SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT

Commentary on the First Book of Kings

Commentarii in Librum I Regum

VOLUME I · III

SABBATISMUS

Saint Gregory the Great (540–604)
Commentarii in Librum I Regum · Commentary on the First Book of Kings

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[COMMENTARII IN LIBRUM I REGUM.]

PRAEFATIO DE COMMENTARIO S. GREGORII MAGNI IN LIBRUM PRIMUM REGUM.

Cum insigne hoc opus abjudicandum sanctissimo Doctori censuerit Petrus Gussanvillaeus, idemque visum sit nonnullis viris eruditis, nostram de eo sententiam promere debemus, antequam denuo in lucem edatur.

I. De auctore Commentarii hujus tres omnino sunt sententiae. Prima est, Gregorium magnum pro vero indubitatoque ipsius parente habendum esse. Hanc secuti sunt quotquot in edendis Doctoris eximii operibus a centum et quinquaginta fere annis, excepto duntaxat uno Gussanvillaeo omnium novissimo, desudarunt. A prioribus enim editoribus hic Commentarius in Gregorianorum scriptorum censum relatus est tanquam genuinus tanti Patris foetus. Eorum judicio adstipulantur eruditi fere omnes non solum ex nostris, sed etiam ex heterodoxis, qui operum sancti Doctoris indicem texuerunt; ex quibus potissimum commemorandus venit Guilielmus Cave in historia litteraria Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum non ita pridem in lucem emissa.

II. Secunda sententia, huic omni ex parte contraria, est Petri Gussanvillaei, Commentarium hunc ex Gregorianorum operum censu prorsus expungentis, licet ipsius nomen in Gussanvillaeana editione, quod hic non dissimulandum, adhuc retinuerit. Fatetur tamen vir aequissimus dignissimam esse Gregorio commentationem hanc in librum I Regum, quod satis innuit his verbis, quibus ejus judicium censoriumque decretum absolvitur: utinam tam pium, tam sanctum opus sancto Gregorio vindicare possemus, salva veritate.

[COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.]

PREFACE CONCERNING THE COMMENTARY OF ST. GREGORY THE GREAT ON THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

Since Peter Gussanville (Petrus Gussanvillaeus) has judged that this noble work should be rejected from the most holy Doctor, and the same has seemed so to some learned men, we ought to bring forth our opinion concerning it, before it is again published.

I. Concerning the author of this Commentary, there are altogether three opinions. The first is, that Gregory the Great is to be held as the true and indubitable parent of the same. This has been followed by as many as have labored in editing the works of the eminent Doctor for nearly a hundred and fifty years, except only one, Gussanville, the most recent of all. For by the earlier editors this Commentary was referred to the census of Gregorian writings as the genuine offspring of so great a Father. To their judgment almost all the learned agree, not only of our own, but also of the heterodox, who have woven an index of the works of the holy Doctor; among whom especially to be commemorated is William Cave (Guilielmus Cave) in the literary history of Ecclesiastical Writers published not so long ago.

II. The second opinion, contrary to this in every part, is that of Peter Gussanville, who entirely expunges this Commentary from the census of Gregorian works, although he still retained his name in the Gussanville edition, which must not be concealed here. Nevertheless, the most fair man confesses that this commentary on the first book of Kings is most worthy of Gregory, which he sufficiently hints at in these words, by which his censorial judgment and decree are concluded: "would that we could vindicate so pious, so holy a work to Saint Gregory, saving the truth."

III. Tertia sententia inter utramque fere media, est laudatum Commentarium ex homiliis a sancto Gregorio habitis de libro I Regum, collectum et consarcinatum esse a Claudio ejus discipulo, postea monasterii Classensis abbate. In hanc sententiam propendent plerique viri docti, maxime Thomassinus disciplinae Eccl. parte II, lib. II, c. 28, n. 2, et Ludovicus Ellies du Pin, Biblioth. novae Script. Eccles. tomo IV, seu saeculo VI, in Gregorio magno. Hac media via tutissimi ibimus, duce praesertim ipsomet Gregorio, qui scilicet lib. XII, indict.

IV. Ex his facile intelligitur qui characteres, quaeve notae Claudianae collectioni conveniant, ex quibus eam dignoscere, et a quavis alia lucubratione discernere operosum non sit: nempe cum ex ipsis Gregorii verbis ac sententiis contexta sit, ejus stylum redolere debet, ejus doctrinam et sacrae Scripturae interpretandae modum, atque ad morales allegoricosque sensus inflectendae repraesentare: ita tamen ut quandoque, labente forte memoria, Claudius de suo quaedam supplere coactus sit; quod satis fuit nostro Gregorio ut foetum hunc pene repudiaret.

III. The third opinion, almost middle between both, is that the praised Commentary was collected and patched together from homilies delivered by Saint Gregory on the first book of Kings, by Claudius his disciple, later abbot of the monastery of Classe (Classensis). Toward this opinion most learned men incline, especially Thomassin in the discipline of the Church part II, book II, c. 28, n. 2, and Louis Ellies du Pin, in the New Library of Ecclesiastical Writers volume IV, or the VI century, on Gregory the Great. By this middle way we shall go most safely, led especially by Gregory himself, who indeed in book XII, indiction 5, epistle 24, writes these things to John the subdeacon: "Furthermore, because the same once most dear son of mine, Claudius, had heard some things spoken by me concerning Proverbs, concerning the Song of Songs, concerning the Prophets, also concerning the books of Kings, and concerning the Heptateuch, which I was not able to commit to writing on account of infirmity, he himself dictated them according to his own sense, lest they should perish through oblivion, so that at a fit time he might bring these same to me, and they might be dictated more correctly. (Which when he had read to me, I found that the sense of my sayings had been very unusefully changed.) Whence it is necessary that your experience, all excuse and delay ceasing, approach his monastery, cause the brothers to meet, and in all truth bring to the middle whatever papers he brought concerning various scriptures: which you receive, and transmit to me most quickly." From these things it is clear that Saint Gregory explained some things from the books of Kings not by writing, but by living voice; that Claudius both received these and digested them, but did not everywhere attain the sense of his master Gregory, nor even his style; and that the holy Doctor resisted these as much as he could, lest they should come forth into public light, and commanded all copies to be brought to him, so that they might be corrected in leisure; which whether he performed we shall open in its own place.

IV. From these things it is easily understood what characters, or what marks belong to the Claudian collection, by which to recognize it, and to discern it from any other lucubration is not laborious: namely, since it is woven from the words and sentences of Gregory himself, it ought to redolent of his style, represent his doctrine and method of interpreting Sacred Scripture, and of inflecting it to moral and allegorical senses: yet so that sometimes, memory perhaps slipping, Claudius was compelled to supply certain things of his own; which was sufficient for our Gregory to almost repudiate this offspring.

Fingamus celeberrimum aliquem divini verbi praeconem, elegantem de poenitentia orationem habuisse, quam a notario cursim excerptam audit postea typis mandatam et publica luce donatam. Hanc legit, et cum autographo confert. Observat quidem orationis idem esse argumentum, eamdem in varia membra partitionem, easdem sive ex sacris Litteris, sive ex ratione depromptas probationes, transitiones non dissimiles; eadem pene ubique verba, idem fere dicendi genus: nonnullis tamen in locis observat luxatam esse orationem, et minus cohaerentem. Hic occurrit vox obsoleta, hic offendit in Scripturae sacrae locum perperam explicatum; hic unus ex sanctis Patribus pro alio laudatur; hic obscurioribus coloribus rudiorique penicillo delineata virtus. Quae sane sufficiunt huic Oratori talem ut reprobet foetum tanquam supposititium, palam que corruptam et adulteratam fuisse queratur orationem a se elucubratam. Eodem pene modo Gregorius de suis in librum primum Regum aliasque Scripturae divinae partes Homiliis minus accurate exceptis loquitur. Nunc vero perspiciamus utrum Commentarius in librum I Regum de quo hic agitur, notas et signa quae in Claudii collectione deprehendenda diximus prae se ferat.

V. Certe stylum sermonemque Gregorii redolere hoc opus non inficiabitur, qui ipsum non oscitanter legerit, et cum libris Moralium potissimum contulerit; quod quia negat Gussanvillaeus, nunc demonstrandum.

Familiare est Gregorio Scripturae sacrae quam exponit sententias mira varietate enucleare, et modo litteralem sensum, modo typicum, allegoricum, moralem exhibere; quod qui non observabit hoc in commentario, caecutire dicendus est. In eo sane ut in caeteris Gregorii tractatibus exegeticis, eadem prorsus methodo singuli versus libri sacri exponendi sic torquentur, retorquentur, et premuntur, ut quidquid succi continent ac saporis omnino exprimatur.

Let us imagine some most celebrated herald of the divine word, who has delivered an elegant oration on penitence, which having been cursorily excerpted by a notary he hears was afterwards committed to types and given to public light. He reads this, and confers it with the autograph. He observes indeed that the argument of the oration is the same, the same partition into various members, the same proofs drawn either from the sacred Letters or from reason, the transitions not dissimilar; almost everywhere the same words, almost the same kind of speaking: nevertheless in some places he observes that the oration is disjointed, and less coherent. Here an obsolete word occurs, here he stumbles upon a place of Sacred Scripture wrongly explained; here one of the holy Fathers is praised for another; here virtue is delineated with darker colors and a ruder brush. Which things are surely sufficient for this Orator to reject such an offspring as suppositious, and to complain openly that the oration worked out by him had been corrupted and adulterated. In almost the same way Gregory speaks concerning his Homilies cursorily excerpted on the first book of Kings and other parts of Divine Scripture. Now indeed let us perceive whether the Commentary on the first book of Kings which is dealt with here, bears before it the marks and signs which we said were to be detected in the collection of Claudius.

V. Certainly he who has not read it sleepily, and especially has compared it with the books of the Morals, will not deny that this work is redolent of the style and speech of Gregory; which because Gussanville denies, must now be demonstrated.

It is familiar to Gregory to unfold the sentences of the Sacred Scripture which he explains with wonderful variety, and to exhibit now the literal sense, now the typical, allegorical, and moral; which he who will not observe in this commentary, is to be said to be blind. In it surely as in the other exegetical treatises of Gregory, by the exactly same method the individual verses of the sacred book to be explained are so twisted, retwisted, and pressed, that whatever juice and flavor they contain may be altogether expressed.

VI. Ad ipsam dictionem aut orationis constructionem quod spectat, delectatur Gregorius quodam praepostero vocabulorum contextu, frequentibus transpositionibus ac veluti hyperbatis, quorum exempla plurima exhibuimus in Praefatione ad libros Moralium, ex quibus pauca selegimus huc adducenda. Lib. XXXI Moral. num. 4: Scimus enim rhinoceros ille, terrenus videlicet princeps, quanta prius contra Dominum crudelitate saevierit. Pro, scimus enim quanta prius crudelitate rhinoceros ille, etc. Hom. 8 in Ezechielem, num. 27: In quo verbo beati Jacob mens ostenditur quomodo Jesu desiderio ardebat. Pro: in quo verbo quomodo beati Jacob mens Jesu desiderio ardebat, ostenditur. Homilia 32 in Evang.: Dum enim coelorum regnum constat quia reproborum, etc. Pro, dum enim constat quia, etc.

Gregorius fere semper graditur periodis bimembribus et quasi bipedibus similiter cadentibus, quod etiam in nostro libri I Regum commentatore observare licet, ejus lucubrationem vel a primo limine salutanti.

VII. Gregorius non raro verba deponentia, ut loquuntur Grammatici, in significatione passiva usurpat, maxime verbum, venerari, quod abunde in praefatione generali demonstratum. Idem vero in Commentario deprehendimus, uti lib. IV, c. 4, num. 35: Quo tardius aspicitur (Pastor in publico) devotius veneratur, hoc est colitur et honoratur. Et num. 51: Verbo itaque sapientiae aut prophetiae spiritu se pollere asserunt, non ut venerentur, sed ut audiantur.

VI. As far as the diction itself or the construction of the speech is concerned, Gregory delights in a certain preposterous context of vocabularies, frequent transpositions and as it were hyperbata, of which we have exhibited very many examples in the Preface to the books of the Morals, from which we have selected a few to be brought hither. Book XXXI of the Morals, num. 4: "For we know that rhinoceros (Scimus enim rhinoceros ille), that earthly prince namely, with how much cruelty he previously raged against the Lord." For, "for we know with how much cruelty that rhinoceros previously," etc. Homily 8 on Ezekiel, num. 27: "In which word of the blessed Jacob the mind is shown how it burned with the desire for Jesus (In quo verbo beati Jacob mens ostenditur quomodo Jesu desiderio ardebat)." For: "in which word how the mind of the blessed Jacob burned with the desire for Jesus, is shown." Homily 32 on the Gospels: "For while the kingdom of heavens it is established that of the reprobate (Dum enim coelorum regnum constat quia reproborum)," etc. For, "for while it is established that," etc. Book II, of the Dialogues c. 2: "In order that . . . . . they might recognize the boy Benedict the grace of conversation from how much perfection it had begun (agnoscerent Benedictus puer conversationis gratiam a quanta perfectione coepisset)." For, "from how much perfection the boy Benedict," etc. Who however would deny that these examples are altogether similar to those which we read in book I of the Commentary c. 2, n. 10: "Let us see now holy Church with what praises of her fecundity she glories in the voice of Hannah (Videamus jam sancta Ecclesia quibus fecunditatis suae laudibus in Annae voce glorietur)." Where another would say: "Let us see now with what praises of her fecundity the holy Church," etc. And num. 12: "But where strength has clothed them, it is pleasing to behold how strong he made (Sed ubi eos robur induit, libet intueri quam fortes fecit)." When it would seem to be said: "But it is pleasing to behold how strong he made them, where," etc.

Gregory almost always walks with bimembral and as it were bipedal periods falling similarly, which one may also observe in our commentator and interpreter of the first book of Kings, greeting his lucubration even from the first threshold.

VII. Gregory not rarely uses deponent verbs, as the Grammarians speak, in a passive significance, especially the verb, to venerate (venerari), which was abundantly demonstrated in the general preface. Indeed we detect the same in the Commentary, as in book IV, c. 4, num. 35: "By how much later he is beheld (the Pastor in public) the more devotedly he is venerated (veneratur)," that is, he is cultivated and honored. And num. 51: "Therefore they assert that they prevail in the word of wisdom or the spirit of prophecy, not that they may be venerated, but that they may be heard."

Sanctus Doctor per verbum innotescere passim significat notum facere, ut homil. 1 in Evangelia num. 1: Appropinquantem ejus (mundi) terminum quantae percussiones praeveniant, innotescit, hoc est ostendit; quod eodem sensu legitur centies in Dialogis et saepius in Epistolis. At hoc sensu quoque non raro adhibetur a Commentarii scriptore, v. g. lib. I, cap. 2, num. 16: Quod etiam conceptum parit, quando proximis . . . . . innotescit. Et cap. 3, num. 8: Hoc namque insigne fortitudinis nec Moyses, nec Helias habere potuit, ut dum incomparabilia signa innotescerent, etc.

Gregorius modo sibi fere peculiari utitur verbo debere, quod exemplis quibusdam palam fiet. Lib. XI, ep. 33, scribit Mariniano: Et ideo videtur mihi . . . . . ut tua fraternitas ad me ante aestivum tempus debeat venire; id est veniat. Ibidem: Et ego qui me proximum morti video . . . . . inter tuas manus transire debeam; hoc est, transeam. Ep. 34 ejusdem libri: Id est, quadringenti solidi seorsim fieri debuissent, ac paulo post: Volumus ut . . . . . fraternitas vestra debeat erogare, pro eroget. Hom. 17 in Evangelia: Ut ex eadem salis petra lambere debeant. In eadem significatione accipiendum est verbum debere lib. I Commentarii c. 3, num. 14: Quia omnes Scripturas acceperant, ut in eis Sacramenta divinae Incarnationis invenire debuissent: hoc est, invenirent.

Adversitatem saepe Gregorius accipit non in passivo sed in activo sensu, seu pro adversantium nobis actione; qua de re consule lib. II Moral. n. 51, et notam ad hunc locum, ubi multis testimoniis id confirmamus. Addi potuisset quod legimus Libro Reg. Pastor. part. III, admon. 16, seu cap. 15: Quid per nubes quae moventur a vento, nisi adversitates pravorum hominum designantur?

The holy Doctor by the verb to become known (innotescere) everywhere signifies to make known, as in homily 1 on the Gospels num. 1: "By how great percussions the approaching end of it (the world) precedes, it becomes known (innotescit)," that is, it shows; which is read in the same sense a hundred times in the Dialogues and more often in the Epistles. But in this sense also it is not rarely employed by the writer of the Commentary, e.g., book I, chapter 2, num. 16: "Which also brings forth what is conceived, when to neighbors . . . . . it becomes known (innotescit)." And chapter 3, num. 8: "For this mark of strength neither Moses, nor Elias was able to have, so that while incomparable signs became known (innotescerent)," etc. See also book II, c. 2, num. 11: "Nevertheless then he was so known to have blessed his own."

Gregory uses the verb to owe (debere) in a way almost peculiar to himself, which will be made clear by certain examples. Book XI, epistle 33, he writes to Marinianus: "And therefore it seems to me . . . . . that your fraternity ought to come (debeat venire) to me before the summer time;" that is, may come. In the same place: "And I who see myself next to death . . . . . ought to pass (debeam transire) between your hands;" that is, may pass. Epistle 34 of the same book: "That is, four hundred solidi separately ought to have been made (fieri debuissent)," and a little after: "We wish that . . . . . your fraternity ought to expend (debeat erogare)," for may expend. Homily 17 on the Gospels: "That from the same rock of salt they ought to lick (lambere debeant)." In the same significance the verb to owe is to be accepted in book I of the Commentary c. 3, num. 14: "Because they had received all the Scriptures, so that in them they ought to have found (invenire debuissent) the Sacraments of the divine Incarnation:" that is, they might find. And book II, c. 2, num. 20: "That they themselves ought to punish (punire deberent) no one;" which is the same as might punish.

Adversity (adversitatem) Gregory often accepts not in a passive but in an active sense, or for the action of those opposing us; concerning which matter consult book II of the Morals n. 51, and the note to this place, where we confirm it by many testimonies. There could have been added what we read in Book of the Pastoral Rule part III, admon. 16, or chapter 15: "What by the clouds which are moved by the wind, unless the adversities of wicked men are designated?" That is, the impulses and attacks of wicked men opposing us. And in a not dissimilar sense it occurs in book V of the Commentary c. 1, num. 15: "Because our holy preachers are crowned with a greater victory, when they tolerate the adverse things of neighbors (adversis proximorum) (that is adverse things brought in by neighbors)."

Qui Gregoriano stilo assueverunt, non ignorant quam frequenter de Christo loquens, utatur antithesi adverbiorum super et inter; ut l. XV Moral. num. 20: Summi Patris unigenitus cum sit Deus super omnia, homo est factus inter omnia. Similia extant lib. XVI, num. 37; homil. 7 in Ezech., num. 19; homil. 23 in Evang. et passim. Eademque ratione auctor Commentarii lib. I, c. 1, num. 4: Quia, inquit, qui inter omnes natus est, supra omnes enituit. Ab aliis exemplis proferendis abstineo.

In Gregorianis scriptis, maxime in Dialogis, ad nauseam usque legitur: sanctae conversationis habitus. Idemque familiare habet qui Commentarium scripsit.

VIII. Solet Gregorius auctorem libri Ecclesiastici designare nomine cujusdam sapientis: ut lib. XXVII Moral., num. 53: Per quemdam sapientem dicitur: sicut glacies in sereno, etc. Et lib. XXXIII, num. 23: Hinc enim per quemdam sapientem dicitur: Ne dixeris, Miserationes Domini multae sunt: Vide quoque lib. VII, num. 45, et lib. XX, num. 51. Eodemque prorsus modo libri primi Regum Commentator et Interpres lib. V, c. 4, num. 2, laudans Ecclesiastici cap. 2, ait: Unde bene per quemdam sapientem dicitur: Fili, accedens ad servitutem.

Denique S. Gregorius ex Regula S. Benedicti verba et sententias integras proferre solet, ut demonstravimus lib. I ejus Vitae c. 3, num. 6; quod etiam convenire auctori Commentarii statim ostendemus.

IX. Quod spectat ad doctrinam, eadem pene est ac ipsius Gregorii. Christi divinitas egregie asseritur lib. I, cap. 3, num. 4, 5, etc. Incarnationis mysterium optime explicatur lib. I, c. 1, num. 3. De reali corporis et sanguinis Christi praesentia in Eucharistia, de incruento novae Legis sacrificio, et de Christianae religionis sacerdotio lege lib. II, cap. 1, num. 14, et lib. III, cap. 4, num. 31. De visione Dei solis coeli civibus concessa (quod saepe probat sanctus Gregorius) vide lib. I, cap. 1, num. 4.

Those who are accustomed to the Gregorian style, are not ignorant of how frequently speaking of Christ, he uses the antithesis of the adverbs over (super) and among (inter); as book XV of the Morals num. 20: "Since the only-begotten of the highest Father is God over all things, he was made man among all things." Similar things are extant in book XVI, num. 37; homily 7 on Ezekiel, num. 19; homily 23 on the Gospels and everywhere. And in the same way the author of the Commentary book I, c. 1, num. 4: "Because," he says, "he who was born among all, shone out above all." I abstain from bringing forth other examples. Those who are not strangers in unfolding and reading Gregorian works, know that there the verb to reform (reformare) frequently has a significance almost unknown to other writers, or at least used by few. Book XXII of the Morals chapter and num. 1: "Lest . . . . . the mind collapse into desperation, it reforms (reformat) this to hope through the memory of its virtues." And num. 9 of the same book: "It reforms the intelligence to it which it had lost." Twice it occurs in the same sense almost in the very threshold of the Morals, and book II on Ezekiel, Homily 7, last num.: "it reforms the mind to hope." In the Commentary indeed not far from the beginning, namely book I, c. 1, num. 20: "For he arose, because he reformed the mind to the instance of preaching."

In Gregorian writings, especially in the Dialogues, is read even unto nausea: "the habit of holy conversation (sanctae conversationis habitus)." And he who wrote the Commentary has the same familiar. Read especially book IV, c. 4, num. 18.

VIII. Gregory is accustomed to designate the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus by the name of "a certain wise man": as book XXVII of the Morals, num. 53: "Through a certain wise man it is said: as ice in the fair weather," etc. And book XXXIII, num. 23: "For hence through a certain wise man it is said: Do not say, The mercies of the Lord are many:" See also book VII, num. 45, and book XX, num. 51. And in the exactly same way the Commentator and Interpreter of the first book of Kings book V, c. 4, num. 2, praising Ecclesiasticus cap. 2, says: "Whence well through a certain wise man it is said: Son, approaching the service."

Finally St. Gregory is accustomed to bring forth whole words and sentences from the Rule of St. Benedict, as we have demonstrated in book I of his Life c. 3, num. 6; which also we shall immediately show to belong to the author of the Commentary.

IX. As far as doctrine is concerned, it is almost the same as that of Gregory himself. The divinity of Christ is eminently asserted in book I, chapter 3, num. 4, 5, etc. The mystery of the Incarnation is best explained in book I, c. 1, num. 3. Concerning the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, concerning the unbloody sacrifice of the new Law, and concerning the priesthood of the Christian religion read book II, chapter 1, num. 14, and book III, chapter 4, num. 31. Concerning the vision of God granted to the citizens of heaven alone (which Saint Gregory often proves) see book I, chapter 1, num. 4.

De Poenitentia, Confessione peccatorum, Satisfactione, atque Absolutione Sacerdotali consule lib. III, cap. 5, num. 13 et 14.

More Gregorii ex tribus sanctis feminis unicam Mariam Magdalenam conflat lib. IV, cap. 4, num. 13. Quod Gregorius asserit de solo Christo inter homines a diaboli servitute libero, docet hic Scriptor lib. III, cap 5, num. 9: Quae est igitur manus Philisthiim, nisi potestas illa daemonum qua mortuas in peccato animas ad aeterna tormenta perducunt? Ab ista Philisthiim manu solus liber fuerat qui dicebat: venit Princeps mundi hujus, et in me, etc.

Haec sane pene demonstrare videntur, non alium Commentarii de quo disserimus, parentem esse, quam ipsummet Gregorium. Attamen occurrunt quaedam sive in dicendi genere, sive in doctrina quae Gregorium minime sapiunt et indicant.

X. 1o Commentarii prooemium a Gregoriana simplicitate deviat; figuris enim turgere videtur ac supramodum luxuriare.

2o Commentarius ipse quibusdam vocibus inspergitur, quae nullibi leguntur in genuinis sancti Doctoris operibus, ut: terrenitas, lib. II, cap. 2, num. 27; sonoritas praedicationis, lib. IV, cap. 4, num. 27; carnalitas, lib. IV, cap, 5, num. 40, et lib. V, cap. 4, num. 14; horribilitas lib. III, cap. 5, num. 9; vaneglorius lib. V, cap. 4, num. 8; granditudo, lib. VI, cap. 2, num. 25.

3o Quod praecipue observandum, a doctrina Gregorii aliquando exorbitare videtur qui Commentarium contexuit, maxime de libero arbitrio, cui nimis tribuit. Quasi enim a Deo sola essent initia fidei et sanctitatis, et a nobis caetera, ait lib. III, cap. 5, num. 20: Quia bona desideria nobis per divinam gratiam ministrantur; sed nos dona gratiae per conatum liberi arbitrii ad virtutum victorias promovemus. At sibi non constat: nam lib. IV, cap. 2, num. 9, in aliud extremum declinans docet aliquando peccatores, etiam quando volunt, a peccato surgere non posse: Quia, inquit, per imitationem Pastoris, reprobi in peccati servitutem incidunt, etiam ab ejus jugo quando volunt, solvi non possunt. Quod adhuc paulo infra confirmat num. 10: In notitiam pravae imitationis, ejus paulatim defluitis: sed pravitatis ejus exempla, quibus vos sponte submittitis, relinquere sponte minime potestis. Omnis enim qui facit peccatum, servus est peccati (Joan. VIII, 35). Quibus ergo peccata dominantur per se, ab eorum jugo liberari nequeunt. Nam saepe ad Dominum cum precibus veniunt; liberari petunt, sed exaudiri non possunt. Divino siquidem judicio cum eis agitur, ut qui noluerunt mala vitare, cum possent, non possint vitare, cum volunt: et qui sponte incurrunt mala praecognita, fugere non possunt experta.

Concerning Penitence, Confession of sins, Satisfaction, and Sacerdotal Absolution consult book III, chapter 5, num. 13 and 14.

After the manner of Gregory he conflates from three holy women the unique Mary Magdalene book IV, chapter 4, num. 13. What Gregory asserts concerning Christ alone free among men from the servitude of the devil, this Writer teaches book III, chapter 5, num. 9: "What is therefore the hand of the Philistines, unless that power of demons by which they lead souls dead in sin to eternal torments? From that hand of the Philistines he alone had been free who said: the Prince of this world cometh, and in me," etc.

These surely seem to almost demonstrate, that there is no other parent of the Commentary about which we discuss, than Gregory himself. Yet certain things occur either in the kind of speaking, or in the doctrine which least savor of and indicate Gregory.

X. 1st.

2nd.

3rd. What is especially to be observed, he who wove the Commentary seems sometimes to deviate from the doctrine of Gregory, especially concerning free will, to which he attributes too much. For as if from God alone were the beginnings of faith and holiness, and the rest from us, he says in book III, cap. 5, num. 20: "Because good desires are ministered to us through divine grace; but we promote the gifts of grace through the effort of free will to the victories of virtues." But he is not consistent with himself: for book IV, cap. 2, num. 9, declining into another extreme he teaches that sometimes sinners, even when they wish, are not able to arise from sin: "Because," he says, "through imitation of the Pastor, the reprobate fall into the servitude of sin, also from its yoke when they wish, they are not able to be loosed." Which he confirms yet a little below num. 10: "Into the notice of depraved imitation, you gradually flow down: but the examples of his depravity, to which you spontaneously submit yourselves, you are by no means able spontaneously to leave. For everyone who doeth sin, is the servant of sin (John 8:35). To those therefore whom sins dominate by themselves, they are unable to be liberated from their yoke. For often they come to the Lord with prayers; they ask to be liberated, but they are not able to be heard. Since indeed it is dealt with them by divine judgment, that those who have not willed to avoid evils, when they could, may not be able to avoid them, when they wish: and those who spontaneously incur pre-recognized evils, are not able to flee them when experienced." He speaks not less harshly book VI, cap. 2, n. 5, although we are not able to deny that the same are read in Pastoral part III, chapter 15, or admonition 16. And indeed they can be explained in the best sense concerning sinners, who bound by depraved custom, are scarcely able to break its chains, even if they profess to wish.

Praeterea lib. II, cap. 1, num. 6, videtur tantum concedere sanctis post mortem, requiem et securitatem, non gloriam; quod pugnat adversus Gregorium, maxime lib. IV Dialog. cap. 25.

Inter Commentarii hujus naevos notare licet quod docet lib. V, cap. 2, num. 15, et alibi, olim, hoc est in antiqua lege, non solum licitum fuisse odisse inimicos, sed etiam praeceptum. Id enim non de populis quibusdam quos Deus internecione delere ob idololatriam aliaque scelera praeceperat, intelligit, sed de quibuslibet inimicis, male interpretatus ista Christi verba: Dictum est antiquis, diliges, etc., et odio habebis inimicum tuum (Matth. V, 27); quod non de praecepto legis veteris intelligit, sed de falsa legis interpretatione a Judaeorum doctoribus qui verbum Dei adulterabantur, excogitata.

Igitur etsi fatendum videatur Commentarium de quo agimus, Gregorii opus esse, minime tamen est negandum hoc a Claudio ejus discipulo interpolatum esse, et aliqua ex parte vitiatum, nec a sancto Doctore postea emendatum, qui videlicet naevos istos non relicturus fuisset. Certe post scriptam supra laudatam epistolam (Lib. XII, 24), Gregorio tot morbis afflicto, tot distracto et cruciato curis, vix integrum fuit opus hoc tantae molis recognoscere, et ad incudem revocare. Hinc ejus consilium fuit illud perpetuis tenebris opprimere. Neque vero ea de causa contemnendum videatur: si enim a paucis quas indicamus maculis expurgetur, cum optimis tanti magistri lucubrationibus de praestantia certare poterit.

XI. Cur ergo, inquies, illud reprobare cogitavit primus ejus parens, et ne publicam in lucem prodiret, quantum potuit, obstitit?

Respondemus, sufficientem ut repudiaretur causam fuisse ipsius interpolationem. Praecipua tamen ratio petenda est a summa Gregorii modestia et animi demissione, quae sane tanta erat, ut aegre ferret opera sua, quaecunque forent, legi et publicari. Qua de re legenda ex integro epistola mox laudata. Certe in Vita P. Virgilii Maronis auctore Tib. Donato, legimus poetam hunc, cum gravari morbo se sentiret, scrinia saepe et magna instantia petiisse, crematurum Aeneida: quibus negatis, testamento comburi jussisse ut rem inemendatam et imperfectam. Quis ideo de Aeneide adeo male sentiat ut flammis addicendam judicet? Idem porro de nostro Commentario dicendum.

Furthermore book II, cap. 1, num. 6, he seems only to concede to the saints after death, rest and security, not glory; which fights against Gregory, especially book IV of the Dialogues chapter 25.

Among the blemishes of this Commentary it is permitted to note what he teaches book V, cap. 2, num. 15, and elsewhere, that formerly, that is in the ancient law, it was not only licit to hate enemies, but also commanded. For he understands that not concerning certain peoples whom God had commanded to be destroyed by internecion on account of idolatry and other crimes, but concerning any enemies, having badly interpreted those words of Christ: "It was said to the ancients, thou shalt love," etc., "and thou shalt hate thy enemy" (Matt. 5:27); which he understands not concerning a precept of the old law, but concerning a false interpretation of the law by the teachers of the Jews who adulterated the word of God.

Therefore although it seems to be confessed that the Commentary about which we act, is the work of Gregory, nevertheless it is by no means to be denied that this was interpolated by Claudius his disciple, and was vitiated in some part, nor was afterwards corrected by the holy Doctor, who namely would not have left those blemishes. Certainly after the writing of the above praised epistle (Book XII, 24), for Gregory afflicted with so many diseases, distracted and tortured by so many cares, it was scarcely possible to recognize this work of such great mass, and to recall it to the anvil. Hence his counsel was to suppress it in perpetual darkness. Nor indeed for that reason does it seem that it should be contemned: for if it be purged from the few spots which we indicate, it will be able to contend for excellence with the best lucubrations of so great a master.

XI. Why therefore, you will ask, did its first parent think to reject it, and as much as he could, resisted its coming forth into public light?

We answer, that its interpolation was a sufficient cause for it to be repudiated. The principal reason however is to be sought from the highest modesty and humility of mind of Gregory, which indeed was so great, that he bore with difficulty that his works, whatever they might be, should be read and published. Concerning which matter the mox praised epistle is to be read in its entirety. Certainly in the Life of P. Virgilius Maro by the author Tib. Donatus, we read that this poet, "when he felt himself to be weighed down by disease, often and with great instance sought the chests, intended to burn the Aeneid: which being denied, he ordered in his testament that it be burned as a thing uncorrected and imperfect." Who for that reason would think so badly of the Aeneid as to judge it should be addicted to the flames? The same furthermore is to be said concerning our Commentary. Concerning that work therefore let this be the judgment.

Illud censemus ex Homiliis a sancto Gregorio habitis in lib. I Regum a Claudio ejus discipulo collectis coaluisse, et cum nonnullis mendis memoriae lapsui praesertim adscribendis prodiisse. Jam vero quibus machinis opinionem hanc evertere conetur P. Gussanvillaeus optima fide referendum.

XII. 1o Gregorius qui genuina sua opera passim indicat, de hoc ubique silet. 2o Altum de illo silentium apud scriptores omnes aut aequales aut suppares, aut etiam aevi longe inferioris.

Imo vero Gregorius, de Homiliis a se habitis et a Claudio exceptis, posteaque in Commentarii modum digestis clare loquitur loco jam indicato. Nec mirum si qui ex Gregorianis sententiis fasciculos quodammodo contexuerunt, Paterius, Tajus, Alulfus, aut qui sancti Doctoris opera recensuerunt, hujus Commentarii non meminerint. Primo enim rarissima semper fuerunt ejus exemplaria, proindeque minus nota. Fatetur ipse Gussanvillaeus omnem a se, sed frustra, adhibitam diligentiam, ut aliquod nancisceretur in Gallia, Belgio, Anglia, Romae, Venetiis, ubi tamen primo excusum esse putat an. 1537, et Argentorati, ubi teste Gesnero in Bibliotheca prodiit cum Pastorali an. 1496. Secundo etiamsi nonnulli ex commemoratis scriptoribus copiam alicujus exemplaris habuerint, Gregorio illud minime probanti morem gerentes, ex ipso nihil decerpendum duxerunt, praetereundumque in Gregorianorum operum indice censuerunt.

Attamen Ratherius monachus Lobiensis, et postea Veronensis episcopus, qui circa an. 928 floruit, scribens De Contemptu Canonum (Spicilegii Acheriani, Tom. II), part. I, paulo ante finem, aliquid ex hoc Commentario laudat his verbis: Gregorium audiat: causa, inquit, ruinae populi, Sacerdotes mali; quae leguntur lib. II, cap. 2, ad versum: Et ait ad eos: quare facitis rem hujuscemodi? Dissimulare quidem non debemus eadem fere occurrere lib. Regulae Pastor. part. I, cap. 2. At pro causa ruinae, etc., legitur in Pastorali, laqueus ruinae; unde liquet Ratherium ad priorem locum potius attendisse quam ad posteriorem. Nec dubium quin si bibliothecarum omnium forulos diligenter explorare liceret, ac libros ineditos legere, multa alia de hoc Commentario testimonia nobis adessent.

We judge that it coalesced from Homilies delivered by Saint Gregory on book I of Kings collected by Claudius his disciple, and came forth with certain faults especially to be ascribed to a slip of memory. Now indeed with what machines Peter Gussanville endeavors to overturn this opinion is to be reported in the best faith.

XII. 1st. Gregory who everywhere indicates his genuine works, is everywhere silent concerning this.

On the contrary indeed Gregory, concerning the Homilies delivered by him and received by Claudius, and afterwards digested in the manner of a Commentary, speaks clearly in the place already indicated. Nor is it a wonder if those who woven as it were bundles from Gregorian sentences, Paterius, Tajus, Alulfus, or those who reviewed the works of the holy Doctor, have not remembered this Commentary. For first its copies were always very rare, and therefore less known. Gussanville himself confesses that all diligence was employed by him, but in vain, so that he might obtain some in Gaul, Belgium, England, Rome, Venice, where however he thinks it was first printed in the year 1537, and at Strasbourg, where according to Gesner in the Library it came forth with the Pastoral in the year 1496. Second, even if some of the commemorated writers had the opportunity of some copy, following the manner of Gregory not approving it, they judged that nothing was to be plucked from it, and that it should be passed over in the index of Gregorian works.

Nevertheless Ratherius a monk of Lobbes (Lobiensis), and afterwards bishop of Verona, who flourished around the year 928, writing "On the Contempt of the Canons" (of the Spicilegium of d'Achery, Vol. II), part I, a little before the end, praises something from this Commentary in these words: "Let him hear Gregory: the cause, he says, of the ruin of the people, are evil Priests;" which are read in book II, chapter 2, at the verse: "And he said to them: why do you do such things?" We ought not indeed to conceal that almost the same things occur in the book of the Pastoral Rule part I, chapter 2. But for "the cause of the ruin," etc., is read in the Pastoral, "the snare of ruin;" whence it is clear that Ratherius attended rather to the former place than to the latter. Nor is it a doubt but that if it were possible to explore diligently the pigeon-holes of all libraries, and to read unpublished books, many other testimonies concerning this Commentary would be present to us. Surely the "Exposition on the Song of Songs" which is ascribed to Gregory, Gussanville contends was also passed over in silence by all writers, and especially by Paterius. In the genuine and sincere Paterius however whom we are about to edit is found a noble place of this Exposition, as we shall sometime demonstrate in the admonition (See below). But let us proceed in diluting the objects of Gussanville.

XIII. Contendit vir doctus Commentarii auctorem Vulgata sacrae Scripturae versione uti, Gregorium vero Italica et Hieronymiana, quod ad utriusque scriptoris discrimen probandum sufficere credit. Infeliciter cessit viro alioquin erudito id probationis genus: nam quatuor duntaxat vicibus ait prolatum a sancto Doctore testimonium istud lib. I Reg. cap. 15: Nonne cum parvulus esses, etc. At in nullo ex assignatis a Gussanvillaeo locis legitur. Praeterea solis oculis opus est ut intelligatur non semper usum esse Vulgata versione scriptorem nostrum; imo saepissime ab illa recedit. Ipso in limine legitur: fuit vir unus de Ramatha. In Vulgata, de Ramathaïim. In Commentario, filius Hieroboam; in Vulgata, filius Jeroam. In Commentario, filii Thau; in Vulgata, filii Tohu. In Commentario versu 4, deditque Phenennae et filiis et filiabus ejus; in Vulgata, deditque Phenennae uxori suae et cunctis filiis ejus et filiabus partes. Caetera prosequi superfluum videtur. Ex Habacuc cap. III haec laudantur in Commentario lib. I, cap. 3, num. 4: Domine Deus virtus mea, constitue pedes meos in consummatione, et super excelsa statue me; ut vincam in claritate ipsius; quae omnino a Vulgata versione discrepant. Infra ex ps. XCVII multa proferuntur prorsus aliter, quam legantur in Vulgata.

XIII. The learned man contends that the author of the Commentary uses the Vulgate version of the Sacred Scripture, but Gregory the Italic and Hieronymian, which he believes to suffice for proving the discrimination of both writers. That kind of proof has unsuccessfully yielded to a man otherwise learned: for only four times he says that testimony was brought forth by the holy Doctor from book I Kings chapter 15: "Was it not when thou wast a little one," etc. But in none of the places assigned by Gussanville is it read. Furthermore only eyes are needed that it may be understood that our writer has not always used the Vulgate version; indeed very often he recedes from it. In the very threshold is read: "there was a certain man from Ramatha (fuit vir unus de Ramatha)." In the Vulgate, "from Ramathaïim." In the Commentary, "son of Jeroboam (filius Hieroboam);" in the Vulgate, "son of Jeroam." In the Commentary, "sons of Thau (filii Thau);" in the Vulgate, "sons of Tohu." In the Commentary verse 4, "and he gave to Peninnah and to her sons and daughters (deditque Phenennae et filiis et filiabus ejus);" in the Vulgate, "and he gave to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters parts." To pursue the rest seems superfluous. From Habakkuk chapter III these things are praised in the Commentary book I, chapter 3, num. 4: "The Lord God is my strength, he will set my feet unto consummation, and he will set me upon high places; that I may overcome in the clarity of him;" which altogether disagree from the Vulgate version. Below from ps. 97 many things are brought forth quite otherwise than they are read in the Vulgate. Book I, c. 1, n. 10, is read from ps. 85: "And they shall adore before thee, O Lord, and they shall honor (honorificabunt) thy name," the Vulgate having, "and they shall glorify (glorificabunt)." Chapter 2, num. 47, for, "and my cup inebriating," which the Vulgate ps. 22 has, there stands, "and my goblet (poculum) inebriating" Truly in a matter so clear we would waste time in vain. Nor however do I deny that some things from the sacred Letters are read here otherwise than in other Gregorian works. Doubtless Claudius cursorily receiving these was not able to render them with so much faith, that in representing the testimonies of Scripture he should not sin even in one syllable. On the contrary indeed we have observed many things brought forth in this Commentary otherwise than they ought to be read; which perhaps moved Saint Gregory to reject this work as adulterine. Concerning those things however it is worthwhile to warn in this place, lest they provide an occasion of erring.

In fine libri I, cap. 1, vers. 28 capitis I lib. I Regum ita legitur: Commendavi eum Domino; et legendum, commodavi. Lib. II, cap. 4, hic versus 3 cap. III. Oculi ejus (Heli) caligaverant, nec poterat videre. Lucerna Dei antequam exstingueretur, Samuel, etc. Ita effertur corrupte: nec poterat videre lucernam Dei antequam exstingueretur; cui lectioni nullae suffragantur versiones. Ita tamen legerunt Beda, Rabanus Maurus, Angelomus, falsus Eucherius; auctoritate forte Gregorii, cujus nomen huic praefixum commentario legerant, abrepti. Et hoc sane validissimum est argumentum, laudatis scriptoribus notum fuisse hoc opus: a quo enim antiquiori scriptore hanc Scripturae lectionem vitiosam desumpsissent?

XIV. Neque vero, inquit, stylus ipse Gregorianum sapit, licet in quibusdam eum imitari conatus sit auctor; quod fortasse erroris occasionem praebuit. Verum quantum stylo Gregorii sit dissimilis, sola Homiliarum in Ezechielem lectio comprobabit.

Sed quid plura, inquit Gussanvillaeus? Si auctoris verba expendantur, luce meridiana clarius apparebit fuisse monachum aliquem; qui frequenter de monachis monasteriorumque regimine ac disciplina sermonem habet; quod pluribus probat.

XV. Rationum ponderi non inviti cedimus. At quid ex his contra sententiam quam tuemur, militat? Negatne Gussanvillaeus Gregorium fuisse monachum, et monachorum abbatem, cui proinde incumbebat frequenter de disciplina monastica sermonem habere? Si vero quae de monastica vita dicit hic scriptor, cum Regula sancti Benedicti conferantur, vix suberit dubitandi locus, quin ejusdem Regulae observationi fuerit addictus. Etenim col. 78 legimus, fervore novitio; quod invenitur S. Benedicti Regulae cap. 1.

In the end of book I, chapter 1, verse 28 of chapter I book I Kings it is read thus: "I have commended (Commendavi) him to the Lord;" and it should be read, "I have lent (commodavi)." Book II, chapter 4, this verse 3 chapter III. "His eyes (Eli's) had grown dim, nor was he able to see. The lamp of God before it was extinguished, Samuel," etc. It is thus brought forth corruptly: "nor was he able to see the lamp of God before it was extinguished;" to which reading no versions suffragate. Thus however Bede, Rabanus Maurus, Angelomus, the false Eucherius read; snatched away perhaps by the authority of Gregory, whose name they had read prefixed to this commentary. And this surely is the most valid argument, that this work was known to the praised writers: from what earlier writer indeed would they have taken this faulty reading of the Scripture? Book V, col. 306, it is read: "he appeared therefore to the garrison (apparuit itaque stationi);" where it ought to be read as in the Vulgate, "both appeared (Apparuit uterque) to the garrison." Truly it is a fault of the copyists, not of the author; for in the explanation of this verse he says: "What is it that Jonathan is said to appear to the Philistines with his armor-bearer?" Therefore he read: "both appeared." Below also is read: "therefore both appeared," etc. Let us pursue the remaining objections of Gussanville.

XIV. "Nor indeed," he says, "does the style itself savor of the Gregorian, although in certain things the author has tried to imitate him; which perhaps provided the occasion of the error. Truly how dissimilar it is to the style of Gregory, only the reading of the Homilies on Ezekiel will prove." A brief proof indeed, but feeble, since it relies on the testimony of the adversary alone strengthened by no examples; especially if those things which we have brought forth to the contrary are reread.

"But what more," says Gussanville? "If the words of the author be weighed, it will appear clearer than the meridian light that he was some monk; who frequently has speech concerning monks and the government and discipline of monasteries;" which he proves with more.

XV. We do not unwillingly yield to the weight of reasons. But what from these militates against the opinion which we defend? Does Gussanville deny that Gregory was a monk, and an abbot of monks, to whom therefore it belonged frequently to have speech concerning monastic discipline? If indeed what this writer says concerning the monastic life be compared with the Rule of Saint Benedict, there will scarcely remain a place of doubting, that he was addicted to the observation of the same Rule. For in col. 78 we read, "novice fervor (fervore novitio);" which is found in the Rule of S. Benedict chapter 1.

Sub initium col. 93 occurrit, in malo inobedientiae mors praevaluit; quibus verbis alluditur ad haec Regulae S. Benedicti cap. 2, tunc demum inobedientibus poena sit eis praevalens ipsa mors. Col. 95, de obedientia disserens auctor, ob oculos habere videtur quae de eadem virtute docet sanctus Benedictus tum cap. 5 Reg. tum c. 7.

Et his non levis suboritur conjectura, Gregorium non ad populum, ut gratis fingit Gussanvillaeus, Homilias de lib. Regum habuisse, sed ad monachos sibi subditos, eo duntaxat tempore, quo post reditum ab urbe regia, majori otio in monasterio fruebatur: quas ejus filius, seu alumnus et discipulus Claudius excipere curavit.

XVI. Composita quae de Commentarii auctore erat controversia, de ipso opere quaedam, etsi pauca, supersunt observanda. Mutilum illud esse, aliqua licet minima ex parte liquet, quod lib. I, cap. 2, num. 3, meminerit scriptor explicationis nominis Helcanae supra allatae, quae nullibi tamen legitur. Lacunam suspicamur esse inter num. 4 et 8 cap. 1 lib. I, ubi ab explicatione verborum illorum: De Ramatha Sophim, de monte Ephraim, transitur ad ista: Qui habebat duas uxores; omissis illis, et nomen ejus Helcana filii Hieroboam, filii Heliu, filii Thau, filii Sup. de quibus ne minimum quid in Commentario delibatur.

Multa occurrunt de nominibus Hebr. quae notis illustrari potuissent. At vero quae de iis dicenda sese offerebant intra metas his in notis nobis praescriptas, contineri vix potuissent. Praeterea qui de his erudiri volent, nunquam Commentarium hunc lecturi sunt, sed potius consulent Origenem et Hieronymum, praesertim in libris de nominibus Hebraicis et de situ ac nominibus locorum Hebr. Caeterum, loquendo de Hieronymo in nota b ad prooemium, col. 2, incaute nobis excidit quod diximus de libro Samuelis ab ipso exposito; nam qui ex nostris edendo huic sancto Doctori strenuam navant operam, Expositionem libri Samuelis Hieronymo abjudicant. At haec nondum vulgata erant quando ad novam Gregorianorum operum editionem schedas nostras disposuimus.

Under the beginning col. 93 occurs, "in the evil of inobedience death has prevailed (in malo inobedientiae mors praevaluit);" by which words is alluded to these of the Rule of S. Benedict chapter 2, "then at last to the inobedient let the penalty be to them prevailing death itself." Col. 95, the author discussing concerning obedience, seems to have before his eyes what Saint Benedict teaches concerning the same virtue both in chapter 5 of the Rule and c. 7. Book IV, cap. 4, num. 17, is read: "Who may not easily spend the most strait way of conversation for those newly approaching;" which are taken almost word for word from the Rule of S. Benedict chapter 58.

And from these no light conjecture arises, that Gregory did not have the Homilies concerning the book of Kings to the people, as Gussanville gratuitously feigns, but to the monks subject to him, only at that time, in which after the return from the royal city, he enjoyed greater leisure in the monastery: which his son, or alumnus and disciple Claudius took care to receive.

XVI. The controversy which was concerning the author of the Commentary having been composed, certain things concerning the work itself, although few, remain to be observed. That it is mutilated, although in some very small part, is clear from the fact that in book I, cap. 2, num. 3, the writer mentions the explanation of the name of Elkanah brought in above, which nevertheless is read nowhere. We suspect there is a lacuna between num. 4 and 8 of chapter 1 book I, where from the explanation of those words: "From Ramath Sophim, from mount Ephraim," there is a transition to those: "Who had two wives;" those having been omitted, "and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroboam, the son of Elihu, the son of Thau, the son of Zuph," concerning which not even the least thing is touched upon in the Commentary.

Many things occur concerning Hebrew names which could have been illustrated by notes. But truly what were offering themselves to be said concerning them would scarcely have been able to be contained within the boundaries prescribed to us in these notes. Furthermore those who wish to be learned concerning these, are never going to read this Commentary, but will rather consult Origen and Jerome, especially in the books on Hebrew names and on the site and names of Hebrew places. Moreover, speaking of Jerome in note b to the prooemium, col. 2, incautiously there slipped from us what we said concerning the book of Samuel explained by him; for those of ours who labor strenuously in editing this holy Doctor, judge the Exposition of the book of Samuel away from Jerome.

XVII. Quid vero nostrae operae hac in editione collocatum sit nunc breviter aperiendum. Cum alicujus codicis manuscripti, in quo contineretur hic Commentarius copiam habere nobis non fuerit integrum, quavis licet adhibita diligentia, illum tantum recensuimus ad meliores editiones, Gilotianam praesertim et Vaticanam, quarum ope non paucos errores expunximus, omissaque nonnulla restituimus. Aliquando quoque ubi editi omnes vitiosi sunt, non dubitavimus eos emendare. Sic lib. I, c. 1, n. 1, legebatur prius: hunc . . . . . per manus iniquorum affligentes; ubi procul dubio legendum, affigentes, quam lectionem amplexi sumus. Libro quoque II, c. 1, num. 2, prius legebatur, ejus se oculis inhaesisse; at series sermonis ostendit legendum, osculis pro, oculis; ut etiam nunc legitur. Quando vero solis conjecturis assecuti sumus qua ratione medendum corruptae orationi foret, lectionem quae nobis visa fuerit melior, inscribere margini satis habuimus.

Nostro quoque more capita, ut pote longiora, plures in articulos appositis notis numeralibus distinximus. Notulis paginae subjectis, vel varias lectiones exhibuimus, vel quaedam Commentarii loca illustravimus. Utinam laboris nostri sane improbi optimos et jucundos fructus lector carpere possit et degustare.

De expositione in Cantica canticorum quae excipiet hunc Commentarium, et de aliis operibus subsequentibus hic dicere nihil attinet, cum singulis praefationes, aut admonitiones praefixerimus. At in praefat. ad Expositionem Cantici non debuit omitti testimonium sancti Columbani, qui inter sancti Gregorii Opera eam recenset cum libro Regulae Pastor. et Homiliis in Ezechielem, ut videre est in ejusdem Columbani epistola inter Gregorianas (Lib. IX, epist. ultima).

SANCTI GREGORII MAGNI ROMANI PONTIFICIS IN LIBRUM PRIMUM REGUM, QUI ET SAMUELIS DICITUR, VARIARUM EXPOSITIONUM LIBRI SEX. (C,G,S)*

Prooemium.

XVII. What indeed of our labor has been placed in this edition is now briefly to be opened. Since it was not possible for us to have the opportunity of any manuscript codex, in which this Commentary was contained, although any diligence was employed, we only reviewed it according to the better editions, especially the Guillotian and the Vatican, by the help of which we expunged not a few errors, and restored some things omitted. Sometimes also where all published are faulty, we have not doubted to emend them. Thus book I, c. 1, n. 1, was previously read: "afflicting (affligentes) this one . . . . . through the hands of the iniquitous;" where without doubt should be read, "fastening (affigentes)," which reading we have embraced. Also in book II, c. 1, num. 2, it was previously read, "to have cleaved to the eyes (oculis) of him;" but the series of the speech shows it should be read, "kisses (osculis)" for "eyes (oculis);" as it is still read now. Moreover when by conjectures alone we have attained by what reason the corrupt speech was to be healed, we have held it sufficient to inscribe the reading which seemed to us better in the margin.

In our manner also we have distinguished the chapters, as being longer, into more articles with numerical notes added. With little notes subjected to the page, we have either exhibited various readings, or illustrated certain places of the Commentary. Would that the reader could pluck and taste the certainly not modest fruits of our labor.

Concerning the exposition on the Song of Songs which will follow this Commentary, and concerning other subsequent works there is no point in saying anything here, since we have prefixed prefaces, or admonitions to each. But in the preface to the Exposition of the Song the testimony of Saint Columbanus ought not to have been omitted, who among the Works of Saint Gregory reviews it with the book of the Pastoral Rule and the Homilies on Ezekiel, as is to be seen in the same Columbanus's epistle among the Gregorian ones (Book IX, last epistle).

SIX BOOKS OF VARIOUS EXPOSITIONS OF SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT, ROMAN PONTIFF, ON THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS, WHICH IS ALSO CALLED OF SAMUEL.

Prooemium.

1 Post Moysi et Jesu Nave libros, et Judicum, octavus sive nonus in canone sanctarum Scripturarum primus liber Regum ostenditur. Qui profecto liber, sicut et pleraque volumina sacri eloquii, quod a sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus nondum sit expositus, nonnulli simpliciores hunc non esse mysticum arbitrantur, et eo sublimiora per spiritum nulla dicere, quo planiora per litteram videtur enarrare. Sed si ea, quae in aliis explanationum libris doctores sancti locuti sunt legerent, hujus quoque historiae quam sit immensa profunditas invenirent. Nam plerumque in illorum expositionibus quod hic planum per litteram dicitur valde esse arduum per spiritalem intelligentiam declaratur, et aperte insinuant quia longe sublimius de sacra historia intelligunt quam in ejus superficie foris legunt. Planum namque est quod Elcana vir Ephrataeus uxores duas habuisse describitur (I Reg. I, 1, 2); quod Heli sacerdos, dum a censura correptionis filiorum affectione dissolvitur, de sella cadit, et fracta cervice interit (Ibid., IV, 18); quod rex Saul obedire Deo in Amalecitarum demolitione noluit (I Reg. XV, 9), sed non multo post et vitam et regnum amisit (I Reg. XXXI, 5). Sed haec nimirum plana, sicut placet 2 simplicioribus, doctores sancti, ut digna sublimitate perciperent, eorum intellectum non in simplicitate quaesierunt litterae, sed in volatu allegoriae. Hinc est enim quod cum sanctus Augustinus (L. XVII de Civit. Dei, c. 4) duas Elcanae uxores per historiam legeret, in planitie lectionis spiritalem altitudinem intuens, Synagogae typum una, altera vero quia figuram sanctae Ecclesiae haberet, exposuit. Sanctus quoque Hieronymus (Advers. Pelag., lib. I, c. 8; et contra Jovin. lib. I, c. 10) Heli sacerdotis et Saul mortem, non ad hoc solum in sacra historia positam, ut inobedientes praepositos eorum terreret poena, sed etiam ut, dum veterum et transgressorum rectorum repulsio legitur, antiquae legis et sacerdotii interitus designetur. Sacra igitur Regum historia non idcirco spiritalibus sacramentis vacua credenda est, quia a venerabilibus patribus seriatim non est exposita, sed eo altior et profundior, quo, velut immensi vastitas fluminis, ex parte quavis exigua hauriri exponendo potuit, et repletis eorum vasculis, suae plenitudinis impetu quotidie implendis aliis decurrit. Dum ergo quaedam hujus sacrae historiae ad robur suorum operum tollerent, plenitudinem vero illius in suae sublimitatis secreto indiscussam praeterirent, quid aliud agere visi sunt, quam de immenso amne aliquid capere, quod sitientibus fidelium 3 mentibus propinarent?

1. After the books of Moses and of Joshua, and of the Judges, the first book of Kings is shown eighth or ninth in the canon of the holy Scriptures. Which book indeed, just as also many volumes of the sacred eloquence, because it has not yet been explained by the doctors of the holy Church, some simpler ones judge this not to be mystical, and to say nothing more sublime through the spirit, by how much the more it seems to narrate plainer things through the letter. But if they read those things which the holy doctors have spoken in other books of explanations, they would find how immense is the depth of this history also. For frequently in their expositions that which is said plainly through the letter here is declared to be very arduous through spiritual intelligence, and they openly insinuate that they understand far more sublimely concerning the sacred history than they read on the surface of it outside. For it is plain that Elkanah an Ephrathite man is described to have had two wives (1 Sam. 1:1, 2); that Eli the priest, while he is dissolved from the censure of correction by affection for his sons, falls from the seat, and perishes with a broken neck (Ibid., 4:18); that king Saul willed not to obey God in the demolition of the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:9), but not much after lost both life and kingdom (1 Sam. 31:5). But these certainly plain things, as it pleases the simpler, the holy doctors, so that they might perceive them with worthy sublimity, sought their understanding not in the simplicity of the letter, but in the flight of allegory. For hence it is that when Saint Augustine (Book 17 of the City of God, c. 4) read the two wives of Elkanah through the history, looking into the spiritual height in the plainness of the reading, he explained one as the type of the Synagogue, but the other because she had the figure of the holy Church. Saint Jerome also (Against Pelagius, book I, c. 8; and against Jovinian book I, c. 10) the death of Eli the priest and of Saul, placed in the sacred history not for this alone, so that the punishment might terrify inobedient prelates, but also so that, while the repulsion of the ancient and transgressing rulers is read, the end of the ancient law and priesthood might be designated. Therefore the sacred history of the Kings is not for that reason to be believed void of spiritual sacraments, because it has not been explained in series by the venerable fathers, but by so much higher and deeper, by how much, like the vastness of an immense river, from any small part it was able to be drawn out by explaining, and their small vessels having been filled, it runs down for others daily to be filled by the impetus of its fullness. While therefore they took certain things of this sacred history to the strength of their works, but passed over the fullness of it undiscussed in the secret of their sublimity, what else were they seen to do, than to take something from the immense river, which they might give to the thirsty minds of the faithful to drink?

2. Quorum profecto morem nos quoque in praesenti opere sequimur, qui ad ingentem hanc historiam gratia aperiendae intelligentiae ejus accedimus, cujus tamen universitatem exponendam suscipere non audemus, hoc videlicet a praefatis venerabilibus Patribus distantes, quia non sparsim et de diversis locis eligimus quod exposituri sumus, cum illi non ex ordine aliquam sacrae hujus historiae partem, sed sparsim testimonia quaedam susciperent, quae ad eruditionem fidelium exponere habuissent. Dei ergo omnipotentis adjutorio confisi, a principio voluminis usque ad David regis unctionem explanare proponimus, ut brevi isto, quod cernitur, experiri possimus si ultra progredi exponendo debeamus. Plerique etenim dum immoderata proponunt, exsecutores propositi sui fieri nunquam possunt, maxime cum tractator sacri eloquii morem gerat viri in alta specula consistentis, Scriptura vero sacra silvae vastioris similitudinem. Qui profecto vir in alto situs, etsi acuta visione nemoris vastitatem considerat, tamen dum summa montium, dum extrema collium, dum arborum celsa, in quadam aequalitate sibi convenientia respicit, quam magnae valles, quam distentae planities in medio lateant, non attendit. Sed si perambulare quod ei breve videtur coeperit, repente cognoscit quia qui se totum vidisse putaverat, valde plura remanserant quae non viderat. Unde et saepe immoderatus viator decipitur, ut tanto periculosius iter expleat, quanto et eum in via, expleto die, noctis error intercipit, qui velut in parvi itineris spatio nec diei partem se explere cogitavit. Sic sic nimirum, dum sacrae historiae intellectum in quadam sensuum ejus summitate consideramus, omnipotentis Dei gratia, velut altos opacioris silvae vertices de quadam sublimitate attendimus. Sed quia dum iidem sensus subtilius considerari et proferri coeperint, alios se multipliciores gignunt, velut in superficie, ut videtur, totius inspecti nemoris, at vallium concava et distenti Matini latent spatia, quae non videntur. Tutius ergo gradimur, si sic metimur ea quae cernimus, ut etiam ea quae procedendo visuri sumus percurrenda esse cogitemus. Itaque dum ingentis historiae parvam partem explanare proponimus, pro modulo imbecillitatis nostrae cursum itineris in vicinio terminamus, tam videlicet ingenii tenuitate diffisi, quam sacri voluminis profunditate perterriti.

2. Whose manner indeed we also follow in the present work, who approach this huge history for the sake of opening its intelligence, the universality of which to be explained however we do not dare to undertake, differing from the aforementioned venerable Fathers in this namely, because we do not choose dispersedly and from diverse places what we are about to explain, since they did not take according to order some part of this sacred history, but dispersedly certain testimonies, which they would have had to explain for the erudition of the faithful. Confiding therefore in the help of almighty God, we propose to explain from the beginning of the volume even to the anointing of king David, so that in this brief thing, which is discerned, we may be able to experience if we ought to proceed further in explaining. For many while they propose immoderate things, are never able to become executors of their purpose, especially when a treater of the sacred eloquence carries the manner of a man standing in a high watch-tower, but the sacred Scripture the similitude of a vaster forest. Which man indeed situated on high, although he considers the vastness of the grove with sharp vision, nevertheless while he looks back at the tops of the mountains, while the extremes of the hills, while the heights of the trees, agreeing to himself in a certain equality, how great valleys, how distended plains lie hid in the middle, he does not attend. But if he begins to walk through what seems brief to him, suddenly he knows that he who had thought himself to have seen everything, very many things had remained which he had not seen. Whence also often the immoderate traveler is deceived, so that he completes the journey so much more dangerously, by how much the error of the night intercepts him in the way, the day having been completed, who as if in the space of a small journey did not even think to complete a part of the day. So so indeed, while we consider the understanding of the sacred history in a certain summit of its senses, by the grace of almighty God, we attend as it were the high tops of a more opaque forest from a certain sublimity. But because while these same senses begin to be more subtly considered and brought forth, they beget others more manifold than themselves, as it were on the surface, as it seems, of the whole inspected grove, but the hollows of the valleys and the distended spaces of the Matine lie hid, which are not seen. More safely therefore we walk, if we so measure those things which we discern, so that we also think that those things which we are about to see by proceeding are to be run through. And so while we propose to explain a small part of the huge history, we terminate the course of the journey in the vicinity according to the module of our imbecility, as much distrusting in the thinness of our genius, as terrified by the depth of the sacred volume.

3. Sed et primum non tam instituere quam obsecrare lectorem censui, ut inanitate expositionis meae pondus sacrae historiae nequaquam penset, quia divina eloquia ex mensura tractatorum nunquam aestimanda sunt. Nam nec idcirco sunt vilipendenda, quia non subtiliter considerantur; nec celsa et venerabilia ideo, quia facunde et subtiliter exponuntur. Alia quippe virtus est quae apud saeculi sapientes tanta habetur, quantum eam extollere possunt praeclara ingenia. Sacra vero Scriptura, quia divinitus inspirata est, tanto sublimius etiam praeclara hominum ingenia superat, quanto ipsi praeclari homines Deo inferiores sunt, et nihil in illa spiritali sublimitate conspiciunt, nisi quod eis ipsius divinae dignationis bonitate revelatur. Nemo igitur in ejus scientia ita perfectus est, 4 ut proficere ultra non possit, quia inferior est omnis profectus hominis, divinitatis altitudine eam inspirantis. Unde et per Psalmistam de Domino dicitur: Qui tegit in aquis superiora ejus (Ps. CIII, 3). Si enim aquarum appellatione illae supernae designantur profundae intelligentiae angelorum, dum sacri eloquii altitudinem Deus in aquis tegere dicitur, constat nimirum quia homo semper illa sit inferior cui solum ejus inferiora revelantur. Hinc etiam per Moysen praecipitur ut agni residuum igne comburatur (Exod. XII, 10), quia videlicet Scripturae sacrae, quae ad cognoscendum Redemptorem sunt editae, pro sublimitatis suae dignitate venerandae tunc etiam sunt cum non intelliguntur. Itaque etsi nihil pensatur quod a me dicitur, nihilominus pensandum est quia haec sacra Scriptura, quae a me indigne exponitur, ei cui omnipotens Deus secreta aperire voluerit bona et sublimia multa dicit. Scriptura etenim sacra tam mirabiliter ab omnipotente Deo condita est, ut etsi multipliciter videatur exposita, non desunt tamen ei secreta quibus servet occulta, quia fere nunquam sic exponitur, ut ei non plura remaneant quae quotidie exponantur. Qua profecto ejus incomprehensibilitate omnipotens Deus humanae mutabilitati magna dispensatione consuluit; nam, ut vilescere nota non possit, sic mire disposita est, ut cognita nesciatur, et eo legatur gratius, quo quotidie discitur; ac dum semper recentia intimat, suavius oblectet.

4. Historia ergo Regum, quia eo spiritu condita quo et caetera Scripturae sanctae volumina cognoscuntur, non debet credi eis esse minor sacramentis, quibus non est inferior titulo auctoritatis. Nam omnes scriptores ejus prophetae fuisse referuntur, qui cum historica narrant, spiritualia signant; exteriora loquuntur, et intima innuunt; terrena proponunt, ut coelestia exsequantur.

3. But also first I have judged not so much to institute as to beseech the reader, that he by no means weigh the weight of the sacred history by the inanity of my exposition, because the divine eloquences are never to be estimated from the measure of the treaters. For they are not for that reason to be vilipended, because they are not subtly considered; nor therefore high and venerable, because they are eloquently and subtly explained. For there is another virtue which is held so much among the wise of the world, as much as clear geniuses are able to extol it. But the sacred Scripture, because it is divinely inspired, overcomes even the clear geniuses of men by so much more sublimely, by how much the clear men themselves are inferior to God, and discern nothing in that spiritual sublimity, unless what is revealed to them by the goodness of the divine dignation itself. No one therefore is so perfect in the knowledge of it, that he is not able to profit further, because every profiting of man is inferior to the height of the divinity inspiring it. Whence also it is said through the Psalmist concerning the Lord: "Who coverest the upper parts of it in the waters" (Ps. 103:3). For if by the appellation of waters those supernal deep intelligences of the angels are designated, while God is said to cover the height of the sacred eloquence in the waters, it is established indeed that man may always be inferior to it to whom only its inferior things are revealed. Hence also it is commanded through Moses that the remainder of the lamb be consumed by fire (Exod. 12:10), because namely the sacred Scripture, which was brought forth for recognizing the Redeemer, for the dignity of its sublimity are then also to be venerated when they are not understood. Therefore even if nothing is weighed which is said by me, nevertheless it is to be weighed that this sacred Scripture, which is unworthily explained by me, says many good and sublime things to him to whom almighty God has willed to open secrets. For the sacred Scripture was so wonderfully founded by almighty God, that even if it seems explained manifoldly, nevertheless secrets are not lacking to it by which it may keep things hidden, because it is almost never so explained, that there do not remain more things to it which may be explained daily. By which incomprehensibility of it indeed almighty God consulted human mutability by a great dispensation; for, that what is known might not be able to become vile, it was so wonderfully disposed, that what is known may not be known, and it may be read the more gratefully, by how much it is daily learned; and while it intimates always fresh things, it may delight more sweetly.

4. Therefore the history of the Kings, because it was founded by that spirit by which also the other volumes of the holy Scripture are known, ought not to be believed to be less than those sacraments, to which it is not inferior in the title of authority. For all the writers of it are reported to have been prophets, who when they narrate historical things, signify spiritual things; they speak external things, and insinuate internal things; they propose earthly things, so that they may pursue celestial things.

Unde et hic liber primus et secundus ejusdem historiae ad hoc prophetae Samueli ascribitur, ut ex auctoris titulo sentiatur historia quam scribit, non tam historia quam prophetia; simplex veraque littera, sed alta nimis et multiplicitate occultorum sensuum profunda. Nos autem de tanto ejus pondere pro modo pusillitatis nostrae assumimus ferenda quae possumus. Nam cum suavis sit in superficie litterae, altior in typis allegoriae, moribus instruendis utilis, lucida in exemplis exhibendis, in locis tamen singulis et historica asserere, et typica proferre, et conferre moralia, et proponere exempla refugio; quanquam alia sub uno intellectu, adjuvante Domino, sim expositurus, alia vero sub pluribus. Maxime cum his temporibus scribendi operam dare censuerim, in quibus dum cordibus quorumdam ecclesiasticorum virorum vetus sollicitudo mundanae intentionis immergitur, nova scribendi studia eo esse superflua judicant, quo et doctorum venerabilium abundare vetera non ignorant. Qui nimirum ratione convincendi essent, nisi signum calumniae, exposita fronte, praetenderent. Nam qui nova velut nova contemnunt, illa quae probant vetera, curarum saecularium saturitate fastidiunt. Quos sane plures sub unius denotatione Scriptura exponit, dicens: Anima saturata calcabit favum (Prov. XXVII, 7). Favus quippe mel novum continet. Quasi ergo dicat: Dum terrenarum rerum cura immoderatius pascitur, in ea 5 quae valde placere solet recenti Scripturarum dulcedine non laetatur. Sed quia hujus sacrae historiae commenta veterum nulla reperiunt, rectius agunt, si opus nostri laboris ea charitate qua ad utilitatem parvulorum sanctae Ecclesiae impenditur amplectantur, et pro reprehensionum molestia nobis in tanta Scripturae profunditate velut altissimo pelago laborantibus praesidia orationum ferant. Hinc nimirum nostri sudoris fructum suum faciunt, quia dum ex benignitate diligunt, ad aeternae remunerationis sibi cumulum vertunt, et quod tantis temporibus tam clausa et inexposita Scriptura ad communem intelligentiam ducitur, et quod parvuli sanctae Ecclesiae dum in veteris Scripturae tegminibus novae religionis splendorem suscipiunt, in profectu suae devotionis adjuvantur.

5. Sed quia in diversis sanctorum Patrum operibus diversa hujus historiae testimonia inveniuntur exposita, notare lector debet quia aliquando eorum sensus tractando subsequor, aliquando autem enodare historiam aliter insudo, ut et opus quod spe divinae inspirationis aggredior, et antiquorum patrum auctoritate sit validum, et lectori nequaquam fastidiosum, dum inter ea quae novit vetera ea etiam ei quae non novit nova repraesentat.

Whence also this first and second book of the same history is ascribed to the prophet Samuel for this, that from the title of the author the history which he writes may be felt, not so much history as prophecy; a simple and true letter, but too high and deep with the multiplicity of hidden senses. We however take from so great a weight of it according to the measure of our smallness things to be borne which we are able. For since it is sweet on the surface of the letter, higher in the types of allegory, useful for instructing morals, lucid in exhibiting examples, nevertheless I flee both to assert historical things, and to bring forth typical things, and to confer moral things, and to propose examples in individual places; although I am about to explain some things under one understanding, the Lord helping, but others under more. Especially since I have judged to give labor to writing in these times, in which while the old solicitude of worldly intention is immersed in the hearts of certain ecclesiastical men, they judge new studies of writing to be superfluous for this reason, by how much they are not ignorant that the old ones of the venerable doctors abound. Who indeed would have to be convinced by reason, unless they pretended the sign of calumny, with an exposed forehead. For those who contemn new things as new, loathe those old things which they approve, with the satiety of secular cares. Whom surely the Scripture exposes more under the denotation of one, saying: "The sated soul will tread upon the honeycomb" (Prov. 27:7). The honeycomb indeed contains new honey. As if therefore it should say: While the care of earthly things is fed more immoderately, it does not rejoice in that which is accustomed to please greatly with the recent sweetness of the Scriptures. But because they find no commentaries of the ancients of this sacred history, they act more rightly, if they embrace the work of our labor with that charity by which it is expended for the utility of the little ones of the holy Church, and for the molestation of reprehensions bring to us laboring in so great depth of Scripture as it were a most deep sea the presidies of prayers. Hence indeed they make the fruit of our sweat their own, because while they love out of benignity, they turn it to the heap of eternal remuneration for themselves, both because a Scripture so closed and unexplained for so many times is led to common intelligence, and because the little ones of the holy Church while they receive the splendor of the new religion in the coverings of the old Scripture, are helped in the progress of their devotion.

5. But because in the diverse works of the holy Fathers diverse testimonies of this history are found explained, the reader ought to note that sometimes in treating I follow their senses, but sometimes I sweat to disentangle the history otherwise, so that both the work which I approach by the hope of divine inspiration, may be valid by the authority of the ancient fathers, and by no means fastidious to the reader, while among those old things which he knows it represents to him also those new things which he does not know.

Ad quam profecto sententiarum pronuntiationem aliquando ex necessitate ducor, quia et Patres venerabiles si seriatim cuncta exponerent quae ex parte tetigerunt, eam seriem locutionis quam tenere visi sunt observare nequaquam potuissent. Dum igitur sanctorum Patrum intellectus praetereo, necessitate aliquando, aliquando commoditate utor, quia et fastidium lectori amoveo, et dum totum seriatim discutio, multa ex mediis contra me veniunt quae illorum sequi sententias non permittunt. In quo sane opere lectorem flagito, ut non verba ex eloquentium oratorum sanctae Ecclesiae comparatione consideret, sed sententiarum intellectus ex ecclesiasticae disciplinae rationibus penset, quia etsi juxta Dei prohibitionem in ejus domo nemus plantare nescio (Deut. XVI, 21), regulam tamen, qua sancta Scriptura fideliter exponitur, in nullo derelinquo. Sed et ubi 6 minus placet quod peritus lector invenerit, consideret quod dum spiritalem historiam et altis sensibus profundam, velut magni pelagi procellas nauta peregrinus aggredior, reprehensibile valde non est si gubernaculum dicendi pulchre non ducitur, cum spumantes undarum vertices irruunt, qui peritissimum regimen saepe solvere clavum cogunt. Sic sic nimirum nec silvosa colere devotus arator ingrediens rectas sulcorum disponit lineas, si ea prius reducto vomere saepius non rescindat, quia artem facilitas nulla sequitur, si eamdem arandi peritiam consuetudo culturae praeire nulla videatur. Verum nec planitiem historiae quis hac aestimatione consideret, quia plerumque tanto difficilius ad spiritalium sensuum secreta pertingimus, quanto in littera planiori secretorum adituum situm longius videmus; et eo ejus tangere summa non possumus, quo gradus est inferior unde tangere summa cogitamus. Quid enim est intellectus divinitatis, nisi ineffabilis quaedam summa celsitudinis? Et quia omnipotens Deus per Scripturas agnoscitur, quid est eadem sacra Scriptura, nisi gradus quidam, qui conscenditur ut illa sublimitas contingatur? Quoties ergo historia planior est, sed altior intellectus, quid est aliud, nisi quia talem gradum illa sublimitas habet a quo facile contingi non potest? Si ergo aliquid indecens etiam in planioris historiae explanatione lector inspexerit, tanto benignius dare veniam poterit, quanto rationabilius agnoscit quia, dum a plano quod cernitur ad illa sublimia ultra non tendimus, facile vacillamus. Priora igitur voluminis, quia tam sanctae Ecclesiae sacramenta continent, quam mores electi hominis demonstrant, positi in studio bonae conversationis, sub utroque intellectu sigillatim edissero, ut cum in actibus veterum novae fidei rationes agnoscimus, in eis etiam conversationis nostrae aedificationem capiamus.

