and not long. But if I have sinned, on whatever day I have sinned, the cord of my sins shall become longer. Whence it is said also in another place: "The cords of sins have encompassed me" (Ps. 118:61). See what he says: "The cords of sins have encompassed me." And in another place it is written: "Each one shall be bound with the cords of his own sins" (Prov. 5:22). See what he says: "each one shall be bound with the cords of his own sins." The cord of sins cannot be woven unless I have many sins. If I have committed a sin, it is not so much a cord as it is, as it were, a single thread. But if it is one thread, it is quickly broken, and it cannot hold or bind. But if...

"The just Lord will cut the necks of sinners." See what he says; he did not say, "may he cut down the sinners." If he had said this, no one could be saved; we are all sinners. But what does he say? "The just Lord will cut the necks of sinners." Those who are both sinners and are proud; since God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble: therefore he will cut the necks of sinners.

PSALM 131.

"Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness." Many think from that which is written in the Gospel, "Have mercy on us, son of David" (this the blind men say who sat in Jericho), that this "David," which is interpreted as "strong in hand," refers to the Lord Savior. But in this psalm, if we should wish it to be referred to him, as they

think, it greatly harms our understanding. For if this which is said, "Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness," is referred to Christ, how does he speak as if of another: "Until I find a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob?" "Behold, we have heard of it in Ephrata, we have found it in the fields of the wood." And how is it said: "For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of thy Christ"? For if, as they think, Christ is David, how does he say: "For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of thy Christ"? The order does not stand. For if David is called Christ, we begin to understand it thus: "For thy servant Christ's sake, do not turn away the face of thy Christ." I speak this because of those who interpret David in this place as Christ: not that we deny that Christ is interpreted as David according to the quality of the places; but in this place the sense does not receive it. And I tell you why they err: because it is written, "Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness." And the Lord says in the Gospel: "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart." According to the sense indeed [it might seem so]; but those who err interpret David here as Christ, and refer his meekness to Christ. Let us, therefore, interpret this psalm in David, so that he who shall be born of David may truly be understood as Christ. Finally, see the order, because the psalm is large, and we have already said many things, we ought to touch upon the senses briefly, not to dispute more widely: so that the prudent hearer from these things which

we have said, may himself understand also those things which we do not speak.

"As he swore to the Lord, he vowed a vow to the God of Jacob." In the Hebrew it does not have os [as], that is, "sicut," nor is the sense so; but it has os [who], that is, "qui," and the sense is: "Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness, who swore to the Lord, vowed a vow to the God of Jacob." And I think this was done not so much by the fault of the Seventy Interpreters, as by the error of the scribes.

"If I shall enter into the tabernacle of my house." David says this: I seek no other rest but Christ's, who is to be born from my seed, that is, whom thou hast promised, because he is to be born from my loins.

"If I shall give sleep to my eyes and slumber to my eyelids. And rest to my temples, until I find a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob." Many think this is said of the Church; but to me it seems to be said not so much of the Church, as of holy Mary. Finally, it is said: "Behold, we have heard of it in Ephrata, we have found it in the fields of the wood." Let us read the holy Scriptures, and days and nights let us winnow individual syllables and letters. Someone may say of Ephrata, here he meant Bethlehem. For we read in Genesis: "He came to Bethlehem," that is, "Ephrata." This is said of Jacob when his wife Rachel died. This is Ephrata. But let us see why Ephrata received the name. For it is written in Chronicles, that Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, had a husband Or: not Ur, but Or (1 Chron.

2:19). And afterwards the order is described, and it is said: Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, this is Ephrata. This is written in the books of Chronicles. Seek and you shall find. Finally, also this Ephrata received the name. It seems perhaps to someone not to be true, because it is new: but I refer him to the authority of the book.

"Behold, we have heard of it in Ephrata." In the Hebrew it does not have "eam" [it/her], but it has "eum" [him], that is, him who is to be born of the seed. "We have heard of it in Ephrata": which refers to Mary in sense. But we can also understand it simply, because Ephrata is called Bethlehem. And Christ was born in Bethlehem. Happy, therefore, is the place which so long before was sung by the voice of the prophets. All holy places indeed are venerable, both where he was born, and where he was crucified, and where he rose again, and where as victor he ascended to the heavens; but this place is properly more venerable. See what great mercy of God, that here a tiny infant was born. He is placed in a manger; for there was no room for them in the inn. O monk, the Lord is born on earth, and he does not have his own cell: "there was no room for them in the inn." All the human race has a place: Christ did not find a place among men. He did not find it in Plato, nor in Aristotle, but in a manger. Among beasts of burden and brute animals and all simple and innocent ones. Whence also the Lord says in the Gospel: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests. But the Son of man has not where to lay his head."

PSALM 141.

"An instruction of David, when he was in the cave." A prayer is prefixed. This title indeed is according to history, when David was fleeing from Saul in the desert of Engedi, hidden in a cave. And Saul entered, being ignorant, as if for his own purpose; but because it has in its prefix, "An instruction of David," we ought to understand the psalm spiritually. Indeed, this psalm is also taken as referring to the Lord, the true David, and Saul is understood as the devil: and the cave as this world. And that the devil does not send into this world anything of good, but dung, and whatever is putrid. Moreover, this world is understood as a cave, because it does not have perfect light in comparison to the future, but the Lord, coming into this world, shone as some light. Therefore the Apostle says: "Who is the brightness of his glory" (Heb. 1:3). Therefore, just as David entered into the cave, hiding himself from Saul: so also the Lord entered into this world, and suffered persecution.

"I pour out my prayer in his sight." He spoke more significantly: I pour out my whole heart in the sight of the Lord. Just as someone confesses his wound to a physician. And he tells him all the sufferings he has, so that he may thus apply a cure to him. "I declare my trouble before him," that is, the trouble which the Apostle reckons, which being reckoned with the rest produces hope, and "hope does not confound."

"When my spirit failed within me." Unless the evil spirit which was suffocating Saul fails from within us, the Lord cannot know our paths. But what are the paths of the just? Justice, good works, the right way, chastity, continence, and other things similar to these.

"In this way wherein I walked, they have hidden a snare for me." Vices are near to virtues. In whatever way anyone wishes to walk, in it they place snares. Either in fasting, or in almsgiving, or in other virtues.

"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, and there was no one that would know me." If we apply the psalm to God, the Lord himself speaks. All my disciples have forsaken me and fled. Only Peter had remained, who promised himself saying: "If I must die for thee, I will not forsake thee"; and he himself denied him. Therefore he said, "I looked for him on the right hand," and he did not say "on the left," because Peter performed penance.

"Flight has perished from me." When he was seized by the Jews. "And there is no one who requires my soul." For all were crying out: "Crucify him, crucify him" (Luke 23).

"Attend to my supplication, for I am brought very low." Unless someone has been humbled, he is not heard by the Lord. For what does it profit someone to pray with words and to have an erect neck? But if we understand it of the Lord: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart."

"Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I." Those who fight against us

are stronger than we, that is, the princes of this world.

"Bring my soul out of prison, that I may confess thy name." That is, out of this body. "To confess," that is, to glorify. As he says: "I confess to thee, Father."

"The just wait for me, until thou reward me." The Lord says: The apostles wait for me, until I rise from the dead.