Toward which pronunciation of sentences indeed I am sometimes led out of necessity, because the venerable Fathers also if they explained in series all things which they touched in part, would by no means have been able to observe that series of locution which they were seen to hold. While therefore I pass over the understandings of the holy Fathers, I use sometimes necessity, sometimes commodity, because I both remove fastidium from the reader, and while I discuss the whole in series, many things from the middle come against me which do not permit me to follow their sentences. In which work surely I flagitate the reader, that he consider not words from the comparison of the eloquent orators of the holy Church, but weigh the understandings of the sentences from the reasons of ecclesiastical discipline, because even if according to the prohibition of God I know not how to plant a grove in his house (Deut. 16:21), nevertheless I leave in nothing the rule by which holy Scripture is faithfully explained. But also where what the skilled reader will have found pleases less, let him consider that while I approach the spiritual history and one deep with high senses, as a foreign sailor the storms of a great sea, it is not very reprehensible if the rudder of speaking is not led beautifully, when the foaming tops of the waves rush in, which often compel even the most skilled government to loosen the tiller. So so indeed neither the devoted plowman entering to cultivate silvosa places disposes straight lines of furrows, if he does not more often rescind them previously with the plowshare brought back, because no facility follows art, if no custom of culture be seen to precede the same skill of plowing. Truly let no one consider the plainness of history with this estimation, because frequently by so much more difficultly do we reach to the secrets of spiritual senses, by how much more plainly we see the site of the secret approaches in the letter; and by so much we are not able to touch the highest things of it, by how much the step is lower whence we think to touch the highest. For what is the understanding of the divinity, unless a certain ineffable summit of highness? And because almighty God is recognized through the Scriptures, what is the same sacred Scripture, unless a certain step, which is climbed so that that sublimity may be touched? As often therefore as the history is plainer, but the understanding higher, what else is it, unless because that sublimity has such a step from which it cannot easily be touched? If therefore the reader shall have inspected anything indecent even in the explanation of the plainer history, by so much more benignly will he be able to give pardon, by how much more rationally he recognizes that, while from the plain which is discerned we do not tend further to those sublime things, we easily vacillate. Therefore the prior things of the volume, because they contain so much the sacraments of the holy Church, as they demonstrate the morals of the chosen man, placed in the study of good conversation, I edisserate individually under both understandings, so that when in the acts of the ancients we recognize the reasons of the new faith, in them also we may take the edification of our conversation.

Fuit vir unus de Ramatha Sophim, de monte Ephraim, et nomen ejus Helcana, filius Hieroboam, filii Heliu, filii Thau, filii Suph, Ephrathaeus.

Quem ergo vir iste nobis insinuat, nisi Dominum ac Redemptorem nostrum, qui et in infirmitate nostrae carnis apparuit, et tamen eamdem susceptae naturae infirmitatem vitae remissioris blanditiis non subegit? Vir quippe a virtute nominatur: Homo autem in paradiso conditus, bellum cum apostata angelo habuit, cui tamen per conditionalem virtutem resistere non curavit. Fortis ergo conditus, sed hosti enerviter subjugatus, vir non fuit ex congressione, qui fuit ex munere. Sic itaque factus est fortis, ut damnata humana natura, victori hosti praevalere non posset, si hanc ille non assumeret, qui supra homines exstitisset. Factus est itaque praeliator noster, Conditor noster. Sed utrum vir fuerit, noscitur, si ex ostensa virtute consideretur. Assumpsit nostram naturam, quae dum in ipso vinceret, nobilitatem conditam repararet, et fieret in Redemptore infirma valida, quae in Adam facta fuerat fortis infirma (Matth. IV). Cui nimirum, dum jejunaret, in eremo tentator adfuit, antiquae victoriae suae tela reparavit, gulae, elationis ac superbiae jacula intorsit; sed cum sibi per omnia resistentem reperit. Vir ergo claruit per victoriam, qui fortem jam victorem apostatam angelum superans, non ei potentiam suae divinitatis exhibuit, sed infirmitatem humanitatis. Hunc virum propheta Jeremias considerans, ait: Femina circumdabit virum (Jerem. XXXI, 22). Hunc Zacharias monstrat, dicens: Ecce vir, Oriens nomen ejus (Zach. VI, 12). Hunc beatus Petrus apostolus Judaeis praedicans, dicit: Jesum Nazarenum, virum approbatum a Deo in vobis, virtutibus, et prodigiis, et signis: hunc praefinito consilio, et praescientia Dei traditum per manus iniquorum affigentes, interemistis (Act. II, 22 et 23). Hinc eidem Redemptori in via colloquens Cleophas, ait: De Jesu Nazareno, qui fuit propheta, potens in opere et sermone (Luc. XXIV, 19). Vir etenim fuit, qui et in hoc mundo ab Ecclesia expulit antiquum hostem, et in inferno, moriens, alligavit. Et quia qui moriens inferni vires comminuit, resurgens nobis aditum reseravit aeternitatis, magnitudinem virtutis suae non solum vivendo monstravit nobis, sed etiam moriendo et resurgendo. Quia ergo Redemptor noster per humanitatem, quam assumpsit, magnae virtutis opera egisse cognoscitur, recte is qui eum typo significat vir fuisse perhibetur.

(1 Kings 1:1) There was a man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite.

1. Whom, therefore, does this man suggest to us, if not our Lord and Redeemer, who both appeared in the infirmity of our flesh, and yet did not subject that same infirmity of the nature He had assumed to the blandishments of a more relaxed life? For "man" (*vir*) is named from "virtue" (*virtus*): but Man (*homo*), created in paradise, had a war with the apostate angel, whom, however, he did not care to resist through the virtue with which he was endowed. Therefore, created strong, but weakly subjugated to the enemy, he was not a man (*vir*) by struggle, who was one by gift. Thus the strong one [the enemy] became so powerful that condemned human nature could not prevail against the victorious foe, had not He who existed above men assumed it. And so our Creator became our champion. But whether He was a man (*vir*), is known if He is considered from the virtue He displayed. He assumed our nature, so that while it conquered in Him, it might repair its created nobility, and what was weak might become strong in the Redeemer, which in Adam had been made weak from being strong (Matt. 4). To Him, indeed, while He was fasting in the desert, the tempter came, preparing the weapons of his ancient victory, and hurled the darts of gluttony, vainglory, and pride; but he found Him resisting him in all things. Therefore, He shone forth as a man (*vir*) through victory, who, by overcoming the strong, already victorious apostate angel, showed him not the power of His divinity, but the infirmity of His humanity. Considering this man, the prophet Jeremiah says: A woman shall compass a man (Jer. 31:22). Zechariah points to Him, saying: Behold the man, whose name is the Orient (Zech. 6:12). The blessed apostle Peter, preaching to the Jews, says of Him: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain (Acts 2:22-23). Hence Cleopas, speaking with the same Redeemer on the way, says: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word (Luke 24:19). For He was a man (*vir*) who both expelled the ancient enemy from the Church in this world, and, by dying, bound him in hell. And because He who by dying crushed the powers of hell, by rising again opened to us the gate of eternity, He showed us the greatness of His virtue not only by living, but also by dying and rising again. Because, therefore, our Redeemer is known to have performed works of great virtue through the humanity He assumed, he who signifies Him in a type is rightly said to have been a man (*vir*).

Sed quaerendum est, cur dicatur vir unus. Nam si unitas haec referatur ad numerum, superfluum videtur: unusquisque enim unus, et non duo, est. Et sanctus Samuel, a quo ista scribuntur, contra morem scriptorum sanctae Ecclesiae frustra inchoasse nullatenus credendus est. Nam scriptor illius voluminis, cum beati Job vitam ad exemplum fidelium duceret, sic exorsus est: Vir erat in terra Hus, nomine Job (Job I, 1). Evangelista etiam Lucas, cum in principio sui Evangelii justi sacerdotis praeconia diceret, ait: Fuit in diebus Herodis regis sacerdos nomine Zacharias (Luc. I, 5). Nam nec ille ait: Vir unus; nec evangelista: Fuit sacerdos unus. Quid est ergo quod electus propheta contra usum scriptorum, scribendi tale coepit exordium? Sed quia non solum scriptor erat, sed etiam propheta, noverat de quo historia diceret; et qui per historiam dicebatur, noverat quem signaret. Quod ergo de historia praeter usum narrat historiae, hoc ad usum catholicae fidei, in intellectu loquitur allegoriae. Unde et hac nova consuetudine, simul tota confitetur Ecclesia, quia Deus et homo unus est Christus. Dicit ergo: Fuit vir unus; quia de Deo homine loquebatur, ut deitatem, et humanitatem ejus assereret, et non aliam suscipientis verbi, et suscepti hominis personam, sed Dei et hominis unam, eamdemque esse apertius demonstraret: quae tamen unitas, ad excellentiam dignitatis ejus referri convenienter potest. Nam etsi Redemptorem alium sancta Ecclesia non habuit, ex virtutis ostensione viros nonnullos habuit. Dum ergo unus dicitur, incomparabilis demonstratur.

Nam aequalem non habuit, qui dum humano generi excellenti vita, et verbo consuluit, singulari munere dare potuit dona Redemptionis. Unde et Paulus ait: Abundantiam gratiae, et donationis, et justitiae accipientes; in vita regnabunt per unum Jesum Christum (Rom. V, 17). Hanc excellentiae suae dignitatem per semetipsum Judaeis improperans, ait: Si opera non fecissem in eis, quae nemo alius fecit, peccatum non haberent (Joan. XV, 24). Excellentiam quoque pulchritudinis ejus Psalmista considerans dixit: Speciosus forma 8 prae filiis hominum, diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis (Ps. XLIV, 3). Singulare bonum Redemptionis Isaias in eo testificans, ait: Vere languores nostros ipse tulit, et iniquitates nostras ipse portavit (Isa. LIII, 4). Singularem quoque dignitatem ejus, aeternus genitor ostendens, a magnifica gloria clamavit dicens: Hic est filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene complacui. (Matth. III, 17; XVII, 5; I Pet. II, 17). Unus vir erat, quem Petrus confitens, ait: Non est aliud nomen datum sub coelo, in quo oporteat nos salvos fieri (Act. IV, 12).

But it must be asked why he is called *one man*. For if this unity refers to number, it seems superfluous: for everyone is one, and not two. And Saint Samuel, by whom these things are written, is by no means to be believed to have begun in vain, against the custom of the writers of the holy Church. For the writer of that volume, when he set forth the life of the blessed Job as an example for the faithful, thus began: 'There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job' (Job 1:1). The Evangelist Luke also, when at the beginning of his Gospel he spoke in praise of a just priest, says: 'There was in the days of Herod the king a certain priest named Zacharias' (Luke 1:5). For neither did the former say, 'One man'; nor the evangelist, 'There was one priest.' What is it, therefore, that the chosen prophet, against the usage of writers, began his writing with such an introduction? But because he was not only a writer, but also a prophet, he knew of whom the history spoke; and he who was spoken of through the history, he knew whom he signified. Therefore, what he narrates concerning the history, beyond the custom of history, this he speaks for the use of the Catholic faith, in the understanding of allegory. Whence also by this new custom, the whole Church at once confesses that Christ is one, God and man. He says, therefore, 'There was one man,' because he was speaking of the God-man, so that he might assert His divinity and humanity, and demonstrate more openly that the person of the Word who assumes and of the man who is assumed is not another, but one and the same person of God and man: which unity, however, can fittingly be referred to the excellence of His dignity. For although the holy Church has had no other Redeemer, it has had several men by the manifestation of virtue. Therefore, when he is called 'one', he is shown to be incomparable.

For He had no equal, who, while He provided for the human race by His excellent life and word, was able by a singular gift to give the gifts of Redemption. Whence also Paul says: 'they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift, and of justice, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ' (Rom. 5:17). Reproaching the Jews with this dignity of His excellence, He says through Himself: 'If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin' (John 15:24). The Psalmist also, considering the excellence of His beauty, said: 'Thou art beautiful above the sons of men: grace is poured abroad in thy lips' (Ps. 44:3). Isaiah, testifying to the singular good of Redemption in Him, says: 'Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows' (Isa. 53:4). The eternal Father also, showing His singular dignity, cried out from the magnificent glory, saying: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; 1 Pet. 2:17). He was the one man, whom Peter confessed, saying: 'For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved' (Acts 4:12).

Hanc excellentiae ejus magnitudinem Paulus asserit, dicens: Dominus exaltavit illum, et dedit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen (Philip. II, 9). Et quia excellentia virtutis ejus non solum electos homines, sed etiam cunctos beatos angelos superat, Hebraeis hunc praedicans Paulus, dicit: Qui cum sit splendor gloriae, et figura substantiae ejus, portansque omnia verbo virtutis suae, purgationem peccatorum faciens, sedet ad dexteram majestatis in excelsis, tanto melior angelis effectus, quanto differentius prae illis nomen haereditavit. Cui enim dixit aliquando angelorum: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te? Et rursum: Ego ero illi in patrem, et ipse erit mihi in filium (Hebr. I, 3, 4, 5). Recte ergo vir unus dicitur, cui nemo comparatur. Sed quem tantum agnovimus, audiamus jam unde esset.

4. De Ramatha Sophim, de monte Ephraim. Ramatha, Sophim et Ephraim, Hebraica nomina sunt, quorum primum in lingua nostra sonat, Visio consummata, secundum vero, Specula; tertium denique, Frugifer, sive fructificans, interpretatur. Quae autem est visio consummata, nisi Dei omnipotentis cognitio perfecta? Hanc profecto consummatam visionem doctor Gentium insinuat, dicens: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem; nunc cognosco ex parte, tunc autem cognoscam, sicut et cognitus sum (I Cor. XIII, 12). Et quid specula, nisi illa angelorum sublimitas intelligitur? Specula quippe in sublimi, ad clariorem visionem eligitur. Ramatha autem Sophim recte dicitur: quia illa Conditoris nostri perfecta cognitio, a solis illis beatis civibus haberi potest, qui in superna illa sublimitate consistunt. Jubar quippe aeterni luminis in sui plenitudine, non in imo praesentis exilii, sed de statu respicitur aeternae sublimitatis. Unde bene Ramatha Sophim in monte Ephraim sita perhibetur. Quis est enim mons Ephraim, nisi coelum? Mons quippe est frugifer, qui aeternae pulchritudinis flores, et fructus indeficientis gaudii, semper profert. Bene autem, et Ramatha, et Sophim in Ephraim monte sita perhibetur, quia illa omnipotentis Dei aeterna visio, et altitudo illa civium beatorum, non in terra habetur, sed in coelo. De Ramatha namque se esse insinuans, ait: Sicut novit me Pater, et ego agnosco Patrem (Joan. X, 15). Hinc iterum dicit: Nemo novit Filium nisi Pater, et Patrem nemo novit nisi Filius, et cui voluerit Filius revelare (Matth. XI, 27; Luc. X, 22).

Paul asserts this magnitude of His excellence, saying: 'God also hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name' (Phil. 2:9). And because the excellence of His power surpasses not only the elect among men but also all the blessed angels, Paul, preaching this to the Hebrews, says: 'Who being the brightness of his glory, and the figure of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sins, sitteth on the right hand of the majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.' For to which of the angels hath he said at any time: 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee'? And again: 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son' (Heb. 1:3, 4, 5). Rightly, therefore, is he called 'one man', to whom no one is compared. But now that we have recognized how great he is, let us hear whence he was.

4. Concerning Ramatha Sophim, from Mount Ephraim. Ramatha, Sophim, and Ephraim are Hebrew names, the first of which in our language means "consummate vision," the second, "watchtower," and the third, finally, is interpreted as "fruit-bearing" or "fructifying." For what is the consummate vision, if not the perfect knowledge of almighty God? The teacher of the Gentiles indeed alludes to this consummate vision, saying: "We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known" (I Cor. 13:12). And what is understood by "watchtower," if not that sublimity of the angels? For a watchtower is chosen in a high place for a clearer vision. Moreover, it is rightly called Ramatha Sophim: because that perfect knowledge of our Creator can be possessed only by those blessed citizens who dwell in that supernal sublimity. For the splendor of the eternal light in its fullness is beheld not from the depths of this present exile, but from the state of eternal sublimity. Hence, Ramatha Sophim is well said to be situated on Mount Ephraim. For what is Mount Ephraim, if not heaven? It is indeed a fruit-bearing mountain, which always brings forth the flowers of eternal beauty and the fruits of unfailing joy. And well is it said that both Ramatha and Sophim are situated on Mount Ephraim, because that eternal vision of almighty God, and that high state of the blessed citizens, is not had on earth, but in heaven. For, implying that He is from Ramatha, He says: "As the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father" (John 10:15). Hence again He says: "No one knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither doth any one know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him" (Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22).

De specula, hoc est sublimi fuit, qui et Judaeos increpans, dicit: Vos de deorsum estis, ego autem de supernis sum: vos de hoc mundo estis, ego autem non sum de hoc mundo (Joan. VIII, 23). De monte Ephraim fuit, qui dicit: Ego sum panis vivus, qui de coelo descendi (Joan. VI, 51). De monte Ephraim eum fuisse Joannes Baptista affirmans, ait: Qui de coelo venit, super omnes est (Joan. III, 31). Hinc Psalmista ait: A summo coelo egressio ejus (Ps. XVIII, 7). Hinc Gentium doctor ait: Secundus homo de coelo, coelestis (I Cor. XV, 47). Vir ergo, qui unus fuisse asseritur, de Ramatha Sophim de monte Ephraim exstitisse perhibetur: quia qui inter omnes natus supra omnes enituit, inde tantus in terra apparuit, quia de coelo venit. De Ramatha quippe Sophim fuit, quia etsi incomparabilis hic refulsit, magnitudo tamen excellentiae ejus non capitur, nisi ubi ejus perfecta cognitio aeternis civibus exhibetur. Nam hic eum in excellentia virtutis aspexerat, quid dicebat: Quod vidimus, et audivimus, et manus nostrae contrectaverunt de verbo vitae (I Joan. I, 1). Sed quia magnitudinem excellentiae ejus non viderat, in Ramatha eam nobis repromittit, dicens: Cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus, quoniam videbimus eum; sicuti est (I Joan. III, 2).

Potest autem hujus montis nomine, beatissima semper virgo Maria Dei Genitrix designari: mons quippe fuit, quae omnem electae creaturae altitudinem electionis suae dignitate transcendit. An non mons sublimis Maria, quae ut ad conceptionem aeterni Verbi pertingeret, meritorum verticem supra omnes angelorum choros, usque ad solium deitatis erexit? Hujus enim montis praecellentissimam dignitatem Isaias vaticinans, ait: Erit in novissimis diebus, praeparatus mons domus Domini in vertice montium (Isa. II, 2). Mons quippe in vertice montium fuit, quia altitudo Mariae supra omnes sanctos refulsit. Nam sicut mons altitudinem, ita domus designat habitationem. Mons quippe et domus apte dicitur, quae dum incomparalibus est illustrata meritis, Dei unigenito, in quo recumberet, sacrum praeparavit uterum. Nam mons in vertice montium Maria non fieret, si supra angelorum altitudinem, hanc divina fecunditas non levaret. Et domus Domini non fieret, si in ejus ventre, per assumptam humanitatem, verbi divinitas non jaceret.

He was from the watchtower, that is, from on high, who also, rebuking the Jews, says: "You are from beneath, I am from above: you are of this world, I am not of this world" (John 8:23). He was from Mount Ephraim, who says: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:51). John the Baptist, affirming that He was from Mount Ephraim, says: "He that cometh from heaven, is above all" (John 3:31). Hence the Psalmist says: "His going out is from the highest heaven" (Ps. 18:7). Hence the teacher of the Gentiles says: "The second man, from heaven, heavenly" (I Cor. 15:47). Therefore, the man who is asserted to have been one, is said to have come from Ramatha Sophim, from Mount Ephraim: because He who, born among all, shone forth above all, appeared so great on earth for this reason: that He came from heaven. He was indeed from Ramatha Sophim, because although He shone incomparably here, the greatness of His excellence is not comprehended, except where the perfect knowledge of Him is displayed to the eternal citizens. For one had beheld Him here in the excellence of His virtue, who said: "That which we have seen and have heard, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life" (I John 1:1). But because he had not seen the greatness of His excellence, he promises it to us again in Ramatha, saying: "When he shall appear, we shall be like to him: because we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

Moreover, by the name of this mountain, the most blessed ever-virgin Mary, Mother of God, can be designated: for she was a mountain, who by the dignity of her election transcended all the height of any chosen creature. Was Mary not a sublime mountain, who, in order to attain to the conception of the eternal Word, raised the pinnacle of her merits above all the choirs of angels, even to the throne of the Godhead? For Isaiah, prophesying the most excellent dignity of this mountain, says: 'In the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains' (Isa. 2:2). Indeed, she was a mountain on the top of mountains, because the loftiness of Mary shone forth above all the saints. For just as a mountain designates height, so a house designates a dwelling. Indeed, she is aptly called a mountain and a house, who, while she was illustrated by incomparable merits, prepared a sacred womb for the only-begotten of God, in which He might recline. For Mary would not have become a mountain on the top of mountains if divine fecundity had not raised her above the height of the angels. And she would not have become the house of the Lord if the divinity of the Word had not lain in her womb through the humanity He assumed.

Sed recte mons frugifer dicitur, de qua optimus fructus, id est novus homo generatur, quam certe in fecunditatis suae gloria pulchram, ornatamque propheta respiciens, ait: Egredietur virga de radice Jesse, et flos de radice ejus ascendet (Isa. XI, 1). De hujus namque montis fructu, David Deo exsultans, ait: Confiteantur tibi populi Deus, confiteantur tibi populi omnes, terra dedit fructum suum (Ps. LXVI, 6). Terra quippe fructum suum dedit, quia quem Virgo peperit, non concepit materiali opere, sed sancti Spiritus obumbratione (Luc. I, 35). Hinc eidem regi et prophetae a Domino dicitur: De fructu ventris tui ponam super sedem tuam (Psal. CXXXI, 11). Hinc Isaias ait: Erit fructus terrae sublimis (Isa. IV, 2). Nam quem Virgo genuit, non solum homo sanctus fuit, sed etiam potens Deus. De hoc fructu ad eamdem beatam Virginem, Elisabeth salutante, dicitur: Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui (Luc. I, 42). Recte igitur mons Ephraim dicitur, quae dum ineffabili dignitate divinae generationis attollitur, in ejus fructu, arida humanae conditionis germina revirescunt. Vir igitur de Ramatha Sophim factus est de monte Ephraim: quia qui per divinitatis suae potentiam angelos condidit, de carne praecelsae Virginis, formam suscepit humanitatis. Et quia per humanitatem, quam assumpsit, non ex infidelibus, sed ex fidelibus nasci voluit, sequitur: Filius Hieroboam, filii Heliu, filii Thau, filii Suph.

Quatuor quippe patrum nomina assignantur: quia dum ex fideli populo Dominus carnem sumpsit, eos per humanitatem patres habuit, quos totidem principalium virtutum gloria illustravit. Unde et non ad infidelem aliquem, sed ad fidelem Abraham divina promissione dicitur: In semine tuo benedicentur omnes gentes terrae (Gen. XXII, 18). Hinc evangelista Matthaeus 10 generationis ejus ordinem texens, ait: Liber generationis Jesu Christi, filii David, filii Abraham (Matth. I, 1). Hinc per semetipsum Samaritanae mulieri loquitur, dicens: Salus ex Judaeis est (Joan. IV, 22). Hinc Paulus ait: Quorum adoptio est filiorum, et gloria, et testamentum, et legislatio, et obsequium, et promissa: quorum patres, ex quibus est Christus secundum carnem, qui est super omnia Deus benedictus in saecula (Rom. IX, 4 et 5). Quibus profecto, quia et prudentia adfuit in cognitione rerum; justitia, qua cognita disponere recta cuperent; fortitudo, qua exequi quae vellent, bona potuissent; temperantia, per quam discrete cuncta perficerent, apte quaternario numero designantur.

But she is rightly called a fruitful mountain, from whom the best fruit, that is, the new man, is generated; whom the prophet, certainly beholding her beautiful and adorned in the glory of her fecundity, says: 'There shall come forth a rod from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up from his root' (Isa. 11:1). For concerning the fruit of this mountain, David, exulting in God, says: 'Let the people praise thee, O God: let all the people praise thee. The earth hath yielded her fruit' (Ps. 66:6). The earth indeed has yielded her fruit, because she whom the Virgin brought forth, she conceived not by a material act, but by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). Hence it is said by the Lord to the same king and prophet: 'Of the fruit of thy womb I will set upon thy throne' (Ps. 131:11). Hence Isaiah says: 'The fruit of the earth shall be sublime' (Isa. 4:2). For He whom the Virgin bore was not only a holy man, but also the mighty God. Concerning this fruit, it is said to the same blessed Virgin, in Elizabeth's greeting: 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb' (Luke 1:42). Rightly, therefore, is she called the mountain of Ephraim, for while she is raised up by the ineffable dignity of the divine generation, in her fruit the withered seeds of the human condition grow green again. Therefore, the man from Ramathaim-zophim was made from the mountain of Ephraim: because He who by the power of His divinity created the angels, took on the form of humanity from the flesh of the most exalted Virgin. And because, through the humanity which He assumed, He willed to be born not from the unfaithful, but from the faithful, it follows: 'the son of Jeroboam, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph.'

Indeed, the names of four fathers are assigned: because when the Lord took flesh from a faithful people, He had as fathers through His humanity those whom the glory of the same number of principal virtues had illustrated. Whence also it is said by divine promise not to some unfaithful person, but to the faithful Abraham: 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed' (Gen. 22:18). Hence the evangelist Matthew, weaving the order of His generation, says: 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham' (Matt. 1:1). Hence He Himself speaks to the Samaritan woman, saying: 'Salvation is from the Jews' (John 4:22). Hence Paul says: 'Who have the adoption as sons, and the glory, and the testament, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all things, God blessed for ever' (Rom. 9:4-5). To whom, indeed, because they possessed prudence in the knowledge of things, justice by which they desired to arrange known things rightly, fortitude by which they were able to execute the good things they willed, and temperance through which they might accomplish all things discreetly, they are aptly designated by the number four.

7. Sequitur: Ephrathaeus. Qui autem de Ephraim monte asseritur, cur Ephrathaeus esse perhibetur? Sed hoc ad litteram patet, quia videlicet de Ephraim monte esse aliquis potuit, qui de tribu Ephraim natus non fuit. Dicitur ergo Ephrathaeus, ut qui ex loco ostenditur, de stirpe etiam propaginis agnoscatur. Quia vero Ephrathaeus fructificans dicitur, recte hoc personae Redemptoris adscribitur, qui prophetae vaticinio praedicatur: Erit tanquam lignum, quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum, quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo (Psal. I, 4). Nam in praefinita apparens plenitudine temporum, coelestis doctrinae flores, in poma vertit electorum; et quotquot sibi conjunxit ex humano genere, quasi tot fructus protulit ad aeternitatem: quo in loco dum Redemptoris vita describitur, latenter etiam diaboli perditio demonstratur. Nam de monte Ephraim fuit, et tamen Ephrathaeus non fuit: quia de coelo quidem cecidit, sed arbor pessima bonum fructum non dedit.

(Vers. 2.) Qui habebat duas uxores, nomen uni Anna, nomen secundae Phenenna: fueruntque Phenennae filii, Annae vero non erant liberi.

8. Quid per Phenennam, nisi Synagoga exprimitur? Et quid per Annam, nisi sancta Ecclesia figuratur? Phenennae quippe filii fuisse referuntur: quia cum Redemptor noster in carne apparuit, per Legem, quam dederat, per prophetas, quos miserat, editos in fide synagogae filios invenit. Annae autem non erant liberi, quia novitia tunc, et coelesti sponso nuper conjuncta sancta Ecclesia, praedicando adhuc nequaquam pariebat. Unde et ei ejusdem sponsi voce in Cantico dicitur: Soror nostra parvula est, et ubera non habet (Cant. VIII, 8). Vel certe non pro inaequalitate aetatis filios non habuisse dicitur, sed per infecunditatem sterilitatis. Quae est ergo sterilitas Annae, nisi obduratio Judaeae? Quae enim dura corda Judaeorum ad Redemptoris fidem convertere non potuit, nimirum sterilis fuit. Sed notandum, quia Phenenna, quae prius parere dicitur, uxor secunda nominatur. Prius quippe synagoga in fide filios edidit, sed tamen dignitate sanctae Ecclesiae minor fuit. Secunda igitur uxor exstitit, non tempore conjugalis copulae, sed inaequalitate praerogativae. Sequitur:

(Vers. 3) Et ascendebat vir ille statutis diebus de civitate sua, ut adoraret et immolaret Domino Deo exercituum in Silo.

7. It follows: *An Ephrathite*. But why is he who is asserted to be from Mount Ephraim said to be an Ephrathite? This is clear in a literal sense (*ad litteram*), because someone could indeed be from Mount Ephraim without being born of the tribe of Ephraim. He is therefore called an Ephrathite so that he who is identified by his place may also be recognized by the lineage of his stock. And because Ephrathite means "fruitful," this is rightly ascribed to the person of the Redeemer, who is proclaimed in the prophecy of the prophet: *He shall be like a tree that is planted by the running waters, that shall bring forth its fruit in due season* (Ps. 1:3). For, appearing in the foreordained fullness of time, He turned the flowers of heavenly doctrine into the fruits of the elect; and as many as He joined to Himself from the human race, He brought forth as so many fruits for eternity. In this passage, while the life of the Redeemer is described, the perdition of the devil is also secretly shown. For he was from Mount Ephraim, and yet he was not an Ephrathite: because he indeed fell from heaven, but the wicked tree did not yield good fruit.

(Verse 2) *He had two wives, the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.*

8. What is expressed by Peninnah, if not the Synagogue? And what is figured by Hannah, if not the holy Church? For Peninnah is said to have had children: because when our Redeemer appeared in the flesh, He found sons born in the faith of the Synagogue through the Law which He had given and the prophets whom He had sent. But Hannah had no children, because the holy Church, then a novice and newly joined to her heavenly spouse, did not yet bear children by preaching. Whence it is also said to her in the Song of Songs by the voice of the same spouse: *Our sister is little, and hath no breasts* (Cant. 8:8). Or certainly, she is said to have had no children not because of an inequality of age, but through the barrenness of sterility. What, then, is the sterility of Hannah, if not the obduracy of Judea? For she who could not convert the hard hearts of the Jews to the faith of the Redeemer was indeed sterile. But it should be noted that Peninnah, who is said to have borne children first, is named the second wife. The Synagogue indeed first brought forth sons in faith, but she was nevertheless lesser in dignity than the holy Church. Therefore, she was the second wife, not in the timing of the marital union, but in the inequality of prerogative. It follows:

(Verse 3) *And this man went up out of his city upon the appointed days, to adore and to sacrifice to the Lord God of hosts in Shiloh.*

9. Quae enim spiritalis civitas Redemptoris, nisi Scriptura sacra exstitit? Haec nimirum civitas suis civibus tot defensionum munimina contulit, quot praecepta; tot arma eis praebuit, quot consilia salutis. Quid autem fuit Redemptori nostro ascendere, nisi in humanitatis forma, divinitatis suae alta revelare? Et quia in sacra Scriptura cognoscitur, de civitate sua recte ascendere perhibetur. Statuti vero dies sunt promissiones de se, in sanctis Scripturis positae. Dies quippe sunt, quia ad cognoscendum eum, electis lucent. Statuti quoque dies sunt, quia ab antiquis Patribus in eodem sacro eloquio eos esse positos non ignoramus. Diem namque ascensus ejus praefigebat Moyses, cum dicebat: Prophetam vobis suscitabit Dominus de filiis vestris, tanquam me ipsum audietis (Deut. XVIII, 18). Diem quoque statuebat, qui dicebat: Non deficiet sceptrum de Juda, et dux de femore ejus, donec veniat qui mittendus est, et ipse erit exspectatio gentium (Gen. XLIX, 10). Diem hujus ascensus statuens, ait Michaeas: Et tu Bethlehem terra Juda, nequaquam minima es in principibus Juda: ex te enim exiet dux, qui regat populum meum Israel (Mich. V, 2). Hinc Isaias ait: Ecce virgo in utero concipiet, et pariet filium, et vocabitur nomen ejus Emmanuel (Isai. VII, 14). Quotquot enim de illo Legis et prophetarum promissiones sunt, tot statutos dies ad ejus ascensum intuemur. Nam velut in statutis diebus ascendebat, cum Judaeis dicebat: Scrutamini Scripturas, in quibus vos putatis aeternam habere vitam, quia ipsae sunt, quae testimonium perhibent de me (Joan. V, 39). Hinc iterum dicit: Si crederetis Moysi, crederetis forsitan et mihi, de me enim ille scripsit (Ibid., 46). Statutis ergo diebus ascendit, quia promissionum insignia, quae in sanctis Scripturis posuit, apparendo monstravit. Possunt autem statuti dies intelligi promissi in adventu ejus splendores miraculorum. Quos nimirum dies propheta Isaias statutos intuens, ait: Dicite pusillanimis: Confortamini, et nolite timere: ecce Deus noster ultionem adducet retributionis; Deus ipse veniet, et salvabit nos. Tunc aperientur oculi caecorum, et aures surdorum audient: tunc saliet, sicut cervus, claudus; et aperta erit lingua mutorum (Isai. XXXV, 4-6). Sed qui dies statutos ad ascensum Redemptoris agnovimus, utrum in eis ascenderit, videamus. Requisitus namque a Joanne, si ipsum, an alium exspectarent, respondit missis discipulis, et ait: Ite et dicite Joanni quae vidistis et audistis: caeci vident, claudi ambulant, leprosi mundantur, pauperes evangelizantur; et beatus homo, qui non fuerit scandalizatus in me (Luc. VII, 19).

9. For what spiritual city of the Redeemer has existed, if not the sacred Scripture? This city, to be sure, has conferred upon its citizens as many means of defense as precepts; it has provided them with as many weapons as counsels of salvation. Moreover, what was it for our Redeemer to ascend, if not, in the form of humanity, to reveal the high things of His divinity? And because He is known in the sacred Scripture, He is rightly said to ascend from His city. Indeed, the appointed days are the promises concerning Himself, placed in the holy Scriptures. They are indeed days, because they shine for the elect for the purpose of knowing Him. They are also appointed days, because we are not ignorant that they were placed in the same sacred word by the ancient Fathers. For Moses prefigured the day of His ascent when he said: "The Lord will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren, like unto me: him you shall hear" (Deut. 18:18). He also appointed the day, who said: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of the nations" (Gen. 49:10). Appointing the day of this ascent, Micah says: "And thou, Bethlehem, land of Judah, art by no means least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a ruler, who shall rule my people Israel" (Micah 5:2). Hence Isaiah says: "Behold a virgin shall conceive in her womb, and bring forth a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (Isa. 7:14). For as many promises of the Law and the prophets there are concerning Him, so many appointed days for His ascent do we behold. For He was ascending as if on appointed days when He said to the Jews: "Search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). Hence again He says: "For had you believed Moses, you would perhaps have believed me also; for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Therefore, He ascended on the appointed days, because by appearing He showed the signs of the promises which He had placed in the holy Scriptures. Moreover, the appointed days can be understood as the promised splendors of miracles at His coming. Gazing upon these appointed days, the prophet Isaiah says: "Say to the fainthearted: Be strong, and fear not: behold our God will bring the revenge of recompense; God himself will come, and will save us. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear: then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Isa. 35:4-6). But let us see whether He ascended on them, we who have recognized the appointed days for the Redeemer's ascent. For when asked by John whether they should expect Him or another, He answered the disciples who had been sent, saying: "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the poor have the gospel preached to them; and blessed is the man who shall not be scandalized in me" (Luke 7:19).

Statutis ergo diebus ascendit, qui ut ab electorum suorum cordibus vetusti erroris caliginem pelleret, tot promissorum miraculorum splendoribus radiavit. Sed ascendit, ut adoraret et immolaret, quia ad hoc cognosci voluit, ut moriendo redimeret, quos vivendo docuisset. Adoravit quippe, quia in exemplum electorum se Deo Patri totum humilem, et abjectum per obedientiam praebuit. Immolavit autem, quia qui nobis exempla humilitatis vivendo dedit, se Deo Patri in ara crucis oblationem et hostiam tradidit, et quos vivendo docuit, moriendo redemit. Utrumque enim nobis valde necessarium novit, et ideo alterum sine altero non impendit. Nam cum natus esset in Bethlehem Judae, eum fraude Herodes ad interficiendum quaesivit (Matth. II, 13); sed si tunc Redemptor moreretur, immolaret utique, et non adoraret: quia victima moriendo fieret, sed quos morte debebat liberare, nequaquam vivendo docuisset. Et si vivendo nos docens, mori contemneret, profecto adoraret et non immolaret. Ut ergo adoraret, persequentem se regem in Aegyptum fugit, et ut immolaret, dissuadenti Petro exprobravit, dicens: Vade retro, satana, non enim sapis ea quae Dei sunt, sed quae hominum (Matth. XVI, 23). Adorare namque se insinuans, ait: Non veni facere voluntatem meam, sed ejus qui misit me (Joan. VI, 38). Hinc item dicit: Quae ei sunt placita, facio semper (Joan. VIII, 29). Immolare etiam se insinuans, ait: Propterea me diligit Pater, quia ego pono animam meam, et iterum sumam eam: nemo tollit eam a me, sed ego pono eam a meipso. Potestatem habeo ponendi eam, et iterum sumendi eam (Joan. X, 17, 18). Et paulo ante: Ego sum Pastor bonus, qui pono animam meam pro ovibus meis (Ibid., 11). Immolare eum Paulus intuens ait: Tradidit semetipsum pro nobis oblationem, et hostiam Deo in odorem suavitatis (Ephes. V, 2). Ascendit ergo, ut adoraret, et immolaret: quia ad hoc se tot miraculis ostendit, ut nos verbis et exemplis instrueret, et mortem nostram moriendo superaret.

Sed notandum, quia cum ad immolandum Ephrathaeus ascendere dicitur, Deus omnipotens, cui immolat, Deus exercituum nominatur. Cur hoc fieri cognoscitur nisi quia Redemptoris morte non unus Judaicus populus, sed omnes Gentes redimebantur? Quid enim sunt fideles multitudines nationum, nisi Dei omnipotentis exercitus? Hos nimirum exercitus ad regis sui triumphum Psalmista exsultare cohortans, ait: Omnes gentes, plaudite manibus, jubilate Deo in voce exsultationis (Psal. XLVI).

Therefore, He ascended on the appointed days, who, in order to drive the darkness of ancient error from the hearts of His elect, shone with so many splendors of promised miracles. But He ascended that He might adore and immolate, because He wished to be known for this purpose: that by dying He might redeem those whom He had taught by living. Indeed, He adored, because for the example of the elect, He presented Himself to God the Father as entirely humble and abject through obedience. But He immolated, because He who by living gave us examples of humility, delivered Himself to God the Father on the altar of the cross as an oblation and a victim, and those whom He taught by living, He redeemed by dying. For He knew that both were very necessary for us, and therefore He did not bestow one without the other. For when He was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Herod sought by fraud to kill Him (Matt. 2:13); but if the Redeemer had died then, He would indeed have immolated, but not adored: because by dying He would have become a victim, but He would by no means have taught by living those whom He was to free by death. And if, teaching us by living, He had disdained to die, He would surely have adored and not immolated. Therefore, that He might adore, He fled into Egypt from the king who persecuted Him, and that He might immolate, He reproached Peter who was dissuading Him, saying: "Go behind me, Satan, for you do not savor the things that are of God, but the things that are of men" (Matt. 16:23). For, intimating that He adored, He says: "I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). Hence He also says: "I do always the things that please him" (John 8:29). Also, intimating that He immolated Himself, He says: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17-18). And a little before: "I am the good shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep" (John 10:11). Paul, beholding Him immolate, says: "He delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness" (Eph. 5:2). He ascended, therefore, that He might adore and immolate: because He showed Himself by so many miracles for this purpose, that He might instruct us by words and examples, and that by dying He might overcome our death.

But it should be noted that when the Ephrathite is said to go up to sacrifice, the almighty God to whom he sacrifices is called the God of hosts. Why is this known to happen, unless it is because by the Redeemer's death not only the Jewish people, but all the Gentiles were redeemed? For what are the faithful multitudes of the nations, if not the armies of almighty God? Indeed, the Psalmist, exhorting these armies to exult in the triumph of their king, says: "All you nations, clap your hands, shout to God with a voice of exultation" (Psalm 46).

Hos convenire item intuens, dixit: Omnes gentes, quascunque fecisti, venient, et adorabunt coram te, Domine, et honorificabunt nomen tuum (Psalm. LXXXV, 9). Dicitur ergo Dominus exercituum, quia profecto per mortem Dominicam non solum electa Judaea colligitur, sed omnes gentes ad Dei omnipotentis servitium perducuntur; quae dum contra occultos hostes fideles acies virtutum armis robustas ducunt, per gloriam triumphi ad superna regna perveniunt.

Locus etiam immolationis declaratur, quia dicitur: In Silo. Silo enim missus, sive missio interpretatur. Quid namque per hanc missionem, nisi summi Patris injunctum unigenito praeceptum obedientiae designatur? quid est etiam quod in Silo immolare dicitur, nisi quia non aliter se morti dedit, quam a Patre mandatum habuit? Non quippe immolaret in Silo, si aliter moreretur, quam praeceptum a Patre habuisset. Unde et per semetipsum dixit: Sicut mandatum dedit mihi Pater, sic facio (Joan. XIV, 31). Hinc Paulus ait: Factus obediens Patri usque ad mortem crucis (Philip. II, 8). In Silo igitur et adoravit, et immolavit: quia tam vivendo, quam moriendo, Patris sui voluntatem fecit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 3.) Erant ibi duo filii Heli, Ophni, et Phinees, sacerdotes Domini.

De quibus recte quaeritur, cur dicantur sacerdotes Domini, qui non valde inferius Belial filii esse referantur? Sed si ad litteram simpliciter istud de Heli filiis quaeritur, facile respondetur: quia eo tempore sacerdotes Domini dicti sunt, quando simulacrorum sacerdotes ex deorum falsorum nominibus censebantur. Cum ergo dicuntur sacerdotes Domini, per insignia fidei, a simulacrorum cultoribus discernuntur. His enim verbis eorum fides, et non vita praedicatur: quia et pravitatem exercebant operis, sed non errabant in fide Conditoris. Quod tamen et tempore divinae incarnationis Judaeae praelatis convenienter adscribitur. Qui nimirum sacerdotes duo esse referuntur, et hoc ipsum non refertur ad virtutis laudem, sed ad calliditatis reprehensionem. Unde et per semetipsum Dominus eis comminatur, dicens: Vae vobis, Scribae et Pharisaei hypocritae, qui similes estis sepulcris dealbatis, quae a foris videntur pulchra, intus sunt plena ossibus mortuorum (Matth. XXIII, 27).

Sed quid est, quod ibi esse referuntur? Si enim Silo, id est missio, illam summi Patris praeceptionem significat, quomodo praelati Judaeae ibi fuerunt, qui eum, cui injuncta fuit, non recipiendo venerati sunt, sed expellendo peremerunt? Ibi tamen fuerunt, quia etsi crudeliter saevierunt in mortem Domini, ex illa tamen crudelitate non sunt consecuti, quod saeviendo statuerunt, sed aeterni Patris consilium in ejus unigeniti morte complebant.

Likewise, seeing them gather, he said: "All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name" (Psalm 85:9). Therefore, He is called the Lord of hosts, because indeed through the Lord's death not only is the elect of Judea gathered, but all nations are brought to the service of almighty God; and while they lead faithful battle lines, robust with the arms of virtues, against hidden enemies, they attain the supernal kingdoms through the glory of triumph.

The place of the sacrifice is also declared, for it is said: "In Shiloh." For Shiloh is interpreted as "sent," or "mission." For what is designated by this mission, if not the command of obedience enjoined upon the only-begotten by the supreme Father? What else does it mean that he is said to sacrifice in Shiloh, if not that he gave himself to death in no other way than as he had been commanded by the Father? Indeed, he would not sacrifice in Shiloh if he were to die otherwise than as he had been commanded by the Father. Hence he also said through himself: "As the Father has given me a commandment, so I do" (John 14:31). Hence Paul says: "He became obedient to the Father unto death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8). In Shiloh, therefore, he both worshiped and sacrificed: because both in living and in dying, he did the will of his Father. It follows:

(Verse 3) There were there the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, priests of the Lord.

Concerning whom it is rightly asked why they are called priests of the Lord, when not much further below they are reported to be sons of Belial. But if this is asked simply according to the letter concerning the sons of Eli, the answer is easy: because at that time they were called priests of the Lord, when the priests of idols were designated by the names of false gods. When, therefore, they are called priests of the Lord, they are distinguished by the marks of their faith from the worshipers of idols. For by these words their faith is proclaimed, and not their life: because they practiced depravity in their deeds, but they did not err in the faith of the Creator. This, however, is also fittingly ascribed to the prelates of Judea at the time of the divine incarnation. These priests are indeed reported to be two, and this itself is not referred to for the praise of virtue, but for the censure of their cunning. Hence the Lord himself also threatens them, saying: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones" (Matthew 23:27).

But what does it mean that they are reported to be there? For if Shiloh, that is, "mission," signifies that precept of the supreme Father, how were the prelates of Judea there, who did not venerate by receiving him upon whom it was enjoined, but killed him by casting him out? Yet they were there, because although they raged cruelly for the Lord's death, from that cruelty they did not obtain what they had determined by their raging, but were fulfilling the eternal Father's plan in the death of His only-begotten Son.

Consilium namque eorum fuit, ut eum ideo morti traderent, ne in ipsum populus credere potuisset; sed qui persecutores suos injunctae sibi paternae praeceptionis adjutores habebat, mortuus resurrexit, et omnis mundus in eum credidit. Ibi enim erant filii Heli, Ophni, et Phinees, id est in missione: quia Redemptor noster ad implendam Patris sui voluntatem, Judaeorum praelatos fautores habuit; quamquam ipsi se ei nequaquam favere crederent, quem occidere non pavissent. Unde et sequitur:

(Vers. 4.) Venit ergo dies, et immolavit Helcana, deditque Phenennae, et filiis, et filiabus ejus partes.

Quem diem istum esse credimus, nisi quem Scripturae sacrae testimonio Isaias statuit, dicens: Tanquam ovis ad occisionem ducetur, et sicut agnus coram se tondente obmutescet, et non aperiet os suum (Isai. LIII, 7)? Venit quippe dies, cum claritas promissi oraculi tempus ostendit Dominicae passionis. Tunc immolavit Helcana, quia se Redemptor noster aeterno Patri in sacrificio nostrae absolutionis per mortem crucis obtulit. Tunc Phenennae et filiis et filiabus ejus dedit partes, quia nimirum electos Judaeae, quos apud inferos reperit, ad paradisi gaudia reportavit. Partes quippe eorum, sunt dona gaudiorum perennium. Unde et Psalmista sortis suae situm eligens, ait: Portio mea, Domine, sit in terra viventium (Ps. CXLI, 6). Bene autem seorsum Phenenna et filii et filiae seorsum in accipiendis partibus nominantur. Phenenna quippe doctores Judaeae significat, filii vero validiores auditores ejus, filiae autem infirmiores, ipsius subditos designant. Seorsum ergo mater, et filii, et filiae memorantur: quia propter disparia electorum veterum merita, aequalia eorum praemia non fuerunt. Sequitur:

Annae autem dedit partem unam tristis: quia Annam diligebat.

Quid est, quod cum partes Phenennae, et filiis, et filiabus dedit, tristis nequaquam fuit: cum vero partem unam Annae tribuit, tristis fuisse perhibetur? Sed quid est una pars Annae, nisi temporalis afflictio sanctae Ecclesiae? Hanc namque ei partem dabat, cum dicebat: Amen amen dico vobis, quia plorabitis, et flebitis vos, mundus autem gaudebit, vos vero contristabimini (Joan. XVI, 20). Hanc partem ei dabat, cum Ananiae Paulum commendaret, dicens: Vade, quia vas electionis est mihi iste, ut portet nomen meum coram gentibus, et regibus, et filiis Israel: ego enim ostendam ei, quanta eum oporteat pro nomine meo pati (Act. IX, 15 et 16). Unde in ejus acceptione idem doctor Gentium gloriatur, dicens: Adimpleo ea, quae desunt passionum Christi in corpore meo (Col. I, 24). Hinc iterum dicit: Ego stigmata Jesu in corpore meo porto (Galat. VI, 17).

For their plan was to hand him over to death for this reason, that the people might not be able to believe in him; but he who had his persecutors as helpers in the paternal precept enjoined upon him, died, rose again, and the whole world believed in him. For the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there, that is, in the "mission": because our Redeemer, to fulfill the will of his Father, had the prelates of the Jews as supporters, although they themselves did not believe they were supporting him in any way, whom they had not feared to kill. Hence it also follows:

(Verse 4) So the day came, and Elkanah sacrificed, and gave to Peninnah, and to her sons and daughters, portions.

What day do we believe this to be, if not the one that Isaiah established by the testimony of Holy Scripture, saying: "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth" (Isa. 53:7)? For the day came when the brightness of the promised oracle revealed the time of the Lord's passion. Then Elkanah sacrificed, because our Redeemer offered Himself to the eternal Father in the sacrifice of our absolution through death on the cross. Then he gave portions to Peninnah and to her sons and daughters, because He undoubtedly brought back the elect of Judea, whom He found in the underworld, to the joys of paradise. For their portions are the gifts of perennial joys. Hence the Psalmist, choosing the state of his lot, also says: "Let my portion, O Lord, be in the land of the living" (Ps. 141:6). It is well, however, that Peninnah and her sons and daughters are named separately in receiving their portions. For Peninnah signifies the teachers of Judea, her sons the stronger of her hearers, and her daughters the weaker, designating her subjects. Therefore, the mother, and the sons, and the daughters are mentioned separately, because on account of the disparate merits of the ancient elect, their rewards were not equal. It follows:

But to Hannah he gave one portion, being sad, because he loved Hannah.

What is the meaning of this, that when he gave portions to Peninnah, and to her sons, and to her daughters, he was not sad at all; but when he gave one portion to Hannah, he is said to have been sad? But what is the one portion of Hannah, if not the temporal affliction of the holy Church? For He was giving her this portion when He said: "Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful" (John 16:20). He was giving her this portion when He commended Paul to Ananias, saying: "Go thy way, for this man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16). Hence, in receiving it, the same teacher of the Gentiles glories, saying: "I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh" (Col. 1:24). Hence again he says: "I bear the marks of Jesus in my body" (Gal. 6:17).

Hinc ait: Mihi autem absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domini nostri Jesu Christi, per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo (Ibid., 14). Unam quippe partem a sponso susceperat, qui gloriari in sola cruce disponebat. Cum ergo partes Phenennae tribuit, Helcana tristis non fuit; quia Redemptor noster electos synagogae, post mortis triumphum; 14 paradisi gaudiis jam laetus reddidit. Annae autem partem tristis tribuit, quia non compati ei non poterat, quam mortis conjugem relinquebat, et crucis haeredem. Unde et patiente Stephano, apertis coelis, Jesus stare perhibetur (Act. VII, 55). Stare enim ejus compati est.

Quod autem subditur, quia Annam diligebat, utriusque rei causa intelligi convenienter potest. Nam sive hunc ideo tristem esse quis accipiat, quia Annam diligebat, sive idcirco ei partem unam tribuisse, a bono intellectu non vacat. Si enim non diligeret, compati ejus passionibus nequaquam vellet. Nam cur illa de Aegypto educitur, nisi quia ad passionem invitatur? Sed ei lacte, et melle emanantia loca promittuntur. Bene igitur cum ei partem unam dare dicitur, diligere eam perhibetur: quia nimirum Redemptor noster sanctae Ecclesiae, etsi crucis suae laborem credidit, excellentiora ei valde in coelo constituit dona retributionis. Cujus nimirum passionis incrementa edisserens subdit, atque ait:

Dominus autem concluserat vulvam ejus. Affligebat quoque eam aemula ejus, et vehementer angebat in tantum, ut exprobraret ei, quia concluserat Dominus vulvam ejus.

17. Vulvam quippe sanctae Ecclesiae Dominus clausit, quia summo ejus judicio repulsum Judaeorum populum in Redemptoris nostri fide generare non potuit. Quam nimirum ejus aemula afflixit, quia contra eam synagoga minis atque exprobrationibus saevit. Sed ei quam nec minae neque contumeliae fregerant, etiam tormento poenas inferebat. Bene itaque eam non solum affligere, sed vehementer angere perhibetur: quia repulsa Judaea contra electam Ecclesiam cum terrore minarum, movit, et plagis caedit. Unde et de persequente tunc Saulo, in Apostolorum Actibus dicitur: Saulus adhuc spirans minarum, et coedis in discipulos Domini, accessit ad principem sacerdotum, et petiit ab eo epistolas in Damascum, ut si quos inveniret hujus viae viros, vinctos perduceret in Jerusalem (Act. IX, 1 et 2). Qui enim minas et caedes spirabat, nimirum eam, quam non bene aemulabatur, Ecclesiam non solum affligebat, sed etiam angebat.

Hence he says: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (ibid., 14). For he had received the one portion from the spouse, who resolved to glory only in the cross. When, therefore, Elkanah gave portions to Peninnah, he was not sad, because our Redeemer, after the triumph of His death, had already joyfully restored the elect of the synagogue to the joys of paradise. But he gave Hannah her portion sadly, because he could not but compassionate her whom he was leaving as a spouse of death and an heiress of the cross. Hence also, when Stephen was suffering, the heavens being opened, Jesus is said to stand (Acts 7:55). For His standing is His compassionating.

But what is added, "because he loved Hannah," can be fittingly understood as the cause of both things. For whether one understands that he was sad for this reason, because he loved Hannah, or that for this reason he gave her one portion, it is not void of a good meaning. For if he did not love her, he would by no means wish to compassionate her sufferings. For why is she led out of Egypt, unless because she is invited to suffering? But places flowing with milk and honey are promised to her. Well, therefore, when he is said to give her one portion, he is said to love her: because our Redeemer, although He entrusted the labor of His cross to the holy Church, undoubtedly established for her far more excellent gifts of retribution in heaven. Expounding on the increases of this passion, he adds and says:

But the Lord had shut up her womb. Her rival also afflicted her, and troubled her exceedingly, insomuch that she reproached her, that the Lord had shut up her womb.

17. The Lord indeed closed the womb of the holy Church, because by His supreme judgment, she could not generate in the faith of our Redeemer the rejected people of the Jews. Her rival, to be sure, afflicted her, because the synagogue raged against her with threats and reproaches. But upon her, whom neither threats nor insults had broken, it also inflicted punishments with torment. Thus, it is well said that it not only afflicted her, but also vehemently tormented her: because the rejected Judea moved against the chosen Church with the terror of threats and struck her with blows. Whence it is also said of Saul, who was then persecuting, in the Acts of the Apostles: "Saul, still breathing threats and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to Damascus, so that if he found any men of this way, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2). For he who was breathing threats and slaughter, to be sure, not only afflicted but also tormented the Church, which he was wrongly emulating.

Nam ejus aemulum se fuisse fatetur, dicens: Audistis enim aliquando conversationem meam in Judaismo, quoniam supra modum persequebar Ecclesiam Dei, et expugnabam illam, et proficiebam in Judaismo supra multos coaetaneos meos in genere meo, abundantius aemulator existens paternarum mearum traditionum (Galat. I, 13, 14). Et quia in tantae damnationis profundum Judaea cecidit, ut inde laetetur, quod aeterna Dei animadversione projicitur, subjunctum est: In tantum, ut exprobraret ei, quod dominus conclusisset vulvam ejus. Adhuc quippe pro magno habebat, quod converti ad fidem non praevalebit. Quasi ergo magnitudinem caecitatis ejus propheta admirans, ait: Tanta caligine erroris deprimitur, ut inde bonis insultet, quod ipsa bona fieri ultra non potest. Cui profecto pereunti quia sancta Ecclesia condoluit, sequitur:

(Vers. 7.) Porro Anna flebat

18. Nam et doloris sui lamenta protulit, dicens. Tristitia est mihi magna, et continuus dolor cordi meo: optabam quidem et ipse anathema fieri pro fratribus meis a Christo, qui sunt cognati mei secundum carnem (Rom. IX, 2, 3). Et quia de eorum conversione gaudium non recepit, subditur:

(Vers. 7.) Et cibum non capiebat.

Cibum denique caperet, si de Judaeae integra conversione laetitiae refectionem habuisset. Quae ergo flevit cibum non accepit, quia quae de pereunte Judaea doluit, de ejus salute gaudium non recepit. Sed cibus laetitiae, qui de Judaeorum conversione non datur sanctae Ecclesiae, per sponsi cohortationem porrigitur. Nam verba praedicationis ejus, etsi auditores non recipiunt reprobi, non tamen vacant a mercede retributionis. Omnipotens enim Deus, et hoc remunerat quod sine reproborum profectu reprobis impenditur; et quod electis praedicatoribus adversitatis ingerunt, per libram aequi examinis in lucro eis pensat retributionis. Unde apte subinfertur:

(Vers. 8.) Dixit ergo ei Helcana vir suus: Anna, cur fles? Et quare non comedis? Et quamobrem affligitur cor tuum? Numquid non ego melior sum tibi, quam decem filii?

19. Quasi ergo per internae inspirationis solatium menti doctoris Redemptor dicat: Frustra de amisso lucro praedicationis quereris, quae eo abundantiorem fructum recipis, quo affectum charitatis etiam inimicis impendis. Inde igitur doles, unde gaudere debuisses. Et quia ipse est electorum praemium, interrogat dicens: Numquid non ego melior sum tibi, quam decem filii? Decem namque filios Anna pareret, si primitiva Ecclesia Judaeorum populum sub decalogo Legis positum in fide genuisset.

For he confesses that he was its rival, saying: "For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1:13-14). And because Judea fell into such a depth of damnation that it rejoices in that from which it is cast out by the eternal censure of God, it is added: "So much so that she reproached her because the Lord had closed her womb." For it still considered it a great thing that it would not be able to convert to the faith. As if, therefore, the prophet, marveling at the magnitude of its blindness, says: It is oppressed by such a darkness of error that it insults the good for the very reason that it can no longer become good itself. Because the holy Church grieved for it as it was perishing, it follows:

(Verse 7) But Hannah wept

18. For she also brought forth the laments of her sorrow, saying. "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:2-3). And because she did not receive joy from their conversion, it is added:

(Verse 7) And she did not take food.

She would, in fact, take food if she had received the refreshment of joy from the complete conversion of Judea. Therefore, she who wept did not take food, because she who grieved for the perishing Judea did not receive joy from its salvation. But the food of joy, which is not given to the holy Church from the conversion of the Jews, is offered through the exhortation of her spouse. For the words of her preaching, even if the reprobate hearers do not receive them, are not without the reward of retribution. For almighty God remunerates even that which is expended on the reprobate without their profit; and what they inflict as adversity upon the chosen preachers, He weighs out to them as a gain of retribution on the scales of a just examination. Whence it is aptly added below:

(Verse 8) Therefore Elkanah her husband said to her: "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart afflicted? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

19. As if, therefore, the Redeemer were to say to the mind of the teacher, through the solace of internal inspiration: In vain do you complain about the lost profit of preaching, you who receive a more abundant fruit to the extent that you extend the affection of charity even to your enemies. Therefore, you grieve over that from which you should have rejoiced. And because He Himself is the reward of the elect, He asks, saying: "Am I not better to you than ten sons?" For Hannah would have borne ten sons if the primitive Church had generated in the faith the people of the Jews, who were placed under the decalogue of the Law.

Et quia nonnulli praedicando prosunt aliis, qui per multa displicent Conditori, ratione ostenditur, quia melior vir suus Annae, quam decem filii sunt. Potest autem et per hoc quod cur fleat, inquiritur, ipsius Judaeae perditio designari. Quasi dicat: Otiose plangitur, cui justorum prece nequaquam indulgetur. Cum ergo subsequenter interrogat: Quare non comedis? Profecto ei gaudium de conversione gentilitatis intimatur. Quasi ergo dicat: Cum orbem universum parere debeas, frustra non gaudes, quod ea, quae projecta est, erroris tenebras non relinquat.

Sequitur:

(Vers. 9 et 10.) Surrexit ergo Anna, postquam comederat, et biberat in Silo, Heli sacerdote sedente super sella ante postes templi Domini, et cum esset amaro animo oravit ad Dominum flens largiter.

Quid enim fuit tunc sanctae Ecclesiae manducare, nisi cibum solatii divina cohortatione suscipere? Et bibere ei quid exstitit, nisi de infusa sibi internae consolationis suavitate gaudere. Nam si cibus confortat, potus exhilarat; cibum ergo sumimus, quando visis aeternis praemiis, inter adversa roboramur. Et quasi post cibum bibimus: quia ubi se mens electi in aeternorum bonorum cogitatione roborat, eo copiosius gaudet inter magna adversa quae sustinet, quo magnis laboribus ampliores repositas in coelo retributiones videt. Audax quippe superna refectione tunc reddita, vires renovat, ut tanto fortius terrena despiciat, quanto eam supernorum amor exaltat. Bene itaque postquam manducavit et bibit, surgere Anna memoratur. Surrexit namque, quia ad praedicationis instantiam animum reformavit.

Et quia Judaicus populus adhuc sacrificiorum ritus, adhuc et honorem legalis magisterii, et sublimitatem pontificalis dignitatis habebat, super sellam Heli sacerdos sedere perhibetur. Quod tamen Legis magisterium, quia non spiritaliter, sed carnaliter exhibere poterat, non intra templum, sed ante postes templi sedebat. Quid est enim templum Domini, nisi spiritalis intelligentia sanctarum Scripturarum? Postes autem templi sunt Lex et Prophetia. Unde et in monte Dominus in medio Moysi et Heliae transfiguratus apparuit (Matth. XVII, 3; Luc. IX, 30): quia tunc divinitatis ejus splendor aspicitur, cum non in occidente littera (II Petr. I), sed in spiritalis Legis et prophetiae significatione, ejus sacramenta requiruntur. Heli ergo sedebat ante postes templi, id est foris, quia doctores synagogae a spiritali Scripturarum intelligentia expulsi erant, et tamen in subversione subjecti populi, auctoritatem habebant magisterii, et dignitatem praelationis. Anna autem amaro animo flevisse scribitur.

And because some, by preaching, benefit others, while in many things they displease the Creator, it is shown by reason that her husband is better to Hannah than ten sons are. Moreover, by the fact that it is asked why she weeps, the perdition of Judea itself can be designated. As if to say: She is mourned in vain, for whom indulgence is by no means granted through the prayer of the just. When, therefore, He subsequently asks: "Why do you not eat?", the joy from the conversion of the Gentiles is certainly intimated to her. As if to say, therefore: Since you are to give birth to the whole world, you are joyless in vain that she who has been cast out does not leave the darkness of error.

It follows:

(Verses 9 and 10.) So Hannah rose after she had eaten and drunk in Shiloh. And Eli the priest was sitting upon a stool, before the posts of the temple of the Lord. And as she was in bitterness of soul, she prayed to the Lord, weeping abundantly.

For what was it for the holy Church to eat at that time, but to receive the food of solace through divine encouragement? And what was it for her to drink, but to rejoice in the sweetness of the internal consolation poured into her? For if food strengthens, drink exhilarates; therefore, we take food when, having seen the eternal rewards, we are strengthened amidst adversities. And we drink, as it were, after the food: because where the mind of the elect strengthens itself in the thought of eternal goods, it rejoices all the more copiously amidst the great adversities it endures, the greater the rewards it sees stored up in heaven for its great labors. Indeed, rendered bold then by the heavenly repast, she renews her strength, so that she may despise earthly things all the more forcefully, the more the love of heavenly things exalts her. Well, therefore, is Hannah remembered to have risen after she ate and drank. For she rose because she reformed her spirit for the urgency of preaching.

And because the Jewish people still had the rites of sacrifices, and still the honor of the legal magisterium, and the sublimity of the pontifical dignity, Eli the priest is said to sit upon a stool. Yet because he could exhibit this magisterium of the Law not spiritually, but carnally, he sat not within the temple, but before the posts of the temple. For what is the temple of the Lord, if not the spiritual understanding of the holy Scriptures? The posts of the temple, however, are the Law and Prophecy. Hence also on the mountain the Lord appeared transfigured in the midst of Moses and Elijah (Matt. 17:3; Luke 9:30): because the splendor of His divinity is then beheld when His sacraments are sought not in the killing letter (2 Peter 1), but in the spiritual significance of the Law and prophecy. Eli, therefore, sat before the posts of the temple, that is, outside, because the doctors of the synagogue had been expelled from the spiritual understanding of the Scriptures, and yet, in the subversion of the subject people, they had the authority of the magisterium and the dignity of prelacy. But Hannah is written to have wept with a bitter soul.

Et quia potum Annae ad laetitiam retulimus sanctae Ecclesiae, quae laetari ostenditur, amaro animoflevisse quomodo narratur? Sed rationabiliter intelligi potest, quia ad laetandum hanc contemplatio supernae retributionis extulerat, et compassio repulsae Judaeae in amaritudinem animi afficiendo concitavit. Inter turbines quippe magnae persecutionis deprehensa, revelatis sibi supernis praemiis, exsultavit, sed in amaritudinem incidit, quia electum prius populum perire conspexit. Unde et orans largiter flere describitur, ut tantae affectionis munere, populi sui salutem a Domino impetrare potuisset. Potest et hoc totum aliter intelligi. Nam in Silo, id est in ministerio, quo missa est, manducavit; quia etsi omnem Judaeorum populum lucrifacere non potuit, plures tamen ex eo ad Redemptoris fidem praedicando convertit. Unde et praedicante Petro, una die quinque millia hominum (Act. IV, 4), altera vero, tria millia crediderunt (Act. II, 4). Et quia quod bibimus, facilius glutire possumus, quam quod manducamus: manducavit Anna et bibit, quia difficile alios, alios vero facile praedicando convertit. Nam et ad praedictam Petri praedicationem plura millia uno momento crediderunt, sed Paulus non ante credidit, quam ipsis praedicatoribus per minas et caedes vehementer obstitit. Postquam autem manducavit, et bibit in Silo Anna, surrexit: quia ut eos, qui erant praedestinati ad aeternam vitam, de Judaea abstulit, sese ad praedicationem Gentium praeparavit. Sed qualem gignere appetebat, ostenditur per hoc, quod additum est:

(Vers. 15.) Et votum vovit, dicens: Domine exercituum, si respiciens videris afflictionem famulae tuae, et recordatus mei fueris, nec oblitus ancillae tuae, dederisque servae tuae sexum virilem, dabo eum Domino omnibus diebus vitae suae, et novacula non ascendet super caput ejus.

Quid est, quod Anna virilem sexum a Domino postulat, nisi quia eos, quos sancta Ecclesia parere praedicando appetit, Evangelica perfectione fortes esse concupiscit? In comparatione quippe Evangelicae perfectionis, opera illa Legis, quae videbantur fortia, non fuerunt fortia, sed infirma. Ibi enim mandatum est: Diliges proximum tuum, et odio habebis inimicum tuum (Levit. XIX 18). In Evangelio autem Dominus praecipit, dicens: Diligite inimicos vestros, benefacite his qui oderunt vos (Matth. V, 44).

And since we have related Hannah's drink to the joy of the holy Church, which is shown to rejoice, how is it narrated that she wept with a bitter soul? But it can be reasonably understood that the contemplation of the heavenly reward had lifted her to joy, and compassion for the rejected Judea stirred her, affecting her with bitterness of soul. Indeed, caught in the whirlwinds of a great persecution, with the heavenly rewards revealed to her, she exulted; but she fell into bitterness because she saw the formerly chosen people perishing. Hence she is also described as praying and weeping abundantly, so that by the gift of such great affection, she might be able to obtain the salvation of her people from the Lord. All this can also be understood in another way. For she ate in Shiloh, that is, in the ministry to which she was sent; because although she could not win over the entire Jewish people, she nevertheless converted many of them to the faith of the Redeemer by preaching. Hence, when Peter preached, on one day five thousand men believed (Acts 4:4), and on another, three thousand (Acts 2:4). And because what we drink, we can swallow more easily than what we eat: Hannah ate and drank, because by preaching she converted some with difficulty, but others with ease. For at the aforementioned preaching of Peter, several thousand believed in one moment, but Paul did not believe until after he had vehemently opposed the preachers themselves with threats and slaughter. But after Hannah ate and drank in Shiloh, she rose: because as she took away from Judea those who were predestined for eternal life, she prepared herself for the preaching to the Gentiles. But what sort of child she desired to bear is shown by what is added:

(Verse 15.) "And she vowed a vow, saying: O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt look down on the affliction of thy servant, and wilt be mindful of me, and not forget thy handmaid, and wilt give to thy servant a man child: I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall not come upon his head."

What is it that Hannah asks for a male child from the Lord, except that she desires those whom the holy Church seeks to bear through preaching to be strong with Evangelical perfection? Indeed, in comparison with Evangelical perfection, those works of the Law, which seemed strong, were not strong, but weak. For there it is commanded: *You shall love your neighbor, and you shall hate your enemy* (Leviticus 19:18). But in the Gospel, the Lord commands, saying: *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you* (Matthew 5:44).

Ibi immunditia fornicationis a corpore reciditur, ut fortitudo conversationis, quasi virili sexu praecellat, etiam a corde immunda cogitatio resecatur: Qui viderit, inquit, mulierem ad concupiscendum eam, jam maechatus est eam in corde suo (Matth. V, 82). Synagoga igitur, quae infirmitate praeceptorum Judaicum populum genuit, non peperit sexum virilem, sed potius muliebrem. Anna itaque dum virilem sexum sibi dari a Domino postulat, quid aliud exoptare cernitur, nisi tales per Evangelium gignere, qui fortes appareant, et exteriori munditia corporis, et interna charitate?

Et quia de conversione gentilium humanam gloriam praedicatorum ordo non appetit, subjectum est: Dabo eum Domino omnibus diebus vitae suae. Domino namque filium dat qui de eo quem praedicando gignit aliquid suis laudibus non usurpat. Omnibus quoque diebus vitae suae hunc Domino tribuit, qui de virtutibus, in quibus subditus meliorando proficit, propriis favoribus nihil ascribit. Dies namque vitae electi subditi sanctae virtutes sunt, quae ejus animam coruscando illuminant ne in via coelestis patriae vitiorum nocte tenebrescat.

25. Sed perfectus ordo praedicatoris, dum favores de lucro praedicationis habere despicit, subditorum temporalia bona ambiendo non tollit. Unde bene quoque illic subditur: Et novacula non ascendet super caput ejus. Novacula cum super caput ascendit, capillos radit. Quid enim per capillos, qui corpori superfluunt, nisi abundans terrenae substantiae copia designatur? Et quid per novaculam, nisi malorum pastorum cupiditas exprimitur? Qua novacula nati filii caput raditur, cum bona subditorum per praedicatorum cupiditatem rapiuntur. Hinc namque et delinquenti Judaeae per prophetam dicitur: Pastores tui lupi vespere non relinquentes in mane (Soph. III, 3). Vespere namque pastores lupi fiunt, quia intenebrescente, atque decrescente in fine isto saeculo, rapere subditorum bona non metuunt. Qui in mane non relinquunt, quia dum temporalibus inhiant, inalbescente adventu futuri judicii, danda sibi praemia non reservant. Quos nimirum Michaeas denotat, dicens: Prophetae qui seducunt populum meum, qui mordent dentibus suis, et praedicant pacem; et si quis non dederit in ore eorum quidpiam, sanctificant super eum praelium (Mich. III, 5). Prophetae quippe populum Domini seducunt, cum praedicatores reprobi auditorum suorum judicia confundunt. Et mordentes dentibus pacem nuntiant, quia in appetitu suae rapacitatis, dum terrena flagitiosorum dona suspiciunt, eis divinae indulgentiae securitatem pollicentur.

There the impurity of fornication is cut away from the body, so that the strength of one's way of life, as if excelling with a male sex, an impure thought is also cut away from the heart: *Whoever*, he says, *looks at a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart* (Matthew 5:82). The Synagogue, therefore, which through the weakness of its precepts begot the Jewish people, did not give birth to the male sex, but rather the female. And so when Hannah asks that a male child be given to her by the Lord, what else is she seen to desire, if not to beget through the Gospel such men who may appear strong, both in the exterior cleanliness of the body and in interior charity?

And because the order of preachers does not seek human glory from the conversion of the gentiles, it is added: *I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life.* For he gives the son to the Lord who does not usurp for his own praise anything from the one whom he begets by preaching. Also, he gives him to the Lord all the days of his life, who ascribes nothing to his own favors from the virtues in which the subject progresses by improving. For the days of the life of an elect subject are the holy virtues, which by shining illuminate his soul, lest on the way to the heavenly fatherland it be darkened by the night of vices.

25. But the perfect order of a preacher, while disdaining to receive favors from the profit of preaching, does not take away the temporal goods of subjects by coveting them. Whence it is also well subjoined there: And a razor shall not go up upon his head. When a razor goes up upon the head, it shaves the hair. For what is designated by the hair, which is superfluous to the body, if not an abundant supply of earthly substance? And what is expressed by the razor, if not the greed of evil pastors? With this razor the head of an born son is shaved, when the goods of the subjects are snatched away through the greed of the preachers. For hence also it is said to delinquent Judea through the prophet: Thy pastors are wolves in the evening, leaving nothing till the morning (Zeph. III, 3). For in the evening pastors become wolves, because as this world grows dark and wanes at its end, they do not fear to snatch the goods of their subjects. They leave nothing till the morning, because while they gape after temporal things, as the advent of the future judgment dawns, they reserve no rewards to be given to themselves. Whom without doubt Micah denotes, saying: The prophets that seduce my people, that bite with their teeth, and preach peace; and if anyone giveth not something into their mouths, they sanctify a war against him (Micah III, 5). Prophets indeed seduce the people of the Lord, when reprobate preachers confound the judgments of their hearers. And biting with their teeth they announce peace, because in the appetite of their rapacity, while they look up to the earthly gifts of the flagitious, they promise them the security of divine indulgence.

Super ipsos autem praelium sanctificant, qui in ore eorum aliquid non dant, quia justos etiam districtis sententiis terrent, qui eis pro voto terrena non exhibent. Qui nimirum super caput filii novaculam ponunt, dum praetextu charitatis coelestia praedicant, ut eis terrena per cupiditatem tollant. Hanc certe novaculam quod sancta Ecclesia in praedam subditorum non habeat, doctor egregius in semetipso ostendit, dicens: Non quaero datum, sed quaero fructum (Philip. IV, 77). Hinc item dicit: Qui Evangelium annuntiat, de Evangelio vivat. Ego autem non sum usus hac potestate (I Cor. IX, 14, 15). Qui enim necessaria non curat a subditis alimenta percipere, ostendit plane qua mundani contemptus sublimitate lucra turpia et illicita dona confutaret. Anna igitur dum novaculam non ascensuram super caput filii vovet, aperte mores sanctae Ecclesiae insinuat, quae ad aeternam vitam electos loquendo parturit, 18 sed temporalia bona eorum per avaritiam nunquam tollit. Sed quia hoc de Anna adhuc vovente, et non pariente dicitur, apte subinfertur:

(Vers. 12.) Factum est autem, dum illa multiplicaret preces coram Domino, ut Heli observaret os ejus.

26. Quid fuit sanctae Ecclesiae pro pariendi desiderio preces coram Domino multiplicare, nisi assiduis orationibus pro convertenda Synagoga insistere? Et quid Judaico sacerdotio os ejus observare, nisi praedicationi sanctae Ecclesiae insidiari? Os namque ejus observavit, quia rectam praedicationem fidei reprehendere vehementer studuit. Bene autem tunc os ejus observasse dicitur, cum illa preces multiplicaret, quia tanto callidius ei nocere studuit, quanto majora ejus desideria in praedicationis instantia recognovit. Denique os ejus non observaret, sed attenderet, si praedicationem fidei nostrae ad salutis suae fructum audire voluisset. Sequitur:

(Vers. 13.) Porro Anna loquebatur in corde suo, tantumque labia ejus movebantur, et vox penitus non audiebatur.

27. Quid est aliud cor sanctae Ecclesiae, nisi ea quae intra se est devota et erudita beatitudo fidelium? In corde autem suo Anna locuta est, quia sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatio eis tantum profuit qui vero lumine illustrandi erant ex divina praedestinatione. Quid vero est motus labiorum, nisi signorum promotio in sanctis praedicatoribus? Qui profecto, etsi velut foris loquentia labia et in imo stare videbantur, dum caecis visum, auditum surdis, vitam mortuis dabant, magnos utique meritorum motus exhibebant.

But they sanctify a war against those who do not give anything into their mouths, because with strict sentences they even terrify the just, who do not present earthly things to them according to their desire. Who indeed place a razor upon the head of the son, while under the pretext of charity they preach heavenly things, so that through greed they may take away earthly things from them. That the holy Church certainly does not hold this razor as a plunder of subjects, the excellent doctor shows in himself, saying: I seek not the gift, but I seek the fruit (Phil. IV, 17). Hence also he says: He that preacheth the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. But I have not used this power (I Cor. IX, 14, 15). For he who does not care to receive necessary food from his subjects, plainly shows with what sublimity of worldly contempt he refutes base gains and illicit gifts. Anna therefore, while she vows that a razor will not go up upon the head of her son, openly insinuates the morals of the holy Church, which gives birth to the elect for eternal life by speaking, 18 but never takes away their temporal goods through avarice. But because this is said of Anna while she is still vowing, and not giving birth, it is aptly subjoined:

(Vers. 12.) And it came to pass, as she multiplied prayers before the Lord, that Heli observed her mouth.

26. What was it for the holy Church to multiply prayers before the Lord for the desire of giving birth, if not to insist with assiduous prayers for the conversion of the Synagogue? And what was it for the Jewish priesthood to observe her mouth, if not to lay wait for the preaching of the holy Church? For he observed her mouth, because he vehemently studied to reprehend the right preaching of faith. But he is well said to have observed her mouth then, when she multiplied prayers, because he studied to harm her so much the more craftily, by as much as he recognized her greater desires in the earnestness of preaching. Finally, he would not have observed her mouth, but would have attended to it, if he had wished to hear the preaching of our faith for the fruit of his own salvation. It follows:

(Vers. 13.) Now Anna spoke in her heart, and only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard at all.

27. What else is the heart of the holy Church, if not that devout and erudite beatitude of the faithful which is within her? But Anna spoke in her heart, because the preaching of the holy Church only profited those who were to be illuminated by the true light from divine predestination. But what is the movement of the lips, if not the promotion of signs in the holy preachers? Who indeed, although they seemed like lips speaking outwardly and standing at the bottom, while they gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, life to the dead, exhibited great movements of merits.

Unde et illud ingens labium sanctae Ecclesiae, dum loquens velut in imo stare videretur, quia non solum verbo et conversatione humilis erat, sed et signorum potestate sublimis, ut motus sui, usque ad coelum se extulit, dicens: Nostra conversatio in coelis est (Philip. III, 20). Heli itaque tantum Annae labia mota conspexit, et vocem penitus non audivit, quia Judaicum sacerdotium opera apostolorum miratum est, sed ex eorum praedicatione non est promotum in salutem. Vox itaque Annae non audiebatur, quia etsi signorum ostensione sancta Ecclesia mirabilis erat, dum praedicationis verba protulit, ad amorem Redemptoris extraneos accendit. Sed quid de ea sentiat Heli, quam non intelligit? Sequitur:

(Vers. 13.) Aestimavit eam igitur Heli temulentam.

28. Hoc nimirum etiam juxta historiam Actuum apostolorum agnovimus, quia diebus Pentecostes sancti apostoli ebrii crediti sunt, cum, accepta sancti Spiritus plenitudine, Christi magnalia omni lingua loquerentur (Act, II, 4). Spiritualiter autem sancta Ecclesia ebria creditur, quam Judaea non aestimat vera asserere, sed haeretica, et falsa praedicare. Ebria tamen erat, non potatione erroris, sed repletione Spiritus sancti. Etenim mutare cor, mentem alienare consuevit ebrietas. Mutato autem corde pergebat, qui nuper domos intrans, fideles quosque minis terrens, caedibus lanians, jam eum quem persecutus Jesum fuerat verum esse omnipotentis Dei Filium praedicabat (Act. IX, 5, 20). Unde et superioris sensus insaniam sese perdidisse glorians, dicit: Qui prius fui blasphemus, et persecutor, et contumeliosus, sed misericordiam consecutus sum, quia ignorans feci (I Tim. I, 13). Aliud cor se accepisse testificans, ait: Nos autem sensum Christi habemus (I Cor. II, 16). Unde et tanto attentius praedicabat, quanto in sensu Christi vim majoris dilectionis acceperat. 19 Sed dum ardenter sancta Ecclesia diligeret, dum fiducialiter ea quae diligebat praedicaret, Judaeorum sacerdotium ejus verba in onere impatientiae, non in suavitate devotionis, habuit. Quare et sequitur:

(Vers. 14.) Dixitque ei: Usquequo ebria eris?

Et quia ei silentium indicere tentavit, adjunxit:

(Vers. 14.) Digere paulisper vinum, quo mades.

Whence also that huge lip of the holy Church, while speaking seemed as if to stand at the bottom, because he was not only humble in word and conversation, but also sublime in the power of signs, as of his movement, he extolled himself even to heaven, saying: Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. III, 20). Therefore Heli only saw the lips of Anna moved, and heard not the voice at all, because the Jewish priesthood wondered at the works of the apostles, but through their preaching was not promoted to salvation. Therefore the voice of Anna was not heard, because although by the showing of signs the holy Church was wonderful, yet when she uttered the words of preaching, she inflamed strangers to the love of the Redeemer. But what does Heli think of her, whom he does not understand? It follows:

(Vers. 13.) Therefore Heli esteemed her to be drunk.

28. This indeed we also recognize according to the history of the Acts of the Apostles, because on the days of Pentecost the holy apostles were believed to be drunk, when, having received the fullness of the Holy Spirit, they spoke the great works of Christ in every tongue (Acts II, 4). But spiritually the holy Church is believed to be drunk, whom Judea does not esteem to assert true things, but to preach heretical and false ones. Yet she was drunk, not with the drinking of error, but with the repletion of the Holy Spirit. For drunkenness is accustomed to change the heart, to alienate the mind. But he proceeded with a changed heart, who, lately entering houses, terrifying all the faithful with threats, tearing them with slaughters, now preached that Jesus whom he had persecuted was the true Son of the omnipotent God (Acts IX, 5, 20). Whence also glorying that he had lost the insanity of his former sense, he says: Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and contumelious, but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly (I Tim. I, 13). Testifying that he had received another heart, he says: But we have the sense of Christ (I Cor. II, 16). Whence also he preached so much the more attentively, by as much as in the sense of Christ he had received the force of greater love. 19 But while the holy Church ardently loved, while she faithfully preached the things which she loved, the priesthood of the Jews held her words in the burden of impatience, not in the sweetness of devotion. Wherefore it also follows:

(Vers. 14.) And he said to her: How long wilt thou be drunk?

And because he attempted to impose silence on her, he subjoined:

(Vers. 14.) Digest a little the wine with which thou art wet.

29. Vinum quo madebat Anna digereret, si a fervore praedicationis sancta Ecclesia Judaeorum minis victa tepuisset. Et quia ultro praedicationis sensum ei subtrahere nitebantur, vinum Anna paulisper digerere jubetur. An non digerere Annam Heli tunc jussit, cum Judaeorum principes caesis apostolis denuntiaverunt, dicentes ne ultra loquerentur in nomine Jesu? Sed quia illud quo madebant digerere vinum noluerunt, respondentes, dixerunt: Obedire oportet magis Deo quam hominibus (Act. V, 29). Et iterum: Non possumus quae vidimus et audivimus non loqui (Ibid., IV, 20). Sed quia sancta Ecclesia inter verba libertatis virtutem mansuetudinis custodivit, sequitur:

(Vers. 15.) Nequaquam, Domine mi.

30. Dominum namque vocavit, cui ministerium praedicationis exhibuit, sed Dominum vocans, ebriam se esse abnegat; ut superiori ordini ex humilitate se subderet, et falsae objectioni ex veritate contrairet. Dominum namque eum vocans, honoravit; et ebriam se esse abnegans, quod non erat satis humiliter ostendit. Potest autem ebrietatis objectio erga sanctam Ecclesiam aliter accipi. Nam dum ministerio evangelicae praedicationis insisteret, dum ex lucro credentium, in magnam populorum gloriam veniret, eam sacerdotes Judaeorum non putabant aeternorum bonorum culmen appetere, sed terrenae sublimitatis gloriam desiderare. Dum ergo ebria vocatur, everso statu mentis, coelestia postponere et appetere terrena reprehenditur.

31. Sed quae labentia bona saeculi despexit, dicit: Nequaquam, Domine mi. Nam mulier infelix nimis ego sum. Quasi dicat: Tu me labentis mundi felicitatem appetere cogitas, sed ego tanto infeliciorem me video, quanto felicitatis meae gaudia hinc longius recognosco. Quia vero illic me futuram felicem credo, hic eo valde me infelicem arbitror, quo ad gloriam nullam concupisco. Mulier quippe sancta Ecclesia dicitur pro fecunditate, infelix nimis pro fortitudine, quia et orbem verbo paritura erat, et orbis gloriam non posset perfecte despicere, si non eam supernus amor mira fortitudine roboraret; vel nimis infelix fuit, quia de perditione populi sui non parum doluit. Quam profecto sapiens Salomon vehementer admirans, ait: Mulierem fortem quis inveniet (Prov. XXXI, 10)? Quo in loco etiam notandum est quia non dicit mulier infelix, sed nimis ego sum. Nimis namque infelix fuit, cui nullum de saeculo blandimentum placuit.

29. Anna would have digested the wine with which she was wet, if the holy Church, vanquished by the threats of the Jews, had grown lukewarm from the fervor of preaching. And because they furthermore strove to withdraw the sense of preaching from her, Anna is ordered to digest the wine a little. Did not Heli then order Anna to digest it, when the princes of the Jews denounced the beaten apostles, telling them that they should not speak anymore in the name of Jesus? But because they would not digest that wine with which they were wet, answering, they said: We ought to obey God rather than men (Acts V, 29). And again: We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard (Ibid., IV, 20). But because the holy Church among the words of liberty preserved the virtue of meekness, it follows:

(Vers. 15.) Not so, my lord.

30. For she called him lord, to whom she exhibited the ministry of preaching, but calling him lord, she denies that she is drunk; so that she might subject herself to a higher order out of humility, and contradict a false objection out of truth. For calling him lord, she honored him; and denying that she was drunk, she showed humbly enough what she was not. But the objection of drunkenness against the holy Church can be understood otherwise. For while she insisted on the ministry of evangelical preaching, while from the gain of believers, she came into the great glory of the peoples, the priests of the Jews did not think that she coveted the summit of eternal goods, but desired the glory of earthly sublimity. Therefore while she is called drunk, with an overturned state of mind, she is reprehended for postponing heavenly things and coveting earthly ones.

31. But she who despised the falling goods of the world, says: Not so, my lord. For I am an exceedingly unhappy woman. As if she said: Thou thinkest that I covet the felicity of a falling world, but I see myself so much the more unhappy, by as much as I recognize the joys of my felicity farther from hence. But because I believe I will be happy there, here I judge myself so very unhappy, in that I concupisce no glory. For indeed the holy Church is called a woman for fecundity, exceedingly unhappy for fortitude, because she was both about to bring forth the world by the word, and could not perfectly despise the glory of the world, if supernal love did not strengthen her with wonderful fortitude; or she was exceedingly unhappy, because she grieved not a little concerning the perdition of her people. Whom truly the wise Solomon vehemently admiring, says: Who shall find a valiant woman? (Prov. XXXI, 10). In which place also it is to be noted that she does not say an unhappy woman, but I am exceedingly so. For she was exceedingly unhappy, to whom no blandishment from the world was pleasing.

Vel certe nimis infelicem se asserit, quae se ab aeternae vitae gaudiis expulsam per primae culpae meritum meminit, ad quae redire non praevalet, nisi per multas vitae hujus tribulationes. Non enim nimis infelix existeret, si ad perdita paradisi gaudia sine praesenti tribulatione reverti potuisset. Hinc namque Paulus, nimiae hujus infelicitatis aerumnam inevitabilem ostendens, dicit: Per multas tribulationes oportet 20 nos introire in regnum Dei (Act. XIV, 21). Ac si ergo detrahenti sibi Judaico sacerdotio sancta Ecclesia respondens dicat: Tu mihi regnum ascribis in felicitate temporis, sed meum illud est ad quod non pertingitur nisi ex afflictione multae tribulationis, sequitur:

(Vers. 15.) Vinum et omne quod inebriare potest non bibi.

32. Vinum namque non bibit, quia de praedicationis officio temporalia lucra non petiit. Aliud quod inebriare potest non bibit, quam in lapsum vitiorum carnis concupiscentia non evertit. Juxta superiorem vero sententiam vinum non bibit, quae aliquid pravitatis haereticae non habuit in refectione. Aliud quod inebriare potest biberet, si de verbi facundia decepta tumuisset. Quia vero recta intentione vera docuit, subdens, ait:

(Vers. 15.) Sed effudi animam meam in conspectu Domini.

33. In conspectu namque Domini animam effundere est conceptam in mente verbi Dei scientiam pro solo conditoris amore praedicare. Anima quippe effunditur, cum innatus verbi Dei intellectus ad utilitatem audientium divulgatur. Quisquis enim pro humanis favoribus, quisquis pro terreno commodo, verbum Dei praedicat, quia res alia de praedicatione attenditur, in conspectu Domini verbum illud animae non profertur. Quare et doctor gentium asserit, dicens: Non sumus, sicut plurimi, adulterantes verbum Dei, sed sicut ex sinceritate, sed sicut ex Deo, coram Deo in Christo loquimur (II Cor. II, 17). Anna ergo in conspectu Domini animam suam effudit, quia sancta Ecclesia in virtutum omnium culmine perfecta, in eruditione fidelium magna facundiae verba protulit, sed ex vitae verbis soli Deo placere desideravit. Cujus praedicationis etiam ministerium commendat, dicens:

(Vers. 16.) Ne putes ancillam tuam quasi unam de filiabus Belial, quia ex multitudine doloris et maeroris mei locuta sum usque in praesens.

Or certainly she asserts herself exceedingly unhappy, who remembers that she was expelled from the joys of eternal life through the merit of the first fault, to which she does not prevail to return, except through many tribulations of this life. For she would not exist exceedingly unhappy, if she could have returned to the lost joys of paradise without present tribulation. For hence Paul, showing the inevitable tribulation of this exceeding unhappiness, says: Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God (Acts XIV, 21). As if therefore the holy Church answering the Jewish priesthood detracting her should say: Thou ascribest a kingdom to me in the felicity of time, but mine is that to which one does not attain except from the affliction of much tribulation, it follows:

(Vers. 15.) I have drunk neither wine nor anything that can intoxicate.

32. For she drank no wine, because she sought no temporal gains from the office of preaching. She drank nothing else that can intoxicate, who the concupiscence of the flesh did not overturn into the lapse of vices. But according to the former sentence she drank no wine, who had nothing of heretical pravity in her refection. She would drink something else that can intoxicate, if she had swelled up deceived by the eloquence of the word. But because with a right intention she taught true things, subjoining, she says:

(Vers. 15.) But I have poured out my soul in the sight of the Lord.

33. For to pour out the soul in the sight of the Lord is to preach the science of the word of God conceived in the mind for the sole love of the Creator. The soul indeed is poured out, when the innate intellect of the word of God is divulged to the utility of the hearers. For whoever preaches the word of God for human favors, whoever for earthly commodity, because another thing is attended to from the preaching, that word of the soul is not proffered in the sight of the Lord. Wherefore also the doctor of the Gentiles asserts, saying: We are not as many, adulterating the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, before God in Christ we speak (II Cor. II, 17). Anna therefore poured out her soul in the sight of the Lord, because the holy Church perfect in the summit of all virtues, brought forth great words of eloquence in the erudition of the faithful, but from the words of life she desired to please God alone. Whose ministry of preaching she also commends, saying:

(Vers. 16.) Count not thy handmaid as one of the daughters of Belial, for out of the multitude of my sorrow and heaviness I have spoken until now.

34. Quasi dicat: Quae tibi aeternae vitae bona loquitur, velut idololatra despici non meretur. Ancillam quoque suam se esse asserit, ut cognoscat ex nomine ministerii quia ad aeterna ei appetit lucra famulari. Sequitur: Quia ex multitudine moeroris et doloris locuta sum usque in praesens. Quasi apertius loquatur, et dicat: Hinc agnosce quod nihil a malo spiritu habeam, quia ex multa poena persecutionis ad loquendum venio, et praedicationis instantiam nullis poenis victa derelinquo. Potest etiam dolor Annae ad affectionem sanctae Ecclesiae, moeror ejus referri ad passionem. Ex multitudine quidem doloris locuta est, quae pereunti Judaico populo verbum praedicationis protulit ex affectu compassionis. Quod Paulus insinuat, dicens: Veritatem dico in Christo Jesu, non mentior, testimonium perhibente mihi conscientia mea in Spiritu sancto, quoniam tristitia est mihi magna, et continuus dolor cordi meo: optabam ego ipse anathema esse pro fratribus meis a Christo, qui sunt cognati mei secundum carnem, qui sunt Israelitae (Rom. IX, 1, 2, seq.). Sed qui se ex multitudine doloris loqui insinuat, an ex multitudine loquatur dicat: A Judaeis quinquies quadragenas, una minus, accepi, ter virgis caesus sum, semel lapidatus sum (II Cor. XI, 24). Sancta vero Ecclesia patienter adversa tolerans, humiliter innocentiae, et veritatis suae virtutem manifestans, quibusdam Judaeae sacerdotibus bonum praedicationis suae loquendo persuasit. Quare et subditur:

21 (Vers. 17.) Tunc ait Heli: Vade in pace, det tibi Deus Israel petitionem quam rogasti eum.

35. Prius quippe Heli oranti Annae prolatis contumeliis contradixit, postea vero in ejus sibi devotione complacuit. Quid est hoc, nisi quod Judaicum sacerdotium, et per alios sui officii ministros praedicanti Ecclesiae obstitit, et per alios cognitae demum fidei nostrae veritati consensit? Nam de obsistentibus dicitur, qui caesis denuntiaverunt apostolis, dicentes ne ultra loquerentur in nomine Jesu (Act. V, 40). De consentientibus autem idem Lucas meminit, dicens: Plurima turba sacerdotum obediebat fidei (Ibid., VI, 7). Tunc ergo Heli pro voto fecunditatis Annae precatus est, cum sacerdotum plurima illa turba, fidei obediens, per praedicationem sanctae Ecclesiae electorum numerum multiplicari desideravit. Quam certe in pace ire optavit, quia fructum praedicationis eam desideravit consequi, sine dolore passionis. Et quia in eorum voto sancta Ecclesia sibi complacuit, sequitur:

(Vers. 18.) Utinam inveniat ancilla tua gratiam in oculis tuis.

Quasi dicat: Juxta intuitum desiderii tui opus ministerii mei subsequatur gratia divinae dispensationis. Sequitur:

34. As if she said: She who speaks to thee the goods of eternal life, deserves not to be despised as an idolater. She also asserts herself to be his handmaid, so that he may recognize from the name of her ministry that she covets to serve him for eternal gains. It follows: For out of the multitude of my heaviness and sorrow I have spoken until now. As if she should speak more openly, and say: Hence recognize that I have nothing from an evil spirit, because from the great penalty of persecution I come to speaking, and I leave not the earnestness of preaching vanquished by any penalties. Also the sorrow of Anna can be referred to the affection of the holy Church, her heaviness to her passion. Indeed she spoke from the multitude of sorrow, who proffered the word of preaching to the perishing Jewish people from the affection of compassion. Which Paul insinuates, saying: I speak the truth in Christ Jesus, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sadness, and continual sorrow in my heart: for I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites (Rom. IX, 1, 2, seq.). But let him who insinuates that he speaks from the multitude of sorrow, say whether he speaks from a multitude: Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes, save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned (II Cor. XI, 24). But the holy Church patiently tolerating adverse things, humbly manifesting the virtue of her innocence and truth, by speaking persuaded some priests of Judea of the good of her preaching. Wherefore it is also subjoined:

21 (Vers. 17.) Then Heli said: Go in peace, may the God of Israel grant thee thy petition which thou hast asked of him.

35. For first Heli contradicted the praying Anna with uttered contumelies, but afterwards he was well pleased with her devotion to him. What is this, if not that the Jewish priesthood both through some ministers of its office withstood the preaching Church, and through others consented to the truth of our faith at length recognized? For of those withstanding it is said, who denounced the beaten apostles, telling them that they should not speak anymore in the name of Jesus (Acts V, 40). But of those consenting the same Luke remembers, saying: A very great multitude of the priests obeyed the faith (Ibid., VI, 7). Then therefore Heli prayed for the vow of Anna's fecundity, when that very great multitude of priests, obeying the faith, desired the number of the elect to be multiplied through the preaching of the holy Church. Whom he certainly wished to go in peace, because he desired her to attain the fruit of preaching, without the sorrow of passion. And because the holy Church was well pleased with herself in their vow, it follows:

(Vers. 18.) Would that thy handmaid may find grace in thy eyes.

As if she said: According to the intuition of thy desire let the grace of divine dispensation follow the work of my ministry. It follows:

(Vers. 18.) Et abiit mulier in viam suam, et comedit, et bibit, vultusque ejus non sunt amplius in diversa mutati.

36. In viam suam mulier abiit, quia sancta Ecclesia verbum fidei gentibus praedicavit. Quod et apostoli Judaeis comminantes dicunt: Quia indignos vos judicatis aeternae vitae, ecce convertimur ad gentes (Act. XIII, 46). Quae bene mulier tunc dicitur, cum recedit, quia per praedicationem Redemptoris exhibitura erat in gentibus fructum magnae fecunditatis. Comedit autem, et bibit, et tamen vultus ejus non sunt amplius in diversa mutati, quia magna lucra de conversione gentium habuit, sed persecutionem quam in Judaea passa fuerat, etiam in gentibus invenit. Sed ordine quo abierit edisserens, ait:

(Vers. 19.) Et surrexerunt mane, et adoraverunt coram Domino; reversique sunt, et venerunt in domum suam, in Ramatha.

37. Quid est autem quod supra de sola Anna singulariter dicitur: Abiit mulier in viam suam, nunc vero pluraliter: Surrexerunt mane, nisi ut cum viro descendere cognoscatur? Et quia vir sanctae Ecclesiae Redemptor humani generis est, qui jam ad coelos ascenderat, cum ipsam Judaeam incredulitatis suae caligine obrutam relinquebat, quomodo de Anna et de viro suo Helcana intelligi in Christi et Ecclesiae typo nunc potest quod simul mane surgerent, et in civitatem suam pariter redirent? Sed quia civitatem Ramatha, coelestem patriam designare jam diximus, quomodo hoc sanctae Ecclesiae convenit, quae statim ut a Judaeorum praedicatione cessavit, ad coelestem patriam non ascendit? Verum quia resurgens a mortuis Dominus, missis in praedicatione doctoribus loquitur, dicens: Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem saeculi (Matth. XXVIII, 20), absurdum non est ut cum eo sancta Ecclesia surgere et reverti sentiatur. Qui enim electos suos per spiritalem praesentiam nunquam deserit, et cum stantibus permanet, et cum abeuntibus recedit. Ramatha vero coelestem patriam designare diximus, sed quod nihil aliud significare possit non diximus. Quid ergo aliud hoc 22 in loco significat, nisi adimpletionem prophetiae in gentium vocatione? Ramatha quippe visio consummata dicitur, ut jam diximus. Quid vero est gentium jam impleta vocatio, nisi prophetarum visio consummata? Nam visionem asserebat, sed non consummatam, qui de futuro adhuc quod viderat pronuntiabat, dicens: Omnes gentes quascunque fecisti venient, et adorabunt coram te, Domine (Psal. LXXXV, 9).

(Vers. 18.) And the woman went her way, and ate, and drank, and her countenance was no more changed diversely.

36. The woman went her way, because the holy Church preached the word of faith to the Gentiles. Which also the apostles say threatening the Jews: Because you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles (Acts XIII, 46). She is well called a woman then, when she recedes, because through the preaching of the Redeemer she was to exhibit the fruit of great fecundity among the Gentiles. But she ate, and drank, and yet her countenances were no more changed diversely, because she had great gains from the conversion of the Gentiles, but the persecution which she had suffered in Judea, she also found among the Gentiles. But discoursing the order by which she went away, he says:

(Vers. 19.) And they rose in the morning, and worshipped before the Lord; and they returned, and came into their house at Ramatha.

37. But what is it that above is said of Anna alone singularly: The woman went her way, but now plurally: They rose in the morning, if not that she is recognized to descend with her husband? And because the husband of the holy Church is the Redeemer of the human race, who had already ascended to the heavens, when he left Judea herself overwhelmed in the darkness of her incredulity, how can it now be understood of Anna and her husband Elcana in the type of Christ and the Church that they should rise early together, and return equally to their city? But because we have already said that the city of Ramatha designates the heavenly country, how does this suit the holy Church, which immediately when she ceased from the preaching of the Jews, did not ascend to the heavenly country? But because the Lord rising from the dead, having sent doctors in preaching speaks, saying: Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. XXVIII, 20), it is not absurd that the holy Church is sensed to rise and return with him. For he who never deserts his elect through spiritual presence, both remains with those who stand, and recedes with those who go away. But we said that Ramatha designates the heavenly country, but we did not say that it can signify nothing else. What else then 22 does it signify in this place, if not the fulfillment of the prophecy in the calling of the Gentiles? Ramatha indeed is called a consummated vision, as we have already said. But what is the already fulfilled calling of the Gentiles, if not a consummated vision of the prophets? For he asserted a vision, but not consummated, who pronounced concerning the future still what he had seen, saying: All the nations thou hast made shall come and adore before thee, O Lord (Ps. LXXXV, 9).

Hinc item repromittit, dicens: Adorabunt eum omnes reges terrae, omnes gentes servient ei (Psal. LXXI, 15). Visio igitur consummata recte prophetarum promissio dicitur, quia nimirum, auctore Deo, juxta eorum oracula, in Redemptorem humani generis omnes gentes crediderunt. Mane autem cum viro suo Anna surgere dicitur, quia sancta Ecclesia in exortu interni luminis ad gentes transiit cum verbo praedicationis. Vel mane surgit, quod Judaeam in nocte infidelitatis deseruit. Mane etiam surgit, quia prosperum iter in conversione gentium invenit. Et coram Domino adoravit, quia in repulsione Synagogae incomprehensibile judicium venerata est omnipotentis Dei. Adoravit quippe, et recessit, quia cum a gentis suae praedicatione pro sola Dei omnipotentis ordinatione recederet, divino judicio per obedientiam obsecuta est quod penetrare intelligendo non potuit. Adorans autem reversa est, quia ministerium praedicationis in vocatione gentium adimplere proposuit, sed tantum ejusdem praedicationis modum in superna contemplatione quaesivit. Reverti enim praedicatoribus est ad divinae contemplationis lumen recurrere. Inde quippe lucem hauriunt, qua et ad venerationem fidelium luceant, et quam loquendo auditorum suorum mentibus infundant. Hinc namque est quod praedicator egregius ante ad tertii coeli secreta sustollitur, et sic terrena disponere perhibetur, et paradisi secreta ingrediens verba percipit, quae non licet homini loqui (II Cor. XII, 2), ut discernere et loqui utiliter foris possit. Anna ergo reversa memoratur, quia sancta Ecclesia dum terrena disposuit, qualiter sint eadem terrena disponenda, in ea ad quam saepe revertitur Dei contemplatione instruitur. Et tunc demum in domum suam venit, quia in auditorum devotione collocare se potuit, cum accedendi ad eos modum sursum revertendo cognovit. Domum namque sanctae primitivae Ecclesiae gentium devotio exstruxit, quam, dum sibi in eis condidit, custodiae sollicitudine inhabitavit. Quae videlicet domus posita in visione consummata describitur, quia non ante condi potuit quam vocationis ejus praedictum a prophetis tempus advenit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 19 et 20.) Cognovit autem Helcana Annam conjugem suam, et recordatus est ejus Dominus. Et factum est post circulum dierum, concepit Anna et peperit filium.

38. Helcana Annam conjugem suam tunc cognovit, cum Redemptor noster praefinitum tempus vocandae gentilitatis aspexit, quo dum novae sponsae, sanctae videlicet Ecclesiae, gremio gratiam superni amoris infunderet, novam ex ea prolem fidelium generaret. Nam velut nondum cognoscebat eam, cum volentes transire in Asiam praedicatores a Spiritu sancto prohibiti sunt (Act. XVI, 6). Hinc est, quod cum ad praedicationem Judaeae discipulos suos mitteret, per semetipsam

Hence also he promises, saying: All kings of the earth shall adore him, all nations shall serve him (Ps. LXXI, 11). A consummated vision therefore is rightly called the promise of the prophets, because without doubt, God being the author, according to their oracles, all nations believed in the Redeemer of the human race. But Anna is said to rise in the morning with her husband, because the holy Church in the rising of the internal light passed over to the Gentiles with the word of preaching. Or she rises in the morning, because she deserted Judea in the night of infidelity. She also rises in the morning, because she found a prosperous journey in the conversion of the Gentiles. And she adored before the Lord, because in the repulsion of the Synagogue she venerated the incomprehensible judgment of the omnipotent God. She adored indeed, and receded, because when she receded from the preaching of her nation for the sole ordination of the omnipotent God, by divine judgment through obedience she followed what she could not penetrate by understanding. But adoring she returned, because she proposed to fulfill the ministry of preaching in the calling of the Gentiles, but she sought the very mode of that preaching in supernal contemplation. For to return for preachers is to recur to the light of divine contemplation. Thence indeed they draw the light, by which they may both shine to the veneration of the faithful, and which by speaking they may pour into the minds of their hearers. For hence it is that the excellent preacher before is lifted up to the secrets of the third heaven, and thus is shown to dispose earthly things, and entering the secrets of paradise he perceives words, which it is not lawful for a man to speak (II Cor. XII, 4), so that he may discern and speak profitably outwardly. Anna therefore is remembered to have returned, because the holy Church while she disposed earthly things, how those same earthly things are to be disposed, is instructed in that contemplation of God to which she often returns. And then at length she comes into her house, because she could place herself in the devotion of her hearers, when she knew the mode of approaching them by returning upwards. For the devotion of the Gentiles built the house of the holy primitive Church, which, while she founded it for herself in them, she inhabited with the solicitude of custody. Which house namely being placed is described in a consummated vision, because it could not be founded before the time of her calling foretold by the prophets arrived. It follows:

(Vers. 19 and 20.) And Elcana knew Anna his wife, and the Lord remembered her. And it came to pass after a circle of days, Anna conceived and bore a son.

38. Elcana then knew Anna his wife, when our Redeemer looked upon the foreordained time of calling the Gentiles, in which while he poured the grace of supernal love into the bosom of the new spouse, namely the holy Church, he might generate a new offspring of faithful from her. For as if he did not yet know her, when the preachers wishing to pass into Asia were forbidden by the Holy Spirit (Acts XVI, 6). Hence it is, that when he sent his disciples to the preaching of Judea, the Truth forbids them

Veritas prohibet dicens: In viam gentium non abieritis, et in civitates Samaritanorum non intraveritis (Matth. X, 5). Quando autem cognovit 23 Annam conjugem suam Helcana, tunc recordatus est ejus Dominus, quia gentilitas tunc venisse in Dei memoriam visa est, cum sancta Ecclesia, Verbo Dei per amoris gratiam conjuncta, in salute visitatur. Quid est hoc loco circulus dierum, nisi innumeris sancti Spiritus ostensa radiis manifestatio divinae voluntatis? Quae profecto dum praedicatorum suorum mentibus, in contemplatione suspensis, claritates supernae dispositionis innumeras exhibet, nimirum, veluti plures dies, temporum circulus clausas tenet. Circulus quippe dierum Annae conceptum praevenit, quia sanctae Ecclesiae Verbum Dei ad docendum non ante infunditur, quam ab ea supernae dispositionis radii plenius agnoscantur. Quae concipiens filium peperit, quia ii quos in fide Redemptoris parit nova conversatione robusti sunt.

(Vers. 20.) Et vocavit nomen ejus Samuel, eo quod a Domino postulasset eum.

39. Samuel interpretatur, nomen ejus Deus. Quem ergo nobis Samuel convenientius insinuat, quam praedicatorum ordinem, qui ad fidem vocatus est ex gentilitate? Quia enim fortis conversatione est, potestate sublimis, et dum in eo speciale signum gratiae divinae conspicitur, ad venerationem praedicationis ejus devotae auditorum turbae deducuntur, recte nomen ejus nuncupatione declaratur. Hinc est quod ad Moysen a Domino dicitur: Posui te in deum Pharaonis (Exod. VII, 1). Hinc item in lege prohibens, ait: Diis non detrahes (Ibid., XXII, 28). Et notandum quia cujus nomen deus dicitur, filius, non filia fuit, quia certe pastoralis dignitas, cum infirma conversatione deprimitur, splendore tam celsi nominis non ornatur. Quia igitur ordo doctorum ad evangelizandi ministerium ex gentilitate promotus excellentiae dignitatis suae meritorum gratia impar non fuit, recte nunc dicitur: Vocavit nomen ejus Samuel, eo quod a Domino postulasset eum. Et notandum quia hoc loco postulare dicitur quod postulando promeruit. Apertis ergo verbis ostenditur cur Annae primogenitus tanto nomine censeatur. Quod tale est ac si dicat: Idcirco ei tantum nomen imposuit, quia is qui superno munere nascitur meritorum gratia magnus fuit. Sed ut ostendatur quo studio eum provida mater foveat, sequitur:

(Vers. 21 et 22.) Ascendit autem vir ejus Helcana, et omnis domus, ut immolaret hostiam solemnem, et votum suum; et Anna non ascendit. Dixit enim viro suo: Non vadam, donec ablactetur infans.

by himself saying: Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not (Matt. X, 5). But when Elcana 23 knew Anna his wife, then the Lord remembered her, because the Gentiles then seemed to come into the memory of God, when the holy Church, conjoined to the Word of God through the grace of love, is visited in salvation. What is the circle of days in this place, if not the manifestation of the divine will showed in the innumerable rays of the Holy Spirit? Which indeed while it exhibits innumerable clarities of the supernal disposition to the minds of its preachers, suspended in contemplation, without doubt, like many days, a circle of times holds enclosed. The circle of days indeed precedes the conception of Anna, because the Word of God is not poured into the holy Church for teaching, before the rays of the supernal disposition are more fully recognized by her. Who conceiving bore a son, because those whom she brings forth in the faith of the Redeemer are robust in a new conversation.

(Vers. 20.) And she called his name Samuel, because she had asked him of the Lord.

39. Samuel is interpreted, his name is God. Whom therefore does Samuel more conveniently insinuate to us, than the order of preachers, which is called to the faith from the Gentiles? For because he is strong in conversation, sublime in power, and while a special sign of divine grace is seen in him, devout crowds of hearers are brought to the veneration of his preaching, his name is rightly declared by appellation. Hence it is that it is said to Moses by the Lord: I have appointed thee the god of Pharaoh (Exod. VII, 1). Hence also prohibiting in the law, he says: Thou shalt not detract the gods (Ibid., XXII, 28). And it is to be noted that he whose name is called god, was a son, not a daughter, because certainly the pastoral dignity, when it is depressed by an infirm conversation, is not adorned by the splendor of so high a name. Because therefore the order of doctors promoted to the ministry of evangelizing from the Gentiles was not unequal by the grace of merits of the dignity of its excellence, it is rightly said now: She called his name Samuel, because she had asked him of the Lord. And it is to be noted that in this place what she merited by asking is said to be asking. By open words therefore it is shown why the firstborn of Anna is counted by so great a name. Which is such as if he said: Therefore she imposed so great a name on him, because he who is born by supernal gift was great by the grace of merits. But that it may be shown with what zeal the provident mother cherishes him, it follows:

(Vers. 21 and 22.) And her husband Elcana went up, and all his house, to offer the solemn sacrifice, and his vow; and Anna went not up. For she said to her husband: I will not go, until the infant be weaned.

40. Quae est autem immolatio solemnis hostiae, nisi illa sanctae Ecclesiae amoris oblatio, qua conditori conjungitur in aeterna contemplatione? Ad hanc autem Helcana tunc ascendit, cum Redemptor noster jam de morte triumphans, jam possibilitatis nostrae tenebras superans, carnem, quam pro nostra salute suscepit, ad coelestia sublimavit. Cum quo et omnis domus ejus ascendit, quia priores electos Synagogae in altitudinem immortalitatis extulit. Tunc immolavit solemnem hostiam, cum se aeterno Patri per glorificatae carnis materiam in coelo exhibuit, et angelorum naturam, sicut de redemptione nostra, ita etiam de eorum reparatione laetificavit. Ad hanc solemnem hostiam Anna invitatur, quia sancta Ecclesia superni sponsi spirituali cohortatione ad aeternam contemplationem divinae claritatis per quotidiana desideria amoris accenditur. Quae tamen ab ascensu suo abstinet, 24 ut filium lactet, quia ut prosit hic Christi parvulis, dilationem suae gloriae patienter sustinet. An non ad immolationem hujus solemnis hostiae mater illa invitata fuerat, quae dicebat: Cupio dissolvi, et esse cum Christo (Phil. I, 23)? Sed quae per amoris desideria ad sponsi speciem trahitur, an amet lactare filium, dicat: In carne mihi manere necessarium est propter vos (Ibid., 24). Quo etiam cibo se Corinthios aluisse insinuat, dicens: Lac vobis potum dedi, non escam (I Cor. III, 2). Lactare quippe parvulos sanctae Ecclesiae est pastoribus infirmorum sive simplicium auditorum corda planioris Scripturae pabulo enutrire. Quibus profecto idem doctor egregius dicit: Nihil judicavi me scire inter vos, nisi Christum, et hunc crucifixum (I Cor. II, 2).

41. Ablactantur autem infantes, cum parvuli sanctae Ecclesiae tam spiritualis eruditionis quam bonae conversationis incrementa suscipiunt, et jam non planiora sacri eloquii, sed alta ejus sacramenta requirunt. Et ablactatus infans ante conspectum Domini ut appareat ducitur, cum per adhortationem praedicatorum quisquis subjectus bene proficiens bonis operibus adornatur. Qui enim ad hoc ducitur ut appareat, non tantum ut videat defertur, sed etiam ut videatur. Quia enim in fine a Domino multi audituri sunt: Nescio vos (Matth. XXV, 12), apparere in conspectu Domini Samuel dicitur, quia electus, et humilis subditus, dum perfecte praesentia despicit, adveniente extremo judice nequaquam reprobatur. Quos autem saeculum in sui amore defixos retinet, in conspectu Domini non apparent. Qui enim in honore rerum transeuntium videri elatiores appetunt, hoc profecto superbiendo agunt, ut ab eo quo solo videri debent honorabiles nunquam videantur.

40. But what is the immolation of the solemn sacrifice, if not that oblation of love of the holy Church, by which she is conjoined to the Creator in eternal contemplation? But to this Elcana then ascended, when our Redeemer already triumphing over death, already ascending 24 the darkness of our possibility, sublimated to heavenly things the flesh which he took up for our salvation. With whom all his house also went up, because he extolled the prior elect of the Synagogue into the altitude of immortality. Then he immolated the solemn sacrifice, when he exhibited himself to the eternal Father through the matter of glorified flesh in heaven, and made joyful the nature of angels, as concerning our redemption, so also concerning their reparation. Anna is invited to this solemn sacrifice, because the holy Church by the spiritual exhortation of the supernal spouse is inflamed to the eternal contemplation of divine clarity through daily desires of love. Who nevertheless abstains from her ascent, 24 that she may nurse her son, because that she may profit Christ's little ones here, she patiently sustains the delay of her glory. Had not that mother been invited to the immolation of this solemn sacrifice, who said: I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ (Phil. I, 23)? But she who through the desires of love is drawn to the sight of the spouse, would she love to nurse the son, let her say: But to abide still in the flesh, is needful for you (Ibid., 24). With which food he also insinuates that he nourished the Corinthians, saying: I gave you milk to drink, not meat (I Cor. III, 2). Indeed to nurse the little ones of the holy Church is for the pastors of the infirm or simple hearers to nourish their hearts with the food of plainer Scripture. To whom certainly the same excellent doctor says: For I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified (I Cor. II, 2).

41. But infants are weaned, when the little ones of the holy Church receive the increments as much of spiritual erudition as of good conversation, and already require not the plainer things of sacred eloquence, but the high sacraments thereof. And a weaned infant is brought to appear before the sight of the Lord, when through the exhortation of preachers any subject profiting well is adorned with good works. For he who is brought to this that he may appear, is not only carried that he may see, but also that he may be seen. For because in the end many will hear from the Lord: I know you not (Matt. XXV, 12), Samuel is said to appear in the sight of the Lord, because an elect and humble subject, while he perfectly despises present things, the extreme judge arriving is by no means reprobated. But those whom the world retains fixed in its love, do not appear in the sight of the Lord. For those who in the honor of passing things desire to be seen more elevated, this indeed they do by being proud, so that they may never be seen honorable by him by whom alone they ought to be seen.

Unde et rex electus, et in rerum culmine positus, ne in flore saeculi deciperetur obsecrat, dicens: Ne projicias me, Domine, a facie tua (Psal. L, 13). Anna ergo et ablactare filium repromittit, et ante conspectum Domini ut appareat ducere, quia sancta Ecclesia electos subditos quos erudit praesentia perfecte despicere docet, et bona agere, et ad aeterna bona per humilitatem festinare. Et notandum quia ab ablactationis loco ductus asseritur, qui apparere debere in conspectu Domini perhibetur, quia videlicet, non parum interest spiritualis itineris, cum ab eo quod de coelesti magisterio discimus in usum perfectae tendimus operationis. Quia vero a studio ejusdem boni operis nunquam cessandum est, sequitur:

(Vers. 22.) Et appareat ibi jugiter.

42. Jugiter namque ibi apparemus unde nunquam discedimus. Jugiter ergo in conspectu Domini apparere est decorem bonae conversationis nullis vitae tenebris obscurare, quia qui ad illicita nulla defluit, a secreto divini intuitus nunquam exit; et quasi in luce positum hunc divina bonitas respicit quia eas quas damnavit peccatorum tenebras electione sui examinis non attendit. Donec igitur ablactetur infans, ad immolandam solemnem hostiam se non ascensuram Anna denuntiat, quia sancta Ecclesia tandiu custodire filios proponit, quandiu de eorum perfectione secura fieri valeat quia ipsi ab accepta bonitate ulterius non recedant. Potest tamen ascensus solemnis hostiae ad altitudinem sanctae praedicationis referri. Nam de ascensu viri ejus per Prophetam scriptum est: Ascendit super cherubim, et volavit super pennas ventorum (Psal. XVII, 11). Super cherubim quippe Dominus 25 ascendit, quia in sublimibus praedicatorum suorum mentibus ascendit, et scientiae suae altitudinem ponit. Et super pennas ventorum volat, quia coram spiritualibus eorum oculis in altitudinem mirae intelligentiae se sancti Spiritus flatibus elevat. Et tenebras latibulum suum ponit (Ibid., 12), quia majestatis suae sublimitatem reprobis abscondit. Sed in circuitu ejus tabernaculum suum (Ibid.), quia quos per sublimia dona elevat, eis suae Majestatis etiam gloriam manifestat.

43. Bene autem cum Helcanae ascensus asseritur, omnis domus ejus ascendisse perhibetur, quia illos quorum mentibus eminet in altitudine suae contemplationis velut domesticos et familiares tenet. Quae est autem Helcanae, id est Redemptoris nostri hostia solemnis, nisi sanctorum suorum cordibus ineffabilis illius internae amor eruditionis? Nam eorum quisque sibi ineffabiliter complacet in eo, quod se ostensa Redemptoris sublimitas tam sublimiter docet. Anna ergo se cum viro suo ascendere abnegat, donec filium lactat, quia sancta Ecclesia tandiu vitavit alta praedicando contingere, quandiu cognovit rudes auditores suos velut parvulos alta capere nequaquam posse.

Whence also the elect king, and placed in the summit of things, lest he should be deceived in the flower of the world beseeches, saying: Cast me not away, O Lord, from thy face (Ps. L, 13). Anna therefore also promises to wean her son, and to bring him that he may appear before the sight of the Lord, because the holy Church teaches the elect subjects whom she erudites perfectly to despise present things, and to do good things, and to hasten to eternal goods through humility. And it is to be noted that he is asserted led from the place of weaning, who is exhibited as owing to appear in the sight of the Lord, because namely, it matters not a little of the spiritual journey, when from that which we learn of heavenly magistery we tend into the use of perfect operation. But because one must never cease from the study of the same good work, it follows:

(Vers. 22.) And let him appear there forever.

42. For we continually appear there whence we never depart. Continually therefore to appear in the sight of the Lord is to obscure the decorum of good conversation by no darkness of life, because he who flows down to no illicit things, never exits from the secret of divine intuition; and placed as if in light divine goodness looks back at him because it does not attend to that darkness of sins which it condemned by the election of its examination. Until therefore the infant be weaned, Anna denounces that she will not ascend to immolate the solemn sacrifice, because the holy Church proposes to guard her sons so long, as long as she may be able to become secure concerning their perfection that they themselves may not further recede from the accepted goodness. Yet the ascent of the solemn sacrifice can be referred to the altitude of holy preaching. For concerning the ascent of her husband it is written by the Prophet: He ascended upon the cherubim, and he flew upon the wings of the winds (Ps. XVII, 11). Upon the cherubim indeed the Lord 25 ascended, because he ascended into the sublime minds of his preachers, and places the altitude of his science. And he flies upon the wings of the winds, because before their spiritual eyes he elevates himself into the altitude of wonderful intelligence by the breathings of the Holy Spirit. And he made darkness his covert (Ibid., 12), because he hides the sublimity of his majesty from the reprobate. But his tabernacle is round about him (Ibid.), because to those whom he elevates through sublime gifts, he also manifests the glory of his Majesty.

43. But well when the ascent of Elcana is asserted, all his house is exhibited to have ascended, because those to whose minds he is eminent in the altitude of his contemplation he holds as if domestics and familiars. But what is the solemn sacrifice of Elcana, that is of our Redeemer, if not the ineffable love of that internal erudition in the hearts of his saints? For each of them is ineffably well pleased with himself in him, because the showed sublimity of the Redeemer teaches himself so sublimely. Anna therefore denies that she ascends with her husband, until she nurses her son, because the holy Church so long avoided touching high things by preaching, as long as she knew that her rude hearers like infants could by no means take high things.

Hinc namque in ipsis sanctae Ecclesiae primordiis factum est ut, velut parvulo adhuc Annae filio, per trium evangelistarum scripta, Matthaei scilicet, Lucae et Marci, lac propinaretur, qui humanitatis Dominicae historiam scribentes, pauca de ejus divinitate tractaverunt; sed cum parvulus Ecclesiae populus cresceret, et in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi proficeret (Ephes. IV, 13), cui lactis potus non suffecerat, pasci cibo solido perquirebat. Compulsa itaque mater Ecclesia ascendere est, ut ipsa quoque cherubim fieret, volantique super se Redemptori appropinquaret, pennas assumeret, ambulantem super eas in sacramentorum altitudine teneret, atque ex ejus Majestate caperet quod poscenti unico alimentum daret. Unde factum est ut rogatus a fratribus evangelista Joannes, non solum humana sed etiam angelica superans, condita cuncta transcenderet, et quem videre meruit unigenitum in sinu Patris praedicaret, dicens: In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum (Joan. I, 1). Tunc ergo Anna ascendit, cum sancta Ecclesia se in celsitudinem divinae praedicationis tam sublimiter extulit. Tunc etiam immolavit solemnem hostiam, quia de cognitione divinitatis in auditorum suorum cordibus flammam mirae devotionis accendit. Solemnis quippe hostia fuit, de incomparabili eloquio, singularis oblatio devotionis. Tunc in conspectu Domini filium adduxit, cum auditorum suorum cordibus perfectam cognitionem summae divinitatis intimavit. Quae profecto Dei cognitio, quia non solum fide tenenda est, sed confessione, et quod credimus, et confitemur, nec ignorare ulterius, nec silere permittimur, puer ablactatus, qui ad domum Domini adducitur, jugiter in conspectu Domini manere declaratur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 23.) Et dixit ei Helcana vir suus: Fac quod tibi bonum videtur; mane, donec ablactes eum.

44. Quid est quod Annae consilium viri sui auctoritate roboratur, nisi quia propositum sanctae Ecclesiae non ex humano praesumitur judicio, sed ex divino? Nam quidquid sancta Ecclesia in subjectis sibi nationibus disponere voluit, tunc demum id ratum habuit, cum ex internae veritatis judicio quid disponendum esset agnovit. Et quia advocatum 26 habemus apud Patrem (I Joan, II, 1), qui interpellat pro nobis, subjungit, atque ait:

(Vers. 23.) Precorque ut impleat Dominus verbum suum.

For hence in the very beginnings of the holy Church it was done that, as to the still infant son of Anna, through the writings of three evangelists, namely Matthew, Luke and Mark, milk was propinated, who writing the history of the Lord's humanity, treated few things concerning his divinity; but when the infant people of the Church grew, and profited unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ (Eph. IV, 13), to whom the drink of milk had not sufficed, required to be fed with solid food. Thus mother Church was compelled to ascend, so that she herself might also become a cherubim, and might approach the Redeemer flying above her, might assume wings, might hold him walking upon them in the altitude of sacraments, and from his Majesty might take what she might give as food to the demanding only son. Whence it came to pass that the evangelist John being asked by the brethren, surpassing not only human but also angelic things, transcended all created things, and preached the only begotten whom he merited to see in the bosom of the Father, saying: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John I, 1). Then therefore Anna ascended, when the holy Church extolled herself into the celsitude of divine preaching so sublimely. Then also she immolated the solemn sacrifice, because concerning the cognition of divinity she kindled a flame of wonderful devotion in the hearts of her hearers. The solemn sacrifice indeed was, from incomparable eloquence, a singular oblation of devotion. Then she brought the son into the sight of the Lord, when she intimated to the hearts of her hearers the perfect cognition of the highest divinity. Which cognition indeed of God, because it is not only to be held by faith, but by confession, and what we believe, and confess, we are permitted neither to be ignorant of further, nor to be silent about, the weaned boy, who is brought to the house of the Lord, is declared to remain continually in the sight of the Lord. It follows:

(Vers. 23.) And Elcana her husband said to her: Do what seemeth good to thee; remain until thou wean him.

44. What is it that the counsel of Anna is strengthened by the authority of her husband, if not because the proposition of the holy Church is not presumed from human judgment, but from divine? For whatever the holy Church wished to dispose in the nations subject to her, then at length she considered it ratified, when she recognized from the judgment of internal truth what was to be disposed. And because we have an advocate 26 with the Father (I John II, 1), who intercedes for us, he subjoins, and says:

(Vers. 23.) And I pray that the Lord may fulfill his word.

45. Quod est verbum, quod implendum asseritur, nisi praedestinata conversio gentilitatis? Et quia per ejus sanguinem reconciliamur Deo, ipse pro implendo verbo precatur, cujus obtentu salus nostra perficitur. Precari etiam ei est se in humanitate assumpta pro salute nostra aeterno Patri continue exhibere; quod dum sic se offerre non desinit, receptioni nostrae aditum ad vitam facit. Quia vero dispositionis suae consilium exquirendo perfecit, apte subinfertur: Mansit ergo mulier, et lactavit filium suum donec amoveret eum a lacte. Deinde sequitur:

(Vers. 24.) Et adduxit eum, postquam ablactaverat, in vitulis tribus, et tribus modiis farinae, et amphora vini; et adduxit eum in domum Domini in Silo.

46. Quid namque per vitulum hoc loco significatur, nisi propositum imitandae vitae perfectorum? Sed vitulus est cum in corde exoritur proficientis, bos autem cum per robur virtutis ad affectum perducitur magnae conversationis. Quo in loco valde quaerendum est cur non unus vitulus, sed tres ad tabernaculum adducti perhibentur. Sed in tribus vitulis infans delatus ostenditur, ut eorum formam insinuet qui ad praedicationis ministerium instruuntur. Perfectus etenim doctor, et peccatoribus convertendis, et custodiendis justis invigilat. Quasi enim colonus summi patrisfamilias utrumque bovem aratris inserit, ut non solum vigilare stantibus ne corruant, sed etiam lapsos possit erigere ut subsistant. Sed qui duos boves habet in subjectorum sollicitudine, ut esse perfectus valeat, bovem tertium jungat in divina contemplatione, ut et corda proximorum integro jugo, loquendo, velut arando, aperiat, et semetipsum per singularem amoris fortitudinem ad conditoris sui speciem semper extendat. Samuel ergo in vitulis tribus ad domum Domini ducitur, cum bene quisque proficiens proponit ut ex labore praedicationis prodesse valeat proximis, et ex secreto quietis inhaerere intimae visioni conditoris. Et quia id bene exhibere animus imperiti nunquam poterit, in tribus etiam farinae modiis offertur. Ex farina quippe cum panes fiunt, praeparatio refectionis perficitur. Quod vero non in panibus, sed in farinae modiis offertur, bonam devotionem doctrinam proponere ostenditur, non ipsius doctrinae commodum exhibere. Modius ergo farinae sanctae praedicationis praeparationem significat. Sed in tribus modiis farinae infans adducitur, quia dum praedicare proponimus, verbum scientiae praeparamus peccatoribus

45. What is the word, which is asserted to be fulfilled, if not the predestinated conversion of the Gentiles? And because through his blood we are reconciled to God, he himself prays for the fulfilling of the word, by whose obtainment our salvation is perfected. Also to pray for him is to exhibit himself continually to the eternal Father in the assumed humanity for our salvation; which while he does not cease to offer himself thus, he makes an approach to life for our reception. But because he perfected the counsel of his disposition by seeking it out, it is aptly subjoined: The woman therefore tarried, and gave her son suck, till she removed him from the milk. Then it follows:

(Vers. 24.) And she brought him, after she had weaned him, with three calves, and three measures of flour, and a pitcher of wine; and she brought him to the house of the Lord in Silo.

46. For what is signified by a calf in this place, if not the proposition of imitating the life of the perfect? But it is a calf when it rises in the heart of one profiting, but an ox when through the robustness of virtue it is brought to the affection of a great conversation. In which place it is greatly to be asked why not one calf, but three are asserted to be brought to the tabernacle. But the infant is shown to be deferred in three calves, that he may insinuate the form of those who are instructed to the ministry of preaching. For the perfect doctor watches both for converting sinners and for guarding the just. For as a husbandman of the highest father of the family he inserts each ox into the plows, so that he may not only watch over those standing lest they fall, but may also be able to raise the fallen that they may subsist. But he who has two oxen in the solicitude of subjects, that he may be able to be perfect, let him join a third ox in divine contemplation, so that he may both open the hearts of neighbors with a whole yoke, by speaking, as if by plowing, and always extend himself through the singular fortitude of love to the sight of his Creator. Samuel therefore is brought to the house of the Lord in three calves, when everyone profiting well proposes that from the labor of preaching he may be able to profit neighbors, and from the secret of quiet to adhere to the intimate vision of the Creator. And because the mind of the unskilled will never be able to exhibit this well, he is also offered in three measures of flour. For when breads are made from flour, the preparation of refection is perfected. But that he is offered not in breads, but in measures of flour, good devotion is shown to propose doctrine, not to exhibit the commodity of doctrine itself. Therefore a measure of flour signifies the preparation of holy preaching. But the infant is brought in three measures of flour, because while we propose to preach, we prepare the

ad conversionem, justis ad statum perseverantiae, et nobis ad supernam contemplationem; vel certe unus modius est, ut diximus, pro conversione peccatoris, alius pro disciplina conjugati, tertius vero pro excellenti puritate continentis. Et modii quidem dicuntur pro mensura discretionis. Unde et beatus Paulus perhibet, dicens: Non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem (Rom. XII, 3).

47. Quod profecto, qua praedicatorum ordo electus exigentibus [Forte, electus ex gentibus], non ex levitate vanitatis habuit, sed ex virtute bonae intentionis, sequitur: Et amphora vini. Virtus vero bonae intentionis est charitas Dei, quae in electorum cordibus diffunditur, per donum Spiritus sancti. Quod nimirum charitatis donum recte vini appellatione figuratur, 27 quia mentem occupat, et a terrenis affectibus alienat, ut intentionem ad saeculum non habeat, quam ad appetenda sola coelestia inflammat. Verum, ut hujus quoque virtutis non perfectio, sed initium designetur, amphora vini, et non poculum fuisse ostenditur. In amphoram quippe reponimus quod quandoque per poculum propinemus. Hinc est enim quod is qui supernae charitatis perfectionem gustaverat, Deo omnipotenti confitebatur dicens: Impinguasti in oleo caput meum, et poculum meum inebrians, quam praeclarum est (Psal. XXII, 5)! In amphora ergo vini Samuel oblatus ostenditur, quia electus quisque, cum ad evangelicae praedicationis ministerium praeparatur, ipsius praedicationis bonum proponit, non pro vana hujus saeculi ambitione, sed pro sola charitate impendere. In vitulis ergo adducitur pro proposito fortitudinis, in farinae modiis pro doctrina verbi, in amphora vini pro intentione charitatis.

48. Quae profecto virtutum initia, ubi sint perficienda edocet, cum subjungit: Et adduxit in domum Domini in Silo. Domus Domini sancta Ecclesia recte intelligitur, quae nimirum in Silo sita esse perhibetur. Silo autem locus est in quo arca Dei mansisse perhibetur. Quid ergo aliud Silo isto in loco significat quam veteris legis traditionem? Nam velut arcam Dei continet, dum carnalem litteram foris exhibet, quae in suis secretis spiritalem scientiam clausam tenet. Quid est ergo, quod domus Domini in Silo sita esse perhibetur, nisi quia sancta Ecclesia in sacramento Scripturarum velut in loco fundata cognoscitur? Illuc Samuel adductus asseritur, illic oblatus, quia praeter sanctam Ecclesiam locus non est ubi merita virtutum crescant, et ad culmen perfectionis veniant. Sed cum ipse qui adductus est asseritur, ejus quoque dilationis causa memoratur, cum subditur:

(Vers. 24.) Puer autem adhuc erat infantulus.

Nam si infantulus tunc non esset, dum per se posset accedere, duci huc ab alio non oporteret. Sequitur:

(Vers. 25.) Et immolaverunt vitulum, et obtulerunt puerum Heli.

word of science for sinners to conversion, for the just to the state of perseverance, and for ourselves to supernal contemplation; or certainly one measure is, as we have said, for the conversion of the sinner, another for the discipline of the married, but the third for the excellent purity of the continent. And measures indeed are said for the measure of discretion. Whence also the blessed Paul asserts, saying: Not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety (Rom. XII, 3).

47. Which indeed, because the order of preachers chosen from the Gentiles had not from the levity of vanity, but from the virtue of good intention, it follows: And a pitcher of wine. But the virtue of good intention is the charity of God, which is poured abroad in the hearts of the elect, by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Which doubtless gift of charity is rightly figured by the appellation of wine, 27 because it occupies the mind, and alienates it from earthly affections, so that it may have no intention towards the world, which it inflames to desire heavenly things alone. But, that the beginning, not the perfection, of this virtue also may be designated, it is shown to have been a pitcher of wine, and not a cup. For in a pitcher we lay up what we may sometime propinate through a cup. For hence it is that he who had tasted the perfection of supernal charity, confessed to almighty God saying: Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup which inebriateth me, how goodly is it (Ps. XXII, 5)! In a pitcher of wine therefore Samuel is shown offered, because every elect, when he is prepared for the ministry of evangelical preaching, proposes the good of that preaching, not for the vain ambition of this world, but to bestow for charity alone. In calves therefore he is brought for the proposition of fortitude, in measures of flour for the doctrine of the word, in a pitcher of wine for the intention of charity.

48. Which indeed beginnings of virtues, where they are to be perfected he teaches, when he subjoins: And she brought him to the house of the Lord in Silo. The house of the Lord is rightly understood the holy Church, which indeed is asserted to be situated in Silo. But Silo is the place in which the ark of God is asserted to have remained. What else therefore does Silo signify in that place than the tradition of the old law? For it as if contains the ark of God, while it exhibits outwardly the carnal letter, which it holds closed in its secrets spiritual science. What is it therefore, that the house of the Lord is asserted to be situated in Silo, if not because the holy Church is known to be founded in the sacrament of the Scriptures as if in a place? Thither Samuel is asserted brought, there offered, because besides the holy Church there is no place where the merits of virtues may grow, and come to the summit of perfection. But when he himself who is asserted brought, the cause of his delay is also remembered, when it is subjoined:

(Vers. 24.) But the boy was yet a little child.

For if he were not then a little child, while he could approach by himself, he would not behoove to be led hither by another. It follows:

(Vers. 25.) And they immolated a calf, and offered the boy to Heli.

49. Superius de sola Anna dicebatur: Et adduxit eum secum, postquam ablactaverat. Nunc autem de Helcana pariter, et de Anna subjungitur: Et immolaverunt vitulum, et obtulerunt puerum Heli. Tunc immolatus est vitulus, cum adductus est Samuel, et oblatus. Si ergo ibi erat tunc Helcana, et cum ducebatur, et cum offerebatur, quare non dictum est, adduxerunt eum secum, sicut dictum est, immolaverunt, et obtulerunt? Sed quia haec ad Ecclesiam et ad Christum retulimus, illi lactare, illi adducere pertinet, offerre et immolare sibi et Christo. Ipsa quippe institit verbo praedicationis, sed quibus doctrinam insinuat virtutem adimplendae operationis nequaquam subministrat. Litteram quippe Scripturae loquendo exhibet, sed ipsum bonum se petentibus nonnisi cum sponso dare potest. Immolatur ergo vitulus cum divina gratia cordi bona petentis infunditur, ut bona quae destinando deliberat studio boni operis hilariter impendat. Vitulus enim tunc immolatur, quia victima boni operis propositi ab omnipotenti Deo devotae mentis oblatione suscipitur, si id quod ei vovendo mens exhibet, totum Deo mactatur per hilaritatem. De hac immolatione vituli Dominus in Evangelio ait: Si vos, cum sitis mali, nostis bona data dare filiis vestris, quanto magis 28 Pater meus coelestis dabit spiritum bonum petentibus se (Matth. VII, 11; Luc. XI, 13)? Hinc Paulus ait: Qui seminat in benedictionibus, de benedictionibus et metet, unusquisque prout destinavit in corde suo, non ex tristitia, aut ex necessitate, hilarem enim datorem diligit Deus (II Cor. IX, 6, 7). Quid namque est destinare in corde, nisi proponere ex deliberatione? Dum ergo destinavit dixit, quasi vitulum adductum asseruit. Sed dum addidit, non ex tristitia, aut ex necessitate, quia hilarem datorem diligit Deus, adductum vitulum qualiter immoletur exposuit. Adducuntur ergo vituli cum ad agenda fortia bene proponenda praeparamur, sed vitulus immolatur cum deliberatio boni propositi Deo impenditur in oblatione magnae devotionis. Uterque autem, id est vir et uxor, vitulum immolasse perhibentur, quia eadem hilaritas fidelibus subditis praedicatoris voce ostenditur, atque in eorum cordibus divina gratia propagatur. Pariter ergo vitulum immolant cum in corde bene proficientis subditi divina convenit cum humana praedicatione. Tres autem vituli adducuntur, quia cum auxilium lapsis et stantibus ferre, et nobis ipsis opem custodiae proponimus, dum una bona intentione haec attendimus, tria quidem sunt respectu operis, sed unum in munere oblationis. Tria quidem sunt, quia erga nos, et proximos nostros diverso respectu et diversis temporibus exhibentur, sed unus sunt vitulus, quia simul proponuntur, et pari devotione oblationis Deo impenduntur, et una in eis hilaritas, et alia non habetur.

49. Above it was said of Anna alone: And she brought him with her, after she had weaned him. But now of Elcana equally, and of Anna it is subjoined: And they immolated a calf, and offered the boy to Heli. Then the calf was immolated, when Samuel was brought, and offered. If therefore Elcana was then there, both when he was brought, and when he was offered, why was it not said, they brought him with them, as it was said, they immolated, and they offered? But because we referred these things to the Church and to Christ, to her belongs to nurse, to her to bring, to offer and to immolate to himself and to Christ. She indeed presses upon the word of preaching, but to whom she insinuates doctrine she by no means subministers the virtue of fulfilling operation. She indeed exhibits the letter of Scripture by speaking, but the good itself she can only give to those asking with the spouse. The calf therefore is immolated when divine grace is poured into the heart of the one asking well, so that the goods which he deliberates by destining he may cheerfully bestow with the zeal of good work. For the calf is then immolated, because the victim of a purposed good work from almighty God is received with the oblation of a devout mind, if that which the mind exhibits to him by vowing, is all sacrificed to God through cheerfulness. Concerning this immolation of the calf the Lord says in the Gospel: If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more 28 will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask him (Matt. VII, 11; Luke XI, 13)? Hence Paul says: He who soweth in blessings, shall also reap of blessings, every one as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver (II Cor. IX, 6, 7). For what is it to determine in the heart, if not to propose from deliberation? While therefore he said he determined, he as if asserted the calf brought. But while he added, not with sadness, or of necessity, because God loves a cheerful giver, he expounded how the brought calf should be immolated. Calves therefore are brought when we are prepared to propose fortitudes well, but the calf is immolated when the deliberation of a good purpose is bestowed on God in the oblation of great devotion. But both, that is the husband and wife, are asserted to have immolated a calf, because the same cheerfulness is shown to faithful subjects by the voice of the preacher, and in their hearts divine grace is propagated. Equally therefore they immolate a calf when in the heart of a well profiting subject divine concurs with human preaching. But three calves are brought, because when we purpose to bring help to the fallen and standing, and aid of custody to ourselves, while with one good intention we attend to these things, they are indeed three in respect of the work, but one in the gift of oblation. They are indeed three, because towards us, and towards our neighbors they are exhibited in diverse respect and at diverse times, but they are one calf, because they are proposed together, and with equal devotion of oblation are bestowed on God, and one cheerfulness is in them, and another is not had.

50. Sequitur: Et obtulerunt puerum Heli. In Heli non solum personae doctorum veterum, sed etiam doctrinae figurantur. Quid est ergo quod puer Samuel Heli oblatus asseritur, nisi hoc, quod aperte cognoscitur, quia quisquis praedicando aliis prodesse nititur, non solum nova scribere debet, sed etiam vetera? Unde et Dominus in Evangelio per parabolam dicit: Ideo omnis scriba doctus in regno coelorum similis est homini patrifamilias qui profert de thesauro suo nova et vetera (Matth. XIII, 52). Samuel ergo Heli tunc offertur, cum mens bene proficientis subditi legis et prophetarum scientia eruditur, ut in libris antiquorum occidentem litteram legat, sed etiam secundum spiritum vivificantem intelligat; et sic quod foris sonat accipiat, ut praeter elementorum sonum, quod intus insonet spiritus recognoscat; et ad fidem nova habeat, sed, quoties necesse fuerit, ad Novi Testamenti confirmationem Scripturas veteres adducat. Tunc quippe defendere nova poterit, cum eorum rationem ex veteribus agnoscit. Aperte igitur Samuel Heli oblatus asseritur, quia solum sufficienter nova praedicat qui eam rationem qua intelligenda sunt vetera non ignorat. Et quia easdem Scripturas veteres intelligere sine praeceptore non possumus, et doctor nihil in nobis docendo proficit, si quod ipse foris loquitur in cordibus nostris per divinam gratiam non infundatur, mater non sola puerum obtulit, sed cum viro. Ei autem cui filium tradit se cum verbo praeconii Anna insinuavit, dicens:

(Vers. 26.) Obsecro, mi Domine, vivit anima tua, ego sum illa mulier, quae stetit coram te hic.

51. Coram Heli Anna stetit, quia sancta Ecclesia doctorum synagogae nullis persecutionibus corruit. Quod tale est ac si dicat Ecclesia glorians Synagogae praepositis: Idcirco orbem parere per Evangelium Deo potui, quia adversa quae mihi intulistis invicta toleravi. Nam si poenis victa vetustati 29 me subderem, novam Redemptori tot nationum sobolem nequaquam genuissem. Et quia humiliter loquitur, obsecrando Dominum vocat. Quia vero ei vitae aeternae pignus in fide Redemptoris dari appetit, dicit: Vivit anima tua. Sed quae se stetisse gloriata est, magna de se protulit. Et quia eadem magna humiliter, non superbe, dixerat, ea protinus ad laudem omnipotentis Dei retulit, dicens:

(Vers. 27.) Oravi, et dedit mihi Dominus petitionem, quam rogavi eum, idcirco et ego commendavi eum Domino.

50. It follows: And they offered the boy to Heli. In Heli not only the persons of the old doctors, but also the doctrines are figured. What is it therefore that the boy Samuel is asserted to be offered to Heli, if not this, which is openly known, because whoever strives to profit others by preaching, must write not only new things, but also old? Whence also the Lord in the Gospel by a parable says: Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like to a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old (Matt. XIII, 52). Samuel therefore is then offered to Heli, when the mind of a well profiting subject is erudited in the science of the law and the prophets, so that he may read the killing letter in the books of the ancients, but may also understand it according to the quickening spirit; and so may receive what sounds outwardly, that he may recognize what the spirit inwardly sounds besides the sound of the elements; and he may have new things for faith, but, as often as it shall be necessary, he may bring forth the old Scriptures for the confirmation of the New Testament. For then indeed he will be able to defend the new, when he recognizes the reason of them from the old. Openly therefore Samuel is asserted to be offered to Heli, because only he preaches the new sufficiently who is not ignorant of that reason by which the old are to be understood. And because we cannot understand those same old Scriptures without a preceptor, and a doctor profits nothing in us by teaching, if what he himself speaks outwardly is not poured into our hearts by divine grace, the mother did not offer the boy alone, but with her husband. But to him to whom she delivers her son Anna insinuated herself with the word of preaching, saying:

(Vers. 26.) I beseech thee, my Lord, as thy soul liveth, I am that woman, who stood before thee here.

51. Before Heli Anna stood, because the holy Church did not fall by any persecutions of the doctors of the synagogue. Which is such as if the Church glorying said to the 29 prelates of the Synagogue: Therefore I could bring forth the world through the Gospel to God, because I bore unvanquished the adversities which you brought upon me. For if overcome by punishments I subjected myself to the oldness, I should by no means have brought forth a new offspring of so many nations to the Redeemer. And because she speaks humbly, she calls him Lord by beseeching. But because she desires a pledge of eternal life to be given to him in the faith of the Redeemer, she says: As thy soul liveth. But she who gloried that she had stood, brought forth great things concerning herself. And because she had said those same great things humbly, not proudly, she straightway referred them to the praise of almighty God, saying:

(Vers. 27.) I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition, which I asked of him, therefore I also have lent him to the Lord.

52. Divina gratia ad hoc sanctae Ecclesiae filios tribuit, ut eos doctrina veritatis instituat, bonis moribus exornet, pia super eos custodia vigilet, a malo declinare perfecte faciat, et ad aeternam patriam sufficientem bonorum operum copiam praeparare. Haec profecto ministerii pastoralis sunt, sed electus praedicator ea suis viribus implere posse diffidit. Quia ergo nec sua virtute aliquos per Evangelium potest gignere, nec quos generat custodire, recte per Annam in Ecclesiae typo nunc dicitur: Oravi, et dedit mihi Dominus petitionem, quam rogavi eum. Idcirco et ego commendavi eum Domino, cunctis diebus quibus fuerit commendatus Domino. Nam ut gignere possit obsecrat; et ut hi quos orando obtinet in sancta conversatione permaneant, eos item omnipotenti Deo precibus commendat. Et quia ab eisdem precibus nunquam desinit, cunctis diebus se commendare filium Deo dicit. Cunctis namque diebus Domino filium commendare est ei pro eorum salute quos generat omni hujus vitae tempore supplicare. Dies namque quibus Domino commendamur tempora praesentis vitae significant. In quibus profecto diebus tanto validioribus divinae protectionis auxiliis indigemus, quanto gravioribus spirituum malignorum tentamentis impetimur. Quia vero in plerisque Codicibus non commendatus, sed commodatus legitur, a bono intellectu non vacat. A matre quippe Ecclesia in hac vita filii commodantur. Quidquid vero commodamus, id reddi nobis in fide excipientis exspectamus. Dies vero virtutum spiritalium claritates sunt. Quibus profecto diebus Annae filius Domino commodatur, quia ei sancta Ecclesia electos offert in claritate virtutum, ut eos postmodum ad augmentum sui aeterni gaudii sibi omnipotens Deus exhibeat in splendoribus praemiorum. Et notandum quia omnibus diebus commendatus asseritur, ut ei de eo quod habendum est de spirituali conversatione nihil desit, quem praedicator electus in aeterna vita recipere tenebrosum ex aliqua parte non poterit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 28.) Et adoraverunt ibi Dominum.

Et nos membra sanctae Ecclesiae, cum per scripturas Testamenti Veteris, venerationi, et praecepto conditoris submittimur, ibi profecto Dominum adoramus, quia Patrum veterum fidem tenemus, et eamdem fidem per dilectionem in bono opere exercemus.

CAPUT II.

Haec de principio typica expositione protulimus; nunc in ejusdem verbis historiae eruditionem nostram per moralem significationem requiramus.

(I Reg. I, 1.) Fuit vir unus, inquit, de Ramatha Sophim.

52. Divine grace therefore bestows sons on the holy Church, that she may instruct them in the doctrine of truth, adorn them with good morals, a pious custody may watch over them, perfectly make them decline from evil, and to prepare for the eternal country a sufficient abundance of good works. These indeed are of the pastoral ministry, but the elect preacher diffides that he is able to fulfill them by his own strengths. Because therefore neither by his own virtue can he beget any through the Gospel, nor guard those whom he begets, it is rightly now said by Anna in the type of the Church: I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition, which I asked of him. Therefore I also have lent him to the Lord, all the days in which he shall be lent to the Lord. For that she may be able to beget she beseeches; and that these whom she obtains by praying may permanently remain in holy conversation, those also she commends to almighty God with prayers. And because she never ceases from those same prayers, she says she commends her son to God all her days. For to commend a son to the Lord all days is for her to supplicate for the salvation of those whom she begets all the time of this life. For the days in which we are commended to the Lord signify the times of the present life. In which days indeed by how much the more we need the valid aids of divine protection, by so much the heavier temptations of malignant spirits we are attacked. But because in many codices it is read not commended, but lent, it is not devoid of a good understanding. For from mother Church in this life sons are lent. But whatever we lend, that we expect to be given back to us in the faith of the receiver. But days are the clarities of spiritual virtues. In which days indeed the son of Anna is lent to the Lord, because to him the holy Church offers the elect in the clarity of virtues, so that them afterwards almighty God may exhibit to herself to the augmentation of her eternal joy in the splendors of rewards. And it is to be noted that he is asserted commended all days, so that to him concerning that which is to be had of spiritual conversation nothing may be wanting, whom the elect preacher will not be able to receive in eternal life dark from any part. It follows:

(Vers. 28.) And they adored the Lord there.

And we members of the holy Church, when through the scriptures of the Old Testament, we are submitted to the veneration, and precept of the Creator, there indeed we adore the Lord, because we hold the faith of the old Fathers, and exercise the same faith through love in good work.

CHAPTER II.

These things concerning the principle we have brought forth by typical exposition; now in the words of the same history let us seek our erudition through moral signification.

(I Kings I, 1.) There was one man, he says, of Ramathaimsophim.

1. In hoc viro uno quid rectius quam unusquisque 30 novus saeculi contemptor designatur? Vir namque dicitur, quia proposito fortis est; unus vero, quia amore singularis; vir namque est, quia ex magna virtute cuncta praesentia despicit; sed unus, quia sola omnipotentis Dei specie frui concupiscit. Quisquis enim perfecte terrena despicit, vir est ex fortitudine, sed si conditorem suum ardenter videre non cupiat, non est unus ex intentione. Perfectio igitur viri in praeconio ponitur unitatis, ut qui saeculum potenter despicit mentem non dividat, solis supernis inhiet, ad ea tantum quae de visione conditoris sunt aeterna gaudia suspiret. Talis profecto erat qui Deo confitens ait: Quid mihi restat in coelo, et a te quid volui super terram (Psal. LXXII, 25)? Hinc item dicit: Vultum tuum, Domine, requiram (Psal. XXVI, 8). Qui enim in terra nihil voluit, profecto vir fuit; sed qui neque in coelo, neque in terra aliquid praeter ipsum voluit, qui, spretis omnibus, solum ejus vultum quaesivit, non solum vir, sed etiam unus exstitit. De hac unitate Dominus in Evangelio Marthae loquitur, dicens: Martha, Martha, sollicita es, et turbaris erga plurima; porro unum est necessarium (Luc. X, 41, 42). Hinc Lucas de perfecto credentium numero loquens, ait: Erat eis cor unum, et anima una (Act. IV, 32). Unum quippe eis cor erat, quia per intentionem rationis solum conditorem aspexerant; unam animam habebant, quia per affectionem amoris solum ejus faciem videre desiderabant. Hinc est quod diligens Propheta secum reputat, dicens: Sitivit anima mea ad Deum fontem vivum, quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem Dei (Psal. XLI, 2)? Pro hac unitate obtinenda Veritas docens ait: Qui non renuntiaverit omnibus quae possidet non potest meus esse discipulus (Luc. XIV, 33).

2. Quae etiam nostra sunt, quia hi qui, abrenuntiantes saeculo, remotioris vitae secretum petivimus, monachi vocamur. Monos quidem Graece, Latine autem unus dicitur. Hoc quippe titulo appellationis inscribimur, ut vox nominis nostri nobis insinuet altitudinem dignitatis, et animus noster tanto ardentius ad conditoris visionem se erigat, quanto sublimitatem claritatis, in qua semper debet consistere, quasi in fronte praelatam portat. Sed divini amoris sublimitas in sola catholica Ecclesia veris electis impenditur. Bene ergo vir, qui unus dicitur, de Ramatha Sophim, de monte Ephraim fuisse perhibetur. Ramatha quippe, ut jam dixi, Hebraeum nomen est, sed Latina locutione dicitur Visio consummata. Quae profecto appellatio sanctae Ecclesiae convenit, quae antiquitus a prophetis praevisa est, sed in finem saeculorum in Redemptoris fide disposita. Consummata ergo visio sancta Ecclesia dicitur, quia per Redemptorem humani generis erecta est in

1. In this one man who more rightly 30 is designated than every new despiser of the world? For he is called a man, because he is strong in purpose; but one, because singular in love; for he is a man, because from great virtue he despises all present things; but one, because he covets to enjoy the sight of almighty God alone. For whoever perfectly despises earthly things, is a man from fortitude, but if he does not ardently desire to see his Creator, he is not one from intention. The perfection therefore of the man is placed in the encomium of unity, that he who potently despises the world may not divide his mind, may gape after supernal things alone, may sigh only for those eternal joys which are of the vision of the Creator. Such indeed was he who confessing to God says: What have I in heaven, and besides thee what do I desire upon earth (Ps. LXXII, 25)? Hence also he says: My face hath sought thee: thy face, O Lord, will I still seek (Ps. XXVI, 8). For he who willed nothing on earth, was indeed a man; but he who neither in heaven, nor on earth willed anything besides him, who, having despised all things, sought only his face, not only a man, but also existed as one. Concerning this unity the Lord in the Gospel speaks to Martha, saying: Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things; but one thing is necessary (Luke X, 41, 42). Hence Luke speaking of the perfect number of believers, says: And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul (Acts IV, 32). For they had one heart, because by the intention of reason they had looked upon the Creator alone; they had one soul, because by the affection of love they desired to see his face alone. Hence it is that the loving Prophet reputes with himself, saying: My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God (Ps. XLI, 2)? For obtaining this unity the Truth teaching says: Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple (Luke XIV, 33).

2. Which also are ours, because we who, renouncing the world, have sought the secret of a more remote life, are called monks. Monos indeed in Greek, but in Latin is called one. By this title of appellation we are inscribed, so that the voice of our name may insinuate to us the altitude of dignity, and our mind may by so much the more ardently erect itself to the vision of the Creator, by how much the sublimity of clarity, in which it ought always to consist, it carries as if pre-borne on the forehead. But the sublimity of divine love is bestowed on the true elect in the catholic Church alone. Well therefore the man, who is called one, of Ramathaimsophim, is asserted to have been of Mount Ephraim. Ramathaim indeed, as I have already said, is a Hebrew name, but in Latin locution is called a consummated vision. Which appellation indeed suits the holy Church, which was foreseen of old by the prophets, but disposed in the end of the world in the faith of the Redeemer. A consummated vision therefore the holy Church is called, because through the Redeemer of

religionis culmine, quae olim tantum praevisa erat spiritu prophetiae. Haec autem Sophim esse describitur in monte Ephraim aedificata (Supra, initio expositionis allegoricae), quia contemplatione Dei celsissima est, et spiritalibus virtutibus fecunda. Sophim quippe specula dicitur, Ephraim fructificans. Quae profecto vocabula situm sanctae Ecclesiae recte insinuant, quae non solum intentione visionis alta est, sed excellentia conversationis. Quibus etiam vocabulis et haereticorum dementia, et caeterorum improborum sterilitas reprobatur. Illi quidem, dum a rectitudine fidei deviant, speculationem sublimitatis non habent; isti vero, quia recta vident quae agant, et ea facere semper dissimulant, speculam quidem habent, sed virtutum montem 31 excellenti vita non obtinent. Sancta vero Ecclesia quia in Sophim, id est in speculatione sublimis est, gloriatur, dicens: Nostra conversatio in coelis est (Philip. III, 20). Quia etiam in virtutum monte per boni operis fructum constituta est, elisam reproborum fidem reprobans, ait: Fides sine operibus mortua est (Jac. II, 20, 26). Hinc item praedicans dicit: Dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime autem ad domesticos fidei (Galat. VI, 10). Vir ergo qui unus dicitur de monte Ephraim esse memoratur, quia et terrena despicere, et superna desiderare, ei solum prodest qui per fidem catholicam intra sanctam Ecclesiam sese continet. Sequitur:

(Vers. 1.) Et nomen ejus Helcana, filius Hieroboam, filii Heliu, filii Thau, filii Suph.

3. Hoc etiam nomen superius ostendimus, quia ab Hebraea lingua in nostram, Dei fervor, verteretur. Quod profecto nomen viri bene congruit ordini spiritalis expositionis. Qui enim vir unus dicitur, necesse est ut ex Dei fervore censeatur. Quis enim aut temporalia despicere, aut amare coelestia sine divina gratia possit? Necesse quippe est ut hunc gratia divina praeveniat, quatenus, Spiritus sancti igne succensus, quanto ardentius summa diligit, tanto fortius ima contemnat. Cui etiam in genealogiae ordine quatuor patrum nomina perscribuntur, quia in fide Redemptoris eorum praedicatione genitus est qui in eumdem humani generis Redemptorem per quatuor Evangelistarum scripta de omni mundi parte credidere. Qui etiam Ephrathaeus dicitur. De monte Ephraim et Ephrathaeus est qui in fertili terra sterilis non est. Nam plerique intra sanctam Ecclesiam nomine censentur fidei, cujus nullos proferunt fructus actionis. Qui nimirum dum de Ecclesia prodeunt, velut de monte fructifero esse

the human race she is erected in the summit of religion, which formerly was only foreseen by the spirit of prophecy. But this Sophim is described as built on mount Ephraim (Above, at the beginning of the allegorical exposition), because she is most high in the contemplation of God, and fruitful in spiritual virtues. For Sophim is called a watchtower, Ephraim fructifying. Which words indeed rightly insinuate the situation of the holy Church, which is not only high by the intention of vision, but by the excellence of conversation. By which words also both the madness of heretics, and the sterility of other wicked men are reprobated. They indeed, while they deviate from the rectitude of faith, have not the speculation of sublimity; but these, because they see the right things which they should do, and always dissimulate doing them, have indeed the watchtower, but do not hold the mountain of virtues 31 by an excellent life. But the holy Church because she is in Sophim, that is sublime in speculation, glories, saying: Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. III, 20). Because also she is established in the mountain of virtues through the fruit of good work, reprobating the crushed faith of the reprobate, she says: Faith without works is dead (James II, 20, 26). Hence also preaching she says: Therefore, whilst we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith (Gal. VI, 10). The man therefore who is called one is remembered to be of mount Ephraim, because both to despise earthly things, and to desire supernal things, profits him alone who through the catholic faith contains himself within the holy Church. It follows:

(Vers. 1.) And his name was Elcana, the son of Jeroboam, the son of Eliu, the son of Thohu, the son of Suph.

3. This name also we showed above, that from the Hebrew language into ours, it is turned the fervor of God. Which name indeed of the man well suits the order of spiritual exposition. For he who is called one man, it is necessary that he be counted from the fervor of God. For who could either despise temporal things, or love heavenly things without divine grace? It is necessary indeed that divine grace should prevent him, so far as, kindled by the fire of the Holy Spirit, by how much the more ardently he loves the highest things, by so much the more strongly he may contemn the lowest. To whom also in the order of genealogy the names of four fathers are written, because in the faith of the Redeemer he is begotten by the preaching of those who believed in the same Redeemer of the human race through the writings of the four Evangelists from every part of the world. Who is also called an Ephrathite. Of mount Ephraim he is also an Ephrathite who in a fertile land is not sterile. For many within the holy Church are counted by the name of faith, of which they bring forth no fruits of action. Who doubtless while they come forth from the Church, are sensed

sentiuntur; sed quia ipsi bonorum operum non habent fructum, non sunt Ephrathaei. De monte ergo Ephraim est, et Ephrathaeus non est, qui fidem catholicam in Ecclesia dedicit, sed opera digna fidei non impendit. Talibus profecto veritas in Evangelio comminatur, dicens: Auferetur a vobis regnum Dei, et dabitur genti facienti fructum ejus (Matth. XXI, 34). Hinc sub ficulneae specie, colono sanctae Ecclesiae repulsionem infructuosae animae imperans, ait: Succide eam, ut quid terram occupat (Luc. XIII, 7)? Hinc Joannes Baptista comminans, ait: Jam securis ad radicem arboris posita est. Omnis arbor, quae non facit fructum bonum excidetur, et in ignem mittetur (Matth. III, 10; Luc. III, 9). De monte quoque Ephraim eos esse ostenderat, sed non Ephrathaeos, de quibus Veritas in Evangelio per parabolam dicit: Malos male perdet, et vineam suam locabit aliis agricolis, qui reddant ei fructum temporibus suis (Matth. XXI, 41). Vir ergo de monte Ephraim, dicitur Ephrathaeus, quia quicunque intra sanctam Ecclesiam fidem catholicam tenemus, dum per ardorem affectionis terrena abjicimus, coelestia amamus, oportet et ut a terrenis quae despicimus per boni operis laborem separemur, et ad ea quae diligimus coelestia praeparemur. Esse ergo in Ecclesia, et opera bona non facere, quia ad acquirendae aeternae salutis bonum non prodest, vir qui de monte Ephraim asseritur, etiam Ephrathaeus fuisse memoratur.

4. Unde et duas uxores habere describitur, quia activae vitae per fecunditatem boni operis et contemplativae vitae conjungitur per amorem internae delectationis. Quamobrem Phenennae filil fuisse dicuntur, Annae autem filii non fuisse. Quid enim sunt activae vitae filii, nisi bonorum operum fructus? 32 Et quid est quod Anna filios non habet, nisi quia rudis contemplatio ea quae jam amare coepit internae contemplationis gaudia cito non obtinet? Filii quidem sunt contemplativae vitae gaudia internae visionis. Sed mens, quae contemplari aeterna inchoat, ad eorum gaudia excipienda tanto difficilius pervenit, quanto etiam illorum pulchritudinem non attendit. Quis ergo in gloria ejus pulchritudinis gaudere praevalet quam non videt? Mens autem quae in aeternorum bonorum contemplatione se noviter elevat, ad ea tanto tardius assurgit, quanto humanitatis suae familiares tenebras velociter non deponit, quia

to be as if from a fruitful mountain; but because they themselves have not the fruit of good works, they are not Ephrathites. Of mount Ephraim therefore is, and is not an Ephrathite, he who has learned the catholic faith in the Church, but does not bestow works worthy of faith. Such indeed the truth in the Gospel threatens, saying: The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof (Matt. XXI, 43). Hence under the species of a fig tree, commanding the husbandman of the holy Church the repulsion of the unfruitful soul, he says: Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground (Luke XIII, 7)? Hence John the Baptist threatening, says: For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that doth not yield good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire (Matt. III, 10; Luke III, 9). Of mount Ephraim also he had shown them to be, but not Ephrathites, of whom the Truth in the Gospel by a parable says: He will bring those evil men to an evil end, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that shall render him the fruit in due season (Matt. XXI, 41). The man therefore of mount Ephraim, is called an Ephrathite, because whoever we hold the catholic faith within the holy Church, while through the ardor of affection we cast away earthly things, we love heavenly things, it behooves both that from the earthly things which we despise we be separated by the labor of good work, and to those heavenly things which we love we be prepared. To be therefore in the Church, and not to do good works, because it does not profit to the acquiring of the good of eternal salvation, the man who is asserted of mount Ephraim, is also remembered to have been an Ephrathite.

4. Whence also he is described to have had two wives, because he is joined to the active life through the fecundity of good work and to the contemplative life through the love of internal delectation. For which reason sons are said to have been to Phenenna, but to Anna sons were not. For what are the sons of the active life, if not the fruits of good works? 32 And what is it that Anna has not sons, if not because a rude contemplation does not quickly obtain those joys of internal contemplation which it has already begun to love? Sons indeed are the joys of the contemplative life of internal vision. But the mind, which begins to contemplate eternal things, arrives by so much the more difficultly to receive their joys, by how much also it does not attend to their beauty. Who therefore prevails to rejoice in the glory of that beauty which he does not see? But the mind which newly elevates itself in the contemplation of eternal goods, rises to them by so much the more slowly, by how much it does not swiftly lay aside the familiar darknesses of its humanity, because while it does not prevail to

dum a se abjicere mundanas curas non praevalet, velut in oculis gestat pulverem, quo id quod cupit videre non potest. Prius ergo abjiciendus est pulvis ex oculo, deinde oculus refovendus. Pulvis quippe abjicitur cum ab intentione mentis cuncta rerum corporearum phantasmata removentur, et oculus refovetur, cum usu continuae meditationis eadem mentis intentio ad aeterna sustollitur. Quae profecto cum diuturna consuetudine in supernis morari didicerit, eadem diuturnitate consuetudinis, puritatem obtinet, qua dum clarius aeterna respicit, in eorum gloria exsultare plenius possit. Anna ergo non habuisse filios dicitur, ut non solum inchoantis imperfectio designetur, sed etiam vitae contemplativae celsitudo. Magno enim meritorum sita est culmine, quae in fecunditatis suae gaudio facile haberi non potest. Hinc est enim quod Jacob Rachelem conjugem habere desiderat (Gen. XXIX, 18, seq.), sed tamen ei prius Lia substernitur, ut pro obtinenda illius specie septenarius annorum numerus in soceri servitio geminetur, quia amator vitae contemplativae, hanc in ubertate aeterni gaudii cito adipisci desiderat, sed tamen ei omnium donorum largitor Spiritus cito non tribuit, ne habitam quasi vilem despiciat, si facilitas ei hanc pro voto repraesentat; sed tanto ea fruatur dulcius, sollicitiusque custodiat, quanto hanc difficilius promeretur. Quare et sequitur:

(Vers. 3.) Et ascendebat vir ille statutis diebus, ut adoraret, et immolaret Domino exercituum in Silo.

5. Statutis quidem diebus ascendit, quia in splendoribus aerternae visionis paulatim proficit. Quid enim sunt illae manifestationes interni luminis, nisi dies electae mentis? et statuti namque dies sunt, quia in profectu spiritalis vitae positis divina ordinatione disponuntur; statuti etiam dies sunt, quia in eorum claritate non possumus admitti cum volumus, sed cum divina dignatione sublevamur. Aliquando namque nos in contemplatione internae lucis excipit, quandoque labi usque ad praeferendas humanitatis tenebras relinquit. Quasi enim statutis diebus elevat, quibus amoenitatem internae lucis non jugiter aperit, sed per tempora suae dispositionis ostendit. Dies ergo nostri sunt, quia in magnis splendoribus excipimur, cum internae gloriae nobis pulchritudo revelatur. Statuti vero dies idcirco nominantur, quia ut intima luce fruamur, non est nostri conaminis, sed divinae

cast away from itself worldly cares, it as if bears dust in its eyes, by which it cannot see that which it desires. First therefore the dust is to be cast away from the eye, then the eye to be fomented. The dust indeed is cast away when from the intention of the mind all phantasms of corporeal things are removed, and the eye is fomented, when by the use of continual meditation the same intention of the mind is raised to eternal things. Which indeed when by long custom it shall have learned to tarry in supernal things, by the same length of custom, it obtains purity, by which while it more clearly looks upon eternal things, it may be able more fully to exult in their glory. Anna therefore is said not to have had sons, so that not only the imperfection of the beginner may be designated, but also the celsitude of the contemplative life. For it is situated in a great summit of merits, which cannot easily be had in the joy of its fecundity. Hence it is indeed that Jacob desires to have Rachel for a wife (Gen. XXIX, 18, seq.), but yet Lia is first sub-laid to him, so that for obtaining her beauty a septenary number of years may be doubled in the service of his father-in-law, because the lover of the contemplative life, desires to acquire this quickly in the fertility of eternal joy, but yet the Spirit the bestower of all gifts does not quickly give it to him, lest he should despise it as vile when had, if facility represents this to him according to his vow; but he may enjoy it by so much the more sweetly, and guard it more solicitously, by how much the more difficultly he merits it. Wherefore also it follows:

(Vers. 3.) And this man went up out of his city upon the appointed days, to adore and to offer sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Silo.

5. He went up indeed on the appointed days, because in the splendors of the eternal vision he profits by degrees. For what are those manifestations of internal light, if not the days of the elect mind? and they are indeed appointed days, because they are disposed by divine ordination for those placed in the proficiency of spiritual life; they are also appointed days, because into their clarity we cannot be admitted when we will, but when we are lifted up by divine dignation. For sometimes he receives us in the contemplation of internal light, sometimes he leaves us to fall down even to the darknesses of humanity that are to be borne. For as if on appointed days he elevates us, on which he does not continually open the pleasantness of internal light, but shows it through the times of his disposition. Therefore they are our days, because we are received in great splendors, when the beauty of internal glory is revealed to us. But they are named appointed days for this reason, because that we may enjoy the intimate light, it is not of our endeavor,

dignationis. Saepe namque diuturno silentio, instantibus supplicationibus, crebris gemitibus, illam nobis internae lucis gloriam aperiri flagitamus, et in ejus amoenitate recipi non meremur. Saepe nil tale pro ejus desiderio agimus, sed subito nos divina gratia praevenit, ab imo nostrae infirmitatis erigit, in superna rapit, insperantibusque nobis gloriam suae lucis ostendit. Diebus ergo statutis ascendimus, quia in contemplationem coelestium 33 sublimari non possumus nostro conamine, sed divina dispositione. Ascensus quoque dies sunt, quia quando illa sublimi luce non fruimur, in imo sumus; et cum in illius alta visione assumimur, quam in imo jacuissemus ante assumptionis nostrae horam, cognoscimus. Displicemus nos tunc nobis, in quo fuimus, placemus autem in quo sumus, quia absorpta jam mens amore coelestium, dum laetatur luce, qua fruitur, cuncta terrena horrore nimio dedignatur. Unde et beatus Petrus, dum in montem assumitur, dum nube lucida obumbratur, dum ei transfigurati gloria Salvatoris ostenditur, dicit: Bonum est nos hic esse, Domine (Matth. XVII, 4). Nam quia jam Dei omnipotentis munere meretur interesse sublimibus, incomparabile illic bonum ineffabiliter diligit, ex cujus pulchritudine cuncta quae transeunt velut foeda reprehendit.

6. Sed quid est quod idem vir de civitate sua ascendere dicitur? Quid vero est aliud civitas, nisi cohabitantium munimentum? Quae autem est haec civitas, nisi muniti cordis perfecta custodia circumspectionis? Haec nimirum velut cohabitantes cives altis moenibus protegit, quia dum custodiendis virtutibus solerter invigilat, internam eorum pacem hostis callidus non conturbat. In hac certe civitate nos consistere sapiens ille praecepit, qui ait: Omni custodia serva cor tuum, quoniam ex ipso vita procedit (Prov. IV, 23). Hinc etiam Dominus discipulis praecipit, dicens: Vos autem sedete in civitate, donec induamini virtute ex alto (Luc. XXIV, 49). In civitate quippe sedemus cum per quotidianam sollicitudinem in internae custodiae defensione requiescimus. In qua sedentes virtute induimur ex alto, quia praeparati jam in habitaculum sancti Spiritus per ejus gratiam in supernae gloriae contemplationem sublevamur. In hoc igitur quod vir Ephrathaeus de civitate sua ascendere dicitur, quid aliud quam negligentiae nostrae culpa indicatur? Nam per contemplationem rimari caelestia volumus, qui non solum cordis, sed etiam corporis custodiam non habemus. Et quidem saepe indecenter aspicimus, otiosa audimus, superflua loquimur, somnum, cibum non ad

but of divine dignation. For often by long-lasting silence, by instant supplications, by frequent groans, we flagitate that that glory of internal light be opened to us, and we do not merit to be received in its pleasantness. Often we do no such thing for the desire of it, but suddenly divine grace prevents us, erects us from the bottom of our infirmity, ravishes us to supernal things, and to us not hoping shows the glory of its light. On appointed days therefore we go up, because into the contemplation of heavenly things 33 we cannot be sublimated by our endeavor, but by divine disposition. The days of ascent also they are, because when we do not enjoy that sublime light, we are in the bottom; and when we are assumed into the high vision of it, how much we had lain in the bottom before the hour of our assumption, we recognize. We then displease ourselves in what we were, but we please ourselves in what we are, because the mind already absorbed by the love of heavenly things, while it rejoices in the light which it enjoys, disdains all earthly things with exceeding horror. Whence also the blessed Peter, while he is assumed into the mountain, while he is overshadowed by the bright cloud, while the glory of the transfigured Savior is shown to him, says: Lord, it is good for us to be here (Matt. XVII, 4). For because now by the gift of almighty God he merits to be present at sublime things, he ineffably loves the incomparable good there, from the beauty of which he reproves all things that pass away as foul.

6. But what is it that the same man is said to go up out of his city? But what else is a city, if not the defense of those dwelling together? But what is this city, if not the perfect custody of circumspection of a fortified heart? This indeed as if it protects the cohabiting citizens with high walls, because while he watchfully keeps awake for guarding the virtues, the cunning enemy does not disturb their internal peace. In this city certainly that wise man commanded us to consist, who says: With all watchfulness keep thy heart, because life issueth out from it (Prov. IV, 23). Hence also the Lord commands the disciples, saying: But sit you in the city, till you be endued with power from on high (Luke XXIV, 49). In the city indeed we sit when through daily solicitude we rest in the defense of internal custody. Sitting in which we are endued with power from on high, because prepared already for the habitation of the Holy Spirit we are sublimated by his grace into the contemplation of supernal glory. In this therefore that the Ephrathite man is said to go up out of his city, what else than the fault of our negligence is indicated? For through contemplation we who not only of the heart, but also have not the custody of the body, wish to search heavenly things. And indeed often we look indecently, we hear idle things, we speak superfluous things, we have sleep, food not for the refection of the body, but for the use of delectation. Therefore when we wish to discuss ambiguous things, to look upon

refectionem corporis habemus, sed ad usum delectationis. Itaque cum discutere ambigua volumus, superna conspicere, tenebras nostras deserere, internae dulcedinis saporem gustare, ab illius secreto tanto dignius repellimur, quanto munitionis nostrae fortitudines negligentius dissipamus; jamque nobis tanto est ascendere difficilius, quanto ad nosmetipsos relapsi in altitudinem custodiae erigere non curavimus cordis munitiones. Ascendat ergo vir de civitate sua, ut qui per internam contemplationem appetit proficere, exteriores sensus ordinet, mentem regat, et quasi in altis receptus munitionibus exspectet, ubi eum superna illustratio visitet. Ad statutorum quippe dierum ascensum jam qui paratus invigilat, dignus custodia puritatis efficitur, ut saepius divina dignatione visitetur. Sed dum ascendere dicitur, ascensionis etiam causa memoratur, cum subditur: Ut adoraret, et immolaret Domino exercituum in Silo.

7. Quisquis divinae contemplationis arce sustollitur, in illa cuncta, illuminante luce, respicit, et quod se admirabiliter terreat, et quod ineffabiliter delectet. Nam illa summa visio, ut electae menti se aperit, et imperscrutabilem abyssum judiciorum Dei et bonitatis ejus abundantiam misericorditer ostendit 34 ut videntem magno pavore dejiciat, et ingenti gaudio sustollat; et terrore quidem dejicitur ut statum mundanae affectionis deserat, et mulcetur gaudio ut quod praegustare de conditoris bonitate inchoat ardentius concupiscat. Tunc quippe adorat, cum, considerata illa immensitate omnipotentiae, sic conditori submittitur, ut contra spiritualem conversationem carnalis concupiscentiae impulsibus non levetur. Adorans autem immolat, quia quo humilius divina veneratione prosternitur, summae claritatis illius blandimento suavius refovetur. Adorare igitur ascendenti, est divinae omnipotentiae magna casti amoris veneratione submitti; immolare vero, divinae lucis suavitate ineffabiliter delectari. Electa enim mens velut spirituali immolationi Deo se consecrat, dum in illa ineffabili elevationis suae laetitia eam ignis divinae charitatis ardentius inflammat. Deum ergo electi cujusque studium sub Ephrathaeo viro ostenditur, et adorare dicitur, et immolare, quia sic mens electa appetit superna conspicere, ut spirituali visione proficiens, et omnem statum conterat carnalis vitae, et plenitudinem capiat aeternae laetitiae. Nam etsi ad hanc summae contemplationis altitudinem carnalis aliquis non assumitur, quantum tamen ad illam spiritualem conversationem, in quam illo ascensu contemplationis proficit, antequam proficiat, quodam modo carnalis est. Hoc enim ipsum quasi carnale est, per altitudinem visionis a corporearum rerum intentione separari non posse.

supernal things, to forsake our darknesses, to taste the savor of internal sweetness, from the secret of it by so much the more worthily we are repelled, by how much the more negligently we dissipate the fortitudes of our fortification; and already for us by so much it is more difficult to ascend, by how much relapsed to ourselves we have not cared to erect the fortifications of the heart to the altitude of custody. Let the man therefore ascend out of his city, so that he who desires to profit through internal contemplation, may order his exterior senses, rule his mind, and as if received in high fortifications may expect, where supernal illustration may visit him. For to the ascent of the appointed days he who already prepared keeps awake, is made worthy of the custody of purity, so that he may be more often visited by divine dignation. But while he is said to ascend, the cause also of the ascension is remembered, when it is subjoined: To adore and to offer sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Silo.

7. Whoever is lifted up into the citadel of divine contemplation, in that all things, the light illuminating, he looks upon, both what may admirably terrify him, and what may ineffably delight him. For that highest vision, as it opens itself to the elect mind, and mercifully shows the unsearchable abyss of the judgments of God and the abundance of his goodness 34 so that it may cast down the seer with great fear, and lift him up with immense joy; and indeed he is cast down by terror that he may forsake the state of worldly affection, and is mulced by joy that what he begins to foretaste of the goodness of the Creator he may more ardently covet. Then indeed he adores, when, that immensity of omnipotence considered, he is so submitted to the Creator, that against spiritual conversation he may not be lifted up by the impulses of carnal concupiscence. But adoring he immolates, because by how much the more humbly he is prostrated by divine veneration, by so much the more sweetly he is fomented by the blandishment of that highest clarity. To adore therefore for him who ascends, is to be submitted to divine omnipotence by a great veneration of chaste love; but to immolate, is to be ineffably delighted by the sweetness of divine light. For the elect mind as if consecrates itself to God for a spiritual immolation, while in that ineffable gladness of its elevation the fire of divine charity more ardently inflames it. The study therefore of every elect to God is shown under the Ephrathite man, and he is said to adore, and to immolate, because so the elect mind desires to look upon supernal things, that profiting by spiritual vision, it may both crush every state of carnal life, and may take the plenitude of eternal gladness. For although to this altitude of highest contemplation a carnal someone is not assumed, yet as to that spiritual conversation, into which by that ascent of contemplation he profits, before he profits, he is in a certain manner carnal. For this itself is as if carnal, not to be able to be separated from the intention of corporeal things through the altitude of vision.

8. Sed, ut temeritas humanae audaciae comprimatur, prius adorare dicitur, postea immolare. Ordinatus quippe contemplantis ascensus est, si a timore incipiat. Timor autem ipse, quid est aliud quam electae mentis ad divinam gloriam speculandam transeuntis praeordinata purgatio? Eo enim purius divinae lucis radios intueri merebatur, quo, validiori timore dejecta, visioni Majestatis intimae purgatior exhibetur. Sic ergo Ephrathaei hujus conversatio foris nobis ostenditur, ut ad perfectionem tendentibus quid intus agendum sit rationabiliter demonstretur. Igitur dum summae gloriae respergi claritate appetimus, praesumptionis nostrae ausum in hoc timoris transitu praefigamus, ut quo venerabilius omnipotentem Dominum metuimus, eo perspicacius benignitatis ejus gloriam videamus. Cujus etiam timoris magnitudo electae menti aliquando post ostensionem laetae visionis incutitur. Quod profecto dum fit, non fit ut mentem ad gloriae visionem purificet, sed ut custodiat ab elatione. Unde et Petrus, et Jacobus, et Joannes prius transformati Domini gloriam viderunt, deinde incusso eis timore cecidere, ne elati perderent quod humiliter assumpti videre meruissent (Matth. XVII, 2, seq.). Aliquando ergo adoratio immolationem praecedit, aliquando immolatio adorationem, sed nimirum divina dispositione, non nostro conamine. Vir quippe Ephrathaeus, ut prius adoraret, et postea immolaret, ascendisse describitur, quia profecto ordo ita perfectus est, ut a veneratione, quae ex pavore divinae districtionis nascitur, ad speculationem laetae majestatis efferamur. Divina tamen clementia electas mentes aliquando sic suae dulcedinis infusione exhilarat, ut eas in timoris magnitudinem non inducat. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 4.) Venit ergo dies, et immolavit Helcana.

9. Quid est quod dicit: Venit dies, et immolavit; et non dixit: Adoravit, et immolavit, nisi 35 quia, ut superius dixi, sic saepe divina dignatione ad videndum gloriam divinae claritatis extollimur, ut nulla tunc judiciorum immista consideratione turbemur. Et quanquam sine magna veneratione omnipotenti Deo electa anima nunquam assistat, tamen velut immolat, et non adorat, dum sic illa summi gaudii felicitate fruitur, ut dejectione timoris nulla quatiatur. In hunc quippe affectum venerat, quae dicebat: Osculetur me osculo oris sui (Cant. I, 1). Quem timoris affectum praetendit, quae osculari appetit? Hinc etiam de Moyse scriptum est: Quia Deo loquebatur, sicut solet loqui vir ad amicum suum (Exod. XXXIII, 11). Nam, velut veniente die, hunc Scriptura sacra sic immolare ostendit, ut eum adoratio timoris nulla prostravisset. Quo in loco hoc notandum video,

8. But, that the temerity of human audacity may be repressed, he is first said to adore, afterwards to immolate. The ascent of the contemplator indeed is ordered, if he begin from fear. But what else is fear itself, than the preordained purgation of the elect mind passing over to specular divine glory? For he merited to look upon the rays of divine light so much the more purely, by how much, cast down by a more valid fear, he is exhibited more purged for the vision of intimate Majesty. So therefore the conversation of this Ephrathite is shown to us outwardly, that to those tending to perfection what is to be done inwardly may be rationally demonstrated. Therefore while we desire to be sprinkled with the clarity of the highest glory, let us prefix the daring of our presumption in this passage of fear, so that by how much the more venerably we fear the almighty Lord, by so much the more perspicaciously we may see the glory of his benignity. The magnitude of which fear is also sometimes struck into the elect mind after the showing of the joyful vision. Which indeed while it is done, is not done that it may purify the mind for the vision of glory, but that it may guard it from elation. Whence also Peter, and James, and John first saw the glory of the transfigured Lord, then the fear struck into them they fell down, lest elated they should lose what humbly assumed they had merited to see (Matt. XVII, 2, seq.). Sometimes therefore adoration precedes immolation, sometimes immolation adoration, but doubtless by divine disposition, not by our endeavor. The Ephrathite man indeed, that he might first adore, and afterwards immolate, is described to have ascended, because indeed the order is so perfect, that out of veneration, which is born from the dread of divine strictness, we are efferated to the speculation of joyful majesty. Yet divine clemency sometimes so exhilarates the elect minds with the infusion of its sweetness, that it does not induce them into the magnitude of fear. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Vers. 4.) Therefore the day came, and Elcana offered sacrifice.

9. What is it that he says: The day came, and he sacrificed; and did not say: He adored, and sacrificed, if not 35 because, as I have said above, we are so often extolled by divine dignation to seeing the glory of divine clarity, that we are then disturbed by no immisted consideration of judgments. And although without great veneration the elect soul never assists almighty God, yet as if she immolates, and does not adore, while she so enjoys that felicity of highest joy, that she is shaken by no dejection of fear. Indeed into this affection had come she, who said: Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth (Cant. I, 1). What affection of fear does she pretend, who desires to kiss? Hence also it is written concerning Moses: Because he spoke to God, as a man is wont to speak to his friend (Exod. XXXIII, 11). For, as if the day coming, sacred Scripture shows him so to immolate, that no adoration of fear had prostrated him. In which place I see this to be noted, that that he

quod ut adoraret, et immolaret, ascendere dicitur, non tamen adorasse et immolasse, veniente die, sed immolasse solum. Alii ergo sunt dies quibus ascendimus, ut adoremus, et immolemus; alius ille dies qui dum venerit, immolamus. Dum enim nostro conamine in divinarum rerum meditatione suspendimur, quasi statuti ascensus nostri dies sunt, quia quosdam spiritualis luminis radios intuemur, quosdam nos ipsi nobis ordinamus, ab imo nostrae humanitatis quadam altitudine sublevamur. Sed quia his meditationibus sine divina gratia nihil agitur, et quia nec timorem nobis praevalemus incutere, nec divinae dulcedinis suavitatem exhibere, ascensus quidem dies sunt, in quibus adorare et immolare statuimus, sed tamen in eis nec adoramus, nec immolamus. Dies autem alius venit, et immolamus, quia subita luce gratiae divinae respergimur, et de gloria Majestatis ejus ineffabilem percipimus abundantiam dilectionis. Hic ergo dies non est illorum aliquis, sed illos sequitur, quia nimirum si nostra dispositione hanc divinae gratiae largitatem accipere non valeamus, tamen eam nunquam promeremur, nisi omnino curemus, ut et meditando, et quotidie legendo, et orando, et in iis quae possumus spiritualibus claritatibus immoremur. Venisse autem dies dicitur, ut superna dignatio designetur, quia cum electas animas visitat, non est facultatis nostrae, sed bonitatis suae. Sequitur:

(Vers. 4 et 5.) Deditque Phenennae, et filiis, et filiabus partes. Annae autem dedit partem unam tristis, quia Annam diligebat.

10. Filii namque Phenennae sunt mentis sacrae consilia, quae per studium pietatis activae vitae subcrescunt. Qui nimirum filii cum matre partes accipiunt, cum consilia pietatis ad splendorem supernae gratiae in operum bonorum pinguescunt devotione. Pia etenim mens, quo sublimius tollitur in divina contemplatione, eo devotius se extendit in sancta operatione. Partes namque matris hujus, et filiorum, praeparationes sanctorum operum sunt. Unam vero partem Annae tristis exhibet, quia per contemplationem, qua superna desiderat, quandiu, in hac aerumna temporis impedita, superna quae amat non obtinet, in solis fletibus pastum refectionis habet. Jejunam quippe se tenet, quoties, se projectam ab aeternis gaudiis memorans, flere non potest. Partem igitur unam a tristi accipit, quia nunquam pro voto reficitur, nisi cum flendo satiatur. Quam ei vir Ephrathaeus tristis tribuit, qui cum partem Phenennae tribueret, tristis non fuit, quia videlicet laetatur in praeparatione bonorum operum, quia supernis quae amat quandiu differtur, 36 gaudiis non laetatur. Hanc certe partem Annae tribuerat, qui aeternis se intuens exclusum bonis loquebatur, dicens: Fuerunt mihi lacrymae meae panes die ac nocte, dum dicitur mihi quotidie: ubi est Deus

might adore, and immolate, he is said to ascend, yet not to have adored and immolated, the day coming, but to have immolated only. There are therefore other days on which we ascend, that we may adore, and immolate; another is that day which while it shall have come, we immolate. For while by our endeavor we are suspended in the meditation of divine things, they are as if the days of our appointed ascent, because we look upon certain rays of spiritual light, some we ourselves ordain for ourselves, from the bottom of our humanity we are sublevated by a certain altitude. But because by these meditations without divine grace nothing is done, and because neither do we prevail to strike fear into ourselves, nor to exhibit the suavity of divine sweetness, the days of ascent indeed they are, in which we appoint to adore and immolate, but yet in them we neither adore, nor immolate. But another day comes, and we immolate, because we are sprinkled with the sudden light of divine grace, and concerning the glory of his Majesty we perceive an ineffable abundance of love. This day therefore is not any of those, but follows them, because doubtlessly if by our disposition we are not able to receive this largess of divine grace, yet we never merit it, unless we altogether care, that both by meditating, and daily reading, and praying, and in those spiritual clarities which we can, we tarry. But the day is said to have come, that supernal dignation may be designated, because when he visits the elect souls, it is not of our faculty, but of his goodness. It follows:

(Vers. 4 and 5.) And he gave portions to Phenenna, and to her sons, and to her daughters. But to Anna he gave one portion sad, because he loved Anna.

10. For the sons of Phenenna are the counsels of the sacred mind, which through the study of piety of the active life grow up. Which sons doubtless receive portions with their mother, when the counsels of piety grow fat to the splendor of supernal grace in the devotion of good works. Indeed the pious mind, by how much the more sublimely it is lifted up in divine contemplation, by so much the more devotedly it extends itself in holy operation. For the portions of this mother, and of the sons, are the preparations of holy works. But one portion he exhibits to Anna sad, because through contemplation, by which she desires supernal things, as long as, impeded in this aerumna of time, she does not obtain the supernal things which she loves, in tears alone she has the pasture of refection. Indeed she holds herself fasting, as often as, remembering herself cast out from eternal joys, she cannot weep. One portion therefore she receives from a sad one, because she is never refected according to her vow, unless when she is satiated by weeping. Which the Ephrathite man sad attributed to her, who when he attributed a portion to Phenenna, was not sad, because namely he gladdens in the preparation of good works, because from the supernal joys which he loves as long as he is deferred, 36 he does not gladden. This portion certainly he had attributed to Anna, who intuering himself excluded from eternal goods spoke in saying: My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy

tuus (Psal. XLI, 4)? Sed inchoantis adhuc imperfectio designatur, dum Ephrathaei conjux altera alteram affligere et vehementer angere perhibetur. Perfecto enim cuique eo nequaquam pugna committitur uxorum, quo firma jam experientia novit discrete disponere indigentiam operis et intentionem contemplationis. Nam velut in pace utramque uxorem possidet, qui nec tempora operis contemplationi deputat, nec contemplationis otia per intentionem operis inquietat.

(Vers 6.) Affligebat quoque eam aemula ejus, et vehementer angebat; in tantum, ut exprobraret ei quod conclusisset Dominus vulvam ejus.

11. Ab aemula Anna affligitur, cun immoderata intentio boni operis turbat quietem internae visionis. Affligitur, cum ei illa praeponitur quae esse nobilior comprobatur, et vehementer angitur, quia electae mentis contemplatio angustatur, dum is qui in contemplatione sublimium esse desiderat sese in activae vitae operibus immoderatius dilatat. Angere quippe stringere est. Mentis quippe visio stringitur, cum, impedita occupationibus operum, in illa internae lucis immensitate nequaquam dilatatur. Et quia hanc vehementer angere dicitur, notandum est quia etiam boni operis immoderata sollicitudo contemplationi non parum nocet. Phenenna quippe Annam vehementer angit, quia mens, dum activae vitae immoderate impenditur, valde difficile est, ut cum ad disponenda terrena se occupat, in visione coelestium potenter surgat. Cui etiam velut sterili Phenenna exprobrat, quia dum ex activa vita bonorum operum fructus cito proferimus, et ad internae contemplationis gaudia facile pertingere non valemus, sterilis ista cernitur, dum rudes de ejus fecunditate desperamus. Dum ergo pro fecunditate Phenennam diligimus, Anna affligitur, angitur, et sterilitatis opprobrio notatur, quia dum bonorum actionum sollicitudinem non ea qua debemus discretione restringimus, puritatem contemplationis tanto nobis difficiliorem reddimus, quanto nobiliorem vitam excellenti studio nequaquam retinemus. Sed quia ad altiora inchoavit ascendere, si fortis est in suo proposito, hujusmodi tentamenta tolerans, non desperat. Nam ad ea quae coepit alta contemplationis innititur, et de actionis cibo consolari despicit, qui in sola conditoris specie delectari concupivit. Apte itaque subditur:

(Vers. 7.) Porro Anna flebat, et non capiebat cibum.

God (Psal. XLI, 4)? But the imperfection of one still beginning is designated, while one wife of the Ephrathite is said to afflict and vehemently anger the other. For to each perfect one by no means is the fight of wives committed, by which firm experience he already knows discretely to dispose the indigence of work and the intention of contemplation. For as if in peace he possesses each wife, who neither deputes the times of work to contemplation, nor disquiets the leisure of contemplation through the intention of work.

(Vers 6.) Her rival also afflicted her, and vehemently angered her; insomuch that she upbraided her, that the Lord had shut up her womb.

11. Anna is afflicted by her rival, when the immoderate intention of good work disturbs the quiet of internal vision. She is afflicted, when that which is approved to be more noble is preferred to her, and she is vehemently angered, because the contemplation of the elect mind is straightened, while he who desires to be in the contemplation of sublime things dilates himself more immoderately in the works of the active life. To anger indeed is to straiten. The vision of the mind indeed is straitened, when, impeded by the occupations of works, in that immensity of internal light it is by no means dilated. And because she is said to anger her vehemently, it is to be noted that also the immoderate solicitude of good work harms contemplation not a little. Phenenna indeed vehemently angers Anna, because the mind, while it is immoderately expended on the active life, it is very difficult, that when it occupies itself to disposing earthly things, it may potentially rise in the vision of heavenly things. To whom also as if to a barren one Phenenna upbraids, because while from the active life we quickly bring forth the fruits of good works, and to the joys of internal contemplation we do not easily prevail to reach, that one is perceived to be barren, while rude we despair of her fecundity. While therefore for fecundity we love Phenenna, Anna is afflicted, angered, and noted with the opprobrium of sterility, because while we do not restrict the solicitude of good actions with that discretion with which we ought, we render the purity of contemplation so much the more difficult to us, by how much the more noble life by excellent study we by no means retain. But because he has begun to ascend to higher things, if he is strong in his purpose, tolerating tentations of this kind, he does not despair. For he leans to those high things of contemplation which he has begun, and despises to be consoled concerning the food of action, who has coveted to be delighted in the species alone of the Creator. Aptly therefore it is subjoined:

(Vers. 7.) Moreover Anna wept, and did not take food.

12. In fletu quippe ardens desiderium divinae contemplationis ostenditur, in dedignatione vero cibi despectus laetitiae transeuntis. Mens enim quae ferventibus desideriis interna desiderat, dum terrenae laetitiae blandimentum respuit, dum instantibus gemitibus infundi sibi supernae lucis amoenitatem expetit, flet utique, et cibum non capit. Hunc namque cibum fastidiebat, qui dicebat: Renuit consolari anima mea (Psal. LXXVI, 3). Sed qui cibum solatii capere de oblectamento rerum conditarum dedignatus est, epulas deliciarum suarum, quia in solo conditore invenerit, dicit: Memor fui Dei, et delectatus sum (Ibid., 4). Ad has profecto epulas flentem conjugem hortabatur, cum diceret: Quare tristis es anima mea, et quare conturbas me? Spera in Deo, quoniam 37 adhuc confitebor illi, salutare vultus mei et Deus meus (Psal. XLII, 5). Quae nimirum exhortatio hic quoque cognoscitur, quia a viro suo cur fleat, et quare non comedat, et afflictum cor habeat, interrogatur. Quasi dicat: Cur de non habita contemplationis perfectione contristaris, quam si rudis non obtines, proficiens obtinebis? Unde et quae afflicta ab aemula comedere noluit, a viro cohortata manducavit; quia quae saniori consilio ima despicit, perfectionem contemplationis habet in spe, quam nondum habet in virtute experientiae. Fere enim deficienti et collapsae contemplationi spei renovatae gaudium cibus est. Ad viri ergo sui vocem Anna reficitur, cum contemplationis intentio concussa per tentationem ab eo qui se amare coeperat ad spem sui profectus excitatur. Unde sumpto cibo surrexit, omnipotenti Deo preces fudit, atque ei sexum virilem, si hunc ab eo accipere mereretur, vovit.

13. Natum filium omnipotenti Deo vovet, qui gaudium contemplationis ad fructum mentis expetit, non ad favorem vanitatis. Sed bene petentibus in contemplationis desiderio carnales praepositi obsistere vehementer solent; eo quippe ineptius agere secretiorem vitam appetentes cogitant, quo ipsi vim internae dulcedinis ignorant. Qui si aliquando in spiritales subditos voce asperae invectionis saeviunt, ab eis humillima ratione sedandi sunt. Nam si se irrationabiliter contra recte agentes erigunt, reverentia superioris ordinis exigit ut tunc honorentur, cum modum rationis excedunt. Quos sane utrosque et carnales scilicet praelatos, et spiritales subditos, bene Heli et Anna insinuant; nam cum ille ante postes templi Domini sederet, et Anna oraret, os ejus Heli observavit, et eam ebriam vocavit. Sed haec, quae injurias patienter sustinuit, humilitatem responsi exhibuit cum veritate rationis. Ancillam se ejus asseruit ex multo dolore et moerore loqui, et furentem in se animum, non solum sedavit, sed etiam pro consequendo fructu sui desiderii ad orationem convertit.

12. In weeping indeed the ardent desire of divine contemplation is shown, but in the disdain of food the despection of passing gladness. For the mind which with fervent desires desires internal things, while it respuits the blandishment of earthly gladness, while with instant groans it expetits the pleasantness of supernal light to be infused into itself, it weeps surely, and does not take food. This food indeed he fastidiated, who said: My soul refused to be comforted (Psal. LXXVI, 3). But he who designed to take the food of solace from the delectation of created things, the feasts of his delights, because he shall have found in the Creator alone, he says: I remembered God, and was delighted (Ibid., 4). To these feasts indeed he exhorted his weeping wife, when he said: Why art thou sad, O my soul, and why dost thou trouble me? Hope in God, for 37 I will still give praise to him: the salvation of my countenance, and my God (Psal. XLII, 5). Which exhortation doubtless is here also recognized, because by her husband why she weeps, and why she does not eat, and has an afflicted heart, she is interrogated. As if he should say: Why concerning the not had perfection of contemplation art thou saddened, which if rude thou dost not obtain, profiting thou shalt obtain? Whence also she who afflicted by her rival was unwilling to eat, exhorted by her husband she did eat; because she who by a sounder counsel despises the lowest things, has the perfection of contemplation in hope, which she has not yet in the virtue of experience. Almost for failing and lapsed contemplation the joy of renewed hope is food. To the voice of her husband therefore Anna is refected, when the intention of contemplation shaken through tentation is excited by him who had begun to love himself to the hope of his proficiency. Whence having taken food she rose, poured out prayers to almighty God, and vowed to him the male sex, if she merited to receive this from him.

13. He vows a born son to almighty God, who expetits the joy of contemplation to the fruit of the mind, not to the favor of vanity. But to those well petitioning in the desire of contemplation carnal prelates vehemently are wont to insist against; by so much the more ineptly indeed they think those coveting a more secret life to act, by how much they themselves are ignorant of the force of internal sweetness. Who if sometimes against spiritual subjects with the voice of harsh invective they rage, by them they are to be sedated with most humble reason. For if they irrationally erect themselves against those acting rightly, the reverence of the superior order exacts that then they should be honored, when they exceed the mode of reason. Whom indeed both namely carnal prelates, and spiritual subjects, Heli and Anna well insinuate; for when he sat before the posts of the temple of the Lord, and Anna prayed, Heli observed her mouth, and called her drunk. But she, who patiently sustained injuries, exhibited the humility of response with the truth of reason. She asserted herself to be his handmaid to speak out of much grief and sorrow, and the raging mind in himself, she not only sedated, but also for obtaining the fruit of her desire she converted to prayer.

14. Sed quia haec ultima ad historiam diximus, non ab re agimus si in his sacrae historiae verbis eruditionem nostram paulo subtilius requiramus. Si ergo rerum ordo requiritur, prius manducavit, et bibit, dehinc amarum animum habuit, oravit Dominum flens largiter, postea votum vovit, et preces multiplicavit. Quid multiplicatio precum Annae, nisi illam electorum perfectionem significat, ad quam nos Doctor egregius hortatur, dicens: Sine intermissione orate (I Thess. V, 17)? Sine intermissione namque orare nisi perfectus vir potest; orare enim sine intermissione est per affectum supplicationis conditori semper assistere. Qui autem imperfectionis adhuc infirmitate deprimitur, eo sine intermissione Dominum non obsecrat, quod in ipso etiam orationis tempore a conspectu ejus mentis elabitur vagatione. Bene autem ante precum multiplicationem votum vovisse sancta mulier dicitur, quia nisi quis se totum coelitem per propositi rigorem exhibeat, eo saepius ab affectu supplicationis educitur, quo mobilitate mentis in gyrum mundanae intentionis vertitur, et in conspectu Domini per fortem custodiam non tenetur. Sed spiritali proposito sese vovere electi mens coelestibus gaudiis poterit, si largiter flere jam novit, si fletuum largitate supernae dulcedinis saporem gustare jam didicit, atque, in illius internae refectionis suae gaudio 38 occupata, respicere terrena fastidit. Aperte igitur ante votum suum flevisse largiter Anna describitur, quia totum sese quis exhibere sic coelitem, terrena obliviscendo, non poterit, nisi, magnis accensus fletibus, in mortuae jam mundo mentis solatio delectationis intimae recipere suavitatem novit. Et quia in gaudio animae hoc lacrymarum solatium non recipitur, si se prius non afficit per amaritudinem compunctionis, et quidquid in se de labenti vivit laetitia salubris tristitiae pugione transfigit. Anna amaro animo ante flevisse relata est, et sic largiter flere potuisse. Quod bene Salomon insinuat, dicens: Cor, quod novit amaritudinem animae suae, in gaudio ejus non miscetur extraneus (Prov. XIV, 10). Extraneus quippe est qui adhuc de bonis exterioribus intentionem delectationis habet. Qui certe in gaudio amaricati cordis non recipitur, quia non potest experiri quae sit interna laetitia, nisi qui perfecte contemnere exteriorem curat. Sed notandum adhuc quia ante ista omnia surrexisse relata est et antequam surgeret, comedisse et bibisse. Quis est cibus electae animae, nisi juxta veritatis vocem: Omne verbum quod procedit de ore Dei (Matt. IV, 4)? et quid est ei surgere, nisi se ad statum supernae intentionis erigere? Ante ergo surrexisse, quam amaro animo fuisse dicitur, et antequam surgeret manducasse et bibisse, quia electa

14. But because we have said these last things to the history, we do not act beside the thing if in these words of sacred history we require our erudition a little more subtly. If therefore the order of things is required, first she did eat, and drink, then she had a bitter mind, she prayed to the Lord weeping largely, afterwards she vowed a vow, and multiplied prayers. What does the multiplication of Anna's prayers signify, if not that perfection of the elect, to which the egregious Doctor exhorts us, saying: Pray without ceasing (I Thess. V, 17)? For without ceasing to pray unless a perfect man can; for to pray without ceasing is through the affection of supplication to always assist the Creator. But he who is still depressed by the infirmity of imperfection, by so much does not beseech the Lord without ceasing, that in the very time of prayer he slips from his sight by the wandering of the mind. But well before the multiplication of prayers the holy woman is said to have vowed a vow, because unless someone exhibit himself wholly heavenly through the rigor of purpose, he is so much the more often led out from the affection of supplication, by how much by the mobility of the mind he is turned into the gyre of worldly intention, and is not held in the sight of the Lord through strong custody. But the mind of the elect will be able to vow itself to heavenly joys by a spiritual purpose, if it already knows to weep largely, if by the largess of weepings it has already learned to taste the savor of supernal sweetness, and, occupied in that joy 38 of its internal refection, it fastidiates to look upon earthly things. Openly therefore before her vow Anna is described to have wept largely, because someone will not be able to exhibit himself wholly so heavenly, by forgetting earthly things, unless, kindled by great weepings, in the solace of a mind already dead to the world he knows to receive the suavity of intimate delectation. And because in the joy of the soul this solace of tears is not received, if he does not first affect himself through the bitterness of compunction, and whatever in himself lives of passing gladness he transfixes with the dagger of salutary sadness. Anna is related to have wept before with a bitter mind, and so to have been able to weep largely. Which Solomon well insinuates, saying: The heart that knoweth the bitterness of its own soul, in its joy shall not the stranger intermeddle (Prov. XIV, 10). The stranger indeed is he who still has the intention of delectation concerning exterior goods. Who certainly is not received in the joy of a bittered heart, because he cannot experience what internal gladness is, unless he who cures perfectly to contemn the exterior. But it is still to be noted that before all these things she is related to have risen and before she rose, to have eaten and drunk. What is the food of the elect soul, if not according to the voice of truth: Every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God (Matt. IV, 4)? and what is it for her to rise, if not to erect herself to the state of supernal intention? Before therefore she had risen, than to have been of a bitter mind she is said, and before she rose to have eaten and

anima de aerumna vitae praesentis dolere non poterit, si sese ad illa quae in coelestibus perdidit non extendit; et se ad illa summa non elevat, si a Scripturae sacrae pabulo jejunat. Ut surgamus ergo, manducamus et bibimus, quia tum ad altitudinem superni amoris erigimur, cum Scripturae sacrae profundis et planioribus sensibus roboramur. Dehinc si surgamus, amaritudinem cordis acquirimus, quia dum in superna per amorem ferimur, quae in imo sunt non nobis praebent blandimenta gaudii, sed asperitatem afflictionis. Sed jam ab amaro animo ad fletuum fluenta conscendimus, quia cum jugi validaque compunctione transfigimur, ea mala quae in hac valle lacrymarum incurrimus, et futura quae timemus, et aeterna bona quae amisimus, flere copiosius valemus. Hinc vero ad vovendorum votorum secreta procedimus, quia dum ab omni quod foris libet fletuum nos largitas sepelit, velut totos effectos coelites supernis obtutibus ostendit, et vota vovemus quibus sic aeterna bona placent, ut mens nostra per nulla terrena atque carnalia se inquinet. Dehinc profectus nostros precum multiplicatio sequitur, quia eo jam libentius, saepius et instantius aeterna orando quaerimus, quo in solo futurorum bonorum solatio respiramus. Mane autem adorant, et in civitatem suam revertuntur.

15. Post multiplicationem precum cum Anna conjuge mane adorare est inter magna virtutum dona humilitatis virtutem custodire; et quia in illa sublimi visione diutius stare non potest anima quae adhuc ista corruptionis sarcina praegravatur, apte in civitatem suam reversi referuntur. Electa anima, cum, infirmitate praegravante, a Dei contemplatione repellitur, ut redire in eamdem visionis altitudinem valeat, debet habere constructa aedificia munitionis, quatenus, ad semetipsam relapsa, in alto se teneat, unde iterum ad eamdem intimae charitatis altitudinem consurgat. Quod et sub typo Jerusalem electae animae per Prophetam dicitur: Sta in excelso, et vide jucunditatem quae veniet tibi 39 a Deo tuo (Baruch. IV, 36; V. 5). Quasi dicat, etsi manere jugiter in Dei contemplatione non potes, ne usque ad ima deponaris, ut ab altis custodiae tuae turribus ad eum contemplandum sine difficultate conscendere quem desideras possis. In Ramatha quidem civitatem suam revertitur, si cum a divinae Majestatis visione repellitur, in sanctorum angelorum contemplatione retinetur. Sed cum de ista subtiliori natura, id est angelica, cogitare non praevalet, si ad beatos martyres, vel electos alios, qui jam aeternitate recepti sunt, meditando recurrit, quia de perfecta eorum gloria cogitat, nimirum tunc in sua civitate recipitur, qui

drunk, because the elect soul will not be able to grieve concerning the aerumna of the present life, if she does not extend herself to those things which she has lost in heavenly things; and she does not elevate herself to those highest things, if she fasts from the pasture of sacred Scripture. That we may rise therefore, we eat and drink, because then we are erected to the altitude of supernal love, when we are corroborated by the profound and plainer senses of sacred Scripture. Then if we rise, we acquire the bitterness of the heart, because while we are borne into supernal things through love, those things which are in the bottom do not offer to us the blandishments of joy, but the asperity of affliction. But already from a bitter mind we ascend to the streams of weepings, because when we are transfixed by a continual and valid compunction, those evils which we incur in this valley of tears, and the future things which we fear, and the eternal goods which we have lost, we prevail to weep more copiously. Hence indeed we proceed to the secrets of vows to be vowed, because while from all that which pleases outside the largess of weepings buries us, it shows us as if made wholly heavenly to supernal gazes, and we vow vows to which so eternal goods please, that our mind may inquinate itself through no earthly and carnal things. Then the multiplication of prayers follows our proficiencies, because by so much the more willingly, more often and more instantly we seek eternal things by praying, by how much in the solace alone of future goods we respire. But in the morning they adore, and return into their city.

15. After the multiplication of prayers to adore in the morning with his wife Anna is to guard the virtue of humility among great gifts of virtues; and because in that sublime vision the soul which is still weighed down by this burden of corruption cannot stand longer, aptly they are related to have returned into their city. The elect soul, when, infirmity weighing it down, it is repelled from the contemplation of God, that it may be able to return into the same altitude of vision, it ought to have the edifices of fortification constructed, in so far as, relapsed to itself, it may hold itself in the high, whence it may rise again to the same altitude of intimate charity. Which also under the type of Jerusalem is said to the elect soul through the Prophet: Stand on high, and look about towards the east, and behold the joy that comes to thee 39 from thy God (Baruch. IV, 36; V, 5). As if he should say, although to remain continually in the contemplation of God thou canst not, lest thou shouldst be cast down even to the lowest things, that from the high towers of thy custody thou mayest be able to ascend without difficulty to contemplating him whom thou desirest. Indeed into Ramatha his city he returns, if when he is repelled from the vision of divine Majesty, he is retained in the contemplation of holy angels. But when to think concerning that subtler nature, that is the angelic, he does not prevail, if to the blessed martyrs, or other elect, who are already received in eternity, he recurs by meditating, because he thinks concerning their perfect glory, doubtlessly then in his city is received, he who

morari in sublimibus prohibetur. Bene autem eadem Ramatha civitas sua dicitur, quia quam familiariter diligit, suam esse indubitanter credit, suam namque hanc civitatem esse cognoverat, qui dicebat: Scimus quia si terrestris domus nostra hujus habitationis dissolvatur, quia aedificationem habemus ex Deo, domum non manufactam, sed aeternam in coelis (II Cor. V, 1). Hinc iterum dicit: Jerusalem, quae sursum est, mater nostra est (Gal. IV, 26). Sed qui in illa sublimi civitate reverti non potest, redeat nihilominus in civitatem suam Ramatha; et qui ab altissima illa deponitur, in istius Ecclesiae adhuc in imo peregrinantis, sed sublimis vitae fulgore radiantis, visione teneatur. Eo quippe hinc iterum redire ad revisendum jubar altiverique luminis poterit, quo eum sensum quem carnis sarcina ab internae lucis secreto retrahit usque ad terrae infima non deponit.

16. Quid est autem quod post dierum circulum Anna concipit et parit, nisi quia gaudium perfectae devotionis contemplatio ad conditoris pulchritudinem semel elevata non suscipit? Post dierum ergo circulum concepisse et peperisse dicitur, quia dum ex consuetudine contemplatio ad superna rapitur, in visione superni luminis munus accipit desideratae fecunditatis. Circulus namque dierum est infusio divinae lucis. Quae profecto in suo ambitu diebus pluribus cingitur, dum una sua claritate mentem irradiat, sed sui splendoris radios per vices dispensativae manifestationis ei insinuat, quousque perfectius gaudium de ampliori manifestatione comprehendat. Vel certe post dierum circulum Anna concipit, quia nimirum quandiu mentis aciem contemplationis ruditas in gyrum mutabilitatis concutit, ipsa mens ad percipiendum plenum internae majestatis gaudium non assurgit. Velut enim in quodam circulo dies transeunt, cum mens inchoantis in contemplationis se culmen elevat, sed vix per respecti jubar luminis eam adhuc rorantem ac discurrentem fixam in sua luce servat. Post dierum ergo circulum concipit, quia prius a mutationis suae vertigine in standi robur anima ducitur, et cum stare fixa ex usu in contemplatione didicerit, gaudium perfectae devotionis in fructu suae fecunditatis apprehendit. Quod etiam conceptum parit, quando proximis ad gloriam supernae majestatis innotescit.

17. Natus vero puer in tribus vitulis ad tabernaculum ducitur, quia de largitate spiritualis muneris gratias referre debemus summae Trinitati. De quibus vitulis Dominum obsecrans propheta dicit: Omnem aufer iniquitatem, et accipe bonum, et reddemus vitulos labiorum nostrorum (Osee, XIV, 3). Quasi dicat: Pro largitate munerum reddemus sacrificia laudis, per obsequium labiorum. 40 In domum vero Domini puer offerendus adducitur, cum sacrae mentis profectus, sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus revelatur, ut dum collatione sapientum discutitur, fraude

is prohibited to tarry in sublime things. But well the same Ramatha is called his city, because what he familiarly loves, he indubitably believes to be his, for this city to be his he had known, who said: We know, if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven (II Cor. V, 1). Hence again he says: But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free: which is our mother (Gal. IV, 26). But he who into that sublime city cannot return, let him return nevertheless into his city Ramatha; and he who is cast down from that highest one, let him be held in the vision of this Church still peregrinating in the bottom, but radiating with the effulgence of sublime life. By how much indeed from here he will be able to return again to review the beam of the high and true light, by so much he does not cast down that sense which the burden of the flesh retracts from the secret of internal light even to the lowest things of the earth.

16. But what is it that after the circle of days Anna conceives and brings forth, if not because the joy of perfect devotion contemplation once elevated to the beauty of the Creator does not receive? After the circle of days therefore she is said to have conceived and brought forth, because while from custom contemplation is ravished to supernal things, in the vision of supernal light it receives the gift of desired fecundity. For the circle of days is the infusion of divine light. Which indeed in its circuit is girt by many days, while by its one clarity it irradiates the mind, but the rays of its splendor through the turns of dispensative manifestation it insinuates to it, until it comprehends more perfect joy concerning ampler manifestation. Or certainly after the circle of days Anna conceives, because doubtlessly as long as the rudeness of contemplation shakes the acies of the mind into the gyre of mutability, the mind itself does not rise to perceiving the full joy of internal majesty. For as if in a certain circle the days pass, when the mind of the beginner elevates itself into the summit of contemplation, but scarcely through the beam of light of the beheld does it preserve her, still bedewing and running hither and thither, fixed in its light. After the circle of days therefore she conceives, because first from the vertigo of her mutation she is led into the strength of standing, and when to stand fixed from use in contemplation she shall have learned, she apprehends the joy of perfect devotion in the fruit of her fecundity. Which even conceived she brings forth, when to her neighbors she becomes known to the glory of supernal majesty.

17. But the born boy is led in three calves to the tabernacle, because concerning the largess of spiritual gift we ought to render thanks to the highest Trinity. Concerning which calves the prophet beseeching the Lord says: Take away all iniquity, and receive the good: and we will render the calves of our lips (Osee XIV, 3). As if he should say: For the largess of gifts we will render the sacrifices of praise, through the obsequy of lips. 40 But into the house of the Lord the boy to be offered is led, when the proficiency of the sacred mind is revealed to the doctors of the holy

hostis callidi nequaquam maculetur. Potest et domus Domini aeternam patriam designare. De hac quippe Psalmista exsultans, dicit: Beati qui habitant in domo tua, Domine, in saecula saeculorum laudabunt te (Psal. LXXXIII, 5). In domum Domini puer adducitur, cum electa mens in alta sustollitur, et de omni quod spiritualiter proficit omnipotenti Deo gratias referre satagit, a quo profectus sui sibi impensa munera recognoscit. Bene autem unus vitulus immolatur, cum tres delati referantur, quia etsi personarum Trinitas confessione fidelium in divinis laudibus canitur, earumdem personarum inseparabilis unitas praedicatur. Sed qualis, aut quanta sit laus, si devota non sit? Apte itaque tribus vitulis totidem farinae modii conjunguntur, ut de eo quod in Dei laudibus ore dicimus per devotionem satiemur. Nam sine farina vitulum offert, qui in Dei laudibus verba quidem edit, sed mente vaga ad ea quae loquitur non intendit. Sed si verba Dei laudando, vel orando, proferentes hilarescimus, dum intelligentiae miscemus gaudium, illius vini quod laetificat cor hominis amphoram farinae sociamus. Hoc profecto insinuat, qui exoptans ait: Benedicat nos Deus, Deus noster, benedicat nos Deus, et metuant eum omnes fines terrae (Psal. LXVI, 7, 8). Quasi tres vitulos ad tabernaculum duxit, qui Deum laudans, divinitatis ejus nomen repetendo, personarum proprietates exposuit. Sed cum metuant, non eos, sed eum dixit, profecto qui tres adduxit vitulos unum immolavit. Et quia farinam vitulis, et farinae vinum miscuit, gloriatur, dicens: Ad ipsum ore meo clamavi, et exsultavi sub lingua mea (Psal. LXV, 17). Dum enim clamavit, quasi ad immolandum sacrificii vitulum duxit, sed sub lingua sua exsultare non posset, si alta precis suae verba non intelligeret. Cum clamavit ergo, intellexit quae clamavit, et cum exsultavit in oblatione omnipotentis Dei, non solum vitulum habuit, sed etiam farinae modios, et amphoram vini. Igitur vitulus, farina et vinum, laus est Dei, intellectus laudis, et laetitia devotae mentis. Cur autem modius et amphora in Dei oblatione nominantur, nisi quia mensurae sunt nomina? Hoc etiam quid spiritualiter indicet Paulus exponit, dicens: Unusquisque proprium donum habet ex Deo, unus quidem sic alius vero sic (I Cor. VII, 7). Hinc Veritas dicit: Mensuram bonam, et confertam, et coagitatam, et supereffluentem dabunt in sinum vestrum (Luc. VI, 38). Hanc nobis mensuram custodire sacra Scriptura praecepit, dicens: Supra te onus ne levaveris. Sed electae animae

Church, so that while it is discussed by the collation of the wise, it may by no means be maculated by the fraud of the cunning enemy. The house of the Lord can also designate the eternal country. Concerning which indeed the Psalmist exulting, says: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord: they shall praise thee for ever and ever (Psal. LXXXIII, 5). Into the house of the Lord the boy is led, when the elect mind is lifted up into high things, and concerning all that limits spiritually it is busy to render thanks to almighty God, from whom it recognizes the gifts of its proficiency expended to itself. But well one calf is immolated, when three are related to be brought, because although the Trinity of persons is sung by the confession of the faithful in divine praises, the inseparable unity of the same persons is preached. But what kind, or how great is praise, if it be not devout? Aptly therefore to the three calves as many measures of flour are joined, so that concerning that which in the praises of God we say with the mouth we may be satiated through devotion. For without flour he offers a calf, who in the praises of God indeed utters words, but with a wandering mind does not intend to those things which he speaks. But if proffering words praising God, or praying, we grow cheerful, while we mix the joy of intelligence, we sociate a vessel of that wine which gladdens the heart of man to the flour. This indeed he insinuates, who exopting says: May God, our God, bless us, may God bless us: and all the ends of the earth fear him (Psal. LXVI, 7, 8). As if he led three calves to the tabernacle, who praising God, by repeating the name of his divinity, expounded the properties of the persons. But when they should fear, not them, but him he said, doubtlessly who brought three calves immolated one. And because he mixed flour to the calves, and wine to the flour, he glories, saying: I cried to him with my mouth: and I extolled him with my tongue (Psal. LXV, 17). For while he cried, as if to immolate the calf of sacrifice he led, but he could not have exulted under his tongue, if he did not understand the high words of his prayer. When he cried therefore, he understood what he cried, and when he exulted in the oblation of almighty God, he not only had a calf, but also measures of flour, and a vessel of wine. Therefore the calf, the flour and the wine, is the praise of God, the understanding of praise, and the gladness of a devout mind. But why are the measure and the vessel named in the oblation of God, if not because they are the names of measure? This also what spiritually it may indicate Paul expounds, saying: Every one hath his proper gift from God; one after this manner, and another after that (I Cor. VII, 7). Hence Truth says: Good measure, and pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom (Luke VI, 38). This measure sacred Scripture commanded us to guard, saying: Lift not up

valde cavendum est, ut haec tria omnipotenti Deo ardore piae devotionis offerat, et studio manifestae veritatis. Unde et ejusdem Annae filius sacerdoti oblatus asseritur. Quod profecto et nos agimus, si cum in sancta conversatione proficimus, cum fecundis jam mentibus spiritalium gaudiorum fructum proferimus, ad praelatorum nostrorum examen ducimus omne quod in nobis ex superna contemplatione generatur. Et quia electi viri inter dona sublimia humilitatis suae bonum non deserunt, sequitur:

(Vers. 28.) Et adoraverunt ibi Dominum.

18. In domo Domini Dominum adorant, qui et 41 alta mente in supernae patriae contemplationem se elevant, sed per humilitatem omnipotenti Deo substernuntur, et omni corde in virtute Spiritus tam sublimiter elevantur. Haec non ex ordine, sed summatim ad historiam, sive moralem intelligentiam exponendo perstrinximus, ut verba spiritalis cantici quod subsequitur secundum moralem typicamque explanationem paulo latius indagemus.

CAPUT III.

(II Reg. II, 1.) Et oravit Anna, et ait: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino.

1. In Annae persona sanctae Ecclesiae typum latere jam ostendimus. Quae nimirum, nato jam puero, in Domino exsultare se perhibet, quia de eo quod ad fidem Redemptoris gentilem populum traxit vane non tumuit, sed in eo laetitiae suae intentionem tenuit, a quo fecunditatis suae dona suscepit. Quibus nimirum verbis sic laetitiae suae situm indicat, ut causam pariter exsultationis ejusdem ostendat. Sterilis quidem flevit, pariens exsultavit, ut sanctae Ecclesiae mores portenderet, quae se in hanc vallem lacrymarum a paradisi gaudiis projectam dolet, sed pro lucrandis animabus exsilii sui aerumnas patienter sustinet. In hoc tantum exsultare consuevit, si in aerumna temporis, qua premitur, per fecunditatis suae gloriam, multiplicatis electis, coelestis patriae damna reparentur. Dicit ergo: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino, quia fructus sui propositi consecuta est. Quo in loco notandum est quia hoc quod glorians loquitur orasse perhibetur. Nam praemissum est: Et oravit Anna, et ait: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino. Quae autem nihil a Deo petere flagitando cognoscitur, cur orasse perhibetur? Sed quia hoc futurum esse per prophetiae spiritum sancta mulier noverat, et id fieri vehementer optat, et exsultando loquitur, et orando. Exsultabat quidem certitudine futurorum, vehementer exoptans fieri quod noverat revelatione sacramenti.

a burden above thyself. But the elect soul must vehemently beware, that she may offer these three to almighty God with the ardor of pious devotion, and with the study of manifest truth. Whence also the son of the same Anna is asserted to be offered to the priest. Which indeed we also do, if when we profit in holy conversation, when with already fecund minds we bring forth the fruit of spiritual joys, we lead to the examen of our prelates all that which is generated in us from supernal contemplation. And because elect men among sublime gifts do not forsake the good of their humility, it follows:

(Vers. 28.) And they adored the Lord there.

18. In the house of the Lord they adore the Lord, who both 41 with a high mind elevate themselves into the contemplation of the supernal country, but through humility are sublaid to almighty God, and with all the heart in the virtue of the Spirit are so sublimely elevated. These things not out of order, but summarily expounding to the history, or moral understanding we have perstringed, so that the words of the spiritual canticle which follows according to the moral and typical explanation we may indagate a little more widely.

CHAPTER III.

(II Kings II, 1.) And Anna prayed, and said: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord.

1. In the person of Anna we have already shown the type of the holy Church to lie hid. Who indeed, the boy being already born, asserts herself to exult in the Lord, because concerning that which she drew the gentile people to the faith of the Redeemer she did not vainly swell, but held the intention of her gladness in him, from whom she received the gifts of her fecundity. By which words indeed she so indicates the site of her gladness, that she equally shows the cause of the same exultation. Barren indeed she wept, bringing forth she exulted, to portend the customs of the holy Church, who grieves herself to be cast forth into this valley of tears from the joys of paradise, but for gaining souls patiently sustains the aerumnas of her exile. In this only she is wont to exult, if in the aerumna of time, by which she is pressed, through the glory of her fecundity, the elect being multiplied, the losses of the heavenly country be repaired. She says therefore: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord, because she has obtained the fruits of her purpose. In which place it is to be noted that this which glorying she speaks is asserted to have been prayed. For it is premised: And Anna prayed, and said: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord. But she who is recognized to petition nothing from God by flagitating, why is she asserted to have prayed? But because the holy woman knew through the spirit of prophecy that this was future, and vehemently options it to be done, she both speaks by exulting, and by praying. She exulted indeed in the certainty of future things, vehemently exopting that to be done which she knew by the revelation of the sacrament.

Sancta quoque Ecclesia inde divina beneficia amando et venerando recolit, praedicat et orat, quia nimirum id foris loquendo exsequitur, quod intus miro desiderio fieri cupit, et factum magna devotione veneratur. Dicit ergo: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino, quia munera quae ad aeternae laetitiae fructum accipit ad temporale gaudium non convertit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 1.) Et exaltatum est cornu meum in Deo meo.

2. Quid est cornu Annae, nisi potestas sanctae Ecclesiae? Quod profecto cornu tunc mirabiliter se extulit, cum Dei Filius per assumptam humanitatem naturae nostrae participem se fecit. In eo igitur cornu sanctae Ecclesiae exaltatum est, in quo humana natura jam splendet supra angelos elevata. Sed in hoc quod hunc Deum suum et salutarem sancta Ecclesia singulariter asserit, Synagogae repulsionem latenter ostendit. In Deo igitur salutari nostro exaltatum est cornu nostrum, quia sublimitas Ecclesiasticae potestatis in humanitate nobis erecta est Redemptoris. Unde et de eodem Redemptore per Zachariam dicitur: Erexit cornu salutis nobis, in domo David pueri sui, sicut locutus est per os sanctorum prophetarum suorum (Luc. I, 69, 70), quia exaltatum cornu suum refert, latenter indicat, quia ante cornu habuerat quod exaltatum non erat. Sancta quippe Ecclesia ante Redemptoris adventum cornu habuit, quia in patriarchis et prophetis tam recte 42 vivendi ordinem quam delinquentes corrigendi potestatem divinitus accepit. Sed tamen cornu exaltatum non habuit, quia etsi vivere juste poterat, tamen ad Paradisi gaudia sine Redemptoris praesentia redire non poterat. Nunc autem sanctae Ecclesiae cornu exaltatum est, qui jam mundi Redemptorem venientem recepimus, per cujus gratiam non solum recte possumus vivere, sed et ad paradisi gaudia transire, quia ille jam pro nobis mortuus resurrexit, in cujus morte mors obiit, et paradisus se ejus fidelibus reseravit. Exaltatum est ergo cornu nostrum in Deo nostro, quia, effusa jam gratia sancti Spiritus in electorum multitudinem impressam Redemptoris imaginem videmus, dum qui terrena omnia despiciunt carnis voluptates fugiunt, propria derelinquunt, tanto altiori potestate radiant, quanto haec tanta virtutis insignia in veterum multitudine sancta Ecclesia non habebat. Exaltatum est cornu nostrum in Deo salutari nostro, quia quotquot eum recipimus, dedit nobis potestatem filios Dei fieri (Joan. I, 12). Hoc cornu exaltare volebat Salutaris noster, cum dicebat: Ecce dedi vobis potestatem calcandi super serpentes, et scorpiones, et omnem virtutem inimici (Luc. X, 19). Hinc item asserens ait: Quodcunque ligaveris super terram erit

So also the holy Church thence recollecting recounts the divine benefits by loving and venerating, preaches and prays, because indeed speaking without she executes that, which within she desires to be done with a wondrous desire, and being done venerates with great devotion. She says therefore: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord, because the gifts which she receives to the fruit of eternal gladness she does not convert to temporal joy. It follows:

(Vers. 1.) And my horn is exalted in my God.

2. What is the horn of Anna, but the power of the holy Church? Which horn indeed then raised itself wonderfully, when the Son of God through assumed humanity made himself a partaker of our nature. In that therefore the horn of the holy Church was exalted, in which human nature now shines elevated above the angels. But in this that the holy Church singularly asserts this her God and Saviour, she latently shows the repulsion of the Synagogue. In God therefore our Saviour our horn is exalted, because the sublimity of Ecclesiastical power in humanity was erected for us of the Redeemer. Whence also concerning the same Redeemer through Zachary it is said: He hath raised up a horn of salvation to us, in the house of David his servant: as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets (Luke I, 69, 70), because she recounts her horn exalted, she latently indicates, because before she had a horn which was not exalted. The holy Church indeed before the advent of the Redeemer had a horn, because in the patriarchs and prophets she received from God as well the order of living rightly 42 as the power of correcting delinquents. But nevertheless she had not an exalted horn, because although she could live justly, nevertheless she could not return to the joys of Paradise without the presence of the Redeemer. But now the horn of the holy Church is exalted, who have now received the coming Redeemer of the world, through whose grace we not only can live rightly, but also pass over to the joys of paradise, because he already died and rose again for us, in whose death death died, and paradise unbarred itself to his faithful. Our horn therefore is exalted in our God, because, the grace of the Holy Spirit being poured out upon the multitude of the elect, we see the impressed image of the Redeemer, while those who despise all earthly things flee the pleasures of the flesh, leave their own things, with so much higher power radiate, by how much the holy Church did not have these so great ensigns of virtue in the multitude of the ancients. Our horn is exalted in God our Saviour, because as many of us as receive him, he gave to us power to be made the sons of God (John I, 12). This horn our Saviour willed to exalt, when he said: Behold I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy (Luke X, 19). Hence also asserting he says: Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon

ligatum et in coelis (Matth. XVI, 19). Hinc iterum repromittit, dicens: Sedebitis super sedes judicantes duodecim tribus Israel (Ibid., XIX, 28). Dicat ergo Anna: Exaltatum est cornu meum in Deo meo, ut videlicet sanctae Ecclesiae gloria designetur, quae singulare culmen potestatis obtinet de praesentia Redemptoris. Et quia jam in toto mundo distenditur, quae quondam intra Judaeam persecutionibus angebatur, sequitur:

(Vers. 1.) Dilatatum est os meum super inimicos meos.

3. Qui enim inimici Ecclesiae alii quam Judaei intelligendi sunt? Supra quos nimirum dilatatum os habet, quia contra eorum perfidiam omnium gentium jam fidelium linguas movet. Os ergo sanctae Ecclesiae dilatatum est, quia per universum orbem diffunditur, et dum nationes universas praedicatione veritatis erudit, Judaeorum stultitiam, veluti dilatato ore, reprehendit. Et quia hoc inde potuit, quia venientem in carne mundi Redemptorem gaudenter excepit, causam dilatati oris exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 1.) Quia laetata sum in salutari tuo.

4. Jam quis sit salutaris Dei cognovimus. De quo etiam Isaias vaticinans ait: Videbit omnis caro Salutare Dei; videbunt omnes fines terrae Salutare Dei (Isa. LII, 10; Psal. XCVII, 3). Jesus autem nostro eloquio Salutaris dicitur. De quo etiam Habacuc sibi gaudium repromittit, dicens: Gaudebo in Deo Jesu meo (Habac. III, 18). Ecce veterum Judaeorum vocibus Dominus Jesus Deus asseritur. Sed nunc Judaei Salvatorem exspectant, quem Deum esse nequaquam credunt. Sed fortasse hoc Judaei in ore suo reprobare contendunt, et dum Jesum Salvatorem interpretantur, Deum Salvatorem non unigeniti personam, sed Patris intelligunt; verumtamen in eodem loco subditur, unde unigeniti persona apertius demonstretur: Domine Deus, inquit, virtus mea, constitue pedes meos in consummatione, et super excelsa statue me, ut vincam in claritate ipsius (Ibid. 19). Ecce Deo loquitur dicens: Statue me super excelsa. Sed quia dicit: Vincam in claritate ipsius, alius utique est de quo dicit. Quis ergo est de quo dicit nisi unigenitus Dei Filius, quem non solum verum hominem, sed etiam Deum credit? Dum ergo Deo loquitur, dicens: Gaudebo 43 in Deo Jesu meo, et vincam in claritate ipsius, non Deum alium, sed Deus personam aliam demonstrat. Hae sunt sanctae Ecclesiae rationes, hae contra Judaeorum perfidiam invincibiles assertiones per universum orbem diffusae. Dilatatum ergo os habet sancta Ecclesia super

earth, it shall be bound also in heaven (Matt. XVI, 19). Hence again he repromises, saying: You shall sit upon seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Ibid., XIX, 28). Let Anna therefore say: My horn is exalted in my God, that namely the glory of the holy Church may be designated, who obtains the singular summit of power from the presence of the Redeemer. And because she is now distended in the whole world, who formerly was straitened within Judea by persecutions, it follows:

(Vers. 1.) My mouth is enlarged over my enemies.

3. For what enemies of the Church are to be understood other than the Jews? Over whom indeed she has an enlarged mouth, because against their perfidy she moves the tongues of all the nations of the already faithful. The mouth therefore of the holy Church is enlarged, because through the universal orb she is diffused, and while she erudites all nations by the preaching of the truth, she reprehends the folly of the Jews, as if with an enlarged mouth. And because she could do this thence, because she joyfully received the Redeemer of the world coming in the flesh, she expounds the cause of her enlarged mouth, saying:

(Vers. 1.) Because I have joyed in thy salvation.

4. Now who the Saviour of God may be we have known. Concerning whom also Isaiah vaticinating says: All flesh shall see the salvation of God; all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God (Isa. LII, 10; Psal. XCVII, 3). But Jesus in our speech is called Saviour. Concerning whom also Habacuc repromises joy to himself, saying: I will joy in God my Jesus (Habac. III, 18). Behold by the voices of the ancient Jews the Lord Jesus is asserted to be God. But now the Jews expect a Saviour, whom by no means they believe to be God. But perhaps the Jews contend to reprobate this in their mouth, and while they interpret Jesus Saviour, they understand God the Saviour not of the person of the Only-begotten, but of the Father; nevertheless in the same place it is subjoined, whence the person of the Only-begotten may be more openly demonstrated: The Lord God, he says, is my strength, and he will make my feet in the end, and he will set me upon high places, that I may conquer in his glory (Ibid. 19). Behold he speaks to God saying: Set me upon high places. But because he says: That I may conquer in his glory, it is certainly another concerning whom he speaks. Who therefore is it concerning whom he speaks if not the only-begotten Son of God, whom he believes to be not only true man, but also God? While therefore he speaks to God, saying: I will joy 43 in God my Jesus, and I will conquer in his glory, he does not demonstrate another God, but God another person. These are the reasons of the holy Church, these the invincible assertions against the perfidy of the Jews diffused through the universal orb. Therefore the holy Church has an enlarged mouth over her enemies, because now, God being the author, everywhere she is known, whence also the perfidy of the Jews may be convinced. Let

inimicos suos, quia jam, auctore Deo, ubique cognoscitur, unde et Judaeorum perfidia convincatur. Causam igitur dilatati oris audiant, qui Salutare Dei negant, et de gaudio Salutaris nostri feriantur argumento confusionis suae. Sed feriri possunt, a blasphemiis vero suis cessare nolunt. Jam Dei Salutare mundus excepit, omnis caro vidit, Judaeus non credit, quia, ut dixi, Salvatorem exspectat, qui Deus non sit. Audiant ergo maledictionem prophetae dicentis: Maledictus homo, qui confidit in homine, et a Domino recedit cor ejus (Jerem. XVII, 5). In hominem Judaei confidunt, qui credere in Redemptorem refugiunt, dum Antichristum in fine mundi praestolantur. In quorum confusionem Psalmista praedicat, dicens: Viderunt omnes fines terrae Salutare Dei (Psal. XCVII, 3). Quasi perfidiam Judaeorum confundat dicens: Quid in posterum visiones differtis? Quem exspectatis jam venit, quem promissum habuistis jam omnibus finibus terrae apparuit, cum clausistis oculos, transiit; imo sic caeci facti estis, quod coram vobis tanta lux stetit, et non vidistis. Ergo, jubilate Domino omnis terra, cantate, et exsultate, et psallite; psallite Deo nostro in cithara, et voce psalmi, in tubis ductilibus, et voce tubae corneae. Jubilate in conspectu regis Domini; moveatur mare et plenitudo ejus, orbis terrarum, et universi qui habitant in eo. Flumina plaudent manu in idipsum, montes exsultabunt ante faciem Domini, quoniam venit, quoniam venit judicare terram (Ibid. IV, seq.). Quasi dicat: Quia tam immensa caecitate premuntur, ut nequaquam videre meruerint, vos gaudete abundantius, qui vidistis. Sed quam mirabiliter, atque ineffabiliter gaudendum sit, signa gaudii coacervans, ait: Jubilate, cantate, et psallite. Celebritatem quoque laetitiae insinuare gestiens, instrumenta ejus enumerans, dicit: Psallite Domino in cithara, et cithara, et voce psalmi, in tubis ductilibus et voce tubae corneae, jubilate in conspectu regis Domino. Quid in conspectu regis, nisi in cognitione Redemptoris? Sed a quantis haec gaudiorum solemnitas sit agenda exponit, dicens: Moveatur mare, et plenitudo ejus, orbis terrarum, et universi qui habitant in eo. O infelix Judaea, fines terrae viderunt Salutare Dei, omnis terra commota jubilat, gaudet universus orbis, flumina plaudunt manibus, montes exsultant; sed impia Judaeorum corda non credunt, et in caecitatis suae tenebris livoris poena feriuntur. Sed quem blasphemare non metuunt, sancta Ecclesia attentius commendat, dicens:

(Vers. 2.) Non est sanctus ut est Dominus.

them therefore hear the cause of the enlarged mouth, who deny the Salvation of God, and concerning the joy of our Saviour let them be striken with the argument of their confusion. But they can be striken, but from their blasphemies they will not cease. Already the world has received the Salvation of God, all flesh has seen him, the Jew does not believe, because, as I said, he expects a Saviour, who is not God. Let them hear therefore the malediction of the prophet saying: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord (Jerem. XVII, 5). The Jews trust in man, who take refuge from believing in the Redeemer, while they wait for Antichrist in the end of the world. In whose confusion the Psalmist preaches, saying: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God (Psal. XCVII, 3). As if he should confound the perfidy of the Jews saying: Why do you defer visions for the future? He whom you expect has already come, he whom you had promised has already appeared to all the ends of the earth, when you closed your eyes, he passed by; nay rather you were made so blind, that so great a light stood before you, and you did not see. Therefore, rejoice to the Lord all the earth, sing, and exult, and sing psalms; sing psalms to our God on the harp, and with the voice of a psalm, on the ductile trumpets, and with the voice of the cornet. Rejoice in the sight of the Lord the king; let the sea be moved and the fulness thereof, the orb of the earth, and all they that dwell therein. The rivers shall clap their hands for the same, the mountains shall exult before the face of the Lord, because he cometh, because he cometh to judge the earth (Ibid. IV, seq.). As if he should say: Because they are pressed with so immense blindness, that by no means they merited to see, you rejoice more abundantly, who have seen. But how wonderfully, and ineffably it is to be rejoiced, coacervating the signs of joy, he says: Rejoice, sing, and sing psalms. Gestiating also to insinuate the celebrity of gladness, enumerating its instruments, he says: Sing psalms to the Lord on the harp, and harp, and with the voice of a psalm, on the ductile trumpets and with the voice of the cornet, rejoice in the sight of the Lord the king. What is in the sight of the king, if not in the knowledge of the Redeemer? But by how many this solemnity of joys is to be acted he expounds, saying: Let the sea be moved, and the fulness thereof, the orb of the earth, and all they that dwell therein. O unhappy Judea, the ends of the earth have seen the Salvation of God, all the earth commoved rejoices, the universal orb gladdens, the rivers clap their hands, the mountains exult; but the impious hearts of the Jews do not believe, and in the darkness of their blindness they are struck with the penalty of lividness. But him whom they do not fear to blaspheme, the holy Church commends more attentively, saying:

(Vers. 2.) There is none holy as the Lord is.

5. In descriptione Redemptoris omnia incomparabilia designantur. Inde enim verus Redemptor ostenditur, quod in omni quod ad ejus gloriam dicitur ei nemo comparatur. Ille enim omnes redemit qui omnibus excellit. Quod recte contra Judaeam dicitur, quae eo audacius Redemptorem despicit, quo multos se habuisse viros recolit, qui magna claruerunt laude sanctitatis. Hinc est enim quod illuminato caeco exprobrantes dicunt: Tu sis discipulus illius, nos autem Moysi discipuli sumus. Scimus, quia Moysi locutus est Deus, hunc nescimus unde sit (Joan. IX, 28, 29). Hinc item gloriantur, et dicunt: Semen Abrahae sumus, et nemini servivimus unquam (Joan. VIII, 33). Sed homo 44 fuit Moyses, homo Abraham, homo Christus. Verumtamen illi assumpti ad locutionem Dei, iste assumptus in divinitatem. Illi assumpti ad ministerium, iste ut unigenitus assumptus ad regnum. Unde et loquitur, dicens. Omnia quae habet Pater mea sunt (Joan. XVI, 15). Non est sanctus ut est Dominus. Hoc etiam sacra Scriptura testatur, dicens: Cui se infudit omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter (Col. II, 9). Hinc Joannes ait: De plenitudine ejus omnes accepimus (Joan. I, 16). Non est sanctus ut est Dominus. Quia in eo quod Dominus asseritur, sanctitatis ejus excellentia commendatur. Sed Judaei Christum, quem exspectant, purum hominem asserunt, et tamen suum Dominum futurum et singulariter sanctum credunt. Sed Psalmista illos reprobans, nos ad fidei gaudium cohortatur, dicens: Jubilate Deo omnis terra, servite Domino in laetitia. Intrate in conspectu ejus in exsultatione, scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus (Psal. IC, 1, 2, 3). Illi Dominum vocant, qui Deus non sit. Nobis ergo jubilandum, nobis in laetitia serviendum, qui talem habemus Dominum, qui etiam Deus veraciter credatur, qui majestatem divinitatis, quam in se asseruit, incomparabilibus miraculis comprobavit. Qui ergo invisibilem ejus divinitatem abnegant, patentibus operibus credant. Sed quam mira sanctitas illa est, quae peccatores sanctificat? Unde et de peccatrice muliere dicit: Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum (Luc. VII, 47). Hanc excellentiam sanctitatis, illa in fluxu sanguinis posita cognoscens, ait: Si tetigero vel fimbriam vestimenti ejus, salva ero (Matth. IX, 21). Sed quis fidem ejus assereret, si effectus fidei non pateret? Nam ut vestimentum ejus tetigit, sanguis stetit. Non est ergo sanctus ut est Dominus, quia quisquis potuit sanctus existere, ejus accepit munere ut sanctus esse potuisset. Hoc namque sancta Ecclesia subsequenti verbo insinuans, ad eumdem Redemptorem ex nimia charitate convertitur, dicens:

(Vers. 2.) Neque enim est alius extra te.

5. In the description of the Redeemer all incomparable things are designated. For thence the true Redeemer is shown, because in all that which is said to his glory no one is compared to him. For he redeemed all who excels all. Which rightly is said against Judea, who by so much the more audaciously despises the Redeemer, by how much she recollects herself to have had many men, who have shone with great praise of holiness. For hence it is that upbraiding the illuminated blind man they say: Be thou his disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not from whence he is (John IX, 28, 29). Hence likewise they glory, and say: We are the seed of Abraham, and we have never been slaves to any man (John VIII, 33). But Moses was 44 a man, Abraham a man, Christ a man. Nevertheless those were assumed to the speaking of God, this one assumed into divinity. Those assumed to the ministry, this one as the Only-begotten assumed to the kingdom. Whence also he speaks, saying: All things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine (John XVI, 15). There is none holy as the Lord is. This also sacred Scripture testifies, saying: In whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporeally (Col. II, 9). Hence John says: And of his fulness we all have received (John I, 16). There is none holy as the Lord is. Because in that he is asserted Lord, the excellence of his holiness is commended. But the Jews assert Christ, whom they expect, to be a mere man, and nevertheless believe him to be their Lord to come and singularly holy. But the Psalmist reprobating them, exhorts us to the joy of faith, saying: Sing joyfully to God, all the earth: serve ye the Lord with gladness. Come in before his presence with exceeding great joy. Know ye that the Lord he is God (Psal. IC, 1, 2, 3). They call him Lord, who is not God. Therefore we should joy, we should serve in gladness, who have such a Lord, who also may truly be believed to be God, who proved the majesty of divinity, which he asserted in himself, by incomparable miracles. Therefore they who deny his invisible divinity, let them believe the patent works. But how wondrous is that holiness, which sanctifies sinners? Whence also concerning the sinful woman he says: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much (Luke VII, 47). Knowing this excellence of holiness, she who was placed in the flux of blood, says: If I shall touch only the hem of his garment, I shall be healed (Matt. IX, 21). But who would assert her faith, if the effect of faith were not patent? For as she touched his garment, the blood stood. Therefore there is none holy as the Lord is, because whoever could exist as holy, received of his gift that he could be holy. For interpreting this by the subsequent word, the holy Church converts to the same Redeemer out of exceeding charity, saying:

(Vers. 2.) For there is no other beside thee.

6. Subauditur, sanctus. Extra eum sanctus aliquis esset, si absque dono unigeniti sanctificationis spiritum habere potuisset. Sed quis hoc asserere audeat de hominibus, quod de Angelis nequaquam constat? Scriptum quippe est: Verbo Domini coeli firmati sunt et spiritu oris ejus omnis virtus eorum (Psal. XXXII, 6). Verbum Domini est unigenitus Dei. Quem profecto evangelista Joannes insinuans, ait: In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum (Joan. I, 1). Si ergo etiam angeli sanctificati creduntur in Filio, multo magis de hominibus creditur quia extra eum sanctificationis gratiam invenire non possunt.

7. Potest etiam hoc sine aliqua subauditione intelligi. Cum ergo dicit: Nec est alius extra te, quid aliud in Redemptore quam divinae essentiae incommutabilitas designatur? Unde et Judaeis blasphemantibus dicit.: Antequam Abraham fieret ego sum (Joan. VIII, 58). Idipsum in Genesi Moysi insinuans, ait: Ego sum qui sum (Exod. III, 14). Deo enim unigenito esse est dissimiliter nunquam esse. Qui certe status tanto longe est a cunctis mortalibus, quanto clarius cognoscitur quia momentis singulis per multa variantur. Potest hoc et ad justitiae statum pertinere, quia electorum esse est in Deo per justitiam manere. Et quia unigenitus Dei Deus est, extra eum non est aliquis, quia nemo electorum nisi in ipso est. Quod si refertur ad divinitatem ejus, ut nequaquam intellectum humanitatis ejus evacuet, quia justus esse 45 non potest qui fidem non habet divinae Incarnationis; Judaei ergo per haec singula verba feriuntur, qui, dum Redemptorem contemnunt, Antichristum exspectant, qui Deus non esse liquido comprobatur. Unde et per beatum Job dicitur: Habitent in tabernaculo ejus socii ejus qui non est (Job. XVIII, 15). Tabernaculum Antichristi est amor perfidiae, quo fidei contradicit Redemptoris. In quo nimirum tabernaculo Judaei nunc permanent, quia dum perfidiae suae situm amanter inhabitant, contra Redemptorem pugnant. Qui etiam ejus qui non est socii esse referuntur, quia in proposito suo diabolum adjuvant, qui, dum a summae illius essentiae amore corruit, verum esse protinus amisit. Cui nimirum non esse est ab summam illam beatam essentiam per amoris participationem reverti non posse. Et quia Judaeorum populus, non solum arduam patrum veterum conversationem, sed etiam miraculorum ostensionem ad augmentum elationis habuit, subditur:

(Vers. 2.) Et non est fortis sicut Deus noster.

6. Holy is understood. Outside him someone would be holy, if without the gift of the Only-begotten he could have had the spirit of sanctification. But who would dare to assert this concerning men, which concerning Angels by no means is established? For it is written: By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth (Psal. XXXII, 6). The Word of the Lord is the Only-begotten of God. Whom indeed the evangelist John insinuating, says: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John I, 1). If therefore even the angels are believed to have been sanctified in the Son, much more concerning men it is believed that outside him they cannot find the grace of sanctification.

7. This also can be understood without any sub-audition. Therefore when she says: Neither is there any other beside thee, what else is designated in the Redeemer than the incommutability of divine essence? Whence also to the blaspheming Jews he says: Before Abraham was made, I am (John VIII, 58). Insinuating the same thing to Moses in Genesis, he says: I am who am (Exod. III, 14). For to the Only-begotten God to be is dissimilarly never to be. Which state certainly is by so much far from all mortals, by how much it is more clearly known that in single moments through many things they are varied. This also can pertain to the state of justice, because for the elect to be is to remain in God through justice. And because the Only-begotten of God is God, there is not another beside him, because no one of the elect is unless in him. Because if it is referred to his divinity, that by no means it may evacuate the intellect of his humanity, because he cannot be just 45 who does not have the faith of divine Incarnation; the Jews therefore are struck by these single words, who, while they contemn the Redeemer, expect Antichrist, who is clearly proved not to be God. Whence also through blessed Job it is said: Let the companions of him that is not, dwell in his tabernacle (Job XVIII, 15). The tabernacle of Antichrist is the love of perfidy, by which he contradicts the faith of the Redeemer. In which tabernacle indeed the Jews now remain, because while they lovingly inhabit the site of their perfidy, they fight against the Redeemer. Who also are related to be the companions of him who is not, because in their purpose they aid the devil, who, while he fell from the love of that highest essence, forthwith lost to be true. To whom indeed not to be is not to be able to return to that highest blessed essence through the participation of love. And because the people of the Jews, had not only the arduous conversation of the ancient fathers, but also the ostension of miracles to the augment of elation, it is subjoined:

(Vers. 2.) And there is none strong like our God.

8. Quasi inaniter gloriantem Judaeam reprimat, dicens: Quos magna fecisse astruis, puri homines fuerunt; quem praedico, non solum homo sanctus fuit, sed etiam potens Deus. Dum ergo fortitudo respicitur, excellentia indicatur, quia nimirum omnino infirma est omnis fortitudo hominis in comparatione deitatis. Quo tamen in loco assertio divinitatis non probat excellentiam operis, sed incomparabilitas fortitudinis ostendit veritatem deitatis. Quasi dicat: In hoc cognoscitur quia vera protulit, quia deitatem quam in se asseruit incomparabilibus operibus comprobavit. Unde per semetipsum dicit: Si opera non fecissem in eis, quae nemo alius fecit, peccatum non haberent (Joan. XV, 24). Jam vero ipsa opera discutienda sunt. Moyses mare (Exod. XIV, 12), Helias flumen divisit (IV Reg. II, 8); Dominus noster Jesus super mare ambulavit (Matth. XIV, 24). Quid ergo est elegantius in sicco profundi alveo viam transeunti populo exhibere, an ipsam maris faciem viam facere? Illi quippe, quia humanitatis deprimebantur pondere, in profundi solido viam qua pergerent requirebant; sed qui infirma humanae naturae in celsitudinem divinitatis assumpsisse cognoscitur, super aquas virtute propria ferebatur. Moyses de consortio sermonis Domini splendorem vultus obtinuit (Exod. XXXIV, 29), Josue orationibus solem fixit (Josue X, 12, 13); sed quia Deus est Jesus, coram discipulis in solis virtute resplenduit. In illius faciem filii Israel intendere non poterant, istius gloriam qui meruerunt cernere ceciderunt, ut aperte cognosceres quia divinum existeret quo humana transiret. Huic, in monte illis assistentibus, ab aeterno Patre dicitur: Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi complacui, ipsum audite (Matth. XVII, 5, 6). Et idcirco etiam Helias, qui ne plueret coelum clausit, et ut plueret reseravit (III Reg. XVII, 1) in ejus comparatione quid est qui apertis coelis, Patrem exhibuit testem suae divinae generationis? Non est ergo fortis ut Dominus, quia quidquid virtutis Moyses ostendere potuit, Dominus, non ipse fecit. Jesus autem omnia quae mire gessit propria virtute exhibuit, quia Dominus etiam Moysi fuit. Non enim Moyses populo perdeserta gradienti, sed Dominus manna pluit (Exod. XVI, 13, seq.). Non Moyses, sed Dominus in columna ignis per noctem, et nubis in die, populum praecessit (Ibid., XIV, 19). Non Moyses, sed verbum quod factum est

8. As if she should repress Judea vainly glorying, saying: Whom thou assertest to have done great things, were mere men; him whom I preach, was not only a holy man, but also a mighty God. While therefore strength is regarded, excellence is indicated, because indeed altogether weak is all the strength of man in comparison of deity. In which place however the assertion of divinity does not prove the excellence of work, but the incomparability of strength shows the truth of deity. As if she should say: In this he is known because he brought forth true things, because the deity which he asserted in himself he proved by incomparable works. Whence through himself he says: If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin (John XV, 24). But now the works themselves are to be discussed. Moses divided the sea (Exod. XIV, 12), Elias the river (IV Kings II, 8); our Lord Jesus walked upon the sea (Matt. XIV, 24). What therefore is more elegant, to exhibit a way to the people crossing in the dry channel of the deep, or to make the very face of the sea a way? Those indeed, because they were weighed down by the burden of humanity, required a way in the solid of the deep by which they might proceed; but he who is known to have assumed the weak things of human nature into the celsitude of divinity, was borne upon the waters by his own virtue. Moses from the consortium of the speaking of the Lord obtained the splendor of his countenance (Exod. XXXIV, 29), Josue fixed the sun by prayers (Josue X, 12, 13); but because Jesus is God, he resplendished before his disciples in the virtue of the sun. The sons of Israel could not intend into his face, those who merited to discern his glory fell down, that thou mightest openly know that it existed divine by which human things passed transitorily. To him, those assisting in the mountain, it is said by the eternal Father: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him (Matt. XVII, 5, 6). And therefore also Elias, who closed heaven lest it should rain, and unbarred it that it might rain (III Kings XVII, 1) in his comparison what is he who the heavens being opened, exhibited the Father as a witness of his divine generation? There is therefore none strong as the Lord, because whatever of virtue Moses could show, the Lord did, not himself. But Jesus exhibited all the things which he wondrously carried out by his own virtue, because he was also the Lord to Moses. For not Moses to the people proceeding through the deserts, but the Lord rained manna (Exod. XVI, 13, seq.). Not Moses, but the Lord in a pillar of fire by night, and of cloud by day, preceded the people (Ibid., XIV, 19). Not Moses, but the word which was made

ad eum, aquam de rupe produxit (Ibid. XVII, 6). Non Moyses, sed Dominus volatilia concupiscentibus exhibuit (Ibid. XVI, 17). Unde et Dominus Judaeos in patrum fortitudine gloriantes reprimit, dicens: Non Moyses, sed Pater meus dedit vobis panem de coelo (Joan VI, 32). 46 Hinc Psalmista non Moysen inaniter efferens, sed Dominum laudabiliter extollens, dicit: Fecit mirabilia in terra Aegypti, in campo Thaneos, interrupit mare, et perduxit eos, et statuit aquas quasi in utre. Eduxit eos in nube diei, et tota nocte in illuminatione ignis. Eduxit aquam de petra, et deduxit tanquam flumina aquas. Et mandavit nubibus desuper, et januas coeli aperuit, et pluit illis manna ad manducandum, et pluit super eos sicut pulverem carnes, et sicut arenam maris volatilia pennata (Psal. LXXVII, 12, seq.). Dominus autem Jesus fortis incomparabiliter non in aliena virtute apparuit, sed in sua. Unde et ex seipso potens, paralytico imperans, ait: Tibi dico, surge (Matth. IX, 6). Hinc etiam scriptum est: Quotquot tangebant eum, salvi fiebant a quocunque languore tenebantur (Marc. VI, 56). Et iterum: Virtus de illo exibat, et sanabat omnes (Luc. VI, 19). Hoc namque insigne fortitudinis, nec Moyses, nec Helias habere potuit, ut, dum incomparabilia signa innotescerent, adventum unigeniti apertissime designarent. Recte ergo Synagoga perpetuo silentio damnatur, cum subditur:

(Vers. 3.) Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia. Recedant vetera de ore vestro.

9. Quasi dicat: Dum incomparabiliter nova cernitis, gesta antiquorum reprehensibiliter effertis. Quasi enim umbra illa praecesserant. Sed nunc palam veri fideles haec Redemptoris nostri opera venerabiliter adorant, quia quod umbrabatur ibi occultatione sacramenti, in adventu Redemptoris patuit, exspectasse corpus revelandae veritatis. Ergo si ad nova referantur, vetera non sunt, quia in Spiritu sancto intellecta, vetustatem aliquam non recipiunt. De illo quippe renovante omnia spiritu, Psalmista precatur, dicens: Emitte spiritum tuum et creabuntur, et renovabis faciem terrae (Psal. CIII, 30). Vetera ergo sunt, si Redemptoris operibus conferantur; sed cum ad confirmanda haec spiritaliter illa proferimus, eo spiritu quo haec intelligimus illa renovantur. Sancta ergo Ecclesia dum Judaeos de veterum narratione reprehendit, quid aliud quam eos acta Patrum spiritualia carnaliter intelligere designatur? Synagoga etenim contra sanctam Ecclesiam se tanto temerius erigit, quanto

to him, produced water from the rock (Ibid. XVII, 6). Not Moses, but the Lord exhibited fowls to those concupiscing (Ibid. XVI, 17). Whence also the Lord represses the Jews glorying in the strength of the fathers, saying: Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven (John VI, 32). 46 Hence the Psalmist not vainly extolling Moses, but laudably exalting the Lord, says: He did wonderful things in the land of Egypt, in the field of Tanis. He divided the sea and brought them through: and he made the waters to stand as in a vessel. And he conducted them with a cloud by day: and all the night with a light of fire. He struck the rock in the wilderness: and gave them to drink, as out of the great deep. He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven. And he rained down manna upon them to eat, and he rained upon them flesh as dust: and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea (Psal. LXXVII, 12, seq.). But the Lord Jesus incomparably strong did not appear in the virtue of another, but in his own. Whence also mighty of himself, commanding the paralytic, he says: I say to thee, arise (Matt. IX, 6). Hence also it is written: And as many as touched him were made whole from whatsoever languor they were held (Mark VI, 56). And again: Virtue went out from him, and healed all (Luke VI, 19). For this ensign of strength, neither Moses, nor Elias could have, that, while incomparable signs should become known, they should most openly designate the advent of the Only-begotten. Rightly therefore the Synagogue is damned with perpetual silence, when it is subjoined:

(Vers. 3.) Do not multiply to speak lofty things. Let old things depart from your mouth.

9. As if she should say: While you discern incomparably new things, you reprehensibly extol the deeds of the ancients. For as if a shadow those things had preceded. But now the true faithful openly venerably adore these works of our Redeemer, because what was shadowed there by the occultation of the sacrament, in the advent of the Redeemer was patent, to have expected the body of the truth to be revealed. Therefore if they are referred to the new, they are not old, because understood in the Holy Spirit, they do not receive any vetusty. Concerning which spirit indeed renewing all things, the Psalmist prays, saying: Send forth thy spirit, and they shall be created: and thou shalt renew the face of the earth (Psal. CIII, 30). They are therefore old, if they are compared with the works of the Redeemer; but when we bring those forth spiritually to confirm these, by that spirit by which we understand these, those are renewed. Therefore the holy Church while she reprehends the Jews concerning the narration of the ancients, what else is designated than them to understand carnally the spiritual acts of the Fathers? For the Synagogue erects herself

legis et prophetarum scientia superbius extollitur, quam suis patribus divinitus inspiratam, sibi autem materialiter exhibitam didicit. Unde sequitur: Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia, gloriantes. Et ut tumere desinant, subjungit, dicens: Recedant vetera de ore vestro. Jam quippe ei vetera sunt, quae, ut dixi, per renovantem spiritum non intelliguntur. Tale est igitur ac si dicat: Dignum est ut ab eorum narratione sileas, quorum novos et splendidos sensus ignoras. Quae nimirum etsi subtiliter intelligis, tumorem arrogantiae tibi praestare non debent, quia Deus scientiarum Dominus est. Redemptor quippe humani generis, quia summi Patris est Verbum, Dominus est utique omnium scientiarum. Alta quippe, et magna locutus est Isaias, magna locutus est Jeremias; sed profecto nihil dicerent, si hoc Verbum scientiarum Dominus non eis, antequam loquerentur, scientias indicaret. Unde et frequenter in libris ejusdem Isaiae prophetae legitur: Verbum quod factum est ad Isaiam prophetam. Frequenter et in libro Jeremiae scribitur: Verbum quod factum est ad Jeremiam prophetam. Hoc Verbum scientiarum Dominum Joannes in altissimo summi Patris sinu aspiciens, ait: In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum (Joan. I, 1). Hinc Paulus scientiarum Dominum Redemptorem nostrum 47 insinuans, dicit: Quia in ipso habitat omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter (Col. II, 9). Dum ergo dicit: Recedant vetera de ore vestro, quia Deus scientiarum Dominus est, quid est aliud dicere, nisi Synagogae aperta ratione monstrare, ut tanto sollicite tacere debeat, quanto non solum quod sint, sed etiam a quo sint ea quae dicit ignorat? Quasi dicat: Illam scientiam, quam patrum tuorum fuisse astruis, tanto tibi dare arrogantiam non debuit, quanto non ipsorum, sed unigeniti Filii Dei fuit, et ipsam eamdem scientiam non intelligis. Dicit ergo: Recedant vetera de ore vestro. Ut Judaei nequaquam depravent quod intelligere recte non praevalent. Deus scientiarum, dicit, Dominus est, ut quod veraciter Dei esse comprobant, hominibus fallaciter non ascribant. Sed dum de verbis jactantiae Judaea reprehenditur, quia nullo timore compungitur, ei etiam de occultis perfidorum cordium motibus tormenta nuntiantur. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 3.) Et ipsi praeparantur cogitationes.

the more rashly against the holy Church, by how much she is the more proudly extolled by the knowledge of the law and the prophets, which to her fathers she learned to have been divinely inspired, but to herself materially exhibited. Whence it follows: Do not multiply to speak lofty things, glorying. And that they may cease to swell, it subjoins, saying: Let old things depart from your mouth. For now those things are old to her, which, as I said, are not understood through the renewing spirit. It is therefore such as if she should say: It is worthy that thou shouldst be silent from the narration of those, whose new and splendid senses thou art ignorant of. Which indeed although thou understandest subtly, ought not to afford thee the tumor of arrogance, because God is the Lord of sciences. For the Redeemer of the human race, because he is the Word of the highest Father, is certainly the Lord of all sciences. High indeed, and great things Isaias spoke, great things Jeremias spoke; but indeed they would say nothing, if this Word the Lord of sciences did not indicate sciences to them, before they spoke. Whence also frequently in the books of the same prophet Isaias it is read: The word that came to Isaias the prophet. Frequently also in the book of Jeremias it is written: The word that came to Jeremias the prophet. Seeing this Word the Lord of sciences in the highest bosom of the highest Father, John says: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John I, 1). Hence Paul insinuating the Lord of sciences our Redeemer 47 says: Because in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporeally (Col. II, 9). While therefore she says: Let old things depart from your mouth, because God is the Lord of sciences, what else is it to say, unless to show the Synagogue by open reason, that by so much the more solicitously she ought to be silent, by how much she is ignorant not only what they are, but also from whom are those things which she speaks? As if she should say: That science, which thou assertest to have been of thy fathers, ought not to have given thee so much arrogance, by how much it was not theirs, but of the only-begotten Son of God, and thou dost not understand that same science. She says therefore: Let old things depart from your mouth. So that the Jews by no means may deprave what they do not prevail to understand rightly. God is the Lord of sciences, she says, that what they truly prove to be of God, they may not falsely ascribe to men. But while Judea is reprehended concerning the words of boasting, because she is compuncted with no fear, also concerning the occult motions of perfidious hearts torments are announced to her. For it follows:

(Vers. 3.) And they prepare thoughts.

10. Quasi dicat: Quem blasphemare non metuis, non solum linguae habebis judicem, sed et cordis. Unde et per Isaiam comminatur, dicens. Ego opera, et cogitationes eorum venio ut congregem (Isai. LXVI, 18). Hinc per Moysen Dominus comminans, ait: Nonne haec condita sunt apud me, et signata in thesauris meis (Deut. XXXII, 34)? Et quia his verbis silentium Synagogae praecipitur, videamus jam sancta Ecclesia quibus fecunditatis suae laudibus in Annae voce glorietur. Subdens namque ait:

(Vers. 4.) Arcus fortium superatus est.

11. Quisnam est arcus fortium, nisi fraudulenta saevitia Judaeorum? Ex occulto quippe, quasi ex arcu Redemptori vulnus inflixerant, quem gentium manibus occidebant. Sed superatus est arcus fortium, quia qui eorum vulnere obiit, a mortuis resurrexit, in coelum ascendit, promissum Spiritum sanctum discipulis misit. Unde subditur:

(Vers. 5.) Et infirmi accincti sunt robore.

12. Appellatione quidem roboris, virtus ostenditur Spiritus sancti. Unde et eumdem Spiritum Dominus discipulis repromittens, ait: Vos autem sedete in civitate, donec induamini virtute ex alto (Luc. XXIV, 49). Robur autem gratia sancti Spiritus recte dicitur, quam ut electi recipiunt, contra omnia adversa hujus saeculi fortes fiunt. Qui vero infirmi hoc loco, nisi apostolo intelligendi sunt? Sed infirmi profecto, cum arcus fortium tenditur, non cum virtute ex alto vestiuntur. Nam in hora Dominicae comprehensionis scriptum de eis est, quia, relicto Domino, omnes fugerunt (Matth. XXVI, 56). An non valde infirmus tunc Petrus erat, cum interrogantis ancillulae vocem timuit, et Redemptorem negavit (Ibid., LXIII, 74)? Jam quippe superatus erat arcus fortium, annihilata saevitia Judaeorum, quia Redemptor morte victa surrexerat; et tamen adhuc infirmi apostoli superatos fortes, clausis januis, metuebant (Joan. XX, 19). Sed ubi eos robur induit libet intueri quam fortes fecit. Repentino quippe sonitu super eos Spiritus sanctus venit, et eorum infirmitatem in mirae charitatis virtutem permutavit (Act. II, 22, seq.). Coeperunt enim Christum jam robore induti praedicare, qui persecutorum minas non erubescebant delitescendo fugere; et qui mulierum verba timuerant, auctoritatem principum libertate frangebant. Vicit robur formidinem, terrores, minas,

10. As if she should say: Him whom thou dost not fear to blaspheme, thou shalt have as a judge not only of the tongue, but also of the heart. Whence also through Isaias he comminates, saying: I come that I may gather together their works and their thoughts (Isai. LXVI, 18). Hence through Moses the Lord comminating, says: Are not these things stored up with me, and sealed up in my treasures? (Deut. XXXII, 34). And because by these words silence is bidden to the Synagogue, let us now see the holy Church with what praises of her fecundity she glories in the voice of Anna. For subjoining she says:

(Vers. 4.) The bow of the mighty is overcome.

11. Who pray is the bow of the mighty, if not the fraudulent cruelty of the Jews? For from a hidden place, as if from a bow they had inflicted a wound on the Redeemer, whom they killed by the hands of the gentiles. But the bow of the mighty is overcome, because he who died by their wound, rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven, sent the promised Holy Spirit to the disciples. Whence it is subjoined:

(Vers. 5.) And the weak are girt with strength.

12. By the appellation indeed of strength, the virtue of the Holy Spirit is shown. Whence also the Lord repromising the same Spirit to the disciples, says: But stay you in the city, till you be endued with power from on high (Luke XXIV, 49). But strength is rightly called the grace of the Holy Spirit, which as the elect receive, they become strong against all the adversities of this world. But who are to be understood by the weak in this place, if not the apostles? But weak indeed, when the bow of the mighty is bent, not when they are clothed with virtue from on high. For in the hour of the Lord's apprehension it is written of them, because, leaving the Lord, they all fled (Matt. XXVI, 56). Or was not Peter then very weak, when he feared the voice of an interrogating little maid-servant, and denied the Redeemer (Ibid., LXIII, 74)? Already indeed the bow of the mighty was overcome, the cruelty of the Jews annihilated, because the Redeemer having conquered death had risen; and nevertheless still the weak apostles feared the overcome mighty, the doors being shut (John XX, 19). But when strength indued them it pleases to look upon how strong it made them. For with a sudden sound the Holy Spirit came upon them, and changed their weakness into the virtue of wondrous charity (Acts II, 22, seq.). For they began to preach Christ already indued with strength, who did not blush to flee by lying hid the threats of persecutors; and who had feared the words of women, broke the authority of princes with liberty. Strength conquered dread,

et caedes superavit; et quos superveniendo induit, in coelesti militia mirabilis audaciae insignibus illustravit, ut inter flagella, caedes et opprobria non metuerent 48, sed exsultarent. Scriptum quippe de eis hoc jam robore indutis est: Ibant apostoli gaudentes a conspectu concilii, quoniam digni habiti sunt pro nomine Jesu contumeliam pati (Act. V, 41). Hinc jam praedicantes, dicunt: Omne gaudium existimate, fratres, cum in tentationes varias incideritis (Jac. I, 2). Bene ergo dicitur: Arcus fortium superatus est, et infirmi accincti sunt robore. Quia prius a mortuis resurrexit, et sic ad coelum Redemptor abiit, et Spiritum sanctum discipulis misit. Prius namque superandus erat arcus fortium, et post infirmi robore accingendi. Unde et scriptum est: Nondum erat spiritus datus, quia Jesus nondum fuerat glorificatus (Joan. VII, 39).

13. Quo in loco notandum est quia hoc contra Judaeam dicitur quae miracula Redemptoris tanto superbius despicit, quanto inter supplicia mortuum recognoscit. Dicit ergo: Arcus fortium superatus est, et infirmi accincti sunt robore. Quasi mortem Redemptoris calumnianti Synagogae respondeat, dicens: Noli despicere quod mori potuit, sed mirare potius quia mortuus resurrexit, et gentis tuae saevitiem reviviscendo superavit. Et quia hoc de praeterito ostendit, non solum denuntiando ei loquitur, sed insultando. Quasi enim inaniter insultanti improperet, dicens: Quid vobis profuit occidisse quem mortis laqueus non potuit tenere? Vos occidistis, ne post eum totus mundus iret; sed idcirco post eum totus mundus vadit, quia verum se Dei Filium probavit, dum moriendo humanum genus redimeret, et dum resurgendo viventem se monstraret, et ad coelum conscenderet, et spiritum sanctum promissum discipulis destinaret. Et quia pro incredulitatis suae merito Synagoga a participatione promissae gratiae repulsa est, id ipsum sancta Ecclesia improperans ei, subdens, ait:

(Vers 5.) Repleti prius, pro panibus se locaverunt, et famelici saturati sunt.

14. Qui fuerunt prius repleti, nisi qui cognitionem Dei, antequam caeteri populi, habuerunt? Qui ergo repleti prius intelligendi sunt alii quam Judaei, qui in fide conditoris fere ab ipso fuerunt principio mundi eruditi? Ipsi quidem pro panibus se locaverunt. Quid enim panes hoc loco significant, nisi mysteria divinae Incarnationis? Locus autem inveniendorum panum sacra est Scriptura. Unde et panis, qui de coelo descendit,

terrors, threats, and overcame massacres; and those whom supervening it indued, it illustrated with the ensigns of wondrous audacity in the heavenly warfare, so that amid scourges, massacres and opprobriums they should not fear 48, but should exult. For it is written of them already indued with this strength: The apostles went rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (Acts V, 41). Hence already preaching, they say: My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations (James I, 2). Rightly therefore it is said: The bow of the mighty is overcome, and the weak are girt with strength. Because first he rose from the dead, and so the Redeemer went away to heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples. For first the bow of the mighty was to be overcome, and afterwards the weak to be girt with strength. Whence also it is written: For as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (John VII, 39).

13. In which place it is to be noted that this is said against Judea, who by so much the more proudly despises the miracles of the Redeemer, by how much she recognizes him dead amid punishments. She says therefore: The bow of the mighty is overcome, and the weak are girt with strength. As if she should answer to the Synagogue calumniating the death of the Redeemer, saying: Do not despise that he could die, but rather wonder because being dead he rose again, and overcame the cruelty of thy nation by reviving. And because she shows this concerning the past, she not only speaks by denouncing to her, but by insulting. For as if to the inanely insulting one she should upbraid, saying: What did it profit you to have killed him whom the snare of death could not hold? You killed him, lest after him the whole world should go; but therefore after him the whole world goes, because he proved himself the true Son of God, while by dying he redeemed the human race, and while by rising again he showed himself living, and ascended to heaven, and destined the promised holy spirit to his disciples. And because for the merit of her incredulity the Synagogue was repulsed from the participation of the promised grace, the holy Church upbraiding her with this very thing, subjoining, says:

(Vers. 5.) They that were before full, have hired out themselves for bread, and the hungry are filled.

14. Who were those filled before, if not they who had the knowledge of God, before the other peoples? Therefore who are to be understood by those filled before, other than the Jews, who in the faith of the Creator were erudited almost from the very beginning of the world? These indeed hired themselves out for breads. For what do breads signify in this place, if not the mysteries of divine Incarnation? But the place of finding the breads is sacred Scripture. Whence also the bread, which came down from heaven, says to those ignorant

ad inveniendum se ignorantibus dicit: Scrutamini Scripturas, quia ipsae sunt quae testimonium perhibent de me (Joan. V, 39). Pro panibus ergo se locaverunt, quia omnes Scripturas acceperant, ut in eis sacramenta divinae Incarnationis invenire debuissent: sed cum panis venit, Synagoga, quae se pro pane locaverat, locum reliquit, in quo invenire panem debuit quem quaesivit. Scripturas quidem, ut dixi, ad cognoscendum Redemptorem habuit, sed qui secundum Scripturas venerat, venientem confutavit. Famelici ergo saturati sunt, quia qui crediderunt de gentibus, dum mysteria divinae Incarnationis veneranter accipiunt, coelestem cibum habent ad internae delectationis usum. Famelici quidem dicti sunt, quia ante adventum Redemptoris, infidelitatis fame projecti, spiritualis refectionis cibum nullum habuerunt. Vel certe famelici dicuntur, quia spiritualis cibi dulcedinem cum magna aviditate suscipiunt. Repleti vero, qui se pro pane locaverunt, audiant quem exspectabant: Ego sum panis vivus, qui de coelo descendi (Joan. VI, 33, 41, seq.). Sed quia non merebantur agnoscere, respondebant: Nonne hic est filius Joseph? quomodo dicit, quia de coelo descendi (Luc. IV, 22; Joan. VI, 42)? Ipse autem, qui 49 omnia noverat ad delectationis suae recubitum famelicos venturos prophetabat, dicens: Amen dico vobis, quia ab Oriente et Occidente venient, et recumbent cum Abraham, Isaac et Jacob in regno coelorum, filii autem regni projicientur in tenebras exteriores (Matth. VIII, 11, 12). Repleti ergo se locaverunt pro panibus, sed famelici saturantur, quia Synagogae filii in Scripturis sanctis pastum fidei de futura Incarnatione Redemptoris habuerunt; sed nunc, projectis illis, dum gentiles in eum veraciter credunt, divinitatis et humanitatis ejus sacramenta in delectationis intimae refectione suscipiunt.

15. Quia vero per egregium Doctorem dicitur: Omnes eamdem escam manducaverunt, et omnes eumdem spiritalem potum biberunt (bibebant de spiritali consequente eos petra, petra autem erat Christus) (I Cor. X, 3, 4), potest rationabiliter colligi quia illi manducaverunt, et non sunt saturati, isti manducaverunt, et saturati sunt. Quod nimirum contra Synagogam a sancta Ecclesia recte dicitur, ut ii qui sunt sub gratia mira celsitudine praeeminere sub lege positis designentur. Quid enim illis fuit se pro panibus locare, nisi sacramenta venturi Redemptoris in Scriptura sacra perquirere? Quorum profecto unusquisque manducavit, et saturatus non est, quia futuram summi unigeniti Incarnationem credidit, sed praesentem non vidit. Manducare quidem ei fuit, divinam Incarnationem in mentis desiderio dulciter retinere, et non saturari ei fuit desideratam ejus praesentiam non videre. Sed infirmi, qui robore accingendi erant, saturitatis suae praeconia ab eo quo

of finding him: Search the scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting; and the same are they that give testimony of me (John V, 39). Therefore they hired themselves out for breads, because they had received all the Scriptures, that in them they ought to have found the sacraments of divine Incarnation: but when the bread came, the Synagogue, which had hired itself out for bread, left the place, in which she ought to have found the bread which she sought. She had indeed the Scriptures, as I said, to know the Redeemer, but she confuted him coming who had come according to the Scriptures. Therefore the hungry are filled, because they who believed from the gentiles, while they reverently receive the mysteries of divine Incarnation, have heavenly food to the use of internal delectation. The hungry indeed they are called, because before the advent of the Redeemer, cast out by the hunger of infidelity, they had no food of spiritual refection. Or certainly they are called hungry, because they receive the sweetness of spiritual food with great avidity. But the filled, who hired themselves out for bread, let them hear him whom they expected: I am the living bread which came down from heaven (John VI, 33, 41, seq.). But because they did not merit to agnize him, they answered: Is not this the son of Joseph? how doth he say, I came down from heaven (Luke IV, 22; John VI, 42)? But he himself, who 49 knew all things prophesied that the hungry would come to the recumb of his delectation, saying: Amen I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into the exterior darkness (Matt. VIII, 11, 12). Therefore the filled hired themselves out for breads, but the hungry are filled, because the children of the Synagogue in the holy Scriptures had the pasture of faith concerning the future Incarnation of the Redeemer; but now, those being cast out, while the gentiles truly believe in him, they receive the sacraments of his divinity and humanity in the refection of internal delectation.

15. But because it is said by the excellent Doctor: And did all eat the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink; (and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ) (I Cor. X, 3, 4), it can reasonably be gathered because those ate, and were not filled, these ate, and are filled. Which indeed against the Synagogue is rightly said by the holy Church, that they who are under grace by wondrous celsitude may be designated to pre-emine those placed under the law. For what was it for them to hire themselves out for breads, if not to search the sacraments of the coming Redeemer in sacred Scripture? Of whom indeed every one ate, and was not filled, because he believed the future Incarnation of the highest Only-begotten, but did not see him present. Indeed to eat was to him, to retain sweetly the divine Incarnation in the desire of the mind, and to not be filled was to him not to see his desired presence. But the weak, who were to be girt with strength, heard the proclamations of their satiety from that bread by which they were filled: Blessed are the eyes that see

saturabantur pane audiebant: Beati oculi qui vident quae vos videtis. Amen dico vobis quia multi reges et prophetae voluerunt videre quae vos videtis, et non viderunt, et audire quae vos auditis, et non audierunt (Matth. XIII, 16, 17). Qui enim videre volebant, jam intimae delectationis panem per desiderium manducabant; sed quia videre non poterant, habebant gaudium desiderii, sed non habebant per fruitionem saturitatis. Nam etsi Scriptura dicat: Quia panem omnem suavitatem habentem et omnem dulcedinem, Deus eis dedit (Sap. XVI, 20), sic dicitur ab eis accipi, sicut nosci, sicut, per fidem notus ab eis, per charitatis desiderium poterat concupisci. Synagogae igitur in primis patribus glorianti, ii accincti robore praeferuntur, ut dum novum culmen electorum conspicitur praecelsum, nequaquam inaniter ultra glorietur. Et quia a discubitu sanctae Ecclesiae cibus vitae nunquam tollitur, tam futura quam praeterita insinuans, ait:

(Vers. 6.) Donec sterilis peperit plurimos, et quae multos habebat filios infirmata est.

16. Quae est sterilis, nisi sancta Ecclesia, ut supra latius in Annae typo jam diximus? Quid est ergo famelicos saturari, donec sterilis pariat, nisi usque in mundi finem panem vitae possidere? Quod et ipse repromittit, dicens: Ecce ego vobiscum sum usque in consummationem saeculi (Matth. XXVIII, 20). Non enim sunt nisi famelici quos sancta Ecclesia parit. Ergo donec parit, famelici saturantur, quia usque in mundi finem Deo filios generat, qui dum venisse in carne Redemptorem credunt, panem vitae, quem desiderant, comedunt, et plenitudine replentur. Sed donec sterilis plurimos parit, ea quae multos habebat filios infirmatur. Infirmari Synagogae est institutione legis veteris parere non posse. Quae enim fidem viri prioris perdidit, diabolo jam et non Deo parit. Bene autem dicitur: Quae multos habebat filios, quia dum in veritate Scripturarum subjectum sibi 50 populum antiquitus erudiret venturi Redemptoris adventum concupiscere, de complexu coelestis sponsi filios pariebat. Nunc autem quae habebat filios infirmata est, et filios non habet. Scripturas quidem suis auditoribus exhibet, sed quia Redemptorem negat, Deo filios nunquam generat. Infirmari ergo dicitur, cui spiritualis fecunditas negatur. Et quia tam Synagogae repulsio quam electio gentilitatis incomprehensibili Dei judicio facta est, sequitur:

(Vers. 6-8.) Dominus mortificat, et vivificat, deducit ad inferos, et reducit; Dominus pauperem facit, et ditat; humiliat et sublevat. Suscitat de pulvere egenum, et de stercore erigit pauperem, ut sedeat cum principibus, et solium gloriae teneat.

the things which you see. For I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them (Luke X, 23, 24). For they who wished to see, already by desire ate the bread of internal delectation; but because they could not see, they had the joy of desire, but did not have satiety through fruition. For although the Scripture may say: For thou didst give them bread from heaven prepared without labor, having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste (Wisd. XVI, 20), it is so said to be received by them, as to be known, as, known by them through faith, through the desire of charity it could be concupisced. Therefore to the Synagogue glorying in the first fathers, these girt with strength are preferred, so that while the new lofty summit of the elect is beheld, by no means she may vainly glory further. And because from the discumbency of the holy Church the food of life is never taken away, insinuating as well the future as the past, she says:

(Vers. 6.) Until the barren hath borne many: and she that had many children is weakened.

16. Who is the barren, if not the holy Church, as we have already said more widely above in the type of Anna? What is it therefore the hungry to be filled, until the barren hath borne, if not until the end of the world to possess the bread of life? Which also he himself repromises, saying: Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. XXVIII, 20). For they are not unless hungry whom the holy Church brings forth. Therefore until she brings forth, the hungry are filled, because even to the end of the world she generates sons to God, who while they believe the Redeemer to have come in the flesh, eat the bread of life, which they desire, and are filled with fulness. But until the barren bears many, she who had many sons is weakened. To be weakened to the Synagogue is to not be able to bear by the institution of the old law. For she who lost the faith of her former husband, now bears to the devil and not to God. But it is well said: She who had many sons, because while in the truth of the Scriptures she erudited the people 50 subject to her anciently to concupisce the advent of the coming Redeemer, from the embrace of the heavenly spouse she brought forth sons. But now she who had sons is weakened, and has no sons. She indeed exhibits the Scriptures to her auditors, but because she denies the Redeemer, she never generates sons to God. She is therefore said to be weakened, to whom spiritual fecundity is denied. And because as well the repulsion of the Synagogue as the election of gentility were made by the incomprehensible judgment of God, it follows:

(Vers. 6-8.) The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to hell and bringeth back again. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, he humbleth and he exalteth. He raiseth up the needy from the dust, and lifteth up the poor from the dunghill: that he may sit with princes, and hold the throne of glory.

17. Quasi obstupescenti alicui de tam electae gentis repulsione respondeat, dicens: Quid in his rationem quaeris, quae summa ratio incomprehensibiliter facit? Quod etiam genus quaerendi doctor egregius reprehendens, ait: Homo, tu quis es, qui respondeas Deo? Nunquid dicit figmentum factori suo: Quid me fecisti sic? Aut non habet potestatem figulus ex eodem luto aliud quidem vas facere in honorem, aliud vero in contumeliam (Rom. IX, 20, 21)? Tale est ergo ac si dicat: Quia omnium Dominus recte cognoscitur, opus illius, et in Judaeae abjectione, et in gentium electione, venerandum et non discutiendum esse sentiamus. Mortificat quidem Dominus, quia incomprehensibili judicio quondam electum Judaeorum populum a cognitione veritatis separat, et in perpetuum damnat. Vivificat, quia gentilitatem ad agnitionem sui unigeniti temporaliter per fidem recipit, et ad ejus contemplandam gloriam aeternaliter perducit. Ad inferos ducit, quia districto ejus judicio ultrix gehenna eos puniendos in perpetuum recipit qui per culpam perfidiae a veneratione se dividunt Redemptoris. Reducit ab inferis, quia gentilem populum ad filii sui fidem devote accedentem suscipit, cui, velut altus abyssi carcer, exstitit immensa obscuritas erroris. Pauperem facit et ditat, quia et repulsam Judaeam spiritalibus virtutibus spoliat, et electam gentilitatem, tam pretio fidei quam bonorum operum fulgoribus exornat. Qui etiam humiliare et sublimare dicitur. Etenim Synagoga, a Redemptore recedendo, sublimitatis suae alta deposuit, et sancta Ecclesia, Redemptorem venerando, ab imo infidelitatis, ubi projecta jacuerat, in altitudinem rectae fidei et Christianae potestatis celsitudinem surrexit. Quia ergo Dei Filium Judaea contempsit, gentilitas promeruit, recte et illa humiliata, et ista creditur exaltata. Sequitur: Suscitans de pulvere egenum, et de stercore erigens pauperem, ut sedeat cum principibus, et solium gloriae teneat.

18. Egenus et pauper gentilis populus intelligitur, qui de pulvere suscitatus et de stercore erectus dicitur, quia cum recipitur in fidem Redemptoris, et ei minima et graviora peccata remittuntur. Quia enim facile pulvis excutitur, et quem stercora inquinant horribiliter foedant, pulvis leviora, stercus graviora peccata significat. Bene etiam de pulvere suscitatus egenus dicitur, et de stercore pauper erectus. In illis siquidem dormiebat, a quibus levi tactu gratiae suscitari poterat. In illis vero jacebat, quia, lapsus in gravioribus, manu magni auxilii indigebat. Sed jam egenus qui de pulvere suscitatur, et is qui de stercore pauper erigitur, audiamus quo culmine praeferatur.

17. He responds as if to someone astonished by the rejection of such an elect nation, saying: Why do you seek a reason in these things, which the highest reason does incomprehensibly? Which kind of questioning the excellent teacher also rebuking, says: O man, who are you that reply against God? Does the thing formed say to him that formed it: Why have you made me so? Or has not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor (Rom. 9:20, 21)? It is such, therefore, as if he should say: Because the Lord of all is rightly known, let us feel that his work, both in the rejection of Judea and in the election of the gentiles, is to be venerated and not discussed. The Lord indeed kills, because by an incomprehensible judgment he separates the once elect people of the Jews from the knowledge of the truth, and damns them forever. He makes alive, because he receives the gentiles to the acknowledgment of his only-begotten temporally through faith, and leads them eternally to contemplate his glory. He brings down to hell, because by his strict judgment the avenging Gehenna receives those to be punished forever who by the fault of perfidy divide themselves from the veneration of the Redeemer. He brings back from hell, because he receives the gentile people approaching devotedly to the faith of his Son, for whom the immense obscurity of error existed like a deep prison of the abyss. He makes poor and makes rich, because he both despoils the rejected Judea of spiritual virtues, and adorns the elect gentility both with the price of faith and with the splendors of good works. He is also said to humble and to exalt. For indeed the Synagogue, by receding from the Redeemer, laid down the heights of her exaltation, and the holy Church, by venerating the Redeemer, rose from the depth of infidelity where she had lain cast down, into the height of right faith and the celsitude of Christian power. Therefore because Judea despised the Son of God and the gentiles merited him, rightly is the former believed to have been humbled, and the latter exalted. It follows: Raising up the needy from the dust, and lifting up the poor from the dunghill, that he may sit with princes, and hold the throne of glory.

18. By the needy and poor the gentile people is understood, who is said to be raised from the dust and lifted from the dunghill, because when he is received into the faith of the Redeemer, both his smallest and his more serious sins are forgiven. For because dust is easily shaken off, and those whom dung pollutes are horribly defiled, dust signifies lighter sins, and dung signifies more serious ones. It is also well said that the needy is raised from the dust, and the poor is lifted from the dunghill. Indeed he was sleeping in those things from which he could be raised by a light touch of grace. But in the others he was lying, because, having fallen into more serious things, he was in need of the hand of great help. But now let us hear to what height he is preferred, who as a needy man is raised from the dust, and who as a poor man is lifted from the dunghill.

Ut sedeat cum principibus, et solium gloriae teneat. Qui vero principes hoc in loco nisi sancti apostoli designantur? De quibus nimirum principibus, Deo per Psalmistam dicitur: Constitues eos principes super omnem terram, memores erunt nominis tui, Domine (Psal. XLIV, 17, 18). Quid est quod pauper cum principibus sedet, nisi quia ordo praedicatorum, de gentibus electus, in sancta Ecclesia culmen apostolicae auctoritatis obtinet? Cum principibus quippe sedet, quia de throno coelestis magisterii doctrinam salutis exhibet. Et solium gloriae tenet, quia bonae famae odorem spargit, quibus dignitate praeeminet. Vel certe solium gloriae tenet, et cum principibus sedet, quia et sublimitatis honore radiat, et miraculis coruscat. Sed qui tam sublimi dignitate sustollitur, qualiter uti ea debeat indicat, cum subjungit: (Vers. 8.) Domini enim sunt cardines terrae, et posuit super eos orbem.

20. Cardines terrae sunt extrema terrae. Nomine autem cardinum ipsos praedicatores electos de gentibus voluit designari. Extrema quidem terrae dicuntur, quia de vili quodammodo et abjecta gentilitate producuntur. Qui profecto cardines Domini esse dicuntur pro mortificatione propriae voluntatis. Domini quidem sunt, quia non sua quaerunt, sed quae Jesu Christi. Sed dum Domini esse dicuntur, singularis quaedam in eis sanctitas designatur. Qui vero Domini sunt, videant quia super eos orbis ponitur, non sub eis. Quid enim orbis nomine nisi sanctae Ecclesiae subjecta designatur plenitudo fidelium? Super cardines quidem terrae Deus orbem posuit, quia praedicatores ad hoc sanctae Ecclesiae praeponuntur, ut eorum infirmitatem relevent, et debiles quoque ad coelestem patriam, velut superimpositum onus portent. Non igitur se semper praelatos debent aspicere, sed quandoque subjectos, ut disciplina cohibendis vitiis praesint, sed aestimatione et obedientia ministerii saepe subsint eis quibus praeeminent cura praelationis. Et quia magna sunt onera quae praedicatores sustinent, subdit atque ait:

(Vers. 9.) Pedes sanctorum suorum servabit,

21. Quasi dicat: Inter onera tam immensa corruerent, si eorum pedes Dominus non servaret. Pedes quidem sanctorum suorum sunt affectus mentium. Qui profecto a Domino servantur, quia ab ipsis gratia mirae devotionis infunditur, qua onus tantum gratanter ferunt. Servare quidem pedes sanctorum Dominus dicitur, quia tanti ponderis molem fugerent, si hoc intolerabiliter grave, non eis infusa desuper charitas levigaret. Possunt etiam et status fortitudinis pedum appellatione signari.

19. That he may sit with princes, and hold the throne of glory. For who are designated as princes in this place if not the holy apostles? Concerning which princes indeed it is said to God through the Psalmist: You shall make them princes over all the earth, they shall be mindful of your name, O Lord (Psalm 44:17, 18). What is it that the poor man sits with princes, if not because the order of preachers, elected from the gentiles, obtains the height of apostolic authority in the holy Church? Indeed he sits with princes, because from the throne of heavenly magisterium he exhibits the doctrine of salvation. And he holds the throne of glory, because he scatters the odor of good fame to those whom he excels in dignity. Or certainly he holds the throne of glory and sits with princes, because he both radiates with the honor of sublimity and shines with miracles. But how he who is raised to such sublime dignity ought to use it, he indicates when he subjoins: (Vers. 8.) For the poles of the earth are the Lord's, and upon them he hath set the world.

20. The poles of the earth are the extremities of the earth. But by the name of poles he wished those very preachers elect from the gentiles to be designated. The extremities of the earth indeed they are called, because from a certain vile and abject gentility they are produced. Who indeed are said to be the poles of the Lord for the mortification of their own will. The Lord's indeed they are, because they seek not their own, but the things that are Jesus Christ's. But while they are said to be the Lord's, a certain singular sanctity is designated in them. But they who are the Lord's, let them see that the world is placed upon them, not under them. For what is designated by the name of the world if not the subject fulness of the faithful of the holy Church? Upon the poles of the earth indeed God hath set the world, because preachers to this end are preferred to the holy Church, that they may relieve their infirmity, and carry the weak also to the heavenly country, as a superimposed burden. Therefore they ought not to always look upon themselves as prelates, but sometimes subject, so that by discipline they may preside to coerce vices, but by estimation and obedience of ministry they may often be subject to them to whom they preemine by the care of prelacy. And because great are the burdens which preachers sustain, she subjoins and says:

(Vers. 9.) He will keep the feet of his saints,

21. As if she should say: Among so immense burdens they would fall, if the Lord did not keep their feet. The feet indeed of his saints are the affections of minds. Which indeed are kept by the Lord, because by them the grace of wondrous devotion is infused, from which they bear so great a burden willingly. To keep the feet of the saints indeed the Lord is said, because they would flee the mass of so great a weight, if charity infused from above did not lighten this intolerably heavy thing for them. They can also be designated by the appellation of feet the states of fortitude.

Pedes vero sanctorum suorum Dominus servat, quando eos mira fortitudine roborat, ut inter tam immensa onera nequaquam cadant. Et quia non pedem, sed pedes servare dicitur, quid in utroque pede sanctorum intelligimus, nisi fortitudinem et humilitatem? Ne enim ruamus, in utroque pede consistimus. Quicunque enim fidelibus gregibus praesunt, in via, qua ad supernam patriam tendunt, modo prospera, modo adversa inveniunt. Ipsa enim prospera, quia elationem menti excitant, eam ad casum valde impugnant; verumtamen ne electa mons cadat, hinc subsistere nititur pede fortitudinis, inde consistit pede humilitatis. Firmum quippe statum inter utramque tentationem retineret, si tam solida humilitate consisteret, ut nulla hanc prosperitas elevaret, adversitas nulla dejiceret. 52 Quid est ergo quod dicitur: Pedes sanctorum suorum servabit, nisi quia debilis est omnis virtus hominis sine auxilio conditoris? Infirma quippe humilitas nostra, dum prosperitatis favore mulcetur, ab ineptae laetitiae impulsu prosternitur. Infirma fortitudo nostra, dum adversitate impingitur, leviter superatur. Sed tristibus elidimur, laetis enervamur, cum nos nobis omnipotens Deus deserit, non cum auxilium suae protectionis impendit. Dicit ergo: Pedes sanctorum suorum servabit, quia omnipotens Deus infirmitatem nostram in ferendis subditorum nostrorum oneribus adjuvat, ut nos nec adversa atterant, nec laeta seducant. Tunc quidem a Domino pedes nostri servantur, cum, divino auxilio roborati, obviantia mundi laeta contemnimus, adversa nulla formidamus, cum stabili patientia gratanter mala ferimus et inconcussa humilitate sublimem animum a vana delectatione refrenamus.

22. Possunt autem pedes sanctorum fides et amor Redemptoris intelligi. Quibus profecto pedibus gradiuntur, cum eum quem per fidem fideles credunt amore consequuntur. Hos profecto pedes servari sibi a Domino postulabat, qui precabatur, dicens: Super excelsa statue me, ut vincam in claritate ipsius (Habac. III, 19). Super excelsa statuitur, cui Redemptoris divinitas revelatur. Et in claritate ejus vincit, quia dum ejus claritatis radiis illustratur, cuncta maligni spiritus tentamenta destruuntur. Statutos quidem in monte pedes tenet, qui veritatis contemplatione arduus est, et ejus quem credit summi Patris unigenitum amore succensus. Super excelsa quidem Petrus statutus erat, qui cum Domino confiteretur, dicens: Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi, protinus audivit: Beatus es, Simon Barjona, quia caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi, sed Pater meus, qui est in coelis (Matth. XVI, 16, 17). Fundatus enim fide, accensus charitate, eum quem amabat etiam praedicabat. Bene ergo de reprobis subjunctum est:

(Vers. 9.) Et impii tenebris conficescent.

But the Lord keeps the feet of his saints, when he strengthens them with wondrous fortitude, that among so immense burdens they may by no means fall. And because he is said to keep not a foot, but feet, what do we understand in both feet of the saints, if not fortitude and humility? Lest indeed we fall, we consist in both feet. For whoever preside over faithful flocks, in the way, by which they tend to the supernal country, sometimes prosperous, sometimes adverse things they find. For the prosperous things themselves, because they excite elation to the mind, greatly impugn it to a fall; nevertheless lest the elect mountain fall, hence it strives to subsist by the foot of fortitude, thence it consists by the foot of humility. Firm indeed state between either temptation it would retain, if by so solid humility it consisted, that no prosperity should elevate this, no adversity should cast it down. 52 What is it therefore that is said: He will keep the feet of his saints, if not because weak is all the virtue of man without the help of the Creator? Weak indeed is our humility, while it is stroked by the favor of prosperity, it is prostrated by the impulse of inept joy. Weak is our fortitude, while it is impinged by adversity, it is lightly overcome. But by sad things we are elided, by joyful things enervated, when almighty God deserts us to ourselves, not when he impends the help of his protection. She says therefore: He will keep the feet of his saints, because almighty God aids our infirmity in bearing the burdens of our subjects, so that neither adverse things may wear us down, nor joyful things seduce us. Then indeed our feet are kept by the Lord, when, strengthened by divine help, we contemn the obviating joyful things of the world, we dread no adverse things, when with stable patience we bear evils willingly and with unshaken humility we refrain a sublime mind from vain delectation.

22. But the feet of the saints can be understood as the faith and love of the Redeemer. By which feet indeed they walk in steps, when the faithful out of faith follow with love him whom they believe. These feet indeed he asked to be kept for himself by the Lord, who prayed, saying: Upon my high places set me, that I may conquer in his brightness (Habac. III, 19). He is set upon the high places, to whom the divinity of the Redeemer is revealed. And in his brightness he conquers, because while he is illustrated by the rays of his brightness, all the temptations of the malign spirit are destroyed. He indeed holds his feet set in the mountain, who is arduous in the contemplation of truth, and accensed by the love of him whom he believes the Only-begotten of the highest Father. Upon the high places indeed Peter was set, who when he confessed to the Lord, saying: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, forthwith heard: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven (Matt. XVI, 16, 17). For founded by faith, accensed by charity, him whom he loved he also preached. Well therefore concerning the reprobate it is subjoined:

(Vers. 9.) And the wicked shall be silent in darkness.

23. Qui enim impii hoc in loco, nisi Judaei intelliguntur, qui a pietate verae fidei sunt extranei, et Redemptoris morte cruenti? De quibus recte dicitur: In tenebris conticescent, quia sancti super excelsa statuti Redemptorem mundi, quem in divinae majestatis claritate conspiciunt, aeternis laudibus confitentur. In tenebris ergo tacent impii, quia Judaei ideo Redemptorem non praedicant, quod ineffabilis eos illa claritas divinitatis non illustrat. Scriptum quippe est: Tollatur impius, ne videat gloriam Domini (Isai. XXVI, 10). His quippe tenebris damnatos eos intuens, Joannes ait: Lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt (Joan. I, 5). Hinc David non optans, sed prophetans, dicit: Obscurentur oculi eorum, ne videant, et deorsum eorum semper incurva (Ps. LXVIII, 24). In tenebris ergo tacent impii, quia etsi Judaei divinae Scripturae verba in Dei laudibus proferunt, dum Filium negant, Deo Patri nulla vocum obsequia consecrant. Deo enim silet, qui, Patrem laudans, Unigeniti laudem tacet. Sed quem crucifixum despiciunt, quando judex venerit expavescent. Unde etiam subditur:

(Vers. 9, 10.) Quia non in fortitudine sua roborabitur vir, Dominum formidabunt adversarii ejus.

24. Nunc autem durus in infidelitate, fortis in errore est, et quem credere Deum contemnit, audacter blasphemare non metuit. Velut vir siquidem nunc vinci non potest, sed tunc sicut vir nequaquam roborabitur, cum is qui eorum insidiis 53 crucifixus est, in sua majestate conspicietur. Tunc formidabunt ejus adversarii, quando crucifixi virtute omnia moveri conspexerint, cum ejus judicio universa submitti, cum per excelsos coelos tonantia judicia audierint aeternae suae damnationis. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 10.) Et super ipsos in coelis tonabit.

25. Qui enim coelorum nomine hoc loco, nisi sancti apostoli designantur? Quibus profecto coelis sublimitatis suae gloriam Dominus repromittens, ait: Sedebitis super sedes judicantes duodecim tribus Israel (Matth. XIX, 28). Horum profecto coelorum tonitrua Judaeis Dominus insinuans, ait: Ipsi judices vestri erunt (Luc. XI, 19). Super Judaeos igitur impios tunc in coelis tonabit, quia a sanctis apostolis tunc terribilia judicia suae damnationis audient, ut eorum examine sententiam aeternae mortis accipiant, quos praedicantes humiliter vitae aeternae bona persecutionibus affligebant. Quia vero de extremo judicio ista intelligi debeant, sequitur:

(Vers. 10.) Dominus judicabit fines terrae.

23. For who are understood by the wicked in this place, if not the Jews, who are extraneous from the piety of true faith, and bloody by the death of the Redeemer? Concerning whom it is rightly said: They shall be silent in darkness, because the saints set upon the high places confess the Redeemer of the world, whom they behold in the brightness of divine majesty, with eternal praises. In darkness therefore the wicked are silent, because the Jews therefore do not preach the Redeemer, that that ineffable brightness of divinity does not illustrate them. For it is written: Let the wicked be taken away, that he may not see the glory of the Lord (Isai. XXVI, 10). Looking indeed upon them damned in these darknesses, John says: The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (John I, 5). Hence David not wishing, but prophesying, says: Let their eyes be darkened that they see not; and their back bow thou down always (Psal. LXVIII, 24). In darkness therefore the wicked are silent, because although the Jews proffer the words of divine Scripture in the praises of God, while they deny the Son, they consecrate no obsequies of voices to God the Father. For he is silent to God, who, praising the Father, is silent of the praise of the Only-begotten. But he whom crucified they despise, when he shall come as judge they shall be terrified. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Vers. 9, 10.) Because no man shall prevail by his own strength, the adversaries of the Lord shall fear him.

24. But now he is hard in infidelity, strong in error, and him whom he contemns to believe God, he does not fear to blaspheme audaciously. Like a man indeed now he cannot be overcome, but then like a man by no means shall he be strengthened, when he who was crucified by their snares 53 shall be beheld in his majesty. Then his adversaries shall fear, when they shall behold all things to be moved by the virtue of the crucified, when all things to be submitted to his judgment, when through the high heavens they shall hear the thundering judgments of their eternal damnation. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Vers. 10.) And upon them shall he thunder in the heavens.

25. For who are designated by the name of heavens in this place, if not the holy apostles? To which heavens indeed the Lord repromising the glory of his sublimity, says: You shall sit upon seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. XIX, 28). The Lord indeed insinuating the thunders of these heavens to the Jews, says: They shall be your judges (Luke XI, 19). Upon the wicked Jews therefore then he will thunder in the heavens, because from the holy apostles then they will hear the terrible judgments of their damnation, so that by their examination they may receive the sentence of eternal death, who preaching humbly the goods of eternal life they afflicted with persecutions. But because these things ought to be understood of the last judgment, it follows:

(Vers. 10.) The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth.

26. Qui sunt fines terrae, nisi ultima hujus mundi? Fines vero terrae Dominus judicat, ut aequitatis ejus sententia impunita aut irremunerata nulla derelinquat, quia dum in judicio extrema concludit, aliqua discutienda non deserit.

(Vers. 10.) Tunc sublimabit cornu Christi sui.

27. Quando omnes electos in aeterna contemplatione sui Unigeniti recipiet, ut eis aeterna illa et ineffabili Majestate praesideat, qui dum in praesentis vitae peregrinatione viverent secum non erant. Tunc sublimabit cornu Christi sui, quando in celsitudine sua 54 respicietur sublimitas Redemptoris. De hac sublimitate per Joannem dicitur: Videbimus eum sicuti est (I Joan. III, 2). Nam potestas sive regnum Domini nostri Jesu Christi semper aequale est; sed tunc sublimari dicitur, quando tales erimus ut ejus sublimitatem intueri valeamus; quidquid enim nunc de illa sublimitate humana mens sibi potest fingere, omnino nihil est in illius gloriae comparatione. Nam scriptum est de illa: Quod oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae praeparavit Deus diligentibus se (Isai. LXIV, 4; I Cor. II, 9). Prius ergo Christo datur imperium, deinde cornu ejus sublimabitur, quia tunc sublimitatis ejus celsitudo respicitur, cum nostra quoque natura a corruptionis suae imo sublevatur, cum renovationis suae integritatem resurgendo suscipit, qua praecelsum lumen contemplari valeat Redemptoris.

28. Si vero in cornu aliquis vult regnum intelligi, per regnum Christi sancta Ecclesia designatur. Quod profecto cornu sublimabitur, quia ima nostra ad angelorum aequalitatem perducentur. Quare et de electis in Evangelio Dominus dicit: Erant sicut angeli Dei in coelo (Matth. XXII, 30). De ista cornu sui sublimitate iterum dicit: Fulgebunt justi sicut sol in regno Patris eorum (Ibid. XIII, 43). Sublimabitur ergo cornu Christi, quia sancta Ecclesia in aeterna contemplatione sui Redemptoris extolletur; et quae nunc in hac valle miseriae depositionis suae poena deprimitur, absorpta tunc morte, renovata aeterni gaudii culmine, sublevabitur. Sed haec jam typica explanatione protulimus, restat ut in sequenti volumine moraliter exprimamus.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

CAPUT PRIMUM.

26. What are the ends of the earth, if not the lasts of this world? But the Lord judges the ends of the earth, so that the sentence of his equity may leave nothing unpunished or unremunerated, because while he concludes the extremes in judgment, he leaves nothing to be discussed.

(Vers. 10.) Then he shall exalt the horn of his Christ.

27. When he shall receive all the elect into the eternal contemplation of his Only-begotten, that he may preside over them with that eternal and ineffable Majesty, who while they lived in the peregrination of the present life were not with him. Then he shall exalt the horn of his Christ, when the sublimity of the Redeemer shall be beheld in his celsitude 54. Concerning this sublimity it is said through John: We shall see him as he is (I John III, 2). For the power or kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is always equal; but then it is said to be exalted, when we shall be such that we may prevail to look upon his sublimity; for whatever the human mind can now feign to itself concerning that sublimity, is altogether nothing in comparison of that glory. For it is written concerning it: That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him (Isai. LXIV, 4; I Cor. II, 9). First therefore the empire is given to Christ, then his horn shall be exalted, because then the celsitude of his sublimity is beheld, when our nature also is lifted up from the bottom of its corruption, when by rising again it receives the integrity of its renovation, by which it may prevail to contemplate the preeminent light of the Redeemer.

28. But if any one wishes the kingdom to be understood by the horn, by the kingdom of Christ the holy Church is designated. Which horn indeed shall be exalted, because our lowest things shall be brought to the equality of angels. Wherefore also the Lord says in the Gospel concerning the elect: They shall be as the angels of God in heaven (Matt. XXII, 30). Concerning this sublimity of his horn he again says: Then shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father (Ibid. XIII, 43). The horn of Christ therefore shall be exalted, because the holy Church shall be extolled in the eternal contemplation of her Redeemer; and she who now in this valley of misery is depressed by the punishment of her deposition, death then being absorbed, renovated by the summit of eternal joy, shall be lifted up. But these things we have already brought forth by typical explanation, it remains that we express them morally in the following volume.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

53 1. Superiori libro, dum sacrae historiae textum moraliter discuteremus, Annae fecunditatem in summae contemplationis perfectione posuimus, quia concipere menti est de summa Dei omnipotentis contemplatione ineffabiliter gaudere, parere autem in mente conceptae charitatis insignia occultare non posse. Nunc autem parienti canticum dicere quid est, nisi conditorem, quem ineffabiliter diligit, veris praeconiis praedicare? Dicit ergo:

(I Reg. II, 1.) Exsultavit cor meum in Domino.

2. Sed ea quae manducavit et bibit, quae amarum animum habuit, quae flevit largiter, quae votum vovit, quia illa mens omnipotentem Deum digne laudare potest, quae dignis agonibus ad charitatis ejus summa pervenit, haec quidem diuturno usu contemnere omnia didicit; et dum cuncta creata ab intentione abjicit, tanto amplius in visione aeternae majestatis gaudet, quanto alicujus creaturae species in sui amore hanc retinere non praevalet. Haec ergo dicit: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino, quae eum, contemptis omnibus, solum amat. In hunc profecto affectum venerat, qui dicebat: Quid mihi restat in coelo, et a te quid volui super terram (Psal. LXXII, 25). Hinc in Deo exsultans, dicit: Vultum tuum, vultum tuum, Domine, requiram (Psal. XXVI, 3). Hinc sponsa in Canticis petit, dicens: Osculetur me osculo oris sui (Cant. I, 1). Dum ergo dicit: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino, quid aliud 54 quam in ejus se osculis inhaesisse quem ardenter diligit gloriatur? Et idcirco illa sola haec dicit, quae experta novit quae vis amoris sit in thalamo sponsi. Cunctis quippe passionum victoriis illustrata, et praelata virtutum culmine, ad illam sublimitatem pervenit ex qua per gaudium mirae devotionis exsultationisque cor suum in Deo posuit. Et quia cor suum dicit, quid aliud quam mentis suae libertatem asseruit? Reprobi quidem corda sua non habent, quia ea diabolus possidet. Unde et de proditore dicitur: Cum diabolus jam misisset in cor, ut traderet eum Judas Simonis Iscariotes (Joan. XIII, 2). Si enim Judas cor suum, et non diabolus, possideret, ipse potius in eo bonum quam diabolus malum poneret. Quo contra electus vir loquitur, dicens: Animam meam porto in manibus meis (Job. XIII, 14). Quid enim aliud manus electi est quam potestas internae libertatis? Quid ergo ei est, animam in manibus portare, nisi internae libertatis gloriam in potestate retinere? Quotiescunque ergo graviter delinquimus, cor nostrum nos non habemus. Quare et Jeremias Judaico populo graviter delinquenti improperans, ait: Audi, populo stulte, et qui non habes cor (Jerem. V, 21). Hinc item conversus alter propheta Deo confitetur, dicens: Invenit servus tuus cor suum (II Reg. VII, 27). Dicit ergo: Exsultavit cor meum in Domino, ut libertatem mentis assereret, sine qua Deum digne laudare non posset. Sequitur:

(Vers. 1.) Exaltatum est cornu meum in Deo meo.

53 1. In the superior book, while we discussed the text of sacred history morally, we placed the fecundity of Anna in the perfection of the highest contemplation, because to conceive for the mind is to rejoice ineffably concerning the highest contemplation of almighty God, but to bear is to not be able to hide the ensigns of conceived charity in the mind. But now, what is it to say a canticle to the bearing one, if not to preach the Creator, whom she ineffably loves, with true proclamations? She says therefore:

(I Kings II, 1.) My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord.

2. But she who ate and drank, who had a bitter mind, who wept largely, who vowed a vow, because that mind can worthily praise almighty God, which by worthy agonies has arrived at the heights of his charity, she indeed by daily use has learned to contemn all things; and while she casts away all created things from her intention, she rejoices so much the more in the vision of eternal majesty, by how much the species of any creature does not prevail to retain her in its love. She therefore says: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord, who, all things being contemned, loves him alone. Into this affection indeed he had come, who said: For what have I in heaven? and besides thee what do I desire upon earth? (Psal. LXXII, 25). Hence rejoicing in God, he says: Thy face, thy face, O Lord, will I seek (Psal. XXVI, 3). Hence the spouse in the Canticles asks, saying: Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth (Cant. I, 1). While therefore she says: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord, what else 54 than that she glories to have inhered in his kisses whom she ardently loves? And therefore she alone says these things, who experienced knows what the force of love is in the nuptial chamber of the spouse. Illustrated indeed by all the victories of passions, and preferred by the summit of virtues, she arrived at that sublimity from which through the joy of wondrous devotion and exultation she placed her heart in God. And because she says her heart, what else did she assert than the liberty of her mind? The reprobate indeed do not have their own hearts, because the devil possesses them. Whence also concerning the traitor it is said: When the devil had now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him (John XIII, 2). For if Judas, and not the devil, possessed his heart, he himself rather would place good in it than the devil evil. To which contrary the elect man speaks, saying: I carry my soul in my hands (Job. XIII, 14). For what else are the hands of the elect than the power of internal liberty? What is it therefore for him to carry his soul in his hands, if not to retain the glory of internal liberty in power? As often therefore as we gravely transgress, we do not have our heart. Wherefore also Jeremiah reproaching the gravely transgressing Judaic people, says: Hear, O foolish people, and without understanding (Jerem. V, 21). Hence again converted another prophet confesses to God, saying: Thy servant hath found his heart (II Kings VII, 27). She says therefore: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord, that she might assert the liberty of the mind, without which she could not worthily praise God. It follows:

(Vers. 1.) My horn is exalted in my God.

55 3. In cornu electae mentis intentio designatur, quae mirabiliter extollitur cum ad eum gaudendo pervenit qui super universa consistit. Unde et cornu suum non in alio aliquo exaltatum asserit, sed in Deo. Qui enim transeuntia bona diligit, hujus profecto intentio depressa, non exaltata est, quia in imo figitur ubi per desiderium locatur. Hinc est quod in Evangelio Dominus dicit: Ubi est thesaurus tuus, ibi est et cor tuum (Matth. VI, 21; Luc. XII, 34). Exaltare ergo cornu nostrum volebat Dominus, cum dicebat: Thesaurizate vobis thesauros in coelo (Matth. VI, 20, 33). Exaltatum cornu habebant ii quibus se Paulus conformabat, dicens: Nostra conversatio in coelis est (Philip. III, 20). Sed qui coelestia tantum diligit, si illam intimae dulcedinis suavitatem gustare non novit, quanquam valde exaltatus sit, ad hujus tamen exaltationis sublimitatem non pervenit. Ille ergo hac exaltatione sublimis est, qui per incrementa virtutum proficiens, sublimitatem summae contemplationis obtinuit, non solum ut perfecte coelestia diligat sed etiam ut amoris perfectione in sola omnipotentis Dei contemplatione requiescat. In Deo exaltatum cornu habet, qui interni luminis alta visione fruitur, in qua familiari quadam singularitate gloriatur. Quare non ait, In Deo nostro, sed in Deo meo. Meum namque de eo dicit quem familiariter ac singulariter diligit. Ad quam certe divinae familiaritatis dignitatem pervenerat, qui dicebat: Deus meus es tu, et confitebor tibi: Deus meus es tu, et exaltabo te (Psal. CXVII, 28). Hinc Isaias ait incredulos increpans: Nunquid parum est vobis molestos esse hominibus, quia molesti estis et Deo meo (Isai. VII, 13)? Quae ergo exaltatione cornu in Deo sustollitur, Deum suum singulariter fatetur, quia summa illa infusio divinae dulcedinis exaltatam mentem, et sui susceptibilem, et valde familiarem facit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 1.) Dilatatum est os meum super inimicos meos.

4. Qui sunt inimici electae mentis, nisi spiritus maligni? Quid ergo est dilatatum os super inimicos habere, nisi omnes malignorum spirituum suasiones amplissima sibi infusae gratiae largitate reprobare? Angustum quippe os habet, qui cunctis fraudibus malignorum spirituum per considerationem rationis contraire non praevalet. Os quippe mentis ejus ratio est, et loqui deliberare. Os namque repletur cum mentis ratio per infusam sibi gratiam in contemplationem summae veritatis attollitur. Repleri quidem ei est illustratione summae veritatis imbui.

55 3. In the horn the intention of the elect mind is designated, which is wondrously extolled when rejoicing it arrives at him who consists over all things. Whence also she asserts her horn to be exalted not in some other, but in God. For he who loves passing goods, his intention indeed is depressed, not exalted, because it is fixed in the bottom where it is located by desire. Hence it is that the Lord says in the Gospel: Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also (Matt. VI, 21; Luke XII, 34). Therefore the Lord wished to exalt our horn, when he said: Lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven (Matt. VI, 20, 33). They had an exalted horn to whom Paul conformed himself, saying: Our conversation is in heaven (Philip. III, 20). But he who loves heavenly things only, if he knows not to taste that sweetness of internal delectation, although he be greatly exalted, yet he has not arrived at the sublimity of this exaltation. He therefore is sublime with this exaltation, who profiting through the increments of virtues, has obtained the sublimity of the highest contemplation, not only that he may perfectly love heavenly things, but also that by the perfection of love he may rest in the sole contemplation of almighty God. He has his horn exalted in God, who enjoys the high vision of internal light, in which he glories with a certain familiar singularity. Wherefore she says not, In our God, but in my God. For she says my concerning him whom she familiarly and singularly loves. At what dignity of divine familiarity he certainly had arrived, who said: Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, and I will exalt thee (Psal. CXVII, 28). Hence Isaiah says reproving the incredulous: Is it a small thing for you to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also? (Isai. VII, 13). Whose horn therefore by exaltation is lifted up in God, singularly confesses her God, because that highest infusion of divine sweetness makes the exalted mind both susceptible of itself and greatly familiar. It follows:

(Vers. 1.) My mouth is enlarged over my enemies.

4. Who are the enemies of the elect mind, if not malign spirits? What is it therefore to have an enlarged mouth over enemies, if not to reprobate all the persuasions of malign spirits by the most ample largeness of grace infused in itself? Narrow indeed does he have a mouth, who prevails not to go against all the frauds of malign spirits by the consideration of reason. The mouth indeed of the mind is its reason, and to speak to deliberate. For the mouth is filled when the reason of the mind by grace infused in itself is lifted up into the contemplation of the highest truth. Indeed to be filled is to him to be imbued by the illustration of the highest truth.

Ibi quippe discit, et quod aeternaliter appetat, et quod temporaliter contemnat. Et quia summa veritas amor est, subtilitate veritatis attollitur electa anima, ejusque rei charitate, quam didicerit, inflammatur, et tanto strictius servat magisterium, quanto ferventius id sibi inviscerat vis amoris. Cui nimirum etsi maligni spiritus mala suggerunt, dilatati oris apertione confunduntur, quia, veritate summae sapientiae instructa, et summi amoris facibus accensa, habet jam contra suggestionem erroris immensam lucem sapientiae, habet et contra oblatam mundi hujus pompam ineffabilem charitatem. In immensitate lucis videt quae reprobet, sed per vim summae charitatis amat inepta reprobare quae novit. Per sapientiam mala suggesta reprehendit, sed in virtute charitatis deprehensa redarguit. Os ergo super inimicos dilatat, quia ex abundantia rationis contra daemones multa deliberat; et eo acutius eorum objecta destruit, quo id unde mala suggesta reprobet in sublimibus agnoscit. Unde protinus causam insinuans, ait:

56 Quia laetata sum in salutari tuo.

5. Quod profecto tale est ac si dicat: Quia exaltatum est cornu meum in Deo meo. Hoc certe est laetari in salutare Dei, quod exaltatum cornu habere in Deo suo. Quod non de qualibet laetitia salutaris accipitur, sed de illo perfectissimo gaudio, quo electa perfectaque anima more sponsae gaudet in sponso. De qua nimirum laetitia David obsecrat, dicens: Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui, et spiritu principali confirma me (Psal. L, 14). Quae ergo dilatatum os habere super inimicos suos se gloriatur, in salutare Dei prius laetata fuisse describitur, quia illa beata mens valide reprobare malignorum spirituum suasiones poterit, quae in Redemptoris divinitate per contemplationem sublimiter assumpta, ex eo et sapientiae accipit magnitudinem, et plenitudinem charitatis. Quem profecto dignis laudibus praedicat, dicens:

(Vers. 2.) Non est sanctus ut est Dominus; neque enim est alius extra te, et non est fortis sicut Deus noster.

6. His namque Annae vocibus quaeque electa anima hoc Redemptori clamat in laude, quod ab ipso credit in munere. Sed ex hoc piae confessionis ordine ordo innuitur, quo eadem muneris bona quae seriatim protulit consequamur. Sanctus itaque Dominus et fortis asseritur, a quo sanctificamur, ad requiem ducimur, et glorificamur. Sanctificationem a Domino accipimus in virtute regenerationis; esse autem, id est quietem ab hujus mutabilitate corruptionis, in terminatione exsilii, fortitudinem in triumpho resurrectionis.

There indeed he learns, both what he should eternally appetize, and what he should temporally contemn. And because the highest truth is love, by the subtilty of truth the elect soul is lifted up, and is inflamed by the charity of that thing which it has learned, and keeps the magistery so much the more strictly, by how much the more fervently the force of love enviscerates it to itself. To whom doubtless although malign spirits suggest evils, by the opening of an enlarged mouth they are confounded, because, instructed by the truth of the highest wisdom, and accensed by the torches of the highest love, it has now an immense light of wisdom against the suggestion of error, it has also ineffable charity against the offered pomp of this world. In the immensity of light it sees what it should reprobate, but through the force of the highest charity it loves to reprobate the inept things which it knows. Through wisdom it reprehends suggested evils, but in the virtue of charity it redargues them when caught. The mouth therefore she enlarges over her enemies, because from the abundance of reason she deliberates many things against demons; and the more acutely she destroys their objections, in that she acknowledges in sublime things that whence she reprobates suggested evils. Whence forthwith insinuating the cause, she says:

56 Because I have joyed in thy salvation.

5. Which indeed is such as if she should say: Because my horn is exalted in my God. This certainly is to rejoice in the salvation of God, to have an exalted horn in one's God. Which is not taken concerning any joy of salvation, but concerning that most perfect joy, by which the elect and perfect soul rejoices in the spouse after the manner of a bride. Concerning which joy doubtless David beseeches, saying: Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and confirm me with a principal spirit (Psal. L, 14). She therefore who glories herself to have an enlarged mouth over her enemies, is described to have first rejoiced in the salvation of God, because that blessed mind will be able validly to reprobate the persuasions of malign spirits, which being sublimely assumed into the divinity of the Redeemer through contemplation, receives from him both magnitude of wisdom and fullness of charity. Whom indeed she proclaims with worthy praises, saying:

(Vers. 2.) There is none holy as is the Lord; for neither is there any other beside thee, and there is none strong like our God.

6. For with these voices of Hannah every elect soul cries this to the Redeemer in praise, which it believes from him in gift. But from this order of pious confession an order is intimated, by which we may follow those same goods of the gift which she brought forth serially. Therefore the Lord is asserted to be holy and strong, by whom we are sanctified, led to rest, and glorified. We receive sanctification from the Lord in the virtue of regeneration; to be, however, that is rest from the mutability of this corruption, in the termination of exile, fortitude in the triumph of resurrection.

Primum itaque horum munerum in ista vita consequimur, cum electi cujusque anima in carne est, sed utraque adhuc in agone operis posita; sequens autem in sola anima praeter carnem, post carnis vitam, et jam de hujus vitae laboribus assumpta; ultimum vero, in carne et anima, sed utraque jam per gloriam aeternitatis innovata. Prius itaque sanctus dicitur, quia regeneratis per salutis lavacrum charitas Dei cordibus nostris infunditur, per cujus gratiam ad aeternae patriae bona praeparamur, ut dum haec vita per decursionis suae tempus elabitur, ea nos vita suscipiat, cujus gaudio hinc electorum egredientes animae sine mortis pavore potiantur. Deinde esse ei ascribitur, quia securi consummationis nostrae diem, videlicet claritatem ultimae resurrectionis, exspectamus, dum in illo munere acceptae requiei discimus extremi examinis discussionem non metuere, sed promissae gloriae laetitiam exspectare. Ultimo autem loco fortis asseritur, quia in gaudio futurae resurrectionis infirma nostra roborantur, cum caro surgit de pulvere; sed idem carnis nostrae pulvis translatus in perpetuae incorruptionis gloriam, ad fragilitatis suae miseriam ultra non redit. Sed et notandum quia in his tribus ab altero ad alterum ducimur; sed cum habere non habitum coeperit, qui hoc accipit quod non habuit, quod ante habuerat non amittit. Nam cum de sanctificatione ad requiem perducimur, et de quiete animae perducimur ad robur aeternae incorruptionis, et sanctificatio charitatis augetur nobis in illa requie, et requies et amor excrescit valde in resurrectione. Conditorem namque suum unaquaeque anima per amorem conjuncta in tantis muneribus intuens, Annae vocibus dicat quam bene sapit sibi donum perfectae regenerationis et vis amoris. Dicat: Non est sanctus, ut est Dominus. Dicat quam melius munus sibi est promissio quietis in hora sui transitus: Neque est alius extra te. Dicat quam optimum sibi placens 57 praemium sit ultima renovatio sua, in gaudio perfecti spiritus sui et glorificatae carnis. Dicat: Et non est fortis, sicut Deus noster. Et notandum quia hoc in precis cantico Anna loquitur. Electae etenim menti haec in cantico poscere est, dona tam grandia cum gaudio desiderare. Petere quippe ei desiderare est, et gaudere cantare. Sed quae tam gaudenter dignitatis suae munera conspicit, quam fortiter occultis hostibus exprobret innotescit. Sequitur enim, et dicit:

(Vers. 3.) Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia gloriantes, recedant vetera de ore vestro.

The first therefore of these gifts we follow in this life, when the soul of each of the elect is in the flesh, but both yet placed in the agony of work; the following however in the soul alone without the flesh, after the life of the flesh, and already assumed from the labors of this life; the last indeed, in flesh and soul, but both already renewed through the glory of eternity. First therefore he is called holy, because to those regenerated through the laver of salvation the charity of God is infused in our hearts, by whose grace we are prepared for the goods of the eternal country, so that while this life glides away through the time of its decursion, that life may receive us, of whose joy the souls of the elect departing hence may possess without fear of death. Then to be is ascribed to him, because secure we expect the day of our consummation, namely the clarity of the ultimate resurrection, while in that gift of accepted rest we learn not to fear the discussion of the extreme examination, but to expect the joy of promised glory. But in the last place he is asserted strong, because in the joy of the future resurrection our infirmities are corroborated, when the flesh rises from the dust; but that same dust of our flesh translated into the glory of perpetual incorruption, returns no more to the misery of its fragility. But it is also to be noted because in these three we are led from one to another; but when he who receives this which he had not begins to have what was not a habit, he loses not what he had before. For when we are led from sanctification to rest, and from the rest of the soul we are led to the strength of eternal incorruption, both the sanctification of charity is increased to us in that rest, and rest and love excresce greatly in the resurrection. For each soul conjoined through love beholding its Creator in so great gifts, let it say with the voices of Hannah how well the gift of perfect regeneration and the force of love savors to it. Let it say: There is none holy, as is the Lord. Let it say how better a gift to it is the promise of rest in the hour of its transit: Neither is there any other beside thee. Let it say how optimum a pleasing reward to it is its ultimate renovation, in the joy of its perfect spirit and glorified flesh. Let it say: And there is none strong, like our God. And it is to be noted because Hannah speaks this in the song of prayer. For to the elect mind it is to ask these things in the song, with joy to desire gifts so grand. For to it to ask is to desire, and to joy to sing. But she who so joyfully beholds the gifts of her dignity, how strongly she exprobrates occult enemies becomes known. For it follows, and says:

(Vers. 3.) Multiply not to speak sublime things glorying, let old things recede from your mouth.

7. Sublimia quippe et vetera spiritus maligni loquuntur, cum alta quae videntur hujus saeculi appetenda fidelibus suggerunt. Qui ergo cornu suum in Deo exaltare jam didicit, qui teneri in gaudio Majestatis novit, quidquid offertur sibi de blandimento saeculi labentis, exprobrando despicit, dicens: Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia gloriantes, recedant vetera de ore vestro. Ac si aperte loquatur, et dicat: Eo mihi ea quae offeruntur displicent, quo per desiderium alia video quae valde placent.

8. Quod profecto dicere, quia ei competit qui jam idoneus ad ministerium praedicationis agnoscitur, apte quoque contra arrogantes sapientes, et contra negligentes sanctae vitae professores, ista prolata sentiuntur. Alta quippe glorians loquitur, qui per scientiam quam accepit se intelligere sublimiter gloriatur. Vetera vero loquitur, qui, postpositis sanctae Scripturae eloquiis, saecularibus verbis occupatur. Dicitur itaque arrogantibus: Nolite loqui sublimia gloriantes. Quibus profecto verbis ostenditur quia non modum locutionis prohibet, sed affectum intentionis. Quasi aperte dicat: sublimia loquimini, sed de eo quod altum dicitur gloriari refugite. Unde et Paulus pie discipulum admonet, dicens: Noli altum sapere, sed time (Rom. XI, 20). Non dixit Non altum loqui, sed Noli altum sapere; sicut et hic non dicitur Nolite loqui sublimia, sed Nolite gloriantes loqui, quia sacra eloquia altius exquirenda sunt, sed quo altius exquirens proficit, semetipsum cohibere a vanae gloriae fastu debet per custodiam humilitatis. Dicitur etiam otiose loquentibus: Recedant vetera de ore vestro. Vetera quippe sunt verba saeculi, quia dum in eis loquentis animus per intentionem figitur, devotionis suae decore spoliatur. Quare illi sublimia gloriantes loqui non debent, et cur ab eorum ore vetera debeant recedere, haec causa demonstrat, quae subjungitur:

(Vers. 3.) Quia Deus scientiarum Dominus est.

9. Audiat itaque sciens et arrogans quia non ipse scientiarum dominus est, sed Deus. Nam recte glorians diceret, si ejus qua tumeret scientia, non omnipotens Deus, sed ipse dominus exstitisset. Audiamus et nos, quando loquimur verba saeculi, quia Deus scientiarum Dominus est. Jam quippe electorum mentes non solum Novi, sed etiam Veteris Testamenti scientia innovat; venit namque qui diceret: Ecce nova facio omnia (Isai. XLIII, 19). Cum ergo tot nova habeamus quae loqui possumus, vetera loqui sine culpa nullatenus valemus. Recedant igitur de ore nostro vetera, ut cum damnatae vetustatis culpa etiam a sermone compescitur, in novi hominis pulchritudinem transeamus. Quod profecto si contemnimus, audiamus:

(Vers. 3.) Et ipsi praeparantur cogitationes.

7. For malign spirits speak lofty and old things, when they suggest to the faithful that the high things which are seen of this world are to be appetized. He therefore who has already learned to exalt his horn in God, who knows how to be held in the joy of Majesty, whatever is offered to him of the blandishment of the gliding world, he despises by reprobaching, saying: Do not multiply to speak lofty things, boasting: let old matters depart from your mouth. And if she should speak openly, and say: By this those things which are offered displease me, by which through desire I see other things which please me greatly.

8. Which indeed to say, because it belongs to him who is already acknowledged fit for the ministry of preaching, aptly also against arrogant wise men, and against negligent professors of holy life, these things protracted are perceived. For he speaks lofty things boasting, who through the knowledge which he has received glories sublimely to understand. But he speaks old things, who, the eloquence of holy Scripture being postponed, is occupied with secular words. It is said therefore to the arrogant: Do not speak lofty things, boasting. By which words indeed it is shown that he does not prohibit the manner of speaking, but the affection of intention. As if she should say openly: speak lofty things, but flee to glory concerning that which is called high. Whence also Paul piously admonishes the disciple, saying: Be not highminded, but fear (Rom. XI, 20). He did not say Speak not high things, but Be not highminded; as also here it is not said Speak not lofty things, but Speak not boasting, because sacred eloquence must be sought out deeper, but the deeper seeking profits, he ought to coerce himself from the fastuousness of vain glory through the custody of humility. It is said also to those speaking idly: Let old matters depart from your mouth. For old things are the words of the world, because while the mind of the speaker is fixed in them by intention, he is despoiled of the decorum of his devotion. Wherefore they ought not to speak lofty things boasting, and why old things ought to depart from their mouth, this cause demonstrates, which is subjoined:

(Vers. 3.) For God is the Lord of sciences.

9. Let the knowing and arrogant therefore hear that he himself is not the lord of sciences, but God. For rightly glorying he would say, if of the knowledge by which he swells, not almighty God, but he himself had existed lord. Let us also hear, when we speak the words of the world, that God is the Lord of sciences. For now the knowledge not only of the New, but also of the Old Testament innovates the minds of the elect; for he came who should say: Behold I make all things new (Isai. XLIII, 19). Since therefore we have so many new things which we can speak, we by no means prevail to speak old things without fault. Let old things therefore depart from our mouth, so that when the fault of damned oldness is restrained even from speech, we may pass over into the beauty of the new man. Which indeed if we contemn, let us hear:

(Vers. 3.) And to him are thoughts prepared.

10. Quasi a minori culpa, subintellecta comparatione, 58 nos terreat, dicens: Hinc otiosa loquentes cogitent quam metuere culpam locutionis debeant, si is cui loquendo delinquitur etiam cogitationum excessus ad judicii sui examen servat. Audiant item arrogantes quod sequitur:

(Vers. 4.) Arcus fortium superatus est, et infirmi accincti sunt robore.

11. Jam quippe in allegorica expositione diximus quia immundi spiritus horum fortium appellatione designantur. Qui nimirum quia a coelesti gloria superbiendo ceciderunt, apte elatis doctoribus ad terrorem proponuntur, ut de se tanto jam humiliter sentiant quanto etiam angelos a superna gloria lapsos per appetitum vanae gloriae contemplantur. Quod etiam Redemptorem nostrum in elatis discipulis egisse recolimus, qui cum se subjecta daemonia habere jactarent, ab eo protinus audiere: Videbam Satanam, quasi fulgur de coelo cadentem (Luc. X, 18). Arcus itaque fortium superbia est spirituum malignorum. Dicuntur autem fortes, vel quia de se magna senserunt, vel quod humanum genus magnarum tentationum impetu vincant. Quem profecto arcum dum intentio impia tetendit, jacere malitiae jacula supra se in conditorem studuit. Ponam, inquit princeps eorum, sedem meam ad Aquilonem, similis ero Altissimo (Isa. XIV, 13, 14). Sed superatus est arcus fortium, quia Deus apostatarum spirituum superbiae restitit, de coelo praecipitavit, conditionali gloria virtutis exuit, ut in lapsis angelis homo disceret quid timeret. Nam quid de aereo vase fiet, si Deus nec aureis superbiae fetore plenis ignoscit? Unde et Petrus in Epistola sua loquitur, dicens. Deus peccantibus angelis non pepercit, sed rudentibus inferni detractos in tartarum tradidit in judicium reservari (II Petr. II, 4). Quasi ergo electus et humilis praedicator superbientibus dicat: Ut cessetis ab elatione, in conformibus vobis angelis, videlicet lapsis, damnationis debitae poenas aspicite.

12. Et quos imitari debeant proponens, ait: Et infirmi accincti sunt robore. Si ob praesumptionem aestimationis mali angeli fortes vocantur, infirmorum appellatio recte beatis spiritibus convenit, qui de se nulla praesumentes, virtuti sui opificis perpetua humilitate subjecti sunt. Infirmi accincti sunt robore, quia, voluntariae subjectionis merito, sancti angeli interni amoris vinculo conditori suo conjuncti sunt. Quibus apte accinctionis nomen congruit, quia accinctus quilibet, eo quo cingitur cinctorio, ex omni parte retinetur, quia videlicet beatissimi illi spiritus sic sunt in aeternitate solidati, ne ab ea cadere unquam possint. Hinc est quod ad Danielem in Babylonia praedicantem angelus mittitur, qui accinctus obrizo perhibetur (Dan. X, 5). Hinc est quod angelum cum quo in Apocalypsi Joannes colloquium habuit aurea zona ad mammillas circumdatum conspexit.

10. As if from a lesser fault, comparison being understood, 58 he should terrify us, saying: Hence let those speaking idly think how they ought to fear the fault of speech, if he to whom by speaking it is offended, keeps even the excesses of thoughts to the examination of his judgment. Let the arrogant likewise hear what follows:

(Vers. 4.) The bow of the mighty is overcome, and the weak are girt with strength.

11. For already in the allegorical exposition we have said that unclean spirits are designated by the appellation of these strong ones. Who doubtless because they fell by being proud from heavenly glory, are aptly proposed for a terror to elated doctors, that they may now think humbly of themselves by so much as they contemplate even angels fallen from supernal glory through the appetite of vain glory. Which also we recall our Redeemer to have done in elated disciples, who when they boasted to have demons subject to them, forthwith heard from him: I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven (Luke X, 18). The bow therefore of the strong is the pride of malign spirits. But they are called strong, either because they felt great things of themselves, or because they overcome the human race by the impetus of great temptations. Which bow indeed while impious intention bent, it studied to cast the darts of malice above itself against the Creator. I will place, said their prince, my seat to the North, I will be like the Most High (Isa. XIV, 13, 14). But the bow of the strong was overcome, because God resisted the pride of apostate spirits, precipitated them from heaven, stripped them of the conditional glory of virtue, that in fallen angels man might learn what he should fear. For what will become of an earthen vessel, if God does not spare even golden ones full of the fetor of pride? Whence also Peter speaks in his Epistle, saying: God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell, unto torments, to be reserved unto judgment (II Pet. II, 4). As if therefore an elect and humble preacher should say to the proud: That you may cease from elation, look upon the punishments of due damnation in angels conformable to you, namely fallen ones.

12. And proposing whom they ought to imitate, she says: And the weak are girt with strength. If on account of the presumption of estimation evil angels are called strong, the appellation of weak rightly convenes to blessed spirits, who presuming nothing of themselves, are subject to the virtue of their maker by perpetual humility. The weak are girt with strength, because, by the merit of voluntary subjection, the holy angels are conjoined to their Creator by the bond of internal love. To whom aptly the name of girding agrees, because anyone girded, by that girdle with which he is girded, is retained from every part, because namely those most blessed spirits are so solidated in eternity, that they can never fall from it. Hence it is that an angel is sent to Daniel preaching in Babylonia, who is asserted to be girded with fine gold (Dan. X, 5). Hence it is that John in the Apocalypse beheld the angel with whom he had colloquy girded about the breasts with a golden zone.

Quia vero iidem beati spiritus ab humilitatis merito in amoris gloriam surrexerunt, sed quia eamdem gloriam in complexu aeternitatis habent, et in timore amissionis non habent, gloriosi siquidem ineffabiliter sunt, sed ineffabilem illam gloriam amittere nunquam possunt. Ut itaque desinat gloriari, audiat arrogans: Arcus fortium superatus est. Et ut damnata culpa superbiae proficiant in humilitate, dicitur sibi: Infirmi accincti sunt robore. Robur namque infirmis impenditur, cum subjectionis merito mitibus infunditur virtus supernae charitatis. Accingimur etiam cum ad verbi ministerium praeparamur. Bene itaque accincti robore infirmi in alta locutione 59 gloriantibus praeponuntur, quia ii qui in ministerium mittuntur spiritus, propter eos qui haereditatem capiunt salutis, priusquam accingerentur ad ministerium humiles fuerunt. Ante enim memoratur infirmitas, post vero accinctio roboris. Hos profecto nobis accinctos Paulus insinuat, dicens: Nonne omnes sunt administratorii spiritus, in ministerium missi, propter eos qui haereditatem capiunt salutis (Hebr. I, 14)? De quibus et propheta etiam loquitur, dicens: Millia millium ministrabant ei (Dan. VII, 40). Quasi ergo dicat: Prius vos agnoscite, et sic vos ad aliorum salutem praeparate, quia bonum praedicationis tunc bene impletur, cum praedicator qui sublimis est verbo humilis esse satagit ministerio. Sed quia superbos et arrogantes praedicatores loquendo redarguit, subdit, dicens:

(Vers. 5.) Repleti prius, pro panibus se locaverunt, et famelici saturati sunt.

13. Repleti prius illi sunt qui, dum tumoris cibos in mentis refectione suscipiunt, delicias sanctarum virtutum, velut cibo jam pleni, capere non possunt. Sed tamen pro panibus se locant, quia in Scripturis quas intelligunt juxta magnitudinem sapientiae se percipere spiritualia munera virtutum putant. Sed saturari nequeunt, quia repletioni arrogantiae dona sancti Spiritus addere nequaquam possunt. Ipse namque spiritus disciplinae effugit fictum, et non habitat in corpore pleno peccatis (Sap. I, 5). Hinc etiam scriptum est: Deus superbis resistit, humilibus autem dat gratiam (I Petr. V, 5). Frustra ergo quae Dei sunt accipere gestiunt, qui in eo quod superbiunt largitorem munerum sibi adversantem reddunt. Saturari ergo nequeunt, quia munera spiritualium gratiarum non adipiscuntur. Qui vero sunt famelici, nisi a cibis vitiorum vacui, a tumore jejuni? Famelici ergo saturati sunt, quia sancti viri humilitatis arce praediti, dum de se alta non sentiunt, alta virtutum dona promerentur. Nam per humilitatis bonum, sancti Spiritus sedes fiunt, quem dum in se manentem recipiunt, ejus donis plenius replentur.

But because the same blessed spirits rose from the merit of humility into the glory of love, but because they have the same glory in the embrace of eternity, and have it not in the fear of loss, they are indeed ineffably glorious, but that ineffable glory they can never lose. That therefore he may cease to glory, let the arrogant hear: The bow of the mighty is overcome. And that the damned fault of pride being left they may profit in humility, it is said to him: The weak are girt with strength. For strength is bestowed on the weak, when by the merit of subjection the virtue of supernal charity is infused into the meek. We are girded also when we are prepared for the ministry of the word. Well therefore the weak girded with strength are preferred 59 to those glorying in lofty speech, because those spirits who are sent into ministry, for the sake of them who receive the inheritance of salvation, before they were girded to the ministry were humble. For infirmity is recorded before, but after the girding of strength. These indeed girded for us Paul insinuates, saying: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation (Heb. I, 14)? Concerning whom the prophet also speaks, saying: Thousands of thousands ministered to him (Dan. VII, 40). As if therefore she should say: First acknowledge yourselves, and so prepare yourselves for the salvation of others, because the good of preaching is then well fulfilled, when the preacher who is sublime in word is busy to be humble in ministry. But because she reproves proud and arrogant preachers by speaking, she subjoins, saying:

(Vers. 5.) They that were full before have hired out themselves for bread, and the hungry are filled.

13. Those are filled before who, while they receive the foods of tumor in the refection of the mind, cannot take the delights of holy virtues, as if already full of food. But nevertheless they hire themselves out for bread, because in the Scriptures which they understand they think themselves to receive the spiritual gifts of virtues according to the magnitude of wisdom. But they cannot be filled, because they can by no means add the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the repletion of arrogance. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful, and will not abide when iniquity cometh in (Wisd. I, 5). Hence also it is written: God resisteth the proud, but to the humble he giveth grace (I Pet. V, 5). In vain therefore they desire to receive the things which are of God, who in that they are proud render the bestower of gifts adverse to themselves. They cannot therefore be filled, because they do not obtain the gifts of spiritual graces. But who are the hungry, if not those empty of the foods of vices, fasting from tumor? The hungry therefore are filled, because holy men endowed with the citadel of humility, while they do not feel high things of themselves, merit the high gifts of virtues. For through the good of humility, they become the seats of the Holy Spirit, whom while they receive remaining in themselves, they are more fully filled with his gifts.

Unde et per Prophetam Dominus dicit: Super quem requiescit spiritus meus, nisi super humilem, et quietum, et trementem sermones meos (Isa. LXVI, 2)? Valde ergo saturantur famelici, quia in donorum plenitudine super humiles sanctus Spiritus requiescit.

14. Quod tamen contra negligentes sacri altaris ministros atque audaces dominici corporis susceptores dici non inconvenienter potest. Repleti vero prius sunt, vitiorumque cibo saturati, qui pro pane se locant, quia corpus ad susceptionem Eucharistiae praeparent. Qui nimirum comedunt, et saturari non possunt, quia etsi sacramentum ore percipiunt, virtute sacramenti nequaquam replentur. A virtute ergo illa sacramenti ideo jejunant, quia prius repleti fuerant. Salutis quippe fructum non percipiunt in comestione salutaris hostiae, qui ea quibus se repleverant flagitia portant in mente. Non saturantur ergo, nisi famelici, quia a vitiis perfecte jejunantes divina sacramenta percipiunt in plenitudine virtutis. Et quia sine peccato electi etiam viri esse non possunt, quid restat, nisi ut a peccatis quibus eos humana fragilitas maculare non desinit evacuari quotidie conentur? Nam qui quotidie non exhaurit quod delinquit, etsi minima sunt peccata quae congerit, paulatim anima repletur, atque ei merito auferunt fructum internae saturitatis. Hac repletione nos evacuare Paulus insinuans, ait: Probet seipsum homo, et sic de pane illo edat, et de calice bibat (I Cor. XI, 28). Quid enim est hoc loco 60 probare, nisi, evacuata peccatorum nequitia, se probatum ad dominicam mensam, et purum exhibere? De repletis etiam subdit: Qui enim manducat et bibit indigne, judicium sibi manducat et bibit. Qui ergo quotidie delinquimus, quotidie ad poenitentiae lamenta curramus, quia ipsa sola virtus est quae evacuat quod in ventre animae culpa coadunat. Et tunc vere famelici saturantur, quia quo studiosius mundamur lamento poenitentiae, eo uberiorem divinae gratiae fructum recipimus in spiritali refectione. Quae nimirum electorum saturitas, quia usque in mundi finem extenditur, subdit, atque ait:

(Vers. 5.) Donec sterilis peperit plurimos, et quae multos habebat filios infirmata est.

Whence also through the Prophet the Lord says: Upon whom doth my spirit rest, if not upon him that is humble, and quiet, and that trembleth at my words? (Isa. LXVI, 2). Greatly therefore are the hungry filled, because in the fulness of gifts the Holy Spirit rests upon the humble.

14. Which nevertheless can be said not inconveniently against negligent ministers of the sacred altar and audacious receivers of the Lord's body. But those were filled before, and saturated with the food of vices, who hire themselves out for bread, because they prepare the body for the reception of the Eucharist. Who doubtless eat, and cannot be filled, because although they receive the sacrament with the mouth, they are by no means filled with the virtue of the sacrament. From that virtue of the sacrament therefore they fast, because they had been filled before. For they do not receive the fruit of salvation in the eating of the saving host, who bear in mind those flagitious acts with which they had filled themselves. They are not filled therefore, except the hungry, because fasting perfectly from vices they receive divine sacraments in the fulness of virtue. And because even elect men cannot be without sin, what remains, if not that they endeavor daily to be evacuated from the sins with which human fragility does not cease to maculate them? For he who does not daily exhaust what he transgresses, although the sins which he gathers are very small, little by little the soul is filled, and they worthily take away from it the fruit of internal saturation. Paul insinuating us to evacuate from this repletion, says: Let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice (I Cor. XI, 28). For what is it in this place 60 to prove, if not, the wickedness of sins being evacuated, to exhibit oneself proved and pure to the Lord's table? Concerning the filled he also subjoins: For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself. Therefore we who transgress daily, let us daily run to the laments of penitence, because that alone is the virtue which evacuates what fault coadunates in the belly of the soul. And then truly the hungry are filled, because the more studiously we are cleansed by the lament of penitence, the more abundantly we receive the fruit of divine grace in spiritual refection. Which doubtless saturation of the elect, because it extends even to the end of the world, she subjoins, and says:

(Vers. 5.) Until the barren hath borne many: and she that had many children is weakened.

15. Quae itaque hujus appellatione sterilis signatur, nisi ea de qua Paulus loquitur, dicens: Quae sursum est Jerusalem libera est, quae mater nostra est (Galat. IV, 26, 27)? Unde et paulo post Isaiae vaticinium ei coaptavit, dicens: Scriptum est enim: Laetare sterilis quae non paris; erumpe et clama, quae non parturis, quia multi filii desertae magis quam ei quae habet virum (Isa. LIV, 1). Sed quomodo Jerusalem sterilis, beatorum scilicet angelorum sancta societas, intelligitur, cum juxta vocis suae significatum de aeterna pacis visione perenni gaudio sit fecunda? Sed si mater est electorum hominum, sterilis profecto erat quando humanum genus in Adam perierat. Velut enim parturire non potuit, cum eum in quo fecunditatis suae extendere sinum debuit lapsi spiritus suasionibus amisit. Tandiu accinguntur infirmi donec sterilis pariat, quia angelorum humilium valido ministerio eo usque indigemus, donec quotquot ad vitam praedestinati sunt de humano genere, usque in mundi finem colligantur. Mittet namque Filius hominis angelos suos, et colligent electos suos a quatuor ventis (Matth. XXIV, 31; Marc. XIII, 27). Ad eos namque colligendos tunc mittendi sunt, in quorum salute quotidie mittuntur, quia ad regnum non colligent, nisi quibus per robur accinctionis suae nunc adjutorium praebent. Usque etiam in mundi finem famelici saturantur. Sed et bene plurimos haec sterilis parere dicitur, quia non omnes homines, sed electi solummodo ad aeterna gaudia perducuntur. Apte igitur etiam parere dicitur, quia angelorum ministerio docemur superna petere, ut ad eorum valeamus bona pervenire. Sed cum haec sterilis parit, ea quae multos habebat filios infirmatur, quia quo pleniora lucra electorum per angelorum ministeria superna regna percipiunt, hujus Babyloniae filii minuuntur. Velut enim infirma in partu suo est, quae inordinato amore rerum transeuntium, ut solet, filios gignere nequaquam potest. Ubique enim jam coelestia regna praedicant, quae profecto dum fidelium mentes audita diligunt, dum ea etiam bonis moribus inquirunt, velut in partu suo Babylonia stringitur, quia mater nostra Jerusalem eos per orbem Deo parturit, quos illa lasso perditionis utero parere gehennae consuevit. Quorum tamen accinctorum robur non ipsis, sed ei a quo accinguntur ascribitur. Apte itaque subditur:

(Vers. 6.) Dominus mortificat, et vivificat.

15. Who therefore by the appellation of this barren one is designated, if not she concerning whom Paul speaks, saying: But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free: which is our mother (Galat. IV, 26, 27)? Whence also a little after he coadapted the vaticination of Isaiah to her, saying: For it is written: Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband (Isa. LIV, 1). But how is Jerusalem barren, namely the holy society of blessed angels, understood, when according to the signification of its voice concerning the eternal vision of peace it is fecund with perennial joy? But if she is the mother of elect men, barren indeed was she when the human race had perished in Adam. For as it were she could not brought forth, when she lost him in whom she ought to have extended the bosom of her fecundity by the persuasions of the fallen spirit. For so long are the weak girded until the barren bears, because by the valid ministry of humble angels we need them so long, until as many as are predestinated to life of the human race, even unto the end of the world they are gathered. For the Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds (Matt. XXIV, 31; Mark XIII, 27). For to gather them then they are to be sent, in whose salvation they are daily sent, because they will not gather to the kingdom, unless to those to whom through the strength of their girding they now afford help. Even unto the end of the world the hungry are filled. But well also is this barren one said to bear many, because not all men, but the elect only are brought to eternal joys. Aptly therefore she is also said to bear, because by the ministry of angels we are taught to seek supernal things, that we may prevail to arrive at their goods. But when this barren one bears, she who had many children is weakened, because by how much the fuller lucre of the elect through the ministries of angels the supernal kingdoms receive, the children of this Babylonia are diminished. For she is as it were weak in her bearing, who by the inordinate love of passing things, as she is wont, can by no means beget children. For everywhere now they preach heavenly kingdoms, which indeed while the minds of the faithful hearing love, while they also seek them by good morals, Babylonia is as it were bound in her bearing, because our mother Jerusalem bears them to God through the orb, whom she has been wont to bear to Gehenna with the weary womb of perdition. Whose strength of the girded nevertheless is not ascribed to themselves, but to him by whom they are girded. Aptly therefore it is subjoined:

(Vers. 6.) The Lord killeth and maketh alive.

16. In quibus profecto verbis etiam ordo notandus est. Prius quippe mortificare dicitur, deinde vivificare, quia nisi saeculum amare desistimus, Deo per amorem vivere non valemus, Joanne attestante, qui ait: Qui diligit mundum, non est charitas Patris in eo (I Joan. II, 15). Unde et is qui se mortificatum et vivificatum, qui se prostratum et erectum meminerat, 61 loquebatur, dicens: Mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo (Galat. VI, 14). Vivebat, sed non mundi vita, quia dicebat: Vivo jam, non ego, vivit vero in me Christus (Ibid., II, 20). Non ergo accinctorum aliquis, sed Dominus mortificat et vivificat. Mortificatum quippe et vivificatum esse est praesentia nulla concupiscere, et aeterna desiderare. Cui itaque de his muneribus referendae sint gratiae exponit, dicens: Dominus mortificat et vivificat. Unde et saepe jam nominatus gentium praedicator dicit: Neque qui plantat est aliquid, neque qui rigat, sed qui incrementum dat Deus (I Cor. III, 7). Sed quo ordine omnipotens Deus ista in electis operetur, exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 6.) Ducit ad inferos, et reducit.

17. Ut mortificet quippe, ducit ad inferos; et ut vivificet, reducit ab inferis. Omnipotenti etenim Deo ad inferos ducere est peccatorum corda aeternorum cruciatuum consideratione terrere. Ei quoque ab inferis reducere est territas poenitentium atque commissa lugentium mentes, spe vitae indeficientis attollere. Tunc quippe peccare desinimus cum, superna gratia mollitis cordibus, futura tormenta formidamus. Et ab inferis reducimur cum, interno visitati solatio, ad spem veniae de poenitentiae lamento respiramus. Apte itaque Dominus ducere ad inferos et reducere dicitur, quia humana duritia in hominis solius praedicatione, nec terrore concutitur, nec amore sublevatur. Nam si doctorum esset mortificare quotquot eorum praedicatio tangeret, peccare desinerent; et si eorum esset vivificare, quicunque ab eis coelestia audirent, ad ea nos protinus omni conatu perquirenda intimi affectus sui amor accenderet. Nunc autem, cum saepe peccatoribus aeterna supplicia minentur, cum ea quae possunt eis coelestia bona praedicent, et nec supplicia metuant, nec laeta concupiscant, clamemus Annae vocibus in laudibus Dei, et ei etiam illud, quod per eos quidam proficiunt imputantes, dicamus: Dominus mortificat et vivificat. Dominus itaque ducit ad inferos, et reducit, quia illi possunt futura tormenta metuere, illi superna gaudia diligere, in quibus per eas voces quas foris homo loquitur intus Dei pietas operatur. Est autem in quo sese quisque cognoscat, si jam ad inferos ductus et reductus sit, si mundo obiit, coelis vivit; nam si electus est, proficit. De eodem vero profectu subdit:

(Vers. 7) Dominus pauperem facit et ditat.

16. In which words indeed also an order is to be noted. First indeed it is said to kill, then to make alive, because unless we cease to love the world, we cannot live to God through love, John bearing witness, who says: If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him (I John II, 15). Whence also he who remembered himself killed and made alive, who himself prostrated and erected, 61 spoke, saying: The world is crucified to me, and I to the world (Galat. VI, 14). He lived, but not with the life of the world, because he said: And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me (Ibid., II, 20). Not therefore any of the girded, but the Lord kills and makes alive. Because indeed to be killed and to be made alive is to concupiscene no present things, and to desire eternal things. To whom therefore thanks should be returned concerning these gifts he expounds, saying: The Lord killeth and maketh alive. Whence also the often already named preacher of the gentiles says: Neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase (I Cor. III, 7). But by what order almighty God operates these things in the elect, he expounds, saying:

(Vers. 6.) He bringeth down to hell and bringeth back again.

17. For that he may mortify, he leads to hell; and that he may vivify, he brings back from hell. For to the almighty God to lead to hell is to terrify the hearts of sinners by the consideration of eternal tortures. To him also to bring back from hell is to lift up the terrified minds of the penitent and those mourning their commissions, by the hope of indeficient life. For then we cease to sin when, our hearts being softened by supernal grace, we dread future torments. And we are brought back from hell when, visited by internal consolation, we respire into the hope of pardon from the lament of penitence. Aptly therefore the Lord is said to lead to hell and to bring back, because human hardness in the preaching of man alone is neither shaken by terror nor raised by love. For if it were of doctors to mortify as many as their preaching touched, they would cease to sin; and if it were of them to vivify, whosoever should hear heavenly things from them, the love of their intimate affection would forthwith accend them to perquire those things with every effort. But now, since they often threaten eternal supplications to sinners, since they preach to them those heavenly goods which they can, and they neither fear supplications nor concupiscite joys, let us cry with the voices of Hannah in the praises of God, and imputing to him also that, by which some through them profit, let us say: The Lord mortifies and vivifies. The Lord therefore leads to hell, and brings back, because they are able to fear future torments, they to love supernal joys, in whom by those voices which man speaks without, the piety of God operates within. But there is that in which each one may know himself, if he has already been led to hell and brought back, if he has died to the world, he lives to the heavens; for if he is elect, he profits. Concerning the same profit she subjoins:

(Vers. 7) The Lord makes poor and enriches.

18. Saeculi divites idcirco de larga facultate gloriantur, quia alto et incomprehensibili judicio Dei coelestia eis bona abscondita sunt. Dominus itaque facit pauperes, quia dum aeterna electis bona insinuat, eo se pauperiores tenent, quo a veris sese divitiis pulsos vident. Unde et rex ille qui saeculi possessione latissimus erat, quia ei veras divitias Dominus ostenderat, clamabat ad eum, dicens: Respice in me, et miserere mei, quia unicus et pauper sum ego (Psal. XXIV, 16). Hinc propheta Jeremias, electi cujusque illuminationem in se exprimens, ait: Ego vir videns paupertatem meam (Thr. III, 1). Pauperem itaque Domino facere est in contemplatione bonorum perennium electorum mentes ad contemptum rerum omnium visibilium excitare. Sed cui summa revelat, qui eadem summa diutius laboris pretio sint quaerenda insinuat, dicat quia qui pauperes facit, etiam ditat, quia nimirum dum ab omnipotenti Deo bonorum coelestium cognitionem percipimus, ab ipso etiam virtutem consequimur, ut digno 62 pro eis labore certemus. Bene autem subditur:

(Vers. 7.) Humiliat et sublevat.

19. Quia in contemplatione coelestium quam abjecti sunt in terra conspiciunt, sed in eadem abjectione temporalis inopiae per Dei gratiam meritorum se pennis sublevant ad gaudia perennis vitae. Humilitatem ergo percipiunt in aestimatione exsilii, sublimitatem vero in praeparatione sanctae operationis. Sequitur:

(Vers. 8.) Suscitat de pulvere egenum, et de stercore erigit pauperem, ut sedeat cum principibus.

20. Pulvis namque est subtilis deliberatio cogitationis illicitae, quae eam mentem cui insederit foedam reddit. Quid namque in stercore nisi foeda perpetratique flagitii audacia designatur? Unde et propheta vitam carnalium coeno foedi operis obrutam intuens, ait: Computruerunt jumenta in stercore suo (Joel I, 17). Apta igitur serie dona Dei in flagitiosorum conversione numerantur. Prius namque suscitatur de pulvere egenus quam pauper de stercore; quia a corde ante deliberatio immundae cogitationis abscinditur, et postmodum ab actione culpa resecatur. Apte quoque suscitari de pulvere egenus dicitur, pauper de stercore erigi, quia intus prava deliberans dormit a contemplatione justitiae, foris illicita perpetrans in iniquitate per actum jacet. Et quia jam cum fortibus de malignis spiritibus trophaea consequitur, suscitatus egenus et erectus pauper quid mereatur exponit, dicens: Ut sedeat cum principibus, et solium gloriae teneat.

18. The rich of the world therefore glory in their large faculty, because by the high and incomprehensible judgment of God heavenly goods are hidden from them. The Lord therefore makes poor, because while he insinuates eternal goods to the elect, they hold themselves so much the poorer, by how much they see themselves driven from true riches. Whence also that king who was most broad in the possession of the world, because the Lord had shown true riches to him, cried to him, saying: Look upon me, and have mercy on me, because I am alone and poor (Psal. XXIV, 16). Hence the prophet Jeremiah, expressing in himself the illumination of each elect, says: I am the man seeing my poverty (Lam. III, 1). Therefore to make poor to the Lord is to excite the minds of the elect in the contemplation of perennial goods to the contempt of all visible things. But to whom he reveals the highest things, he insinuates that the same highest things are to be sought for a long time at the price of labor, let her say because he who makes poor, also enriches, because doubtless while we perceive the cognition of heavenly goods from almighty God, we also follow from him the virtue, that we may strive for them with worthy labor. Well therefore is it subjoined:

(Vers. 7.) He humiliates and raises up.

Because in the contemplation of heavenly things they behold how abject they are on earth, but in that same abjection of temporal inopia they raise themselves by the grace of God on the wings of merits to the joys of perennial life. They perceive humility therefore in the estimation of exile, but sublimity in the preparation of holy operation. It follows:

(Vers. 8.) He raises up the needy from the dust, and from the dunghill he lifts up the poor, that he may sit with princes.

20. For dust is the subtle deliberation of illicit thought, which renders that mind foul in which it rests. For what is designated by dung if not the foul audacity of a perpetrated flagitious act? Whence also the prophet beholding the life of carnal men overwhelmed with the mire of foul work, says: The beasts have rotted in their dung (Joel I, 17). By an apt series therefore the gifts of God are numbered in the conversion of flagitious men. For the needy is raised from the dust before the poor from the dunghill; because first the deliberation of unclean thought is cut off from the heart, and afterwards fault is resected from action. Aptly also the needy is said to be raised from the dust, the poor to be lifted up from the dunghill, because deliberating depraved things within he sleeps from the contemplation of justice, perpetrating illicit things without he lies in iniquity through act. And because already with the strong he attains trophies from malign spirits, the needy raised up and the poor lifted up what he merits he expounds, saying: That he may sit with princes, and hold the throne of glory.

21. Sedere quippe triumphantis est. Unde et in Apocalypsi Joannis victoriae nostrae dignitatem Dominus ostendit, dicens: Qui vicerit, faciam eum sedere in throno meo, sicut et ego vici, et sedi cum Patre meo in throno ejus (Apoc. III, 21). Quod et Paulus intuens, suscitationis, atque sessionis nostrae dona in Dei laudibus numerans, ait: Conresuscitavit, et consedere nos fecit in coelestibus in Christo Jesu (Ephes. II, 6). Cum eo itaque principes sedent, quia qui ejus auxilio malignorum spirituum vires reprimunt, in eorum triumpho dignitatem sessionis habent quibus ex praesidentis sibi virtute dominantur. Cum eo item principes sedent, quia etsi stare per corpus in hac vitae labentis aerumna cernuntur, meritorum tamen sedem cum Redemptore in sublimibus habent, a cujus conformitate claritatis nec in ista foeditatis valle separantur. Egeni quoque rebus et pauperes sunt qui propter Evangelium ea quae in saeculo habere poterant, cuncta reliquerunt. Qui certe ut cum principibus possint sedere, de pulvere suscitari debent, et de stercore erigi. Quid enim favores linguae, quid sunt aliud labentium dignitatum infulae, nisi pulvis? Nam eam quam blandiendo sordidant a veris splendoribus mentem caecant. Et quid divitiae pereuntes, et transitoriae facultates, nisi stercora aeterna diligentibus sunt? Stercora quippe sunt quae sanctae animae in contemptu humilitatis habent, non in appetitu desiderii. Unde et Salomon in amissione bonorum temporalium contristatum saeculi divitem intuens, ait: De stercore boum lapidandus est piger (Eccli. XXII, 2). Quasi dicat: De eo verbera doloris sustinet, quod is qui pro aeterna vita laborare appetit velut stercora contemnit. Hinc Paulus ait: Omnia detrimentum feci et arbitror ut stercora, ut Christum lucrifaciam. De pulvere itaque egenus suscitatur, et de stercore pauper erigitur, cum mens, saeculo abrenuntians, quidquid sibi placere solebat 63 de linguae humanae favoribus, de honore dignitatum, et de abundantia rerum, calcat, dum ad sola aeterna respicit, quae sola ardenter amat. Ei namque suscitari, et erigi, est ea quae corpore derelinquit mentis sublimitate despicere. Et cum principibus ei sedere est, supernae patriae civibus per gaudium aeternae quietis interesse. Qui certe tunc gloriae solium tenet, quia qui tam sublimiter praesidet a conditoris sui laudibus nunquam silet. Hanc namque gloriae sedem Psalmista admirans Domino loquitur, dicens: Beati qui habitant in domo tua, Domine, in saecula saeculorum laudabunt te (Psal. LXXXIII, 5). Hanc sedem gloriae Isaias praedicat, dicens: Gaudium et laetitia invenietur in ea, gratiarum actio, et vox laudis (Isa. LI, 3).

21. To sit indeed is of one triumphing. Whence also in the Apocalypse of John the Lord shows the dignity of our victory, saying: To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne: as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne (Apoc. III, 21). Which also Paul beholding, numbering the gifts of our raising up and session in the praises of God, says: And hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places, through Christ Jesus (Ephes. II, 6). With him therefore princes sit, because they who by his help repress the forces of malign spirits, in their triumph have the dignity of session to whom they dominate from the virtue of him presiding over them. With him also princes sit, because although they are discerned to stand through the body in this aerumna of sliding life, nevertheless they have the seat of merits with the Redeemer in sublime places, from whose conformity of brightness they are not separated even in this valley of foulness. Needy also in things and poor are they who for the Gospel have left all things which they could have in the world. Who certainly that they may be able to sit with princes, ought to be raised from the dust, and lifted up from the dunghill. For what are the favors of the tongue, what else are the infulae of sliding dignities, if not dust? For they blind that mind from true splendors which they dirty by flattering. And what are perishing riches, and transitory faculties, if not dung to those loving eternal things? For they are dung which holy souls have in the contempt of humility, not in the appetite of desire. Whence also Solomon beholding a rich man of the world saddened in the loss of temporal goods, says: The slothful is stoned with the dung of oxen (Eccli. XXII, 2). As if he should say: From that he sustains the lashes of sorrow, which he who desires to labor for eternal life contemns like dung. Hence Paul says: I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ. From the dust therefore the needy is raised, and from the dunghill the poor is lifted up, when the mind, renouncing the world, whatever was wont to please it 63 from the favors of human tongue, from the honor of dignities, and from the abundance of things, it treads upon, while it looks back only to eternal things, which alone it ardently loves. For to him to be raised, and to be lifted up, is to despise with the sublimity of the mind those things which he leaves in body. And to sit with princes for him is to be present with the citizens of the supernal country through the joy of eternal quiet. Who certainly then holds the throne of glory, because he who presides so sublimely never keeps silent from the praises of his Creator. For admiring this seat of glory the Psalmist speaks to the Lord, saying: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord: they shall praise thee for ever and ever (Psal. LXXXIII, 5). This seat of glory Isaiah preaches, saying: Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of praise (Isa. LI, 3).

Hanc item sanctus Tobias ostendens, ait: Et omni lapide pretioso et mundo plateae ejus sternentur, et per omnes vicos ejus Alleluia cantabitur (Tob. XIII, 22). Sed ea quae sequuntur ereptus pauper aspiciat, quia ad principum sessionem, ad gloriae solium non statim ut fuerit erectus adducitur:

(Vers. 8) Domini, inquit, sunt cardines terrae, et posuit super eos orbem.

22. Quia terrae nomine peccatores in sacro eloquio designantur, cardines terrae hi accipi convenienter possunt in quibus per inepta desideria saeculum circuit, et de alio ad alium ducit. Cum igitur conversos peccatores aspicimus, in laudem Creatoris his Annae verbis erumpamus. Quasi enim aliis verbis tunc dicimus: Jam Domini esse per ejus gratiam coeperunt, qui diu in rota rerum transeuntium per mundi concupiscentiam tenti sunt. Et cum, jam derelictis vitae saecularis blandimentis, fortia tentamenta fortiter tolerant, dicamus: Posuit super eos orbem. Orbem quippe super eos posuit, qui, antequam eis imponeretur, sub eis fuit. Nam eum jam in onere tentationum habent, qui eis blandiendo velut subjectus serviebat, cum in eo delicias et voluptates sequendo recumberent. Et quia magnas ex eo tentationes habent, qui magna in illo oblectamenta habuerunt, adjungitur:

(Vers. 9.) Pedes sanctorum suorum servabit.

23. Quibus profecto verbis sic auxilium divinae protectionis propitiationisque ostenditur, ut pericula tentationum gravia designentur. Quasi etenim dicat: Tam grandia de eo cui adhaeserant saeculo tentamenta sustinent, ut solus ad adjuvandum ille sufficiat qui deesse fidelibus suis in tribulatione non potest. Pedes namque sanctorum suorum servare, est concussos in tentatione affectus electorum, ne corruant, per gratiam roborare. Unde et qui ad casum nutaverat, et tamen a Domino conservatus erat, propheta dixit: Mei autem pene moti sunt pedes, pene effusi sunt gressus mei (Psal. LXXII, 2). Hinc iterum: Pulsus sum; et eversus sum ut caderem, et Dominus suscepit me. Fortitudo mea, et laudatio mea Dominus, et factus est mihi in salutem (Psal. CXVII, 13, 14). Et de hostium infirmitate subjunxit, dicens:

(Vers. 9.) Et impii in tenebris conticescent.

Showing this also holy Tobias says: And all its streets shall be paved with white and clean stones: and Alleluia shall be sung in its streets (Tob. XIII, 22). But let the rescued poor man behold those things which follow, because to the session of princes, to the throne of glory he is not straightway led as soon as he has been lifted up:

(Vers. 8) The pillars of the earth, she says, are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them.

22. Because by the name of earth sinners are designated in sacred eloquence, the hinges of the earth can conveniently be taken as those in which the world circles through inept desires, and leads from one to another. When therefore we behold converted sinners, let us break out into the praise of the Creator with these voices of Hannah. For as if in other words we then say: Now they have begun to be of the Lord through his grace, who for a long time were held in the wheel of passing things through the concupiscence of the world. And when, the allurements of secular life being already relinquished, they strongly tolerate strong temptations, let us say: He has set the world upon them. For he has set the world upon them, who, before it was imposed upon them, was under them. For they now have him in the burden of temptations, who by flattering them served as if subjected, when they lay down in it following delights and pleasures. And because they have great temptations from him, who had great delectations in him, it is added:

(Vers. 9.) He shall keep the feet of his saints.

23. By which words indeed the help of divine protection and propitiation is so shown, that the grave perils of temptations are designated. For as if he should say: They sustain so grand temptations from that world to which they had adhered, that he alone suffices for helping who cannot be wanting to his faithful in tribulation. For to keep the feet of his saints, is to corroborate through grace the shaken affections of the elect in temptation, lest they fall. Whence also he who had nodded to a fall, and yet had been conserved by the Lord, the prophet said: But my feet were almost moved, my steps had well nigh slipped (Psal. LXXII, 2). Hence again: I was pushed; and I was overturned that I might fall, and the Lord received me. The Lord is my strength, and my praise, and is become my salvation (Psal. CXVII, 13, 14). And concerning the infirmity of enemies he subjoined, saying:

(Vers. 9.) And the wicked shall be silent in darkness.

24. Quid est autem quod cum servare sanctorum pedes Dominus dicitur, silentium memoratur impiorum, nisi quia ad peccati lapsum nequaquam impellimur, nisi cum perversa nobis malignorum spirituum tentamenta suggeruntur? Cum ergo pedes nostros Dominus servat, in tenebris tacent impii, quia dum gratia divina protegimur, vocem qua nos praecipitent dare nobis immundi spiritus nequaquam possunt. In tenebris quippe tacent, quia caliginosa reproborum corda possident, a quorum 64 ad nos progredi obscuritate non audent. Quare autem sanctorum pedes servet exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 9.) Quia non in fortitudine sua roborabitur vir.

25. Quasi dicat: Idcirco tenet, quia sine ipso stare non possent. Nam etsi vir virtutis agnoscitur, in fortitudine sua timorem lapsus habet, statum robur non habet, et toties illicita concupiscendo labitur, quoties interna ejus vestigia a Domino tenente deseruntur. An vero non vir erat cui in juvencularum choro cantabatur: Saul percussit mille, et David decem millia (I Reg. XVIII, 7)? Qui nimirum cum inter onera fortitudini suae relinquitur, in carnis suae culpam impulsus corruit, atque in se expertus est quia vir in se non habeat statum roboris, sed lapsum infirmitatis. Unde et relabi metuens, eum a quo teneri ad statum debeat exposcit, dicens: Non me derelinquas usquequaque (Psal. CXVIII, 8). Nemo ergo se fallat, quasi in se robur standi inveniat, quia etsi magna saepe occultorum hostium bella superamus, si digne eos in suis suasionibus reprobando velut in fugam versos insequimur, non nos tunc refugi spiritus, sed eum quem in nobis aspiciunt expavescunt. Vel certe si nos etiam timent, idcirco profecto timent, quia in divinae gratiae robur assumptos vident. Apte ergo subjungitur:

(Vers. 10.) Dominum formidabunt adversarii ejus, et super ipsos in coelis tonabit.

26. Coeli namque tunc sumus, cum in altitudinem divinae gratiae praesidentis nobis sublevamur. Et tonitrua contra ejus adversarios habemus, cum validis sanctorum desideriorum vocibus omne quod nobis de eorum suggestione spirat elidimus. Quidquid enim tonitruum ferit, interficit. Tonitrua ergo coelorum sunt perfecta desideria electorum. Nam velut a coelorum altitudine terribiliter sonando prodeunt, cum ab eo mentis culmine malignos spiritus feriunt, cui omnipotens Deus sic praesidet, ut amore praesidentis facile superet omne quod ad pugnam moveri poterat hostis audacia mala suggerentis.

24. But what is it that when the Lord is said to keep the feet of the saints, the silence of the wicked is mentioned, unless because we are by no means impelled to the lapse of sin, unless when the perverse temptations of malign spirits are suggested to us? When therefore the Lord keeps our feet, the wicked are silent in darkness, because while we are protected by divine grace, the unclean spirits can by no means give us the voice by which they may precipitate us. For they are silent in darkness, because they possess the dark hearts of the reprobate, from whose obscurity they dare not proceed to us. But why he should keep the feet of the saints she expounds, saying:

(Vers. 9.) Because not in his own strength shall man be corroborated.

25. As if she should say: Therefore he holds them, because without him they could not stand. For although a man of virtue is acknowledged, in his own strength he has the fear of a fall, he has not the strength of standing, and so many times he falls by concupisciting illicit things, as many times as his internal footsteps are deserted by the Lord holding him. Or indeed was he not a man to whom it was sung in the chorus of young women: Saul has struck a thousand, and David ten thousand (I Reg. XVIII, 7)? Who indeed when among burdens he is left to his own strength, being impelled into the fault of his flesh fell, and experienced in himself that a man has not in himself the state of strength, but the lapse of infirmity. Whence also fearing to slip back, he requests him by whom he ought to be held to standing, saying: Forsake me not utterly (Psal. CXVIII, 8). Let no one therefore deceive himself, as if he should find in himself the strength of standing, because although we often overcome great wars of occult enemies, if we pursue them as if turned into flight by worthily reprobating them in their persuasions, then the fugitive spirits dread not us, but him whom they behold in us. Or certainly if they fear us also, they certainly fear for this reason, because they see us assumed into the strength of divine grace. Aptly therefore is it subjoined:

(Vers. 10.) The adversaries of the Lord shall dread him, and over them in the heavens he shall thunder.

26. For we are heavens then, when we are lifted up into the altitude of the divine grace presiding over us. And we have thunders against his adversaries, when with the valid voices of holy desires we elide all that breathes upon us from their suggestion. For whatever thunder strikes, it kills. The thunders therefore of the heavens are the perfect desires of the elect. For as it were from the altitude of the heavens sounding terribly they proceed, when from that culmination of mind they strike malign spirits, over which almighty God so presides, that by the love of him presiding it easily overcomes all that the audacity of the enemy suggesting evil things was able to move to battle.

Sed praemonente Redemptore novimus quia qui perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit (Matth. X, 22). Eodem quoque Domino promittente, didicimus quia quacunque hora peccator convertitur, salvus erit (Ezech. XVIII, 21). In extremo itaque sui cantici addat Anna, et dicat unde peccantem terreat, dicat quo justum cautiorem reddat.

(Vers. 10.) Dominus, inquit, judicabit fines terrae.

27. Non ait terram, sed fines terrae. Fines quippe terrae sunt, qui vitae sua ultima cum culpae perpetratione clauserunt. Nam qui peccat, et corrigit quod delinquit, terra est per peccatum, et finis terrae non est, quia delinquendo redemptionis suae alta deposuit, sed ab imo depositionis suae ante judicium resurrexit. Flevit namque quod fecit, et venturum judicem eo laetius sustinet, quo in damnatione terrenitatis per poenitentiam ipse in se flagella ultionis tenet. Quia ergo fines terrae Dominus judicat, conversus peccator ad Dominum priora, sive media, non expavescat. Quia item fines terrae Dominus judicat, justus, inchoata justitia, non praesumat. Nam si hunc ab ea qua cadere potest adhuc aequitate labentem subita mors intercipit, quia in suis extremis culpa clauditur, finium terrae lege judicatur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 10.) Et dabit imperium regi suo, et sublimabit cornu Christi sui.

28. Hoc profecto superius, quia ad Redemptorem retulimus, in hujus quoque explanationis ordine 65 non mutamus. Ipse namque est pax nostra, qui fecit utraque unum (Ephes. II, 14).

CAPUT II.

Sequitur enim divinus sermo, et dicit:

(Vers. 11.) Et abiit Helcana in Ramatha, in domum suam.

1. Quem profecto virum, humani generis Redemptorem; Annam vero conjugem, ejus Ecclesiam; puerum Samuelem, credentium de gentibus populum; Ramatha quoque civitatem, coelestem patriam designare ostendimus. Quid ergo est quod post conjugis canticum abiisse in Ramatham civitatem suam Helcana dicitur, cum post natum puerum Deo canticum Anna dixerit, atque ante ad coelos Redemptor ascenderit, quam gentilem populum sancta Ecclesia in fide genuisset? Quod profecto ab eis solummodo quaeritur qui tantum Domini nostri corporalem praesentiam scire noscuntur.

But the Redeemer forewarning we know that he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved (Matt. X, 22). By the same Lord also promising, we have learned that in whatever hour the sinner shall be converted, he shall be saved (Ezech. XVIII, 21). In the extremity therefore of her canticle let Anna add, and say whence she may terrify the sinner, say whereby she may render the just man more cautious.

(Vers. 10.) The Lord, she says, shall judge the ends of the earth.

27. She does not say the earth, but the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth indeed are those who have closed the last things of their life with the perpetration of fault. For he who sins, and corrects what he transgresses, is earth through sin, and is not the end of the earth, because by transgressing he has deposited the high things of his redemption, but from the bottom of his deposition before the judgment he has risen again. For he has wept what he has done, and so much the more joyfully sustains the judge to come, by how much in the damnation of earthliness through penitence he himself holds in himself the scourges of vengeance. Because therefore the Lord judges the ends of the earth, let the sinner converted to the Lord not dread prior or middle things. Because also the Lord judges the ends of the earth, let the just man, his justice begun, not presume. For if sudden death intercepts him sliding from that equity from which he can still fall, because in his last things fault is closed, he is judged by the law of the ends of the earth. It follows:

(Vers. 10.) And he shall give empire to his king, and shall exalt the horn of his Christ.

28. This indeed above, because we have referred it to the Redeemer, in the order of this explanation also 65 we do not change. For he himself is our peace, who hath made both one (Ephes. II, 14).

CHAPTER II.

For the divine word follows, and says:

(Vers. 11.) And Elcana went to Ramatha, to his house.

1. Which man indeed, we show to designate the Redeemer of the human race; but his wife Anna, his Church; the boy Samuel, the people of the Gentiles believing; also the city Ramatha, the heavenly country. What therefore is it that after the canticle of his wife Elcana is said to have gone to his city Ramatha, when Anna said the canticle to God after the boy was born, and the Redeemer ascended to the heavens before the holy Church had begotten the Gentile people in faith? Which indeed is sought only by those who are known to know only the corporal presence of our Lord.

Nunquid enim tunc non eum secum Paulus habebat qui ad Patrem ascenderat, cum dicebat: An experimentum quaeritis ejus qui in me habitat Christus (II Cor. XIII, 3)? qui item fatetur dicens: Sicut ex Deo, coram Deo et Christo loquimur (II Cor. II, 17). Quid est ergo quod sanctae Ecclesiae aliquando adfuit per gratiam muneris, aliquando ei se subtraxit per dispensationem probationis? Adfuit namque, ut in acquisitione Gentium vitae verba abundanter effunderet; sed aliquando ei velut absens se abscondit, ut, verbi munere sublato, cognosceret sine ejus praesentia qualis esset. Post finem itaque cantici dicitur: Abiit Helcana in domum suam, quia sancta Ecclesia ex ejus praesentia alta praedicat, qui cum mortalibus per dispensationem se subtrahit, aeternis se civibus jugiter repraesentat. Domus namque sua illa supernorum civium, quam amando, replendo et sociando Dominus inhabitat, aeterna societas est. In eam igitur vadit cum Annam deserit, quia qui se nobis adhuc proficientibus salubriter subtrahit, perfectis atque consummatis aeternae patriae civibus eo se incessanter jungit atque exhibet, quo probari jam probatos ejus absentia ulterius non oportet. Apte itaque post Annae canticum dicitur: Abiit Helcana in domum suam, quia sancta Ecclesia, quae tam sublimia electos edocet, sicut pia semper Domini dispensatione deseritur, ita et eadem alta quae doceat non semper habet. Sed plerique verba audiunt, praeteritam malitiam detestantur, et correctionis vitae opera proponunt; sed cum audire desierint, ac si nunquam eadem vitae verba audissent, ad iniquitatem redeunt. Auditor sanctae Ecclesiae gentilis populus devotus ad audiendum fuit, et ad operandum promptus. Apte itaque subditur:

(Vers. 11.) Puer autem Samuel erat minister in conspectu Domini, ante faciem Heli sacerdotis.

2. Ac si aperte diceretur: Ex eo quod audivit, omnipotenti Deo placere studuit. Qui apte puer dicitur, quia etsi grandia pro defensione fidei nostrae agenda susceperat, tamen in eadem fidei generatione adhuc novus erat. Et quia placidum omnipotenti Deo ministerium praebuit, minister in conspectu conditoris fuit. In conspectu etenim Domini est, quem in oblatione obsequiorum divina dignatio 66 libenter aspicit. A quo nimirum Domini conspectu expelli valde metuens quis, orat, dicens: Ne projicias me a facie tua (Psal. L, 13).

For did Paul not then have him with him who had ascended to the Father, when he said: Do you seek a proof of Christ that dwelleth in me (II Cor. XIII, 3)? who also confesses saying: As of God, before God and in Christ we speak (II Cor. II, 17). What is it therefore that to the holy Church sometimes he was present through the grace of the gift, sometimes he withdrew himself from her through the dispensation of probation? For he was present, that in the acquisition of the Gentiles he might abundantly pour forth the words of life; but sometimes as if absent he hid himself from her, that, the gift of the word being taken away, she might know what she was without his presence. After the end therefore of the canticle it is said: Elcana went to his house, because the holy Church from his presence preaches high things, who when he withdraws himself from mortals by dispensation, continually represents himself to the eternal citizens. For that house of his of the supernal citizens, which the Lord inhabits by loving, filling and associating, is eternal society. Into it therefore he goes when he leaves Anna, because he who healthfully withdraws himself from us still profiting, to the perfect and consummated citizens of the eternal country he unceasingly joins and exhibits himself, for this reason that they already proved ought no longer to be proved by his absence. Aptly therefore after the canticle of Anna it is said: Elcana went to his house, because the holy Church, which teaches such sublime things to the elect, as she is always deserted by the pious dispensation of the Lord, so also she does not always have the same high things which she may teach. But many hear the words, detest past malice, and propose works of the correction of life; but when they have ceased to hear, as if they had never heard the same words of life, they return to iniquity. The hearer of the holy Church the Gentile people was devout to hearing, and prompt to working. Aptly therefore it is subjoined:

(Vers. 11.) But the boy Samuel was a minister in the sight of the Lord, before the face of Heli the priest.

2. As if it were openly said: From that which he heard, he studied to please almighty God. Who aptly is called a boy, because although he had undertaken grand things to be done for the defense of our faith, yet in the same generation of faith he was still new. And because he offered a placid ministry to almighty God, he was a minister in the sight of the Creator. For he is in the sight of the Lord, whom in the oblation of obsequies divine dignation willingly beholds. Fearing greatly to be expelled from which sight of the Lord indeed, one prays, saying: Cast me not away from thy face (Psal. L, 13).

In quo item recipi vehementer cupiens, dilationis suae moram secum reputat, dicens: Quando veniam, et apparebo ante faciem Dei (Psal. XLI, 3)? Hinc Elias gloriatur; et ait: Vivit Dominus, in cujus conspectu sto (III Reg. XVII, 1). Minister itaque erat Samuel in conspectu Domini, quia in novae religionis obsequiis omnipotenti Deo gentilis populus valde acceptus fuit. Quo nimirum verbo Judaeae quoque repulsio latenter innuitur, dum solus Samuel, in quo gentium fidelis populus exprimitur, ante Dominum ministrare perhibetur. Solus itaque in ejus conspectu erat, quia profecto ei Judaicus populus placere desierat. Quod utrumque per Malachiam Dominus loquitur. Nam Judaeae repulsionem insinuans, ait: Non est mihi voluntas in vobis, et sacrificium non suscipiam de manu vestra (Malach. I, 10). Sed qui a facie sua Judaicam perfidiam expulit, quem libenter intueatur, subjungens, ait: Ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, magnum est nomen meum in gentibus, et in omni loco offertur nomini meo oblatio munda (Ibid., 11). Sed subtiliter est videndum quod dicitur: Ante faciem Heli Samuel Domino ministravit, quia praedicatorum sanctae Ecclesiae ministerium gentilis populi conversionem, amorem et reverentiam circa Redemptoris obsequium, veterum ordo doctorum longe ante videndo cognovit, et prophetando praedicavit. Hunc namque pronum in Domini ministerio noverat, qui dicebat: Adorabunt eum omnes reges terrae, omnes gentes servient ei (Psal. LXXI, 11). Hinc Aggaeus loquitur, dicens: Veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus, et replebitur gloria domus Domini (Aggaei II, 8). Hinc Isaias dicit: Erit radix Jesse, qui exsurget regere gentes; in ipsum gentes sperabunt (Isa. XI, 10; Rom. XV, 12). Hinc Psalmista ait: Laudate, omnes gentes, Dominum et collaudate eum, omnes populi (Psal. CXVI, 1). Hinc patriarcha Jacob ait: Ipse erit exspectatio gentium (Gen. LIX, 10). Ante faciem ergo Heli minister Domini Samuel puer fuit, quia quod dignum Deo postmodum gentilis populus habuit, doctorum ordo veterum per prophetiae spiritum praevidit. Et statim de projectis subditur:

(Vers. 12, 13.) Porro filii Heli nescientes Dominum, et officium sacerdotis ad populum.

3. Subaudis erant. Qui namque filii Heli sunt alii, nisi Israelitae secundum carnem, qui Scripturam sacram noverant a patribus editam, et tamen quem Scriptura promiserat nesciebant? Quos nimirum per semetipsam Veritas in Evangelio increpat, dicens: Abraham exsultavit ut videret diem meum; vidit, et gavisus est (Joan. VIII, 56). Et item: Si crederetis Moysi, crederetis utique et mihi, de me enim ille scripsit (Ibid. V, 46). Nescierunt ergo Dominum, qui venientem in carne nostra Redemptorem spreverunt.

In which also vehemently desiring to be received, he reckons with himself the delay of his procrastination, saying: When shall I come, and appear before the face of God (Psal. XLI, 3)? Hence Elijah glories; and says: The Lord lives, in whose sight I stand (III Reg. XVII, 1). Therefore Samuel was a minister in the sight of the Lord, because in the obsequies of the new religion the Gentile people was greatly accepted by almighty God. By which word indeed the repulsion of Judea also is latently intimated, while Samuel alone, in whom the faithful people of the Gentiles is expressed, is said to minister before the Lord. Therefore he alone was in his sight, because indeed the Jewish people had ceased to please him. Both of which the Lord speaks through Malachi. For insinuating the repulsion of Judea, he says: I have no pleasure in you, and I will not receive a sacrifice from your hand (Malach. I, 10). But he who expelled Jewish perfidy from his face, subjoining whom he might willingly behold, says: From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place a clean oblation is offered to my name (Ibid., 11). But it is to be subtly seen what is said: Before the face of Eli Samuel ministered to the Lord, because the order of ancient doctors knew long before by seeing, and preached by prophesying, the ministry of the preachers of the holy Church, the conversion of the Gentile people, their love and reverence concerning the obsequy of the Redeemer. For he had known him prone in the ministry of the Lord, who said: All the kings of the earth shall adore him, all nations shall serve him (Psal. LXXI, 11). Hence Haggai speaks, saying: The desired of all nations shall come, and the house of the Lord shall be filled with glory (Haggai II, 8). Hence Isaiah says: There shall be a root of Jesse, who shall rise to rule the nations; in him the nations shall hope (Isa. XI, 10; Rom. XV, 12). Hence the Psalmist says: Praise the Lord, all ye nations, and praise him together, all ye people (Psal. CXVI, 1). Hence the patriarch Jacob says: He shall be the expectation of nations (Gen. LIX, 10). Before the face of Eli therefore the boy Samuel was a minister of the Lord, because what the Gentile people afterwards had worthy of God, the order of ancient doctors foresaw through the spirit of prophecy. And immediately concerning those cast off it is subjoined:

(Vers. 12, 13.) Moreover the sons of Eli were children of Belial, not knowing the Lord, nor the office of the priest to the people.

3. You understand they were. For who are the sons of Eli other, if not the Israelites according to the flesh, who knew the sacred Scripture published by the fathers, and yet knew not him whom Scripture had promised? Whom indeed Truth itself in the Gospel reproves, saying: Abraham rejoiced that he might see my day; he saw it, and was glad (John VIII, 56). And likewise: If you believed Moses, you would indeed believe me also, for he wrote concerning me (Ibid. V, 46). They knew not the Lord therefore, who despised the Redeemer coming in our flesh.

Unde per Isaiam queritur, dicens: Cognovit bos possessorem suum, et asinus praesepe Domini sui; Israel autem me non cognovit (Isai. I, 3). Quasi dicat: Et incarnationis meae vias ei longe ante per prophetas aperui, et tamen id quod promiseram exhibitum non accepit. Quare et officium sacerdotum ad populum nesciit. Officium sacerdotale quippe cognosceret, si ad redemptionem humani generis eum qui a lege et prophetis fuerat promissus jam venisse praedicaret. In quem profecto quia non solum non credidit, sed etiam persequendo insanivit, et Dominum nesciit, et ad populum officium sacerdotum. Cujus tamen malitia minor esset, si qui prodesse minoribus Redemptoris adventum praedicando noluit, nocere timuisset. Sequitur ergo, et dicit:

67 (Vers. 13, 14.) Sed quicunque immolasset victimam, veniebat puer sacerdotis, dum coquerentur carnes, et habebat fuscinulam tridentem in manu sua, et mittebat in lebetem, vel caldarium, aut in ollam, sive in cacabum, et omne quod levabat fuscinula, tollebat sacerdotibus.

4. Quid enim est immolare victimam, nisi verae fidei omnipotenti Deo offerre confessionem? Et quid vasa in quibus immolando caro coquitur, nisi fidelium mentes sunt? Quae dum Mediatorem Dei et hominum hominem Christum Jesum esse verum summi Patris Unigenitum credunt, nimirum in his caro coquitur quae Deo per devotionis intimae obsequium immoletur. Quis puer sacerdotis est alius quam perfidis Synagogae pastoribus per obsequium subjectus populus? Qui apte puer dicitur, quia dum infirma legis ad litteram tenere maluit, in virum perfectum crescere per Evangelium recusavit. Quid vero est quod ad inferendos ciborum raptus destinatur? Quid est iterum quod in illata violentia tenere tridentem fuscinulam dicitur? But the food of the elect soul is the person of the Redeemer. Qui profecto cibus in sacris vasis coquitur, dum per calorem sancti Spiritus ad suavitatem refectionis in electis mentibus praeparatur. Caro etenim coquitur, dum per Spiritus sancti gratiam humanitatem Dominicam in divinitatis naturam assumptam, et firmiter credimus, et efficaciter confitemur. Unde et per Moysen Agni paschalis carnes comedendas insinuat, dicens: Non comedetis ex eo crudum quid, aut coctum aqua (Exod. XII, 9). Crudum quippe ex eo manducare est, praeter Spiritus sancti gratiam, Redemptorem nostrum purum hominem credere. Aqua vero coquitur cum Redemptoris essentia per humanam sapientiam ventilatur. Crudum ergo Judaei comedunt, aqua coctum haeretici, quia illi ejus divinitatem negant, isti per humanam sapientiam et divinitatis et humanitatis ejus sacramenta evacuant.

Whence he complains through Isaiah, saying: The ox has known his owner, and the ass the crib of his Lord; but Israel has not known me (Isai. I, 3). As if he should say: And I opened the ways of my incarnation to him long before through the prophets, and yet he received not that which I had promised when exhibited. Wherefore also he knew not the office of the priests to the people. For he would know the priestly office, if he should preach that he who had been promised by the law and the prophets had already come for the redemption of the human race. Into whom indeed because not only he believed not, but also became insane by persecuting, he both knew not the Lord and the office of the priests to the people. Whose malice nevertheless would be less, if he who wished not to profit the lesser by preaching the advent of the Redeemer, had feared to harm. It follows therefore, and says:

67 (Vers. 13, 14.) But whosoever had sacrificed a victim, the boy of the priest came, while the flesh was being cooked, and he had a flesh-hook with three teeth in his hand, and he cast it into the kettle, or caldron, or into the pot, or into the pan, and all that the flesh-hook lifted up, the boy took for the priests.

4. For what is it to sacrifice a victim, if not to offer the confession of true faith to almighty God? And what are the vessels in which the flesh is cooked in sacrificing, if not the minds of the faithful? Which while they believe the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, to be the true Only-begotten of the highest Father, doubtless in these the flesh is cooked which is sacrificed to God through the obsequy of intimate devotion. Who is the boy of the priest other than the people subjected through obsequy to the perfidious pastors of the Synagogue? Who aptly is called a boy, because while he preferred to hold the infirm things of the law according to the letter, he refused to grow into a perfect man through the Gospel. But what is it that he is destined for bringing in the snatching of foods? What is it again that in the violence brought in he is said to hold a three-toothed flesh-hook? But the food of the elect soul is the person of the Redeemer. Which food indeed is cooked in sacred vessels, while through the heat of the Holy Spirit it is prepared for the sweetness of refection in the elect minds. For the flesh is cooked, while through the grace of the Holy Spirit we both firmly believe and efficaciously confess the Dominican humanity assumed into the nature of divinity. Whence also through Moses he insinuates that the flesh of the paschal Lamb is to be eaten, saying: You shall not eat of it anything raw, nor boiled with water (Exod. XII, 9). For to eat of it raw is, beside the grace of the Holy Spirit, to believe our Redeemer to be a pure man. But with water it is cooked when the essence of the Redeemer is ventilated through human wisdom. Therefore the Jews eat it raw, the heretics boiled with water, because the former deny his divinity, the latter through human wisdom evacuate the sacraments both of his divinity and humanity.

Puer itaque sacerdotis ad tollendum fidelium cibos mittitur, quia Judaeorum populus, a fide Redemptoris expulsus, amorem fidei ejus a corde fidelium auferre vehementer studuit. Qui apte fuscinulam tridentem in manu habuisse perhibetur, quibus carnis partem quam posset infigere eductam coqui prohiberet. Fuscinula quippe in manu pueri illata sanctae Ecclesiae Judaici populi persecutio est. Et quia blandimentis, poenis atque terroribus nocere fidelibus tentavit, tres utique fuscinula dentes habuit. Bene autem dicitur quia quod levabat fuscinula tollebat puer sacerdotibus, quia magna epulatio iniquorum praelatorum erat, si eum blandientium sive furentium satellitum turba subverteret, quem in fidei nostrae sublimitate stare per confessionem cognovissent. Sequitur:

(Vers. 14, 15.) Sic faciebant universo Israeli venienti in Silo, etiam antequam adolerent adipem.

5. Adeps quidem interna pinguedo est, in qua nimirum illa devotio mentis exprimitur, qua electorum mentes conditori suo in perfectiori charitate copulantur. Qui recte jam cocta carne immolant, quia assurgere quis ad sublimitatem charitatis non poterit, nisi prius quae credit amet mysteria incarnatae divinitatis. Humanitatem quippe Domini Jesu in divinitatem assumptam per sanctum Spiritum credere, quae immoletur Deo carnem coquere est. Ante igitur quam adoleretur adeps, 68 puer carnem praeripere studuit in universo Israele, quia apparitores Synagogae novos Christi confessores putaverunt evertere prius quam eos omnipotenti Deo charitas perfecta sociaret. Quod apertius ipsa sacrae historiae verba indicant, quibus dicitur: Dum coquerentur carnes. Per quae nimirum verba non perfectio coctionis, sed apparatus innuitur. Sed ordo nefariae hujus exactionis ostenditur per ea quae sequuntur:

(Vers. 15.) Veniebat puer sacerdotis et dicebat immolanti: Da mihi carnem, ut coquam sacerdoti; non enim accipiam a te carnem coctam, sed crudam.

6. Carnem crudam puero daret, qui coram persecutoribus humanitatem Christi puram assereret, et eam puer sacerdoti coqueret, quia per ignem malitiae Judaicus populus hoc putaret, quod ejus praelati in mentis suae refectione libenter exciperent. Venit ergo puer sacerdotis, et crudam carnem petiit, quando Judaicus populus litterae legis serviens, divinitatem Redemptoris negare fidelibus suggessit. Veniens ergo dicit: Non accipiam a te carnem coctam, sed crudam. Quia quem purum hominem fidelis compulit confiteri, esse Deum nec audire voluit.

Therefore the boy of the priest is sent for taking away the foods of the faithful, because the people of the Jews, expelled from the faith of the Redeemer, vehemently studied to take away the love of his faith from the heart of the faithful. Who aptly is said to have had a three-toothed flesh-hook in his hand, by which he might prohibit the part of the flesh which he could fix to be cooked when drawn out. For the flesh-hook brought in the hand of the boy is the persecution of the Jewish people against the holy Church. And because he tempted to harm the faithful with allurements, pains, and terrors, the flesh-hook had three teeth indeed. But well is it said that what the flesh-hook lifted up the boy took for the priests, because it was a great feasting of the iniquitous prelates, if the crowd of flattering or raging satellites should subvert him whom they had known to stand through confession in the sublimity of our faith. It follows:

(Vers. 14, 15.) Thus they did to all Israel coming to Shiloh, even before they burnt the fat.

5. The fat indeed is the internal richness, in which doubtless that devotion of the mind is expressed, by which the minds of the elect are coupled to their Creator in more perfect charity. Who rightly sacrifice with flesh already cooked, because no one will be able to rise to the sublimity of charity, unless he first loves the mysteries of the incarnate divinity which he believes. For to believe through the Holy Spirit the humanity of the Lord Jesus assumed into divinity, is to cook the flesh which is sacrificed to God. Before therefore the fat was burnt, 68 the boy studied to snatch away the flesh in all Israel, because the apparitors of the Synagogue thought to overturn the new confessors of Christ before perfect charity should associate them to almighty God. Which the very words of the sacred history more openly indicate, by which it is said: While the flesh was being cooked. By which words indeed not the perfection of cooking, but the preparation is intimated. But the order of this nefarious exaction is shown through those things which follow:

(Vers. 15.) The boy of the priest came and said to him that sacrificed: Give me flesh to cook for the priest; for I will not receive boiled flesh from thee, but raw.

6. He should give raw flesh to the boy, who before persecutors should assert the pure humanity of Christ, and the boy should cook it for the priest, because the Jewish people through the fire of malice should think this, which its prelates should willingly receive in the refection of their mind. Therefore the boy of the priest came, and sought raw flesh, when the Jewish people serving the letter of the law, suggested to the faithful to deny the divinity of the Redeemer. Coming therefore he says: I will not receive boiled flesh from thee, but raw. Because whom the faithful he compelled to confess a pure man, he wished not even to hear to be God.

Cujus profecto populi importunitas ostenditur, cum verba sacrilega in nefaria exactione geminantur. Nam sequitur: Non enim accipiam a te carnem coctam, sed crudam. Quia Jesum Dominum ac Redemptorem nostrum, non Dominum et hominem, sed purum tantum hominem audire valde desideravit. Sed quos quasi imperfectos in carne tentavit, perfectos reperit. Nam qui divinitatem Redemptoris negare compulsi sunt, non solum Redemptorem noluerunt negare, sed compulsores suos curabant ad vitam trahere. Unde et sequitur:

(Vers. 16.) Dicebatque illi immolans: Incendatur primum juxta morem hodie adeps, et tolle tibi quantum desiderat anima tua.

7. A bestiali siquidem appetitu cruda postulantem avertere nititur, qui ei ad libitum cocta pollicetur. Quasi male esurientibus Judaeis sancta Ecclesia responsum praebeat, et pro humanitate simplici, quam vorare per desiderium cupiunt, divinitatis cibum repromittat, dicens: Prius coqui sinite quod ad refectionem vitae habeatis in Spiritu sancto intellectum. An non tunc puer sacerdotis crudam carnem petiit, cum illuminato a Domino ei qui caecus fuerat natus diceretur: Da gloriam Deo; nos scimus quia hic homo peccator est (Joan. IX, 24)? Quid est dicere, da gloriam Deo, nisi non huic curationis tuae laudes tribuas, quia Deus non est? et qui peccator asseritur, non solum Deus esse negatur, sed etiam homo justus. Cui profecto crudam quam petebat carnem praebere noluit, coctam obtulit, quia quem salutis suae auctorem instanter asseruit, ex ostenso tantae admirationis signo, non solum hominem sanctum, sed verum Deum esse monstravit. Qui autem sequi bestias, amissa ratione, populus coeperat, crudam sibi carnem exhiberi importune postulabat. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 16.) Nunc dabis, alioquin tollam tibi vi. Sequitur:

(Vers. 17.) Erat enim peccatum puerorum grande nimis coram Domino. Et causam qua grande fore hoc peccatum demonstraretur adjungit, dicens:

(Vers. 17.) Quia detrahebant homines a sacrificio Domini.

69 8. Grande nimis peccatum esse cognoscitur, quod poenitentiae lacrymis non deletur. Hoc namque nimis grande peccatum Synagogae propheta intuens, ait: Peccatum Judae scriptum est stylo ferreo, in ungue adamantino (Jerem. XVII, 1). Vel certe grande nimis coram Domino peccatum erat, quia ad peccandum alios pertrahebat. Quare et subditur: Quia detrahebant homines a sacrificio Domini. Detrahebant quippe a sacrificio homines, quia ad confessionem rectae fidei progredi infirmorum corda prohibebant.

Whose importunity of the people indeed is shown, when sacrilegious words are doubled in nefarious exaction. For it follows: For I will not receive boiled flesh from thee, but raw. Because he greatly desired to hear Jesus our Lord and Redeemer, not Lord and man, but a pure man only. But those whom he tempted as if imperfect in the flesh, he found perfect. For they who were compelled to deny the divinity of the Redeemer, not only refused to deny the Redeemer, but took care to draw their compellers to life. Whence also it follows:

(Vers. 16.) And he that sacrificed said to him: Let the fat first be burnt today according to the custom, and take to thee as much as thy soul desires.

7. From a bestial appetite indeed he strives to avert the one asking for raw things, who promises him boiled things at his pleasure. As if to the evilly hungering Jews the holy Church should offer a response, and for simple humanity, which they cupiscite to devour through desire, should repromise the food of divinity, saying: First let that be cooked which you may have as an intellect in the Holy Spirit for the refection of life. Or did not the boy of the priest then seek raw flesh, when to him who had been born blind and was illuminated by the Lord it was said: Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner (John IX, 24)? What is it to say, give glory to God, unless that you should not attribute the praises of your cure to this one, because he is not God? and he who is asserted a sinner, is not only denied to be God, but also a just man. To whom indeed he refused to offer the raw flesh which he sought, he offered boiled, because whom he instantly asserted the author of his salvation, from the shown sign of so great admiration, he showed to be not only a holy man, but true God. But the people who had begun to follow beasts, reason being lost, importunately demanded raw flesh to be exhibited to them. For it follows:

(Vers. 16.) Thou shalt give it now, or else I will take it from thee by force. It follows:

(Vers. 17.) For the sin of the young men was exceeding great before the Lord. And he subjoins the cause by which this sin would be demonstrated to be great, saying:

(Vers. 17.) Because they withdrew men from the sacrifice of the Lord.

69 8. A sin is acknowledged to be exceeding great, which is not deleted by the tears of penitence. For the prophet beholding this exceeding great sin of the Synagogue, says: The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, with a point of a diamond (Jerem. XVII, 1). Or certainly the sin was exceeding great before the Lord, because it drew others away to sinning. Wherefore also it is subjoined: Because they withdrew men from the sacrifice of the Lord. For they withdrew men from the sacrifice, because they prohibited the hearts of the infirm to proceed to the confession of the right faith.

Et notandum quia qui detrahuntur a sacrificio homines dicuntur, quia nimirum si in fidei nostrae vera confessione persisterent, hos divinus sermo filiorum Dei appellatione signaret. Quibus profecto per Psalmistam Dominus dicit: Ego dixi dii estis, et filii excelsi omnes, vos autem sicut homines moriemini (Psal. LXXXI, 6, 7). Sequitur autem:

(Vers. 18.) Samuel autem erat minister in conspectu Domini, puer accinctus ephod lineo.

9. Subtilior quam lanea vestis linea esse cognoscitur. Apte autem Samuel lineo ephod indutus asseritur, per quem sacerdotum ordo electus ex gentibus designatur. Nam in comparatione legalis vitae nova Evangelii conversatio lini subtilitas est. Ibi enim aliquid animale praeceptum est, ibi omnis maledicitur a quo semina propaginis in Sion nulla relinquuntur. In Novo autem Testamento, quia subtiliora sunt omnia, quisquis ejus praeceptis utitur, velut delicatiori lini veste decoratur: ibi quippe connubii abstinentia damnatur, hic miris laudibus colitur; illic sacerdotes carnaliter generant, hic fructum spiritalis propaginis tanto copiosius afferunt, quanto etiam per conjugale bonum pudicitiae detrimenta sentire non possunt. Bene autem dum Samuelis vestis exponitur linea fuisse perhibetur, ut novi sacerdotii gloriam aperte ostenderet, quod novae pudicitiae nitoribus splenderet. Sed dum in conspectu Domini esse minister Samuel dicitur, ephod lineo accinctus memoratur, quia divina obsequia tunc bene exhibentur, cum exhibentis persona carnalis voluptatis sordibus non foedatur; et acceptum Deo tunc est munus ministerii, cum per sanctae conversationis munditiam Deo placita est persona ministri. Et quia inter primordia novitatis suae proficiebat, adhuc sequitur:

(Vers. 19.) Et tunicam parvam faciebat ei mater sua, quam afferebat ei, cum ascendebat cum viro suo, ut immolaret Domino hostiam solemnem.

10. Sanctae Ecclesiae hostiam immolare est per eloquia praedicationis auditorum suorum corda in amorem conditoris accendere. Tunc itaque Samueli parva vestis delata perhibetur, quia dum adhuc per novitatis suae incrementa proficeret, ab Ecclesia apta suae parvitati accepit monumenta justitiae, cujus splendore radiaret. Sequitur:

(Vers. 20.) Et benedixit Heli Helcanae, et uxori suae, dicens: Reddat tibi Dominus semen de muliere hac, pro femore quod commendasti Domino.

And it is to be noted because they who are withdrawn from the sacrifice are called men, because doubtless if they persisted in the true confession of our faith, the divine word would sign these with the appellation of sons of God. To whom indeed the Lord says through the Psalmist: I have said you are gods, and all of you sons of the most High, but you shall die like men (Psal. LXXXI, 6, 7). But it follows:

(Vers. 18.) But Samuel was a minister in the sight of the Lord, a boy girded with a linen ephod.

9. A linen garment is known to be subtler than a woolen one. But Samuel is aptly asserted to be clothed with a linen ephod, by whom the order of priests elect from the Gentiles is designated. For in comparison of the legal life the new conversation of the Gospel is the subtilty of linen. For there something animal is precepted, there every one is cursed from whom no seeds of offspring are left in Zion. But in the New Testament, because all things are subtler, whosoever uses its precepts is decorated as if with a more delicate garment of linen: for there the abstinence of marriage is damned, here it is cultivated with wondrous praises; there priests generate carnally, here they bring forth the fruit of spiritual offspring so much more copiously, by how much also through the conjugal good they cannot feel the detriments of pudicity. But well while the garment of Samuel is expounded it is said to have been of linen, that he might openly show the glory of the new priesthood, which should shine with the brightnesses of a new pudicity. But while Samuel is said to be a minister in the sight of the Lord, he is mentioned girded with a linen ephod, because divine obsequies are then well exhibited, when the person of the exhibitor is not defiled with the filths of carnal pleasure; and the gift of ministry is then accepted to God, when through the cleanness of holy conversation the person of the minister is pleasing to God. And because he profited among the primordia of his novelty, it still follows:

(Vers. 19.) And his mother made him a little coat, which she brought to him when she went up with her husband to sacrifice to the Lord the solemn victim.

10. To sacrifice a victim of the holy Church is to accend the hearts of her auditors into the love of the Creator through the eloquence of preaching. Then therefore a little garment is said to have been brought to Samuel, because while he yet profited through the increments of his novelty, he received from the Church monuments of justice apt for his smallness, with whose splendor he might radiate. It follows:

(Vers. 20.) And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, saying: The Lord render to thee seed of this woman, for the loan which thou hast commended to the Lord.

11. Quia in persona Heli sacerdotis etiam boni doctores populi veteris designantur, Helcanae et uxori ejus benedixisse cognoscitur, quia nimirum eorumdem veterum doctorum ordo Christi et sanctae Ecclesiae spiritalem copulam praevidit, et eorum electorum prolem futuram coelo dignam, cum devotione praedicavit. Quod quamvis longe ante actum fuerit, tamen tunc se eis sic benedixisse innotuit, cum, revelata jam nostrae redemptionis gratia, credere unusquisque fidelis poterat, quia tot bona 70 patres nostri veteres de hac renovatione praecinebant. Et ut ordo quo fiebat agnoscatur, subjunctum est:

(Vers. 20.) Et abierunt in locum suum.

12. In locum suum cum viro suo sanctae Ecclesiae abire, est vitae activae molestias interdum fugere, et supernae vitae gaudiis per contemplationem vacare. Puerum quippe ad horam reliquerat mater illa, quae dicebat: Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo (Philip. I, 23). Si cum puero erat, quando eumdem egregium doctorem usque ad tertium coelum vis amoris extulerat (II Cor. XII, 2-4)? Si tunc erat cum puero, quando in paradiso exceptus, verba quae non licet homini loqui audiebat, et in locum suum rapiebatur, quia ostendit, dicens: Non habemus hic manentem civitatem, sed futuram inquirimus (Hebr. XIII, 14)? Sed quae cum viro abibat in locum suum, reverti hanc materna viscera cogebant ad filium. Nam loquebatur et dicebat: In carne manere est mihi necessarium propter vos (Philip. I, 24). Sequitur:

(Vers. 21.) Visitavit ergo Dominus Annam, et concepit, et peperit tres filios et duas filias.

13. In tribus filiis perfectiores quique sanctae Ecclesiae designati sunt, qui pro fide Trinitatis fortia semper egisse cognoscuntur. Sed si solos perfectos sancta Ecclesia gigneret, nostra infirmitas ad aeternae vitae praemia pervenire non posset. Robur ergo filiorum duarum filiarum fragilitas sequitur, quia sancta Ecclesia etsi contra superbientem hostem humani generis fortes protulit, tamen ad aeternae patriae gaudia etiam infirma ejus membra per duo charitatis praecepta perducuntur. Et quia in inchoationis suae initiis non semper mansit quisquis eo tempore erudiri ad sacerdotale ministerium coeperat, sequitur:

(Vers. 21.) Et magnificatus est puer Samuel in conspectu Domini.

11. Because in the person of Eli the priest also the good doctors of the ancient people are designated, he is known to have blessed Elkanah and his wife, because doubtless the order of those same ancient doctors foresaw the spiritual coupling of Christ and the holy Church, and with devotion preached the future progeny of their elect worthy of heaven. Which although it was done long before, yet then he became known to have so blessed them, when, the grace of our redemption being already revealed, every faithful one could believe, because our ancient fathers foretold so many goods 70 concerning this renovation. And that the order in which it was done may be acknowledged, it is subjoined:

(Vers. 20.) And they went to their own place.

12. To go into her own place with her husband for the holy Church, is sometimes to flee the molestations of the active life, and to be vacant for the joys of the supernal life through contemplation. For that mother had relinquished the boy for an hour, who said: I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ (Philip. I, 23). Was she with the boy, when the force of love had extolled that same egregious doctor even to the third heaven (II Cor. XII, 2-4)? Was she then with the boy, when received into paradise, he heard words which it is not lawful for man to speak, and was snatched into his own place, because he showed, saying: We have not here a lasting city, but we seek one to come (Hebr. XIII, 14)? But she who went away with her husband into her own place, her maternal bowels compelled her to return to her son. For he spoke and said: To remain in the flesh is necessary for me for your sake (Philip. I, 24). It follows:

(Vers. 21.) The Lord therefore visited Hannah, and she conceived, and bore three sons and two daughters.

13. In the three sons are designated whoever are more perfect of the holy Church, who are known to have always done brave things for the faith of the Trinity. But if the holy Church brought forth only perfect ones, our infirmity could not arrive at the rewards of eternal life. The fragility therefore of two daughters follows the strength of the sons, because although the holy Church brought forth brave ones against the prideful enemy of the human race, nevertheless even her infirm members are led through the two precepts of charity to the joys of the eternal country. And because whoever at that time had begun to be erudited to the sacerdotal ministry did not always remain in the beginnings of his inchoation, it follows:

(Vers. 21.) And the child Samuel was magnified before the Lord.

14. Quo in loco valde notandum est quod puer Samuel dicitur et magnificatus. Sed et cum magnificatus asseritur, hoc virtutis suae praeconium non in conspectu hominum, sed in conspectu Domini habere perhibetur. Cur ergo puer, nisi quia ad perfectionis erat celsitudinem sublimatus? Puer itaque et magnificatus in conspectu Domini Samuel dicitur, quia novus ordo praedicatorum, etsi ad magnae conversationis celsitudinem pervenit, humilitatis suae virtutem non perdidit. Magnificari quippe ante Deum non prodesset, si puer esse desisteret, quia amissa humilitate, placere omnipotenti Deo de conversationis altitudine non valeret. Denique magnificati jam fuerant, qui in nomine Jesu ab obsessis daemonia ejiciebant; sed quia pueritiae suae bonum perdiderant, hos veritas arguit, dicens: Videbam Satanam, quasi fulgur de coelo cadentem (Luc. X, 18). Hinc iterum denuntians, ait: Nisi conversi eritis, et efficiamini sicut parvuli, non intrabitis in regnum coelorum (Matth. XVIII, 3). Quia ergo novorum praedicatorum vita et sublimis est merito, et plana per humilitatem, Samuel apte magnificatus et puer asseritur. Et quia ex utroque valde accepti Deo sunt, magnificatus non simpliciter, sed in conspectu Domini fuisse perhibetur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 22.) Heli autem erat senex valde, et audivit omnia quae faciebant filii sui in universo Israel, et quomodo dormiebant cum mulieribus quae observabant ad ostium tabernaculi.

15. In persona Heli non solum vetus sacerdotium, sed etiam antiquorum patrum doctrinae figurantur, 71 quia ex hoc quod spiritali dignitate praefuit, hoc suscepit officii, ut salutari praedicatione instrueret pro quibus placabiles hostias Domino offerret. Quid est ergo quod Heli senex asseritur, nisi quia in reproborum Judaeorum cordibus vis infirmatur coelestium mandatorum? Juvenis quidem fuit Heli quandiu sacra Scriptura in electis Synagogae vim magnae auctoritatis obtinuit, quia videlicet promissiones venturi Redemptoris acceperat, et eum cum magno desiderio exspectabat. Tunc ergo Heli senuit, quando Judaea devotionem observandae promissionis amisit, ut desideratum a patribus suis Redemptorem coram se miraculis se probantem cerneret, et omnino caeca in tanta ejus luce de veritatis praesentia dubitaret. Valde etiam fuisse senex dicitur, ut profecto omnis vis fidei in Synagoga emarcuisse doceatur. Vere autem dicimus quia si valde senex erat Heli, omnino debilis vivebat. Quid enim tunc erat seni Scripturae vivere, nisi debilem valde aspirationem fidei Synagogae ministrare?

14. In which place it is to be greatly noted that Samuel is called a boy and magnified. But also when he is asserted to be magnified, he is recorded to have this encomium of his virtue not in the sight of men, but in the sight of the Lord. Why therefore a boy, if not because he was sublimated to the altitude of perfection? Samuel therefore is said to be a boy and magnified in the sight of the Lord, because the new order of preachers, although it arrived at the altitude of great conversation, did not lose the virtue of its humility. For to be magnified before God would not profit him, if he ceased to be a boy, because humility having been lost, he would not be able to please almighty God from the altitude of conversation. Finally those had already been magnified, who in the name of Jesus cast out demons from the obsessed; but because they had lost the good of their boyhood, truth argues them, saying: I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven (Luke X, 18). Hence again denouncing, he says: Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. XVIII, 3). Because therefore the life of the new preachers is both sublime in merit, and plane through humility, Samuel is aptly asserted to be magnified and a boy. And because from both they are very acceptable to God, he is asserted to have been magnified not simply, but in the sight of the Lord. It follows:

(Vers. 22.) Now Heli was very old, and he heard all that his sons did to all Israel: and how they lay with the women that waited at the door of the tabernacle.

15. In the person of Heli not only the old priesthood, but also the doctrines of the ancient fathers are figured, 71 because from this that he presided in spiritual dignity, he undertook this of duty, that by salutary preaching he might instruct those for whom he offered placable hosts to the Lord. What is it therefore that Heli is asserted to be an old man, if not because the force of heavenly mandates is infirm in the hearts of the reprobate Jews? Heli indeed was a young man as long as the sacred Scripture obtained the force of great authority in the elect of the Synagogue, because evidently he had received the promises of the Redeemer to come, and expected him with great desire. Heli therefore grew old then, when Judea lost the devotion of observing the promise, so that she might discern the Redeemer desired by her fathers proving himself by miracles before her, and entirely blind might doubt of the presence of truth in so great a light of his. He is also said to have been very old, that surely all the force of faith in the Synagogue may be taught to have withered. But truly we say that if Heli was very old, he lived entirely weak. For what was it then for the old man to live by Scripture, if not to minister a very weak aspiration of faith to the Synagogue?

Senex quidem valde esse et vivere poterat, cum Judaeorum corda nutabant ut Dominum Jesum nec Redemptorem verum esse crederent, nec quasi blasphemum aperte damnarent. Hujus namque senectutis debilitatem evangelista Joannes ostendit, dicens: Alii dicebant, quia bonus est, alii vero, non, sed seducit turbas (Joan. VII, 12). Hinc Judaei ipsi calliditatis suae versutiam proferentes, dicunt: Usquequo animas nostras tollis? si tu es Christus, dic nobis palam (Ibid. X, 24). Hinc item dicunt: Magister, volumus a te signum videre (Matth. XII, 38).

16. Sed Heli valde senex audivit omnia quae faciebant filii sui universo Israeli. Audivit certe haec, quia novit. Quod autem cognovimus, intra aulas memoriae clausum tenemus. Consulta vero sacra eloquia, intra se omnem Judaeorum perfidiam scriptam foris proferunt, et velut diu servatam memoriter ostendunt. Hujus profecto auditus notitiam Amos, velut Heli ascribens, ait: Non faciet Dominus verbum super terram, quod non revelaverit servis suis prophetis (Amos III, 7). Hinc Habacuc Deo unigenito confitetur, dicens: Domine, audivi auditum tuum, et timui; consideravi opera tua, et expavi; in medio duorum animalium innotesceris (Hab. III, 1, ex interpret. LXX). Veteribus quippe Synagogae doctoribus filiorum scelera audire, praecognoscere est. Sed quid praecognoverit, exponit, quia dicit: Omnia, quae faciebant filii sui universo Israeli, et quomodo dormiebant cum mulieribus, quae observabant ad ostium tabernaculi. Cum mulieribus quippe Judaeis dormire est variis haeresibus pollui. Bene autem ipsae mulieres ad ostium tabernaculi observare referuntur. Quid enim est ostium tabernaculi, nisi littera legis spiritalis? Judaei autem dum sacram Scripturam juxta litteram solam intelligunt, ibi haereses statuerunt, unde ad secretum verae fidei intrare potuere. Nam sicut per ostium ad interiora tabernaculi, ita per litteram sacrae Scripturae ad spiritalem intratur cognitionem Redemptoris. Quia ergo per observantiam litterae Judaea decipitur, mulieres ad ostium, non intra tabernaculum, observare referuntur. Et quia in omnibus Scripturis Judaei Redemptori nostro contradicunt, non una mulier fuisse dicitur, sed plures. Haec quidem sibi filii Heli faciunt, quia juxta prophetae vocem: Anima, quae peccaverit, ipsa morietur (Ezech. XVIII, 4, 20); sed universo Israeli ea facere dicuntur, quia dum in erroris sui nocte praelati intereunt, caliginis suae minores caecitate involvuntur. Cum mulieribus ergo filii Heli dormiunt, quia reprobi Judaei haeresum suarum admistione usque in mundi finem...

(Vers. 23.) Et ait ad eos: Quare facitis res hujusmodi, quas ego audio res pessimas ab omni populo?

He could indeed be a very old man and live, when the hearts of the Jews were nodding that they should neither believe the Lord Jesus to be the true Redeemer, nor openly condemn him as if a blasphemer. For the evangelist John shows the debility of this old age, saying: Some said: He is a good man. And others said: No, but he seduceth the people (John VII, 12). Hence the Jews themselves bringing forth the astuteness of their callidity, say: How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly (Ibid. X, 24). Hence also they say: Master, we would see a sign from thee (Matt. XII, 38).

16. But Heli, being very old, heard all that his sons did to all Israel. He certainly heard these things because he knew them. For what we have known, we hold enclosed within the halls of memory. Indeed, the consulted sacred oracles bring forth from within themselves all the perfidy of the Jews written without, and show it as if preserved by memory for a long time. Amos, as if ascribing the knowledge of this hearing to Heli, says: The Lord will not do a word upon the earth, which he shall not have revealed to his servants the prophets (Amos III, 7). Hence Habakkuk confesses to the only-begotten God, saying: Lord, I have heard thy hearing, and I was afraid; I have considered thy works, and I was terrified; in the midst of two animals thou shalt be made known (Hab. III, 1, from the LXX interpretation). For the ancient teachers of the Synagogue to hear the crimes of the sons is to foreknow them. But what he foreknew, he explains, for he says: All that his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women, who waited at the door of the tabernacle. For to sleep with Jewish women is to be polluted by various heresies. Moreover, those women are rightly recorded to wait at the door of the tabernacle. For what is the door of the tabernacle, if not the letter of the spiritual law? But while the Jews understand the sacred Scripture according to the letter alone, they established heresies there, whence they could have entered into the secret of the true faith. For just as through the door to the interior of the tabernacle, so through the letter of the sacred Scripture one enters into the spiritual cognition of the Redeemer. Because therefore Judea is deceived through the observance of the letter, the women are recorded to wait at the door, not within the tabernacle. And because in all the Scriptures the Jews contradict our Redeemer, not one woman is said to have been there, but many. These things indeed the sons of Heli do for themselves, because according to the voice of the prophet: The soul that shall sin, the same shall die (Ezek. XVIII, 4, 20); but they are said to do those things to all Israel, because while the prelates perish in the night of their error, their subjects are involved in the blindness of their darkness. Therefore the sons of Heli sleep with women, because the reprobate Jews, by the admixture of their heresies even unto the end of the world...

(Vers. 23.) And he said to them: Why do you do such things, which I hear to be very evil things from all the people?

17. Ecce senex erat Heli, et acuta loquebatur, quia virtus sacri eloquii, etsi in reproborum corde deficit, tamen coram recte intelligentibus, Judaeorum culpas subtiliter exquirit. Districte enim discutiens, dicit: Quare facitis res hujuscemodi, quas ego audio res pessimas ab omni populo? Sed qui exquirens interrogat Quare facitis? profecto ostendit eos impingere noctem haeresis sine discretione rationis. Ipsos autem fecisse res pessimas, quas audiebat, dicit, et ipsas res pessimas ab omni populo esse asserit. Quid est hoc, nisi quia universitas Judaici populi in haeresum profunda corruerat? Sed ipsius ruinae causa reprobi sacerdotes erant. Unde et Oseas prophetans, ait: Causa ruinae populi sacerdotes mali (Osee V, 1). Nam ideo subjectus populus cecidit, quia ruentes praelatos studuit imitari. Cum ergo dicit: quas ego audio res pessimas ab omni populo, ipsae res a populo agi debent intelligi, non referri. Quod tale est, ac si dicat: Res pessimas, quas fieri ab omni populo audio, quare facitis? Unde et statim quid dixerit apertius insinuans, ait:

(Vers. 24.) Nolite, filii; non est bona fama, quam ego audio de vobis, ut transgredi faciatis populum Domini.

18. In quo autem populus Domini mandata transgrederetur, si ipsi dormirent cum mulieribus? Sed quia hoc in figura contingebat illis, hoc profecto, quod dominicae Incarnationis tempore debebat fieri praesignabat. Nam quando sacerdotes cum mulieribus dormiunt subditi mandata Domini transgrediuntur, quia dum praelati haeresum admistione maculantur, reproba subjectae Synagogae multitudo in eisdem fetoribus mergitur. Ait ergo: Quare facitis res hujusmodi, quas ego audio, res pessimas ab omni populo? Quod tale est ac si dicat: Tanto gravius delinquitis, quanto foedius universum populum vestro crimine maculatis. Simile etiam aliquid per prophetam dicitur: A Dan, inquit, auditus est fremitus curruum et equorum ejus (Jerem. VIII, 16). In quo nimirum loco non est intelligendum quod a Dan auditum sonitum referat, sed quod ipse curribus, et equis saeviens, eumdem sonitum qui audiatur agat. Quo in loco hoc etiam notandum est, quia qui res pessimas ab omni populo se audisse retulit, mansuetae affectionis verba subjunxit, dicens: Nolite, filii; non est bona fama quam audio de vobis, ut transgredi faciatis populum Domini. Et acute quidem reprehendit Heli, et mansuete admonuit, quia Scriptura patrum veterum et errorem Judaici populi denuntians, increpat, et ab ejusdem erroris sui nocte, benigno affectu, ad verae fidei diem vocat.

17. Behold, Heli was an old man, and he spoke sharp things, because the virtue of the sacred oracle, although it fails in the heart of the reprobate, nevertheless before those who understand rightly, it subtly seeks out the faults of the Jews. For discussing strictly, he says: Why do you do such things, which I hear to be very evil things from all the people? But he who inquiring asks Why do you do? surely shows them to strike against the night of heresy without the discretion of reason. Moreover, he says that they themselves have done the very evil things which he heard, and he asserts those very evil things to be from all the people. What is this, if not because the universality of the Jewish people had fallen into the depths of heresies? But the cause of their ruin was the reprobate priests. Whence also Hosea prophesying says: The cause of the ruin of the people are the evil priests (Hosea V, 1). For the subject people fell for this reason, because they strove to imitate the falling prelates. When therefore he says: which I hear to be very evil things from all the people, those very things ought to be understood to be done by the people, not reported. Which is such as if he should say: The very evil things, which I hear to be done by all the people, why do you do them? Whence also immediately insinuating more openly what he said, he says:

(Vers. 24.) Do not, my sons; it is no good report, which I hear of you, that you make the people of the Lord to transgress.

18. In what, then, would the people of the Lord transgress the mandates, if they themselves slept with the women? But because this happened to them in figure, it surely prefigured that which was to be done at the time of the Lord's Incarnation. For when the priests sleep with the women, the subjects transgress the mandates of the Lord, because while the prelates are stained by the admixture of heresies, the reprobate multitude of the subject Synagogue is merged in those same stenches. Therefore he says: Why do you do such things, which I hear, very evil things from all the people? Which is such as if he should say: You delinquent so much more gravely, by how much more foully you stain the whole people with your crime. Something similar is also said through the prophet: From Dan, he says, is heard the snorting of his horses and chariots (Jerem. VIII, 16). In which place, surely, it is not to be understood that he reports the sound heard from Dan, but that he himself, raging with chariots and horses, does that same sound which is heard. In which place this also is to be noted, that he who reported that he had heard very evil things from all the people, subjoined words of mild affection, saying: Do not, my sons; it is no good report which I hear of you, that you make the people of the Lord to transgress. And indeed Heli reprehended sharply, and admonished mildly, because the Scripture of the ancient fathers, both denouncing the error of the Jewish people, rebukes it, and from the night of its same error, with benign affection, calls it to the day of the true faith.

Filios quidem eos appellat, ut se debere esse haeredes paternae promissionis agnoscant; et tanto devotius mundi Salvatorem recipiant, quanto promissionem ejus fuisse factam patribus non ignorant. Sed et de peccati audacia eos revocare gestiens, rationem subjungit, dicens:

(Vers. 25.). Si peccaverit vir in virum, pacari ei potest Deus; si autem in Deum peccaverit, quis orabit pro eo.

19. Vir in virum peccare est homo in hominem perversa agere. Quid est ergo quod dicit: Pacari ei potest Deus, nisi quia talia peccata levia erant in illorum comparatione quae Judaei committere in Dei Filium cogitabant? In Deum quippe peccabant, quia eum quem moliebantur occidere Deum se esse apertissima miraculorum luce monstraverat. Hoc quippe per semetipsum Dominus ostendit, dicens: Si opera non fecissem in eis, quae nemo alius fecit, peccatum non haberent (Joan. XV, 24). Et ut ostenderet implacabilitatem Dei Patris, subjungit dicens: Nunc autem excusationem non habent de peccato suo, quia viderunt et oderunt me, et Patrem meum (Ibid.). Tale est ergo, ac si dicat: Cujus prece illud peccatum indulgetur, quod in ipsum indultorem committitur: quis pro eo omnipotentem Patrem obsecrat, qui coaeternum Unigenitum in mortem damnat? Nihil enim apertius diceret, si fateretur, dicens: Hic, quem velut purum hominem persequimini, etiam Deus est. Rationis ergo lex exigit ut qui conditorem persequitur venia defraudetur. Sed ducit divina pietas districtionem rationis; legis enim aequitatem ostendit, sed prolatae assertionis vigorem in promulgati juris exsecutione non tenuit. Aequitatis enim rigore decretum est ut ad indulgentiae obtentum nulla prece pertingeret; sed quibus oratio hominis nulla suffecit, pietas Redemptoris non defuit. Omnis homo qui pro transgressionibus oret tollitur; sed quibus homo sufficiens erat nullus, ipse Deus homo factus est intercessor pius. Nam in cruce suspensus oravit, dicens: Pater, dimitte illis, quia nesciunt quid faciunt (Luc. XXII, 34). Pacatus est ergo Deus iis qui in Deum peccaverunt, non aliena prece, sed sua. Sed pacatus est Deus non omnibus, sed quibusdam. Quidan namque persecutores Domini praedicantibus apostolis conversi sunt, caeteri vero periere. De istis enim Lucas meminit, dicens: Factus est numerus eorum quinque millia (Act. IV, 4). De reprobis vero subjungitur:

(Vers. 25.) Et non audierunt vocem patris sui, quia voluit Dominus occidere eos.

Indeed he calls them sons, that they may acknowledge that they ought to be the heirs of the paternal promise; and may receive the Savior of the world so much more devotedly, by how much they are not ignorant that his promise was made to the fathers. But also desiring to recall them from the audacity of sin, he subjoins the reason, saying:

(Vers. 25.) If a man shall sin against a man, God can be pacified towards him; but if he shall sin against God, who shall pray for him?

19. For a man to sin against a man is to do perverse things, man against man. What is it, therefore, that he says: God can be pacified towards him, if not because such sins were light in comparison with those which the Jews thought to commit against the Son of God? Indeed they sinned against God, because he whom they strove to kill had shown himself to be God by the most manifest light of miracles. For the Lord showed this through himself, saying: If I had not done among them the works which no other man hath done, they would not have sin (John XV, 24). And that he might show the implacability of God the Father, he subjoins saying: But now they have no excuse for their sin, because they have both seen and hated me, and my Father (Ibid.). It is such, therefore, as if he should say: By whose prayer is that sin indulged, which is committed against the indulger himself? Who shall beseech the almighty Father for him, who condemns the co-eternal Only-begotten to death? For he would say nothing more clearly, if he confessed, saying: This one, whom you persecute as if a pure man, is also God. Therefore the law of reason requires that he who persecutes the creator be defrauded of pardon. But divine piety leads the strictness of reason; for it shows the equity of the law, but it did not hold the vigor of the produced assertion in the execution of the promulgated right. For by the rigor of equity it was decreed that he should reach to the obtaining of indulgence by no prayer; but for whom no prayer of man was sufficient, the piety of the Redeemer was not lacking. Every man who might pray for transgressions is taken away; but for whom no man was sufficient, God himself was made a man, a pious intercessor. For hanging on the cross he prayed, saying: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do (Luke XXIII, 34). God was therefore pacified towards those who sinned against God, not by another's prayer, but by his own. But God was pacified not towards all, but towards some. For some persecutors of the Lord were converted by the preaching apostles, but the others perished. For of these Luke mentions, saying: The number of them was made five thousand (Acts IV, 4). But of the reprobates it is subjoined:

(Vers. 25.) And they heard not the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.

20. Per prophetam Dominus denuntians, ait: Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut convertatur et vivat (Ezech. XVIII, 23; et XXXIII, 11). Quomodo ergo ei competit velle occidere peccatorem, et mortem peccatoris nolle? Sed in praefato testimonio sequitur unde veritas agnoscatur; ait enim: Sed ut convertatur et vivat. Qui enim peccatorem vult vivere ut convertatur, si hunc inconvertibilem divina praescientia noscit, occidit. Vult ergo Dominus occidere, sed eos quos praenoscit converti nolle. Misericors et justus asseritur dum a Propheta flagitatur: Domine, inquit, libera animam meam, misericors et justus Deus noster (Psal. CXIV, 5). Per misericordiam vero conversionem peccatorum exspectat; per justitiam non conversos damnat. Per misericordiam converti vult peccatores et vivere, sed per justitiam eos qui converti noluerunt vult punire; misericorditer non salvat nisi volens, per justitiam nolens damnat. Dum ergo occidere velle dicitur, peccatorum impietas maxima et inemendabilis ostenditur, quae voluntarie divinae justitiae exsecutione puniatur. Sic utique et piissimos saecularium negotiorum judices agere videmus, qui vellent ut nemo delinqueret, ut ipsi punire neminem deberent; sed dum ab iniquis audacter scelera committuntur, voluntarie eos puniunt, quos libentius non commisisse punienda voluerunt. Quo contra illud hoc in loco cernitur, quia non dicit: Quia corrigentis patris vocem audire noluerunt, sed: Non audiere, quia voluit eos Dominus occidere. Sed qui divini examinis aequitatem recte considerat, interesse nihil putat an occidatur aliquis, an illo in scelere dimittatur in quo aeterna reprobatione perimatur. Tale est ac si dicat: Tanta fuit magnitudo culpae, ut et conversionis monumenta susciperent, et a mortis suae fovea surgere nequaquam possent; et qui irae Dei pelagus biberant, in damnationis suae cumulum haberent non solum poenam commissi sceleris, sed etiam additam vindictam contemptae praedicationis. Sed cur hoc de praeterito miramur, quod nunc usque fie...

(Vers. 26.) Puer autem Samuel proficiebat atque crescebat, et placebat tam Deo quam hominibus.

20. Through the prophet the Lord denounces, saying: I will not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live (Ezek. XVIII, 23; and XXXIII, 11). How then does it suit him to will to slay the sinner, and not to will the death of the sinner? But in the aforementioned testimony follows that from which truth may be recognized; for he says: But that he be converted and live. For he who wills the sinner to live so that he may be converted, if the divine foreknowledge knows him to be inconvertible, he slays him. Therefore the Lord wills to slay, but those whom he foreknows will not to be converted. For he is asserted to be merciful and just when it is demanded by the Prophet: Lord, he says, deliver my soul, our God is merciful and just (Ps. CXIV, 5). Through mercy, indeed, he expects the conversion of sinners; through justice he damns those not converted. Through mercy he wills sinners to be converted and live, but through justice he wills to punish those who have willed not to be converted; mercifully he does not save unless he who is willing, through justice he damns the unwilling. When therefore he is said to will to slay, the greatest and irremediable impiety of sinners is shown, which is voluntarily punished by the execution of divine justice. So surely we see the most pious judges of secular affairs act, who would wish that no one should delinquent, so that they themselves should have to punish no one; but while crimes are audaciously committed by the iniquitous, they voluntarily punish those whom they would more gladly have willed not to have committed things to be punished. On the contrary, that which is seen in this place is that he does not say: Because they willed not to hear the voice of the correcting father, but: They heard not, because the Lord willed to slay them. But he who rightly considers the equity of the divine examination, thinks it matters nothing whether someone is slain, or is left in that crime in which he is destroyed by eternal reprobation. It is such as if he should say: So great was the magnitude of the fault, that they should both receive the monuments of conversion, and could in no way rise from the pit of their death; and those who had drunk the sea of the wrath of God, should have in the heap of their damnation not only the punishment of the committed crime, but also the added vengeance of the despised preaching. But why do we wonder about this in the past, which even now happens...

(Vers. 26.) But the child Samuel advanced and grew, and pleased both God and men.

21. Proficiebat quidem lucro praedicationis, crescebat numero ministrorum. Nam de profectu ejus Apostolus gloriatur, dicens: A Jerusalem usque Illyricum replevi Evangelium Christi (Rom. XV, 19). Crescendi quoque modum Lucas meminit, dicens: Crescente numero discipulorum, factum est murmur Graecorum adversus Hebraeos, eo quod despicerentur in ministerio viduae eorum (Act. VI. 1). Et paulo post: Elegerunt, inquit, Stephanum plenum fide et Spiritu sancto, et Procorum, et reliquos (Ibid., 5). Hos statuere ante conspectum apostolorum, et orantes imposuerunt eis manus. Item de profectu isto novorum praedicatorum scriptum est: In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum (Psal. XVIII, 5).

22. Sed subtiliter est intuendum quod dicitur: Placebat tam Deo quam hominibus. Hominibus placet doctor cum se subditis venerabilem et bonis moribus ornatum praebet: Deo autem placet cum de bona conversatione inaniter gloriari refugit, et solius Dei laudem promereri concupiscit. Dicit ergo: Placebat tam Deo quam hominibus, quia nonnulli praedicatores praetextum sanctitatis praeferunt, quam non habent. Hi ergo, quia etsi hominibus placent, Deo displicent, in typo novi et electi praedicatoris de Samuele nunc dicitur: Placebat tam Deo quam hominibus. Venerabiles quidem se exhibent subditis, et Deo offerunt puritatem intentionis. Hominibus quidem placere studuerat, qui dicebat: Christi bonus odor sumus in omni loco (II Cor. II, 15), Et item: Omnia omnibus factus sum, ut omnes facerem salvos (I Cor. IX, 22). Hominibus etiam placere auditores suos docebat, dicens: Sine offensione estote Judaeis et gentibus, sicut et ego omnibus per omnia placeo, non quaerens quod mihi utile est, sed quod multis (I Cor. X, 32, 33). Sed qui se hominibus placuisse insinuaverat, puritatem cordis commendat, dicens: Gloria nostra haec est, testimonium conscientiae nostrae (II Cor. I, 12). PLACEBAT tam Deo quam hominibus. Qui novus ordo praedicatorum venerabilem se suis auditoribus ad imitationem foris praebuit, et intus acceptum Deo per innocentiam voluntatis. Sequitur:

(Vers. 27.) Venit vir Dei ad Heli.

23. Quid per hunc virum Dei, nisi sanctorum apostolorum ille coetus venerandus exprimitur? Qui certe vir Dei dicitur, pro excellentia sanctitatis, quia culmen ordinis, quod in universi orbis praelatione conscenderat, aequali sublimitate virtutis disponebat. Qui profecto ad Heli tunc venit, quando ad annuntiandam repulsionem Synagogae ejus pontificibus accessit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 27, 28.) Et ait ad eum: Nunquid non aperte revelatus sum domui patris tui, cum esset in Aegypto in domo Pharaonis, et elegi eum ex omnibus tribubus Israel mihi sacerdotem, ut ascenderet ad altare meum, et adoleret mihi incensum, et portaret ephod coram me, et dedi domui patris tui cuncta de sacrificiis filiorum Israel?

21. He advanced, indeed, by the gain of preaching, he grew by the number of ministers. For the Apostle glories of his advancement, saying: From Jerusalem even unto Illyricum I have replenished the Gospel of Christ (Rom. XV, 19). Luke also mentions the manner of growing, saying: The number of the disciples increasing, there was made a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews, for that their widows were neglected in the ministry (Acts VI, 1). And a little after: They chose, he says, Stephen, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and Prochorus, and the rest (Ibid., 5). These they set before the sight of the apostles, and praying they imposed hands upon them. Likewise about this advancement of the new preachers it is written: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Ps. XVIII, 5).

22. But it is to be subtly intuited that which is said: He pleased both God and men. A teacher pleases men when he shows himself venerable to his subjects and adorned with good morals: but he pleases God when he refuses to glory vainly in his good conversation, and desires to merit the praise of God alone. Therefore he says: He pleased both God and men, because some preachers present a pretext of sanctity, which they do not have. These, therefore, because although they please men, they displease God, in the type of the new and elect preacher it is now said of Samuel: He pleased both God and men. They indeed show themselves venerable to their subjects, and offer to God the purity of intention. He had indeed studied to please men, who said: We are the good odor of Christ in every place (II Cor. II, 15), And likewise: I became all things to all men, that I might make all saved (I Cor. IX, 22). He also taught his hearers to please men, saying: Be without offense to the Jews and to the gentiles, even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking what is useful to me, but what is to many (I Cor. X, 32, 33). But he who had insinuated that he had pleased men, commends the purity of heart, saying: Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience (II Cor. I, 12). HE PLEASED both God and men. Which new order of preachers showed itself venerable to its hearers for imitation without, and within acceptable to God through the innocence of the will. It follows:

(Vers. 27.) There came a man of God to Heli.

23. What is expressed by this man of God, if not that venerable assembly of the holy apostles? Who certainly is called a man of God, for the excellence of sanctity, because he disposed the summit of the order, which he had ascended in the prelature of the whole world, with an equal sublimity of virtue. Who surely came to Heli then, when he approached its pontiffs to announce the repulsion of the Synagogue. It follows:

(Vers. 27, 28.) And he said to him: Did I not openly reveal myself to the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in the house of Pharaoh, and I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, and burn incense to me, and to wear the ephod before me, and I gave to the house of thy father all of the sacrifices of the children of Israel?

24. Quia divino judicio Judaea repellitur, ipsius judicii districtio quam mira aequitatis dispositione illata sit demonstratur. Prius enim collata Heli dona numerantur, ut dum tam benignus dator omnipotens Deus ostenditur, contemptorem suum quam juste feriat cognoscatur. Revelatum se domni patris ejus asseruit, ut ignoratiae excusationem habere non possit. Eamdem vero suae revelationis cognitionem se ei in Aegypto exhibuisse edocet, ut se ei suis meritis Heli obtinuisse nequaquam putet. Quasi aperte dicat: Illic me ei cognoscendum praebui, ubi mei oblivisci poterat, reminisci nesciebat. Et ne ipsa cognitionis divinae dona reprobo parva fortasse viderentur, de caeteris tribubus Israel ad culmen sacerdotii assumptus asseritur. Quasi dicat: Eis eum praetuli, quibus non superior, sed aequalis fuit.

25. Notandum vero est quod in officio ipsius sacerdotii tria denotantur. Ut ascinderet, inquit, ad altare meum, et adoleret mihi incensum, et portaret ephod coram me. Quid vero in hoc altari, nisi ille lapis ostenditur, quem patriarcha Jacob in titulum erexit (Gen. XXVIII, 18)? Et quis lapis iste alius nisi ille exprimitur quem Paulus in laude fidelium praedicat, dicens: Aedificati super fundamentum apostolorum et prophetarum, ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Jesu (Ephes. II, 20)? Pater ergo Heli ideo in sacerdotium electus a Domino est, ut ad altare ascenderet, quia ordo doctorum veterum ad hoc subjecto sibi populo praefuit, ut humani generis reparationem in Redemptoris adventu futuram praedicaret. Et incensum adolevit, quia ei quem futurum Redemptorem praedicat, per desiderium auditorum corda conjunxit. Ephod quoque portavit, quia desiderio tantae exspectationis dignae conversationis ornatum praebuit. Adoleret utique incensum, et ephod non portaret, si auditorum corda in desiderium venturi Redemptoris accenderet, a quo ipse foedae conversationis inaequalitate differret. Et quia omnipotens Deus veritatem religionis, et non praetextum quaerebat coram se, et non coram populo, ephod se ei portare praecepisse perhibuit. Coram Domino quidem ephod portare est de vitae innocentia solius divinae bonitatis retributionem quaerere. Aperte autem ista contra Heli per improperium dicuntur.

24. Because Judea is repelled by divine judgment, the strictness of that judgment is demonstrated by how wonderful a disposition of equity it was brought on. For first the gifts conferred on Heli are numbered, so that while almighty God is shown to be so benign a giver, it may be known how justly he strikes his contemner. He asserted that he had revealed himself to the house of his father, so that he might not have the excuse of ignorance. Moreover, he teaches that he had exhibited the cognition of the same revelation to him in Egypt, so that Heli might by no means think that he had obtained it by his own merits. As if he should say openly: I offered myself to be known by him there, where he could forget me, and did not know how to remember me. And lest those gifts of divine cognition should perhaps seem small to the reprobate, he is asserted to have been assumed from the other tribes of Israel to the summit of the priesthood. As if he should say: I preferred him to those to whom he was not superior, but equal.

25. It is to be noted, moreover, that in the office of that priesthood three things are denoted. To go up, he says, to my altar, and burn incense to me, and to wear the ephod before me. What is shown in this altar, indeed, if not that stone which the patriarch Jacob erected as a monument (Gen. XXVIII, 18)? And what else is this stone expressed as if not that which Paul praises in the praise of the faithful, saying: Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone (Ephes. II, 20)? The father of Heli, therefore, was chosen by the Lord for the priesthood, to go up to the altar, because the order of the ancient teachers presided over the people subject to it for this, that it might preach the reparation of the human race to come in the advent of the Redeemer. And he burned incense, because he joined the hearts of his hearers through desire to him whom he preaches as the future Redeemer. He also wore the ephod, because he presented the ornament of worthy conversation to the desire of so great an expectation. He would certainly burn incense, and not wear the ephod, if he should inflame the hearts of his hearers into the desire of the coming Redeemer, from whom he himself differed by the inequality of foul conversation. And because almighty God sought the truth of religion, and not a pretext, before himself, and not before the people, he recorded that he had commanded him to wear the ephod. To wear the ephod before the Lord, indeed, is to seek the retribution of divine goodness alone from the innocence of life. But these things are said openly against Heli through reproach.

Ad altare quippe non ascendit qui sacerdotium illud, quod manifestatae veritatis tempore Synagogae praefuit, eum qui tanta signorum magnitudine Redemptor humani generis claruit, subjectis plebibus nequaquam praedicavit. Et incensum Deo non adolevit, quia in persecutionem ejus populum, et non in amorem concitavit. Ephod etiam coram Domino portare contempsit, quia nulla religionis veritate resplenduit. Nam etsi nonnulla honestatis insignia praeferebat ornatus ille vitae, ex praetextu fallaciae erat, non ex intentione charitatis. Unde et hoc ipsum in eis Dominus reprehendit, dicens: Vae vo...

(Vers. 29.) Quare calce abjicitis victimam meam, et munera mea, quae praecepi ut offerrentur in templo?

26. Quare enim non dicit judex, nisi qui instanter discutit. Et qui calce repulisse victimam Dei et munera reprehenditur, ei injuriam sine consilio rationis fecisse judicatur. Notandum vero est quia plurali numero dicit: Quare calce abjecistis victimam meam, ut non tantum ad Heli, sed ad filios quod dicitur pertinere videatur. Fera quippe animalia solent sibi adhaerentia calce repellere. Quae enim fidelibus victimae aliae fuerunt, quam Redemptoris sui laudibus insistere, Christum Jesum pro salute mundi in mortem occubuisse praedicare, et resurgendo humani generis vitam reparasse? Et quae alia eorum munera erant, nisi pro tantis sibi collatis beneficiis gratiarum actiones omnipotenti Deo incessanter offerre? Quae profecto Heli filii calce repulerunt, quia in repulsione novae praedicationis, non consilium rationis per sacra eloquia secuti sunt, sed impetum feritatis. Ab irrationabili namque saevitia ad rationalis consilii intentionem eos Veritas revocare cupiebat, dicens: Scrutamini Scripturas, quia vos in ipsis putatis vitam aeternam habere; et illae testimonium perhibent de me (Joan. V, 39). Unde et hic quoque dicitur: Quae praecepi ut offerentur in templo. In lege namque, psalmis, et prophetis scriptum de passione, resurrectione Domini, et universalis Ecclesiae statu fuerat. Calce ergo Synagogae praepositi victimam et munera Domini in templo Domini offerri jussa repulerunt, quia profecto praedicationem sanctae Ecclesiae, non Scripturae sanctae auctoritate discutere, sed solo feritatis suae impetu reprobare atque abjicere conati sunt. Nam si praecepta Dei in sacro eloquio illuminata mente consulerent, sanctos praedicatores, quos ferociter abjecere, quasi ad se missos divinitus recepissent. Sed qui Heli filios, id est veteres doctores minoris ordinis, de irrationabili feritate reprehendit, ipsum etiam patrem de negligentia arguit, dicens:

(Vers. 29.) Honorasti filios tuos magis quam me.

For he did not go up to the altar who, in that priesthood which presided over the Synagogue at the time of the manifested truth, by no means preached to the subject peoples him who shone as the Redeemer of the human race by so great a magnitude of signs. And he did not burn incense to God, because he concited the people into his persecution, and not into his love. He also contemned wearing the ephod before the Lord, because he shone with no truth of religion. For even if that ornament of life presented some insignia of honesty, it was from a pretext of fallacy, not from an intention of charity. Whence also the Lord reprehended this very thing in them, saying: Woe to you...

(Vers. 29.) Why do you kick at my sacrifice and at my gifts, which I have commanded to be offered in the temple?

26. For why does the judge say Why, if not he who discusses instantly? And he who is reprehended for having rejected with the heel the victim and gifts of God, is judged to have done injury to him without counsel of reason. It is to be noted, indeed, that he says in the plural number: Why have you rejected with the heel my victim, so that what is said may seem to pertain not only to Heli, but to his sons. For wild animals are accustomed to repel with the heel things adhering to them. For what other victims were there for the faithful, than to insist on the praises of their Redeemer, to preach that Jesus Christ died unto death for the salvation of the world, and by rising repaired the life of the human race? And what were their other gifts, if not to offer incessantly thanksgivings to almighty God for so great benefits conferred upon them? Which surely the sons of Heli rejected with the heel, because in the rejection of the new preaching, they followed not the counsel of reason through the sacred oracles, but the impetus of ferocity. For from irrational savagery Truth desired to recall them to the intention of rational counsel, saying: Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and the same are they that give testimony of me (John V, 39). Whence also it is said here also: Which I commanded to be offered in the temple. For in the law, psalms, and prophets it had been written concerning the passion, resurrection of the Lord, and the state of the universal Church. Therefore the prelates of the Synagogue rejected with the heel the victim and gifts of the Lord commanded to be offered in the temple of the Lord, because surely they attempted to reprobate and cast away the preaching of the holy Church, not discussing by the authority of the holy Scripture, but by the sole impetus of their ferocity. For if they consulted the precepts of God in the sacred oracle with an illuminated mind, they would have received the holy preachers, whom they ferociously rejected, as if sent to them divinely. But he who reprehended the sons of Heli, that is the ancient teachers of the lesser order, for irrational ferocity, also rebukes the father himself for negligence, saying:

(Vers. 29.) Thou hast honored thy sons more than me.

27. Quasi aperte reprehendens dicat: Illi repulerunt, et tu repulsores honorasti. Magis quam Deum filios honoravit, quia dum aperta eorum opera ostensa contemneret, lucra temporalia iisdem providebat. Unde et subdit:

(Vers. 29.) Ut comederetis primitias omnis sacrificii mei.

28. Quibus nimirum verbis arguere majorem ordinem doctorum videtur, qui idcirco in Redemptoris morte consensit, quod oblationum veterum lucra amittere formidavit. Unde et inito consilio cum Pharisaeis, dicebant: Quid facimus, quia hic homo multa signa facit? Si dimittimus eum sic, omnes credent in eum, et venient Romani, et tollent nostrum locum et gentem (Joan. XI, 47, 48). Et iterum: Videte quia nihil proficimus; ecce mundus totus post eum vadit (Ibid. XII, 19). Ideo igitur filios honoravit, ut comederent, quia a praedicationis intentione conticuit, ne dum veritatem novae oblationis assereret, habere ulterius ad voluptatis suae luxuriam vetera non valeret. Quia ergo magnitudinem qualitatemque reatus exposuit, videamus jam quanta aequitate examinis modum insinuet ultionis. Nam subdens ait:

(Vers. 30.) Propterea ait Dominus Deus Israel: Loquens locutus sum, ut domus tua et domus patris tui ministraret in conspectu meo, amodo et usque in sempiternum. Nunc autem absit hoc a me.

29. Quasi aperta congruaque sententia feriens, dicat: Tu filios tuos honorasti, ut omnis sacrificii primitias ederetis; sed ideo vobis primitiarum jura auferuntur, quia indigne honorati sunt. Quid enim est dicere: Absit a me ut domus tua ministret in conspectu meo, nisi: ab illo vos dejicio culmine cui primitiarum jura debebantur? Mira igitur aequitatis exsecutione comprehensus est, qui unde primitiarum esum inhianter appetiit, inde a primitiarum perceptione jejunavit. Nam Redemptorem mori pertulit, ne sacerdotalia lucra perderet, sed ille de triumpho mortis accepit, unde sacrificii veteris emolumenta destruxit. Dicit autem: Loquens locutus sum, ut domus tua, et patris tui ministraret in conspectu meo; nunc autem absit hoc a me. Quasi verbis apertioribus dicat: Ut in tanto culmine dignitatis stares, te frequenter admonui, sed modo talis non es qualem esse desideravi. Quod quia in Judaici populi reprobatione dicitur, de ordine novorum praedicatorum subjunctum est:

(Vers. 30.) Sed qui glorificaverit me, glorificabo eum.

27. As if openly reprehending he should say: They rejected, and thou hast honored the rejectors. He honored his sons more than God, because while he contemned their open works shown, he provided temporal gains for them. Whence also he subjoins:

(Vers. 29.) That you might eat the firstfruits of every sacrifice of my people.

28. By which words, surely, he seems to rebuke the greater order of doctors, who for this reason consented in the death of the Redeemer, because they feared to lose the gains of the ancient oblations. Whence also having entered into counsel with the Pharisees, they said: What do we, for this man doth many signs? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation (John XI, 47, 48). And again: See that we prevail nothing; behold, the whole world is gone after him (Ibid. XII, 19). Therefore, he honored his sons that they might eat, because he was silent from the intention of preaching, lest while he asserted the truth of the new oblation, he should no longer be able to have the old ones for the luxury of his pleasure. Because therefore he exposed the magnitude and quality of the guilt, let us see now by how great an equity of examination he may insinuate the manner of vengeance. For subjoining he says:

(Vers. 30.) Wherefore the Lord the God of Israel saith: Speaking I have spoken, that thy house and the house of thy father should minister in my sight, from henceforth and forever. But now far be this from me.

29. As if striking with an open and congruent sentence, he should say: Thou hast honored thy sons, that you might eat the firstfruits of every sacrifice; but therefore the rights of the firstfruits are taken away from you, because they were unworthily honored. For what is it to say: Far be it from me that thy house should minister in my sight, if not: I cast you down from that summit to which the rights of the firstfruits were due? Therefore he was comprehended by a wonderful execution of equity, who where he gapingly sought the eating of the firstfruits, from there he fasted from the perception of the firstfruits. For he bore that the Redeemer should die, lest he should lose the sacerdotal gains, but he received from the triumph of death, whence he destroyed the emoluments of the old sacrifice. Moreover he says: Speaking I have spoken, that thy house and the house of thy father should minister in my sight; but now far be this from me. As if in more open words he should say: That thou shouldst stand in so great a summit of dignity, I frequently admonished thee, but now thou art not such as I desired thee to be. Which because it is said in the reprobation of the Jewish people, it is subjoined concerning the order of the new preachers:

(Vers. 30.) But whosoever shall glorify me, him will I glorify.

30. Jam quippe glorificantis gloriam cernimus, quia praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae magno splendore vitae omnipotentis Dei laudes concinunt, atque in universali orbis praelatione gratulantur. Ecce jam sacerdotum vestigiis gentilitas universa substernitur, et eos quibus se gaudet obediendo subjicere patronos gloriatur in coelestibus possidere. Glorificantem se ergo Dominus glorificat, quia a quibus devotas quotidie laudes accipit, ad universi orbis honorem sustollit. An non glorificati gloria est, in terra manere, et coelum claudere? Vitam communiter homines vivere, atque supernas coelorum sedes subditis auctoritate potestatis exhibere? Glorificabat quippe Dominum, qui dicebat: Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi (Matth. XVI, 16). Sed glorificantem se Dominus glorificavit, quia ei respondit, dicens: Tibi dabo claves regni coelorum, et quodcunque ligaveris super terram erit ligatum et in coelis, et quodcunque solveris super terram erit solutum et in coelis (Ibid., 19). Sed de projectis Judaeorum reprobis subditur:

(Vers. 30.) Qui autem contemnunt me erunt ignobiles.

31. Ipsi quidem contemnunt, qui nequaquam hunc esse mundi Redemptorem credunt: de quibus profecto ipsa Veritas in Evangelio queritur, dicens: Cives autem ejus oderant illum, et miserunt legationem post eum, dicentes: Nolumus hunc regnare super nos (Luc. XIX, 14). Sed eorum jam ignobilitatem cernimus, quia et genere et conditione proscribuntur. Genere quidem ignobiles sunt, quia ab ipsa Veritate audierunt: Vos ex patre diabolo estis (Joan. VIII, 44). Conditione etiam ignobiles sunt, quia amissa libertate, et regno, perpetua gentium servitute deprimuntur. Sed poenarum ordinem clarius ostendit, dicens:

(Vers. 31.) Ecce dies veniunt, et praecidam brachium tuum, et brachium domus patris tui, ut non sit senex in domo tua.

32. Jam quidem sine brachio est, quia qui templum et tabernaculum perdidit, manum ad oblationem sacrificii veteris non extendit. Et quia Heli, id est majoribus Synagogae sacerdotibus, loquebatur, non solum brachium ejus, sed etiam domus ejus se praecidere minatur, ut profecto universalem ritus veteris destructionem insinuet, et hoc quod novo tempore jam factum cernimus antiquitus fuisse dispositum sentiamus. Et brachium itaque ejus, et domus ejus Dominus praecidit, quia et summos Judaeae pontifices, et minores sacerdotes ab immolatione veteri penitus amovit.

30. Indeed we now discern the glory of the glorifying one, because the preachers of the holy Church sing the praises of almighty God with great splendor of life, and congratulate in the universal prelature of the world. Behold now the whole of gentility is prostrated at the footsteps of the priests, and glories to possess in the heavens as patrons those to whom it rejoices to subject itself by obeying. Therefore the Lord glorifies the one glorifying him, because those from whom he receives devoted praises daily, he raises to the honor of the whole world. Or is not the glory of the glorified, to remain on earth, and to close heaven? For men to live life commonly, and to exhibit the supernal seats of the heavens to their subjects by the authority of power? For he glorified the Lord, who said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. XVI, 16). But the Lord glorified the one glorifying him, because he answered him, saying: I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven (Ibid., 19). But concerning the cast out reprobates of the Jews it is subjoined:

(Vers. 30.) But they that contemn me shall be ignoble.

They themselves indeed contemn, who by no means believe this one to be the Redeemer of the world: concerning whom surely Truth itself in the Gospel complains, saying: But his citizens hated him, and sent an embassage after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us (Luke XIX, 14). But we now discern their ignobility, because they are proscribed both by race and by condition. Indeed they are ignoble by race, because they heard from Truth itself: You are of your father the devil (John VIII, 44). They are also ignoble by condition, because liberty and kingdom having been lost, they are depressed by the perpetual servitude of the nations. But he shows the order of punishments more clearly, saying:

(Vers. 31.) Behold the days come, and I will cut off thy arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thy house.

32. Now indeed he is without an arm, because he who has lost the temple and the tabernacle does not extend his hand to the offering of the old sacrifice. And because he was speaking to Heli, that is, to the greater priests of the Synagogue, he threatens to cut off not only his arm, but also his house, so that he may indeed insinuate the universal destruction of the old rite, and that we may perceive that this which we now see done in the new time was disposed from of old. And therefore the Lord cut off both his arm and his house, because he removed both the high priests of Judea and the lesser priests entirely from the old immolation.

Unde et convenienter adjungitur: Ut non sit senex in domo tua. Senes quippe intelligendi sunt sacerdotes, quorum officium, quia gravitate magnae honestatis impenditur, a religionis pondere nulla puerili levitate vacuatur. Brachium igitur ejus, et domus patris ejus ita praecisum est, ut in domo sua senex non sit, quia sic veteris sacerdotii ritus evanuit, ut omnino nemo remanserit, qui veteri more immolare jam possit. Nam postquam Redemptor humani generis pro peccatis nostris novo sacrificii more se obtulit, esse sacerdos consuetudine antiqua cessavit. Sed qui amissi sacerdotii damna sustinet, habet tormentum majoris poenae de dolore invidiae. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 32.) Et videbis aemulum tuum in templo, in universis prosperis Israel.

33. Intra templum quippe aemulum suum videt, quia ipse jam foras expulsus est. Nam quis aemulus sacerdotii veteris alius est, quam ordo novorum praedicatorum? Qui profecto dum veterum et electorum patrum studia vivendo atque docendo adaequare nititur, bona Heli nimirum in bono aemulatur. Hinc Paulus admonet, dicens: Bonum aemulamini in bono omnes (Gal. IV, 18). Quae autem Israel prospera, nisi felicitates hujus transeuntis temporis intelliguntur, in quibus Israel secundum carnem valde laetabatur? In universis ergo Israel prosperis aemulum suum videt, qui in sancta Ecclesia praedicatores veritatis felices aspicit, et rerum opulentia et celsitudine dignitatis. Hoc etiam quod in templo videndus asseritur perfectiori intelligentia declaratur. In omnibus quippe prosperis in templo est aemulus, quia ordo praedicatorum omne quod sibi famulatur de felicitate temporis, in contemplatione disponit aeternitatis. Sequitur:

(Vers. 33.) Verumtamen non auferam penitus ex te virum ab altari meo.

34. Penitus namque ab altari suo virum auferret, si ad fidei nostrae unitatem nullum admitteret. Penitus ergo non abstulit, quia etsi reprobos Synagogae sacerdotes repulit, plures tamen ex eis ad sui cognitionem misericorditer adduxit. Quorum profecto in apostolorum Actibus Lucas meminit, dicens: Plurima turba sacerdotum obediebat fidei (Act. VI, 7). Digni namque tanto et novo ministerio inventi sunt, qui remanere cum perditis in vetustate noluere. Sed quia non solum electos praedicatores de gentibus, verumetiam illos qui de Judaea credidere ad tormentum invidiae Judaicum sacerdotium habuit, sequitur:

(Vers. 33.) Sed ut deficiant oculi tui, et tabescat anima tua.

Whence also it is fitly added: That there shall not be an old man in thy house. For old men are to be understood as the priests, whose office, because it is expended with the gravity of great honesty, is not emptied of the weight of religion by any childish levity. Therefore his arm and the house of his father were so cut off, that there should not be an old man in his house, because the rite of the old priesthood so vanished, that altogether no one remained who could now immolate according to the old custom. For after the Redeemer of the human race offered himself for our sins according to the new custom of sacrifice, to be a priest according to the ancient custom ceased. But he who sustains the losses of the lost priesthood has the torment of a greater penalty from the grief of envy. Wherefore also it is subjoined:

(Vers. 32.) And thou shalt see thy rival in the temple, in all the prosperity of Israel.

33. Indeed he sees his rival within the temple, because he himself has now been cast out of doors. For who else is the rival of the old priesthood than the order of the new preachers? Who indeed while they strive to equal the studies of the ancient and elect fathers by living and teaching, certainly emulate the good of Heli in good. Hence Paul admonishes, saying: Be zealous for that which is good in all things (Gal. IV, 18). Moreover, what are the prosperities of Israel, if not the felicities of this passing time understood, in which Israel according to the flesh greatly rejoiced? In all the prosperities of Israel, therefore, he sees his rival, who beholds the preachers of truth happy in the holy Church, both in the opulence of things and the loftiness of dignity. This also which is asserted to be seen in the temple is declared with a more perfect understanding. For in all prosperities the rival is in the temple, because the order of preachers disposes all that serves it of the felicity of time, in the contemplation of eternity. It follows:

(Vers. 33.) Nevertheless I will not entirely take away from thee a man from my altar.

34. For he would entirely take away a man from his altar, if he admitted no one to the unity of our faith. Therefore he did not entirely take them away, because although he rejected the reprobate priests of the Synagogue, he nevertheless mercifully led many of them to the knowledge of himself. Of whom indeed Luke makes mention in the Acts of the Apostles, saying: A great multitude of the priests was obedient to the faith (Acts VI, 7). For they were found worthy of so great and new a ministry, who were unwilling to remain in antiquity with the lost. But because the Jewish priesthood had for the torment of envy not only the elect preachers from the Gentiles, but also those who believed from Judea, it follows:

(Vers. 33.) But that thy eyes may fail, and thy soul may languish.

35. Vel idcirco virum penitus ex eo ab altari suo non abstulit, ut Heli oculi deficerent, et anima ejus tabesceret, quia videlicet electos de Judaea noluit ad ministerium novae praedicationis assumere, ut, remotis eis, culpa ad poenam reprobos teneret. Defecerunt namque oculi Heli cum summum sacerdotium veritatem fidei per ora praedicatorum in auditu habuit, et non cognovit. Anima quoque ejus tabescit, quia videlicet per repulsionis suae poenam emarcuit, dum sancti spiritus gratiam amisit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 33.) Et pars magna domus tuae morietur, cum ad virilem aetatem pervenerit.

36. Aetas virilis tempus est dominicae Incarnationis, quod profecto Apostolus insinuat, dicens: Quando venit plenitudo temporis, misit Deus Filium suum factum ex muliere, factum sub lege, ut eos qui sub lege erant redimeret, et adoptionem filiorum perciperemus (Gal. IV, 4, 5). Quid igitur praecepta Judaeae fuerunt, nisi quaedam eruditiones infantiae? Hujus item pueritiae tempus idem Apostolus insinuat, dicens: Cum essemus parvuli, sub elementis mundi hujus eramus servientes (Ibid., 3). In virili ergo aetate mortua est, quia in plenitudine temporis in mundi Redemptorem saeviit, et semetipsam infidelitatis mucrone transfixit. Bene autem non tota domus, sed pars magna domus ejus moritura praedicitur, quia ex eis quidam in Redemptorem crediderunt. Et causam majoris doloris adjiciens, ait:

(Vers. 34.) Hoc autem tibi signum, quod venturum est duobus filiis tuis, Ophni et Phinees. In una die morientur ambo.

37. In duobus filiis Heli geminum sacerdotii veteris ordinem supra ostendimus designari. Qui certe una die mortui sunt, quia simul in Redemptoris morte convenerunt. Bene autem sacerdotum mors in signum moriturae domus posita memoratur, quia cum pastores intereunt, necesse est ut ad eumdem interitum grex sequatur. Et quia ex falsa ratione decepti sunt, in die mori perhibentur. De cujus falsitate lucis beatus Job loquitur, dicens: Sic in tenebris, sicut in luce ambulant (Job. XXIV, 17). Sed qui vetus expulit, novum sacerdotium praeparavit. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 35.) Et suscitabo mihi sacerdotem fidelem.

38. Mortuis namque filiis Heli, fidelem sacerdotem sibi Dominus suscitavit, quia exstinctis in perfidia praelatis veteris populi, electos ad exhibendum redemptionis nostrae ministerium ascivit. Qui nimirum fidelis assumptus dicitur, quia vetus, cui successit, per infidelitatem fuit reprobatus. Et quia ea fides ejus sacerdotis laudibus ascribitur, quae per dilectionem operatur, ipsa dilectionis opera per sequentia verba designantur. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 35.) Qui juxta cor meum et animam meam faciat.

35. Or therefore he did not entirely take away from him a man from his altar, that the eyes of Heli might fail, and his soul might languish, because forsooth he was unwilling to assume the elect from Judea to the ministry of the new preaching, so that, they being removed, guilt might hold the reprobate for punishment. For the eyes of Heli failed when the high priesthood had the truth of faith in hearing through the mouths of the preachers, and did not recognize it. His soul also languishes, because forsooth it withered through the penalty of its rejection, while it lost the grace of the Holy Spirit. It follows:

(Vers. 33.) And a great part of thy house shall die, when they shall have come to man's estate.

36. Man's estate is the time of the Lord's Incarnation, which indeed the Apostle insinuates, saying: When the fullness of the time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Gal. IV, 4, 5). What then were the precepts of Judea, if not certain eruditions of infancy? The same Apostle also insinuates the time of this childhood, saying: When we were children, we were serving under the elements of this world (Ibid., 3). Therefore in man's estate she died, because in the fullness of time she raged against the Redeemer of the world, and pierced herself with the sword of infidelity. Moreover, it is well that not the whole house, but a great part of his house is predicted to die, because some of them believed in the Redeemer. And adding the cause of greater grief, he says:

(Vers. 34.) And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, Ophni and Phinees. In one day they shall die both of them.

37. In the two sons of Heli we showed above that the twofold order of the old priesthood is designated. Who certainly died in one day, because they met together in the death of the Redeemer. Moreover, the death of the priests is well mentioned as set for a sign of the house that is to die, because when the pastors perish, it is necessary that the flock follow to the same destruction. And because they were deceived by a false reason, they are said to die in the day. Of the falsity of which light blessed Job speaks, saying: They walk so in the dark as in the light (Job. XXIV, 17). But he who expelled the old, prepared a new priesthood. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Vers. 35.) And I will raise me up a faithful priest.

38. For the sons of Heli being dead, the Lord raised up for himself a faithful priest, because the prelates of the old people being extinguished in perfidy, he called the elect to exhibit the ministry of our redemption. Who indeed is said to be assumed as faithful, because the old, which he succeeded, was reproved through infidelity. And because that faith of his priest is ascribed to the praises which work through love, the works of love themselves are designated by the following words. For it follows:

(Vers. 35.) That shall do according to my heart and my soul.

39. Hoc namque ineffabilis divina substantia signari per partes hominis voluit, quod in se juxta litteram intelligi non oportet. Dixit itaque: Qui juxta cor meum, et animam meam faciat. Non quod incorporea et incircumscripta Dei substantia cor et animam habeat, sed sic loquitur homini ut homo homini loqui solet, ut per hoc quod ex verbo suo audiens homo cognoscit, aperte sciat quid etiam velit Deus. Quod profecto dici simplicius potuisset: Qui faciat voluntatem meam. Et praemia operis exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 35.) Et aedificabo ei domum fidelem.

40. Quae namque ista domus alia, nisi aeterna patria intelligitur? Quam profecto domum Dominus commendans, ait: In domo patris mei mansiones multae sunt (Joan. XIV, 2). Sed haec domus aedificari nunc dicitur, quia ex piae vitae actionibus praeparatur. Verumtamen ad eam promerendam indignum est opus hominis, si non hoc agat gratia misericordis Dei. Bene itaque, cum domus aedificium ponitur, Dominus ei eam aedificare pollicetur, quia nimirum vires humanae a tanta operatione deficiunt, si non divinitus adjuventur. Hinc Paulus ait: Deus est qui operatur in me velle et perficere (Philip. II, 13). Hinc iterum dicit: Non est volentis, neque currentis, sed miserentis est Dei (Rom. II, 16). Hanc domum se aedificare promittebat, cum diceret: Vado parare vobis locum, et iterum veniam, et accipiam vos ad meipsum, ut ubi ego sum, et vos sitis (Joan. IV, 2, 3). Quia vero vocantem se gratiam ex arbitrii libertate devote secuturus erat, adjungitur:

(Vers. 35.) Et ambulabit coram Christo meo cunctis diebus.

41. Unicuique enim electorum coram Christo ambulare est se semper in conspectu Redemptoris aspicere, et ea quae ei accepta cognoscit operari. Vel certe coram Christo ambulat, qui in omni quod agit semper ad ipsum respicit, et vitae suae rectitudinem in eo dirigit, quem per assumptam humanitatem ad componendum electorum speciem venisse recognoscit. Sed in caecitatis suae tenebris Judaea non semper deserenda est, quia per prophetam dicitur: Si fuerit numerus filiorum Israel, sicut arena maris, tamen reliquiae salvae fient (Isai. X, 22). Hinc Paulus ait: Caecitas ex parte contigit in Israel, donec plenitudo gentium introeat, et sic omnis Israel salvus fiat (Rom. XI, 25, 26). Hanc ergo Judaeae visitationem subsequenter ostendit, quia dicit:

(Vers. 33.) Futurum est autem ut quicunque remanserit in domo tua, veniat, ut oretur pro eo.

CAPUT III.

39. For the ineffable divine substance willed this to be signaled through the parts of man, which in itself ought not to be understood according to the letter. And so he said: That shall do according to my heart and my soul. Not that the incorporeal and uncircumscribed substance of God has a heart and a soul, but he speaks to man as man is wont to speak to man, so that through this which man, hearing from his word, recognizes, he may clearly know what God also wills. Which indeed could have been said more simply: That shall do my will. And he sets forth the rewards of the work, saying:

(Vers. 35.) And I will build him a faithful house.

40. For what other is that house understood to be, if not the eternal fatherland? Which house indeed the Lord commending, says: In my father's house there are many mansions (John XIV, 2). But this house is now said to be built, because it is prepared from the actions of a pious life. Nevertheless, for the meriting of it the work of man is unworthy, if the grace of the merciful God does not do this. Well, therefore, when the building of the house is set down, the Lord promises him that he will build it, because forsooth human strength fails from so great an operation, if it be not divinely helped. Hence Paul says: It is God who worketh in me both to will and to accomplish (Philip. II, 13). Hence again he says: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy (Rom. IX, 16). He was promising that he would build this house, when he said: I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again, and will take you to myself, that where I am, you also may be (John XIV, 2, 3). But because he was devotedly to follow the grace calling him from the freedom of his will, it is added:

(Vers. 35.) And he shall walk before my Christ all days.

41. For to each of the elect to walk before Christ is always to behold himself in the sight of the Redeemer, and to work those things which he knows to be accepted by him. Or certainly he walks before Christ who in everything that he does always looks to him, and directs the rectitude of his life in him, whom he recognizes to have come through the assumed humanity to compose the beauty of the elect. But Judea is not always to be deserted in the darkness of her blindness, because it is said by the prophet: If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant shall be saved (Isai. X, 22). Hence Paul says: Blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles should enter in, and so all Israel should be saved (Rom. XI, 25, 26). This visitation of Judea, therefore, he subsequently shows, because he says:

(Vers. 33.) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall remain in thy house, shall come that he may be prayed for.

BOOK III

1. Haec de sacra historia typica explanatione percurrimus, ut in eisdem sacrae historiae verbis moralis intelligentiae aliquid perquiramus. Itaque puer Samuel in conspectu Domini minister asseritur; quod tamen ministerium non absolute, sed ante faciem Heli Domino exhiberi memoratur. His igitur verbis non ostenditur perfectio ministerii, sed humilitatis. Facies namque Heli uniuscujusque institutoris ratio est arbitrii. Illi namque ante praeceptoris sui faciem Domino ministrat, qui in exhibitione ministerii sui proprii arbitrii rationem non sequitur, qui eo operis itinere graditur quod ei magistri sui cognitione praevidetur. Nam perfecti quique viri, et docibiles Dei (Joan. VI, 45; Isai. LIV, 13), ministri quidem in conspectu Domini sunt, sed ante faciem hominis ministri ejus non sunt. quia ipsa eos intus divinitas erudit qualiter foris etiam vita et moribus ac doctrina disponantur. unde et praecursori Redemptoris 82 paterni oraculi laude promittitur: Tu quidem, puer, propheta Altissimi vocaberis; praeibis enim ante faciem Domini parare vias ejus (Luc. I, 76). Ante faciem quidem Domini praeire describitur, qui in ministerio suo non erat secuturus arbitrium superioris hominis, sed inspirationem divinitatis. Ante faciem ergo Heli Samuel Domino ministrare dicitur, ut subjecti quique ejus exemplo doceantur, quatenus de ministerio suo sic placere conditori studeant, ut praeter praelatorum suorum arbitrium agere aliquid non praesumant. Nam qui ante institutoris sui faciem Domini minister asseritur, si ejus faciem praeire per tumorem despicit, minister in conspectu Domini non existit, quia omnipotentem ignorare convincitur, cui per ejus arbitrium placere despicit, cujus se imperio ut ei placeret subjugavit. Unde et Heli, et filii Belial esse, et nescire Dominum dicuntur, et ad populum officium sacerdotum. Filii namque sunt qui spiritualibus patribus ad eruditionem subiguntur. Qui profecto cum eorumdem patrum sequi consilia superbiendo despiciunt, Belial filii recte nominantur, quia ejus, qui per superbiam de coelo cecidit, apostatae spiritus imitatores fiunt. Qui certe tanto deterius Dominum nesciunt, quanto ejus sibi cognitionem arrogantius ascribunt. Eo namque agitur ut quod scire debent periculosius nesciant, quo id quod se scire existimant nescientes discere non curant. Et quia invisibilem conditorem amare nequeunt, quem ignorant, in appetitu visibilium ipsa quae sibi usurpant Dei ministeria dissipant. Unde et ii qui ignorare Dominum sacerdotes relati sunt, et sacerdotum quoque officium ad populum nescire perhibentur.

1. We have run through these things of the sacred history with a typical explanation, so that in the same words of the sacred history we may seek for something of moral understanding. And so the child Samuel is asserted to be a minister in the sight of the Lord; which ministry, however, is mentioned to be exhibited to the Lord not absolutely, but before the face of Heli. By these words, therefore, not the perfection of ministry is shown, but of humility. For the face of Heli is the reason of the will of each instructor. For he ministers to the Lord before the face of his preceptor, who in the exhibition of his ministry does not follow the reason of his own will, who walks in that path of work which is foreseen for him by the knowledge of his master. For all perfect men, and those taught of God (John VI, 45; Isai. LIV, 13), are indeed ministers in the sight of the Lord, but they are not his ministers before the face of man. This is because divinity itself instructs them within how they are to be disposed without even in life and manners and doctrine. Whence also it is promised to the precursor of the Redeemer in the praise of the paternal oracle: And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways (Luke I, 76). He indeed is described to go before the face of the Lord, who in his ministry was not to follow the will of a superior man, but the inspiration of divinity. Therefore Samuel is said to minister to the Lord before the face of Heli, that all subjects may be taught by his example, so that they may strive so to please the Creator by their ministry, that they do not presume to do anything besides the will of their prelates. For he who is asserted to be a minister of the Lord before the face of his instructor, if he despises to follow his face through pride, he does not exist as a minister in the sight of the Lord, because he is convicted of being ignorant of the Almighty, whom he despises to please through his will, to whose command he subjected himself that he might please him. Whence both Heli and the sons of Belial are said to be, and not to know the Lord, and the office of the priests to the people. For they are sons who are subjected to spiritual fathers for erudition. Who indeed, when they despise following the counsels of the same fathers by being proud, are rightly named sons of Belial, because they become imitators of the apostate spirit who fell from heaven through pride. Who certainly know not the Lord so much the worse, as they more arrogantly ascribe the knowledge of him to themselves. For it is so brought about that they know more perilously what they ought to know, as they do not care to learn, being ignorant, that which they think they know. And because they cannot love the invisible Creator, whom they are ignorant of, in the appetite for visible things they dissipate those very ministries of God which they usurp for themselves. Whence also those who are reported as priests to be ignorant of the Lord, are also held to be ignorant of the office of priests to the people.

2. Et ut reprehensionis ejus causas aperiat, ad omnem immolantem ignorantis sacerdotis puer cum tridente fuscinula venire memoratur, et crudam carnem violenter exigere. Quibus profecto verbis in aviditate suae rapacitatis tres gulae species notantur. Nam is cujus puer, antequam coquerentur carnes, ad inferendam pro eis violentiam veniebat, legitimam refectionis horam sustinere non poterat; et cui carnes quaerebantur, simplicibus cibis uti nesciebat et quia, coctam renuens, crudam carnem exigebat, communi praeparatione eamdem carnem edere fastidiebat. Verum cum sacerdotum voluptati servierit perversitas famulorum, quid est quod non ipsorum sacerdotum, sed puerorum peccatum grande nimis, etiam coram Domino, fuisse memoratur? Sed eisdem verbis sacerdotum culpa major ostenditur; nam qui minorum peccatum grande nimis coram Domino fuisse asserit, majorum inquitatem in quem damnationis cumulum excrevisse cognovit. Quae tamen magnitudo reatus asseritur, non solum pro appetitu illicitae comestionis, sed etiam pro violentia rapacitatis.

3. Sed ad electi pueri narrationem divinus sermo regreditur, ut in eo, non quod reprobandum, sed quod imitandum est, attentius consideremus. Itaque ephod lineo accinctus, et in conspectu Domini esse perhibetur. Quid ergo in ephod lineo nisi continentiae candor ostenditur? quo nimirum ephod accingimur, cum ad nitorem pudicitiae ex omni parte retinemur, cum animae et carnis pars nulla a districtionis lege absolvitur, per quam ad luxuriae caliginem diffluamus. Talis itaque minister in conspectu Domini est, quia de omnipotentis Dei sperata visione non fallitur, cui cum tanto accinctionis suae nitore famulatur. Cui profecto puero ascendens mater cum viro ad immolandum solemnem hostiam attulisse parvam tunicam dicitur. Mater quidem cum viro ascendit quando mens praedicatoris per praescientiam interni sponsi sese ad contemplanda sublimia illa aeternitatis gaudia erigit. Tunc quippe immolat solemnem hostiam, quia dum per illius amoris ineffabilem suavitatem conditori conjungitur, supernis altaribus devotio festiva praesentatur. Et tunc quidem parvam tunicam defert, quia, etsi per magnam internae visitationis gratiam pastoris anima ad superna sustollitur, parvulus tamen non ad modum subtilitatis suae, sed pro eorum viribus imponere praecepta conversationis debet. Unde et Moyses a monte in immenso vultus sui splendore regrediens faciem velavit, ut in eum populus intendere visum potuisset (Exod. XXXIV, 33). Parvam itaque tunicam ea quae spiritalis mater est filio deferat, ut parvulis adhuc initia quaedam et plana praecipiat, et non fortitudinis suae onus imponat.

2. And that he may open the causes of his reprehension, the child of the ignorant priest is mentioned to come to every one immolating with a flesh-hook of three teeth, and violently to demand raw flesh. In which words indeed in the greediness of their rapacity three kinds of gluttony are noted. For he whose child, before the meats were boiled, came to bring violence for them, could not sustain the legitimate hour of refreshment; and he for whom the meats were sought, did not know how to use simple foods; and because, refusing the boiled, he demanded raw flesh, he was fastidious of eating the same flesh in the common preparation. But when the perversity of the servants served the pleasure of the priests, what is it that not the sin of the priests themselves, but of the children, is mentioned to have been exceeding great, even before the Lord? But by the same words the greater fault of the priests is shown; for he who asserts the sin of the lesser to have been exceeding great before the Lord, recognized into what a heap of damnation the iniquity of the greater had grown. Which magnitude of guilt, however, is asserted, not only for the appetite of illicit eating, but also for the violence of rapacity.

3. But the divine word returns to the narration of the elect child, so that in him we may more attentively consider, not what is to be reproved, but what is to be imitated. And so he is held to be girded with a linen ephod, and to be in the sight of the Lord. What then is shown in the linen ephod if not the whiteness of continence? with which ephod indeed we are girded, when we are restrained on every side to the splendor of chastity, when no part of the soul and flesh is absolved from the law of severity, through which we might flow down to the darkness of luxury. Such a minister, therefore, is in the sight of the Lord, because he is not deceived concerning the hoped-for vision of almighty God, whom he serves with so great a splendor of his girding. To which child indeed the mother ascending with her husband to immolate the solemn host is said to have brought a little coat. The mother indeed ascends with her husband when the mind of the preacher, through the foreknowledge of the internal spouse, raises itself to contemplate those sublime joys of eternity. For then he immolates the solemn host, because while through the ineffable sweetness of that love he is joined to the Creator, a festive devotion is presented at the supernal altars. And then indeed she brings a little coat, because, although through the great grace of internal visitation the soul of the pastor is raised to supernal things, nevertheless he ought to impose precepts of conversation upon the little one, not according to the measure of his own subtlety, but for their strength. Whence also Moses, returning from the mountain in the immense splendor of his countenance, veiled his face, so that the people might have been able to fix their sight upon him (Exod. XXXIV, 33). Therefore, let her who is a spiritual mother bring a little coat to her son, so that she may prescribe to the little ones as yet certain beginnings and plain things, and not impose the burden of her own fortitude.

Nam saepe inter magna opera corruunt, qui per minora vincere hostem possunt. Unde et David contra Allophylorum fortissimum in pugnam progrediens, loricam, clypeum et militaria quaeque instrumenta deposuit; et qui se in eorum pondere contra hostem exercere non potuit, in uno eum fundae lapide prostravit (I Reg. XVII, 39, 40, seq.). Ad immolandam solemnem hostiam mater illa ascenderat, quae dicebat: Scio hujusmodi hominem, qui raptus est in paradisum (II Cor. XII, 4). Sed de tanta magnitudine magnam vestem parvulis non adduxit, quia dicit: Audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui (Ibid.). Item: Lac vobis potum dedi, non escam (I Cor. III, 2). Parvam itaque parvo filio tunicam mater deferat, et pro modo corporis mensura indumenti tendatur, quatenus dum temperatae conversationis virtute dimicat, hunc hostis inaequali armorum sarcina non substernat.

4. Et quia ex discreto curae pastoralis studio praedicatori Deus conversorum lucra multiplicat, visitata a Domino Anna perhibetur, atque per gratiam divini muneris in filiis et filiabus meruisse gratiam fecunditatis. Quae filios quidem parit, cum eos verbo lucratur per quos praedicationis semina aliis tribuit. Filias vero parit cum eas mentes ad omnipotentis Dei servitium revocat, quae etsi ad praedicationem idoneae non sunt, verbi Dei tamen semen diligenter a praedicatoribus acceptum nutriunt, quod velut parturientes postmodum filiae per bona opera in exemplum proximorum gignunt. Sed quia prius Samuel lineo ephod accinctus asseritur, dehinc fecunditas matris in pluralitate liberorum potest rationabiliter intelligi hoc quod fieri quotidie cernimus, quia videlicet ex bona opinione electi discipuli magistro succrescunt lucra conversorum. Unde et post ortum fratrum et sororum, magnificatus Samuel apud Dominum fuisse perhibetur, quia profecto coram Domino jam magni sunt qui per exempla piae conversationis proximorum corda ad omnipotentis Dei servitium convertunt.

5. Magnus vero nobis timor incutitur, quia Heli filiorum culpa damnatur, cujus peccata propria nulla referuntur. Nam bonis subditis bene vivere ad salutem sufficit, praelatis vero propria vita non sufficit. Valde etenim senex est, qui vivere irreprehensibiliter semper studet. Unde etiam scriptum est: Senectus enim venerabilis est, non diuturna, neque annorum numero computata; cani enim sunt sensus hominis, et aetas senectutis vita immaculata (Sap. IV, 8). Sed quidam bene vivendo praeeminent, qui auctoritatem quam praelatio exigit nullam habent.

For often those collapse among great works, who could conquer the enemy through lesser ones. Whence also David, going forth to battle against the strongest of the Philistines, laid aside the breastplate, the shield, and all military instruments; and he who could not exercise himself against the enemy in their weight, prostrated him with one stone of a sling (I Kings XVII, 39, 40, seq.). That mother had ascended to immolate the solemn host, who said: I know such a man, who was caught up into paradise (II Cor. XII, 4). But from so great a magnitude she did not bring a great garment to the little ones, because he says: He heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to speak (Ibid.). Likewise: I gave you milk to drink, not meat (I Cor. III, 2). Therefore, let the mother bring a little coat to the little son, and let the measure of the garment be extended according to the mode of the body, so that while he fights by the virtue of a tempered conversation, the enemy may not prostrate him by an unequal burden of arms.

4. And because from the discreet study of pastoral care God multiplies the gains of converts for the preacher, Anna is said to have been visited by the Lord, and to have merited the grace of fecundity in sons and daughters through the grace of the divine gift. She indeed brings forth sons when she gains them by the word through whom she bestows the seeds of preaching to others. But she brings forth daughters when she recalls to the service of almighty God those minds which, even if they are not fit for preaching, nevertheless diligently nourish the seed of the word of God received from the preachers, which afterwards the daughters, as if in labor, bring forth through good works for the example of their neighbors. But because Samuel is first asserted to be girded with a linen ephod, from this the fecundity of the mother in the plurality of children can be reasonably understood as that which we see happen daily, because forsooth from the good reputation of the elect disciple the gains of converts grow for the master. Whence also after the birth of the brothers and sisters, Samuel is said to have been magnified before the Lord, because indeed those are already great before the Lord who through examples of pious conversation convert the hearts of their neighbors to the service of almighty God.

5. But a great fear is struck into us, because Heli is condemned for the fault of his sons, of whom no sins of his own are reported. For for good subjects to live well suffices for salvation, but for prelates their own life does not suffice. For he is very much an old man who always strives to live irreproachably. Whence also it is written: For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years; but the understanding of a man is grey hairs, and a spotless life is old age (Wisd. IV, 8). But some preeminent in living well have no authority which prelacy requires.

Nam etsi ad agenda bona excitare subditos satagunt, tamen contraire delinquentibus per zelum rectitudinis erubescunt. Qui nimirum etsi ad redarguendos eos aliquando exeunt, nocent potius loquendo quam prosunt, quia eorum obstinationem non digna severitate confundunt. Nam idem Heli filiorum scelera, et quomodo ad tabernaculi ostium cum mulieribus dormirent, audivit; qui, velut ab aspera invectione auctoritatis incipiens, res pessimas ab omni populo se audisse perhibuit. Sed qui insequi eas quas exposuit culpas debuit, per subsequentia verba laevigavit, dicens: Nolite, filii. In qua nimirum propinquitatis appellatione quantum a Domini voluntate dissentiat liquet, quia illos filios appellavit quos divinus sermo supra Belial, id est spiritus nequam, filios esse perhibuit, dicens: Porro filii Heli filii Belial. Cum mulieribus quippe dormire est secure et sine metu futurae vindictae peccare. Mulieres quippe meretrices sunt concupiscentiae saeculares. Quae bene ad tabernaculi ostium observare perhibentur, quia ad introitum regni coelestis tendentibus insidiantur. Qui vero sic mundi concupiscentias sequitur, ut saepe divini metus consideratione terreatur, polluitur quidem cum mulieribus, sed non dormit, quia etsi transgrediendo labitur, in perpetratis tamen facinoribus per securitatem nequaquam requiescit. Dormiens itaque cum mulieribus nomine propinquitatis honorandus non est, quia qui, projecto jam Dei timore, in suis sceleribus obstinati sunt, leviori increpatione arguendi non sunt, ne leve pondus peccati esse putent id in quo corruunt, dum grave eis illud non sonat quod ex auctoritate praedicatur. Sed remissi pastores inter fomenta verborum quaedam proferre solent argumenta rationis. Unde et Heli voce dicitur:

(Vers. 25.) Si peccaverit vir in virum, pacari ei potest Deus; si autem in Deum peccaverit, quis orabit pro eo?

6. Vir in virum peccare est de rebus labentibus alterutrum sibi homines nocere. In Deum vero peccare est ea ei quae ad aeternitatem condidit auferre. Quicunque igitur aut suam aut alterius fidelis hominis animam ad peccandum pertrahit, in Deum peccare convincitur, quia sua ei auferre propria nititur. Quod nimirum tanto gravius peccatum esse ostenditur, quanto et qui pro ejus absolutione dignus intercessor existat rarius invenitur. Nam sub interrogatione: Quis orabit pro eo? non dicitur ut talibus etiam poenitentiae remedia denegentur, sed quia altiora peccatorum vulnera difficilius curantur.

For although they busy themselves to excite their subjects to do good things, nevertheless they blush to go against the delinquent through the zeal of rectitude. Who indeed, even if they sometimes go forth to reprove them, harm rather than help by speaking, because they do not confound their obstinacy with worthy severity. For the same Heli heard of the crimes of his sons, and how they slept with women at the door of the tabernacle; who, as if beginning from a harsh invective of authority, asserted that he had heard the worst things from all the people. But he who ought to have followed up those faults which he exposed, smoothed them over by the subsequent words, saying: Do not so, my sons. In which naming of kinship indeed it is clear how much he dissents from the will of the Lord, because he called those sons whom the divine word above asserted to be sons of Belial, that is, of a wicked spirit, saying: Now the sons of Heli were sons of Belial. To sleep with women indeed is to sin securely and without fear of future vengeance. For women are the harlot secular concupiscences. Which are well said to observe at the door of the tabernacle, because they lie in wait for those tending to the entrance of the celestial kingdom. But he who so follows the concupiscences of the world, that he is often terrified by the consideration of divine fear, is indeed polluted with women, but does not sleep, because although he falls by transgressing, nevertheless he by no means rests in security in the committed crimes. Therefore he who sleeps with women is not to be honored with the name of kinship, because those who, the fear of God being already cast away, are obstinate in their crimes, are not to be reproved with a lighter incrimination, lest they think that to be a light weight of sin in which they collapse, while that does not sound grave to them which is preached from authority. But remiss pastors are wont to proffer certain arguments of reason among the fomentations of words. Whence also it is said by the voice of Heli:

(Vers. 25.) If one man shall sin against another, God may be appeased in his behalf; but if a man shall sin against the Lord, who shall pray for him?

6. To sin man against man is for men to harm one another concerning falling things. But to sin against God is to take away from him those things which he created for eternity. Whosoever therefore draws either his own soul or that of another faithful man to sin, is convicted of sinning against God, because he strives to take away his own from him. Which indeed is shown to be a so much graver sin, as he who exists as a worthy intercessor for its absolution is more rarely found. For under the interrogation: Who shall pray for him? it is not said so that the remedies of penitence are denied even to such, but because the deeper wounds of sins are more difficultly cured.

7. Quod tamen idcirco dictum potest intelligi, quia sacerdotes arguuntur. Vir enim in virum peccat, cum ille delinquit cujus culpa corrigenda ad hominis superioris judicium respicit. Quia igitur peccata subditi populi, quae ad sacerdotes respiciunt, ipsorum sacerdotum precibus delentur, cum sacerdos in culpam labitur, superior persona non est cujus precibus expietur. Quod et ipsa Veritas per se insinuat, dicens: Si sal evanuerit, in quo salietur (Matth. V, 13)? Dicat ergo: Quis orabit pro eo? Quasi dicat, quis ei intercessor remanet, cum ille se transgrediendo praecipitat, qui ad intercedendum pro aliis ordinatus est? Quo profecto culpae magnitudo monstratur, quia plerique eorum a Domino in impoenitentis cordis caliginem projiciuntur, et nulla hominis adhortatione resipiscunt. Quare apte subjunctum est:

(Vers. 25.) Non audierunt vocem patris sui, quia voluit eos Dominus occidere.

8. Puer autem Samuel et proficere et crescere memoratur, et tam Deo quam hominibus placere, ut electi auditoris studium designetur, qui rectae vitae itinere suos conatus ad supernam patriam dirigit, dum ad majora convalescit. Unde et per Psalmistam dicitur: Ambulabunt de virtute in virtutem, videbitur Deus deorum in Sion (Psal. LXXIII, 8). Profectus itaque conversationis est crescere meritis, placere Deo et hominibus consummatae perfectionis. Et quia ad opera conversatio pertinet, meritumque provenit ex charitate, illi auditores proficiunt, et non crescunt, qui bona opera pro studio vanitatis exhibent, et charitatem non habent. Proficimus ergo, et crescimus, si cum sublimiori conversatione per opera meliora sustollimur, ex eadem sublimitate operis ad sola intendimus gaudia aeternitatis. Placere autem tam Deo quam hominibus magnae virtutis est, quia plerumque de bono opere nostro proximos nostros offendimus, si eadem bona opera non cum magna cautela faciamus. Tam Deo igitur quam hominibus placet, qui in bono opere quod omnipotentis Dei obsequiis impendit cautus est; qui sic Deo placere curat, ut de Dei ministerio aliquem non offendat.

9. Et quia de Samuele adhuc puero et sub aliena instructione posito dicitur, communiter viventium per hoc vita eruditur. Nam quidam in sacris locis communiter viventes fervore novitio sub colore magnae operationis sibi vacate appetunt, qui contubernalibus fratribus quo minus sunt utiles, hoc minus placent. Electus itaque per Samuel communiter viventibus forma proponitur, cui imprimuntur. Deo itaque et hominibus quisque eorum placet, cum fratribus utilis est, Deo devotus.

7. Which, however, can be understood to be said for this reason, because the priests are argued. For a man sins against a man when he is delinquent whose fault to be corrected looks to the judgment of a superior man. Because therefore the sins of the subject people, which look to the priests, are blotted out by the prayers of the priests themselves, when the priest falls into fault, there is no superior person by whose prayers he may be expiated. Which also Truth itself insinuates through itself, saying: If the salt shall lose its savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned (Matth. V, 13)? Let him say therefore: Who shall pray for him? As if he should say, what intercessor remains for him, when he precipitates himself by transgressing, who was ordained to intercede for others? By which indeed the magnitude of the fault is shown, because many of them are cast by the Lord into the darkness of an impenitent heart, and repent by no exhortation of man. Wherefore fitly it was subjoined:

(Vers. 25.) They heard not the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.

8. But the child Samuel is mentioned both to profit and to grow, and to please both God and men, so that the study of the elect hearer may be designated, who directs his efforts to the supernal fatherland by the path of a right life, while he gathers strength for greater things. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: They shall go from virtue to virtue, the God of gods shall be seen in Sion (Psal. LXXXIII, 8). The profit of conversation therefore is to grow in merits, to please God and men is of consummate perfection. And because conversation pertains to works, and merit proceeds from charity, those hearers profit, and do not grow, who exhibit good works for the study of vanity, and have not charity. We profit therefore, and grow, if with a more sublime conversation we are raised up through better works, and from the same sublimity of work we intend only the joys of eternity. Moreover, to please both God and men is of great virtue, because for the most part we offend our neighbors concerning our good work, if we do not do the same good works with great caution. Therefore he pleases both God and men, who is cautious in the good work which he expends in the services of almighty God; who so cares to please God, that he does not offend anyone concerning the ministry of God.

9. And because it is said concerning Samuel while yet a child and placed under the instruction of another, the life of those living in common is instructed by this. For some living in common in sacred places desire to be at leisure for themselves with a novice fervor under the color of a great operation, who the less they are useful to their fellow brethren, the less they please them. The elect Samuel therefore is proposed as a form to those living in common, upon which they are impressed. Therefore each of them pleases God and men when he is useful to the brethren and devoted to God.

Sic ergo agant curam sui, ut ea quae sunt proximi non omittant, quatenus ex benignitate his placeat qui secum in imo sunt, supernis vero oculis ex devotione fortitudinis suae robur caute exhibeat, ut infirmorum corda non atterat, dum fortitudinis suae impetu ad superna festinat.

10. Vir autem Dei ad Heli venisse describitur, qui profecto divinae sententiae severitatem prolaturus, quanta ei dona contulerat diligenter enumeravit. Et quia tandem vindictae quam mereretur poenam denuntiat, quid dat intelligi, nisi quia pastorum culpae subtilius judicantur? et non solum peccata eis poenam ultionis aggravant, sed etiam munera concessa. Item quia sigillatim eadem dona replicat, aliquid gravius designat, quia singula ad tormentum veniunt, quae male fuisse servata comprobantur. Male namque in se omnipotentis Dei munera custodit, qui nitorem pastoralis culminis per maculas polluit pravae actionis. Unde et apte Heli domus munera et victimas Domini calce abjecisse reprehenditur. Calx quidem ea pars corporis est qua terram tangimus. In hac igitur inferiori parte corporis animae affectus ostenditur quo terrena concupiscuntur.

11. Et quia, ut quibusdam visum est, pro consecuta vel consequenda victoria victimae offerri consueverant et munera amicis dari, quid in victimis et muneribus nisi proficientium adhuc vota et perfectorum devotiones in omnipotentis Dei laudibus designantur? Qui enim per occultorum hostium tentamenta proficimus, cum ad eorum conflictum virtutem praeparamus, profecto victimas in omnipotentis Dei laudibus tenemus. Sed devictis jam iis quae ingeruntur nobis praeliis, cum de victory consecuta omnipotenti Deo gratias agimus, 86 eidem Domino nimirum victimas immolamus. Qui autem ei familiaris amoris affectum offerunt, quasi amico munera impendunt. Munera igitur sunt affectiones charitatis, quibus corda electorum in desiderium sui conditoris inardescunt. Et quia cum rector terrena sequitur, plerisque in spirituali conflictu positis, plerisque etiam jam anhelare incipientibus nocet, calce nimirum Dei victimas et munera abjicit, quia exemplo suae pravitatis eorumdem utrorumque studia expellit.

So therefore let them take care of themselves, that they do not omit those things which are of their neighbor, so far as from benignity he may please those who are with him in the lowest place, but to the supernal eyes from devotion he may cautiously exhibit the strength of his fortitude, so that he may not crush the hearts of the infirm while he hastens to supernal things by the impetus of his fortitude.

10. Moreover, a man of God is described to have come to Heli, who indeed about to bring forth the severity of the divine sentence, diligently enumerated how great gifts he had conferred upon him. And because at length he denounces the penalty of the vengeance which he deserved, what does he give to be understood, if not that the faults of pastors are more subtly judged? and not only do sins aggravate for them the penalty of retribution, but also the gifts granted. Likewise because he repeats the same gifts one by one, he designates something graver, because the individual things come to torment, which are proved to have been poorly kept. For he keeps the gifts of almighty God poorly in himself, who pollutes the splendor of the pastoral height through the stains of a depraved action. Whence also fitly the house of Heli is reproved for having cast away the gifts and victims of the Lord with the heel. The heel indeed is that part of the body by which we touch the earth. In this inferior part of the body therefore the affection of the soul is shown by which earthly things are lusted after.

11. And because, as it seemed to some, victims were wont to be offered for a victory obtained or to be obtained, and gifts to be given to friends, what is designated in the victims and gifts if not the vows of those still profiting and the devotions of the perfect in the praises of almighty God? For those of us who profit through the temptations of occult enemies, when we prepare virtue for their conflict, we certainly hold victims in the praises of almighty God. But those battles which are brought upon us being already conquered, when we give thanks to almighty God for the victory obtained, we indeed immolate victims to the same Lord. Moreover, those who offer him the affection of familiar love, bestow gifts as if to a friend. The gifts therefore are the affections of charity, by which the hearts of the elect are kindled in the desire of their Creator. And because when the rector follows earthly things, he harms many placed in spiritual conflict, and many also already beginning to pant for it, he indeed casts away the victims and gifts of God with the heel, because by the example of his own depravity he expels the studies of both of them.

Abjiciuntur itaque victimae, quia saepe a rudibus Christi militibus pugnae spiritualis labor relinquitur, cum principes Christianae expeditionis in terrenorum blandimentorum requie sequi corporis otia videntur. Calce abjiciuntur munera, quia affectiones charitatis a plurimorum jam superna diligentium mente frigescunt, dum praelatos suos aspiciunt supernam patriam per nulla amoris desideria quaerere, sed corporis frigore constrictos infimis delectationibus jacere. Quorum profecto nonnulli sunt, qui ipsos spiritales honores carnaliter exhibent, et quod meritis debetur, propinquitati tribuunt. Qui profecto praesumptionis suae reatum expavescerent, si hoc, quod de Heli sacerdote Dominus queritur, attente pensarent.

(Vers. 29.) Honorasti, inquit, filios tuos, magis quam me, ut comederetis primitias omnis sacrificii populi mei Israel.

12. Filios quippe et propinquos magis quam Dominum honorat, qui ad sacros ordines personas eligit non ex conversationis honestate, sed amore propinquitatis. Idcirco filii honorati referuntur, ut sacrificii primitias ederent, quia carnales praelati spiritualis honoris culmina carnalibus propinquis ideo tribuunt, ut ecclesiasticis facultatibus ditentur, et in altitudine ordinis cumulentur abundantia ubertatis. Nec curant quales sunt qui ad spirituale ministerium veniunt, sed tantum ut temporali dignitate praeferant quos carnali affectione complectuntur. Queritur ergo honorasse filios, sed scelestos, qui et carnali propinquitate proximi habendi non sunt, si ecclesiasticae doctrinae conversatione nequaquam fulgescunt. Sed qui reprobos provehunt ipsum promotionis ordinem confundere designantur, cum idcirco honoratos filios refert, ut sacrificii primitias ederent. Non enim praedicat sacerdos ut comedat, sed ideo, ut praedicet, manducare debet. Quod et Paulus insinuat, dicens: Qui Evangelium annuntiat, de Evangelio vivat (I Cor. IX, 14). Hinc iterum dicit: Bovi trituranti non claudatur os (I Cor. IX, 9; I Tim. V, 18; Deut. XXV, 4), ut videlicet praedicator sanctae Ecclesiae ideo comestionem subministret corpori, ut ferre valeat laborem praedicationis. Rectum itaque promotionis ordinem pervertere comprobantur, qui propinquos provehunt, non ad intentionem ministerii, sed ad propositum dignitatis. Quod profecto non facerent, si se et eos in spiritali culmine carnaliter non amarent. Sed si Heli repulsionem intelligunt, sui quoque reatus judicia pertimescant. Nam divina voce dicitur: Honorasti filios tuos magis quam me, ut comederetis omnes primitias populi mei Israel.

(Vers. 30.) Propterea ait Dominus Deus Israel: Loquens locutus sum, ut domus tua et domus patris tui ministraret in conspectu meo usque in sempiternum. Nunc autem absit hoc a me.

Therefore the victims are cast away, because often the labor of spiritual battle is left by the novice soldiers of Christ, when the princes of the Christian expedition are seen to follow the leisure of the body in the rest of earthly blandishments. The gifts are cast away with the heel, because the affections of charity grow cold from the minds of many already diligent for supernal things, while they behold their prelates seeking the supernal fatherland through no desires of love, but lying in lowest delights constrained by the cold of the body. Some of whom indeed there are, who exhibit spiritual honors carnally, and attribute to kinship what is due to merits. Who indeed would dread the guilt of their presumption, if they would attentively weigh this, of which the Lord complains concerning Heli the priest.

(Vers. 29.) Thou hast honored, he says, thy sons more than me, that you might eat the firstfruits of every sacrifice of my people Israel.

12. He indeed honors his sons and kinsmen more than the Lord, who chooses persons for sacred orders not from the honesty of conversation, but from the love of kinship. Therefore the sons are reported as honored, that they might eat the firstfruits of the sacrifice, because carnal prelates therefore bestow the heights of spiritual honor upon carnal kinsmen, that they may be enriched with ecclesiastical faculties, and be heaped up with the abundance of fertility in the height of the order. Nor do they care what kind they are who come to the spiritual ministry, but only that they may prefer with temporal dignity those whom they embrace with carnal affection. He complains therefore that he honored his sons, but wicked ones, who are by no means to be held as near even by carnal kinship, if they in no wise shine by the conversation of ecclesiastical doctrine. But those who promote the reprobate are designated to confound the order of promotion itself, since he therefore reports the sons honored, that they might eat the firstfruits of the sacrifice. For the priest does not preach that he may eat, but therefore he ought to eat, that he may preach. Which also Paul insinuates, saying: They who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel (I Cor. IX, 14). Hence again he says: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn (I Cor. IX, 9; I Tim. V, 18; Deut. XXV, 4), so that forsooth the preacher of the holy Church should therefore supply eating to the body, that he may be able to bear the labor of preaching. Therefore they are proved to pervert the right order of promotion, who promote kinsmen, not to the intention of ministry, but to the purpose of dignity. Which indeed they would not do, if they did not carnally love themselves and them in the spiritual height. But if they understand the rejection of Heli, let them also greatly fear the judgments of their own guilt. For it is said by the divine voice: Thou hast honored thy sons more than me, that you might eat all the firstfruits of my people Israel.

(Vers. 30.) Wherefore the Lord the God of Israel saith: I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should minister in my sight, for ever. But now far be this from me.

13. Ecce Heli celsitudine dignitatis sententia divina deponitur, qui pro primitiarum esu scelestos filios honorasse convincitur, ut profecto sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatores 87 intelligant quia si carnali amore reprobis spiritalia ministeria scienter committunt, ab illo in quo foris stare videntur culmine interni arbitri aequitate ceciderunt. Et quia subsequenter adjunxit:

(Vers. 30.) Sed quicunque glorificaverit me, glorificabo eum.

14. Etiam inhonoratum fuisse eorum audacia latenter innuit. Quibus profecto et Paulus idipsum improperans ait: Nomen Dei per vos blasphematur inter gentes (Rom. II, 24). Quia enim decorem acceptae dignitatis per miserae famae sordes maculant, profecto Dominum inhonorant. Digne enim ab honoris arce repellitur, qui ei facit injuriam a quo honoratus fuisse comprobatur. Quo contra generali promissione affirmat, dicens: Sed qui me glorificaverit, glorificabo eum. Deum quippe pastor glorificat qui exemplo bonorum operum ad imitationem fidelium corruscat, qui de sublimitate regiminis ingenti lumine radiat magnae conversationis, qui ad speculum sacrorum ordinum reproborum ministrorum personas non accipit, sed eos ad formam subjecti gregis eligit quos omnis qui imitationem respicit, quia verum in eis lumen sequitur, non offendit. Quibus nimirum per semetipsum Veritas loquitur, dicens: Sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant vestra bona opera, et glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in coelis est (Matth. V, 16). Glorificantes quidem se Dominus glorificat, quia quod electi pastores sanctae Ecclesiae exterius portant de gloria culminis, hoc intus accipiunt ex gratia divinae bonitatis, et honorem quo sublimes sunt in oculis hominum, digno studio in interiori ab internae majestatis largitate promerentur. Quo contra inhonorantium se gloriam a se non esse eis impensam queritur, dicens: Ipsi regnaverunt, et non ex me; principes exstiterunt, et ego ignoravi (Osee VIII, 4). Ex se namque, et non ex electione summae ordinationis, regnant, quia ad gloriam ecclesiastici culminis non vocantur divinitus, sed per cupiditatem perducuntur. Quos profecto Dominus ignorat, quia eos per internae aequitatis judicium reprobat. Tale est ergo ac si dicat: Et si meus esse videtur honor quem habent, non illum meruerunt obsequio, sed per cupiditatem rapuerunt. Unde et subsequenter adjungit.

(Vers. 30.) Qui autem contemnunt me erunt ignobiles.

13. Behold Heli is deposed from the loftiness of his dignity by the divine sentence, who is convicted of having honored his wicked sons for the eating of the firstfruits, so that forsooth the preachers of the holy Church may understand that if they knowingly commit spiritual ministries to the reprobate from carnal love, they have fallen from that height in which they are seen to stand without by the equity of the internal judge. And because he subsequently added:

(Vers. 30.) But whosoever shall glorify me, him will I glorify.

14. He also covertly insinuates that he had been dishonored by their audacity. To whom indeed Paul also upbraiding that very thing says: The name of God is blasphemed through you among the Gentiles (Rom. II, 24). For because they stain the beauty of the received dignity through the filth of a miserable fame, they forsooth dishonor the Lord. For he is worthily repelled from the citadel of honor, who does injury to him by whom he is proved to have been honored. On the contrary he affirms by a general promise, saying: But he who shall glorify me, I will glorify him. For the pastor glorifies God who shines by the example of good works for the imitation of the faithful, who radiates from the sublimity of his governance with the immense light of a great conversation, who does not accept the persons of reprobate ministers for the mirror of sacred orders, but chooses those for the form of the subject flock whom everyone who looks to imitation does not offend, because he follows the true light in them. To whom indeed Truth speaks through itself, saying: So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matth. V, 16). The Lord indeed glorifies those glorifying him, because what the elect pastors of the holy Church carry outwardly of the glory of the height, this they receive inwardly from the grace of divine goodness, and the honor by which they are sublime in the eyes of men, they merit by a worthy study in the interior from the largess of the internal majesty. On the contrary he complains that the glory of those dishonoring him was not bestowed upon them by him, saying: They have reigned, but not by me; they have been princes, and I knew it not (Hosea VIII, 4). For they reign from themselves, and not from the election of the highest ordination, because they are not called divinely to the glory of the ecclesiastical height, but are led through cupidity. Whom indeed the Lord knows not, because he reproves them through the judgment of internal equity. It is therefore as if he should say: And if the honor which they have seems to be mine, they did not merit it by obedience, but snatched it through cupidity. Whence also he subsequently adds.

(Vers. 30.) But they that despise me shall be ignoble.

15. Quasi aperte loquatur, dicens: Etsi nobilitatem dignitatis praeferunt praetextu religionis, ignobiles tamen sunt, quia excellentiae ejus quam habent gloriae non concordant per sublimitatem vitae. Sed quia hoc totum expressione futuri temporis promittitur, potest non inconvenienter ad venturae retributionis meritum referri. De qua nimirum Joannes dicit: Cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus (I Joan. III, 2). Hinc evangelista Marcus asserens ait: Tunc videbunt Filium hominis cum potestate multa, et gloria (Marc. XIII, 26). Cum autem glorificantem se glorificaturum asserit, profecto ei suae similitudinis gloriam repromittit. Glorificantem quippe se Dominus glorificat, quia eos aeterna sublimitate remunerat, qui nunc intra sanctam Ecclesiam per exempla bonorum operum in electorum oculis coruscant. Contemptores autem erunt ignobiles, quia in electorum gloria recipi non merentur. Nam quia modo per conversationem reprobam lapsi angeli imaginem vestiunt, ignobiles cum eo tunc erunt, quando ei in interna poena sociantur. Horum namque glorificationem atque illorum ignobilitatem Propheta intuens, 88 ait: Exsultabunt sancti in gloria, laetabuntur in cubilibus suis. Exsultationes Dei in faucibus eorum, et gladii ancipites in manibus eorum. Ad faciendam vindictam in nationibus, increpationes in populis. Ad alligandos reges eorum in compedibus, et nobiles eorum in manicis ferreis. Glorificantem se quippe Dominus glorificat, quia humiles electi cum eo in aeterna gloria exsultant. Qui nimirum, quia glorificationis claritatem ex modo propriae conversationis accipiunt, in cubilibus suis laetari de gloria consecuta perhibentur. Contemptores autem ejus perpetua ignobilitate feriuntur, quia nationum reges et nobiles ferreis, aeternis videlicet, vinculis ad poenam vinciuntur. Reges autem nationum, et princes, sunt superbi et gloriosi praelati carnalium. Ignobiles autem tunc erunt, quando ferreis vinculis ligantur, quia qui modo se adversus parvulos temporaliter erigunt, a fulgore honoris, et ausu suae tyrannidis aeterna poena cohibentur. Unde et hic quoque subditur:

(Vers. 31.) Ecce dies veniunt, et praecidam brachium tuum, et brachium domus patris tui.

16. Brachium quippe contemptoris est fortitudo temporalis. Et quia de summi patris familia transgrediendo exiit, lapsum angelum a coelesti gloria habere jam patrem coepit. Domus itaque patris ejus est ea quae sibi favet in malo societas subditorum. De quibus profecto superius dicit: Honorasti filios tuos magis quam me. Brachium ergo contemptoris, et domus patris ejus praeciditur, cum, interveniente morte carnis, praelatus et subditi violentiam suae tyrannidis pariter amittunt. Tunc quippe sine brachio est, cum in oppressione parvulorum exercere violentiam nequaquam potest.

15. As if he should speak openly, saying: Although they prefer the nobility of dignity under the pretext of religion, yet they are ignoble, because they do not agree with the excellence of that glory which they have through the sublimity of life. But because all this is promised in the expression of future time, it can not inconveniently be referred to the merit of future retribution. Of which indeed John says: When he shall appear, we shall be like to him (I John III, 2). Hence the evangelist Mark asserting says: Then shall they see the Son of man with much power and glory (Mark XIII, 26). But when he asserts that he will glorify him that glorifies him, he forsooth repromises to him the glory of his likeness. For the Lord glorifies him that glorifies him, because he rewards with eternal sublimity those who now shine in the eyes of the elect within the holy Church through the examples of good works. But the despisers shall be ignoble, because they do not merit to be received into the glory of the elect. For because now through reprobate conversation they put on the image of the fallen angel, they shall then be ignoble with him, when they are associated with him in internal punishment. For the Prophet beholding the glorification of these and the ignobility of those, 88 says: The saints shall rejoice in glory, they shall be joyful in their beds. The high praises of God in their mouths, and two-edged swords in their hands. To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people. To bind their kings in fetters, and their nobles in manacles of iron. For the Lord glorifies him that glorifies him, because the humble elect exult with him in eternal glory. Who indeed, because they receive the brightness of glorification from the manner of their own conversation, are said to rejoice in their beds over the glory attained. But his despisers are struck with perpetual ignobility, because the kings and nobles of the nations are bound with iron, namely eternal, chains for punishment. But the kings of the nations, and the princes, are the proud and glorious prelates of the carnal. But they shall then be ignoble, when they are bound with iron chains, because they who now raise themselves temporally against the little ones, are restrained by eternal punishment from the brightness of honor and the daring of their tyranny. Whence also here it is added:

(Vers. 31.) Behold the days come, and I will cut off thy arm, and the arm of thy father's house.

16. For the arm of the despiser is temporal strength. And because he went out from the family of the highest father by transgressing, he has already begun to have the fallen angel as a father instead of heavenly glory. Therefore the house of his father is that society of subjects which favors him in evil. Of whom indeed he says above: Thou hast honored thy sons more than me. Therefore the arm of the despiser and the house of his father is cut off, when, through the intervening death of the flesh, the prelate and the subjects alike lose the violence of their tyranny. For then indeed he is without an arm, when he can by no means exercise violence in the oppression of the little ones.

Unde et aeterni judicis aequitate decernitur: Ligatis, inquit, manibus et pedibus, projicite in tenebras exteriores (Matth. XXII, 13). In cujus etiam domo senex non erit. Damnati quippe hominis domus infernus est. Senectus autem vera est maturitas sapientiae. In domo itaque ejus senex non erit, quia in inferno nulla inveniri poterunt consilia salutis. Unde et ad verae sapientiae opera sacra Scriptura excitat, dicens: Quodcunque potest manus tua, instanter operare, quia nec ratio, nec sapientia, nec scientia est apud inferos, quo tu properas (Eccle. IX, 10). Hinc Paulus ait: Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies salutis (II Cor. VI, 2). In domo itaque contemptoris senex non erit, quia quisque recte sapit, non in inferno, sed in coelo sibi mansionem paravit. Qui etiam contemptor ad augmentum poenae suae aemulum suum videt in templo in universis prosperis Israel. Templum etenim Dei superna patria est, de qua etiam per Prophetam dicitur: Dominus in templo sancto suo, Dominus in coelo sedes ejus (Psal. X, 4). Israel autem, qui videns Deum interpretatur, angelorum illa felix multitudo signatur, de qua Dominus in Evangelio dicit: Angeli eorum semper vident faciem Patris mei, qui in coelis est (Matth. XVIII, 10). Israel autem prospera sunt beatorum illorum spirituum gaudia sempiterna. In templo igitur aemulum suum contemptor aspiciet, quia praedicator reprobus jam damnatus ordinem humilium jam gaudere in coelestibus recognoscit. Cui nimirum aemulo universa Israel prospera tribuuntur; scriptum quippe est: Erit Deus omnia in omnibus (I Cor. XV, 28). Cuncta igitur Israel prospera omnia quae Deus est illis beatissimis civibus designantur. Nam cum aeterna illa essentia summum videlicet et simplex bonum in semetipso sit, tamen quia revelatione Majestatis suae 89 omnia illorum beatorum spirituum desideria satiat, hanc esse Doctor egregius demonstrat. Unde et caute non in semetipso Deus omnia, sed in omnibus omnia esse praedicat, quia qui in natura sua unum et simplex bonum ineffabiliter existit, tot bona est bonis omnibus, quot ipsi omnes de contemplatione gloriae adimplentur gaudiis. Universa igitur Israel prospera aemulo tribuuntur, quia ordo humilium electorum inter angelorum choros excipitur, ut divinae contemplationis gaudiis aeterna perceptione satietur. Qui recte aemulus contemptoris esse perhibetur, quia electi Dei etiam superborum atque negligentium praedicatorum bonae admonitionis hortamenta suscipiunt. Unde et Dominus praecipit, dicens: Quaecunque dixerint vobis facite, secundum opera illorum facere nolite (Matth. XXIII, 3). Hinc Paulus ait: Bonum aemulamini in bono omnes (Gal. IV, 18).

Whence also it is decreed by the equity of the eternal judge: Bind his hands and feet, he says, and cast him into the exterior darkness (Matth. XXII, 13). In whose house also there shall not be an old man. For the house of the damned man is hell. But true old age is the maturity of wisdom. In his house therefore there shall not be an old man, because in hell no counsels of salvation can be found. Whence also the sacred Scripture excites to the works of true wisdom, saying: Whatsoever thy hand can do, do it instantly, for there is neither reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge in hell, whither thou art hastening (Eccl. IX, 10). Hence Paul says: Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation (II Cor. VI, 2). In the house of the despiser therefore there shall not be an old man, because whosoever is rightly wise has prepared a mansion for himself not in hell, but in heaven. This despiser also, for the increase of his punishment, sees his rival in the temple in all the prosperity of Israel. For the temple of God is the supernal country, of which also it is said through the Prophet: The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's seat is in heaven (Psal. X, 4). But Israel, which is interpreted as seeing God, signifies that happy multitude of angels, of whom the Lord says in the Gospel: Their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven (Matth. XVIII, 10). But the prosperity of Israel is the everlasting joys of those blessed spirits. In the temple therefore the despiser shall behold his rival, because the reprobate preacher already damned recognizes that the order of the humble already rejoices in the heavenly places. To which rival indeed all the prosperity of Israel is given; for it is written: God shall be all in all (I Cor. XV, 28). All the prosperity of Israel therefore designates all things which God is to those most blessed citizens. For since that eternal essence is indeed the highest and simple good in itself, yet because by the revelation of his Majesty 89 he satisfies all the desires of those blessed spirits, the eminent Doctor demonstrates this to be so. Whence also he cautiously preaches that God is not all in himself, but all in all, because he who in his nature ineffably exists as one and simple good, is as many goods to all the good as they all are filled with joys from the contemplation of glory. All the prosperity of Israel therefore is given to the rival, because the order of the humble elect is received among the choirs of angels, that it may be satisfied with the joys of divine contemplation by eternal perception. Who is rightly said to be the rival of the despiser, because the elect of God receive the exhortations of good admonition even from proud and negligent preachers. Whence also the Lord commands, saying: Whatsoever they shall say to you, do, but according to their works do ye not (Matth. XXIII, 3). Hence Paul says: Be zealous for that which is good in a good thing always (Gal. IV, 18).

Sed cum Scriptura dicat: Tollatur impius, ne videat gloriam Domini (Isai. XXVI, 10), contrarium videtur ut ii qui in inferno damnati sunt eos qui in coelo gaudent videre intelligantur. Sed quia videre etiam ad cognitionem pertinet, in templo aemulum videt, quia etsi inferni poenis constrictus tenetur impius, electos humiles, quos oculis non videt, in coelo non dubitat angelorum gaudiis interesse. Et notandum quia bis dicitur: Non erit senex in domo tua, quia nec de poenarum experientia, quam damnatus habet, nec de scientia alienae felicitatis, nec de poenarum experientia, quam non habet, ad salutem eruditur. Aliquando autem a pastoribus reprobis electi per doctrinam filii nascuntur. Quos nimirum obligatos pastorum culpa non retinet, quia bonae praedicationis ejus hortamenta sequuntur quae audiunt, et non perversa opera quae vident. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 33.) Verumtamen non auferam penitus ex te virum ab altari meo.

17. Viri namque sunt qui ardua rigidae conversationis arce fulgescunt. Quasi ergo dicat. Idcirco eos ab altari meo non aufero, quia viri sunt. Nam pro merito conversationis servatur eis fortitudo et celsitudo potestatis. Unde et per prophetam Dominus aequitatis edicta promulgat, dicens: Anima quae peccaverit, ipsa morietur. Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, nec pater filii (Ezech. XVIII, 20). Ab altari itaque suo ex eo virum Dominus juste auferret, si filius patris iniquitatem portaret. Sed ex eo ipso quod electus auditor in gloria cernitur, reprobo doctori poena cumulatur. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 33.) Sed ut deficiant oculi tui, et tabescat anima tua.

18. Oculi namque ejus deficiunt, quia ex ejus vita qui sua perfecit exhortatione confunduntur. Anima quoque ejus tabescit, quia abundantius dolere compellitur, dum bonum quod docuit per gloriam retributionis florere noscit in subditis, et ipse hoc agere non curavit. In quibus etiam verbis notandum est quia qui penitus ex eo virum ab altari suo se non ablaturum promittit, rarus invenitur esse quem recipit, quia profecto doctoris reprobi plures auditores sunt qui sequantur prava quae agunt, quam recta quae docent. Unde et hic quoque magna pars domus ejus in virili aetate moritura perhibetur.

But since Scripture says: Let the impious be taken away, lest he see the glory of the Lord (Isai. XXVI, 10), it seems contrary that those who are damned in hell should be understood to see those who rejoice in heaven. But because to see also pertains to knowledge, he sees his rival in the temple, because although the impious man is held constrained by the punishments of hell, he does not doubt that the humble elect, whom he does not see with his eyes, are present in heaven in the joys of the angels. And it is to be noted that it is said twice: There shall not be an old man in thy house, because he is not instructed unto salvation neither from the experience of punishments which the damned man has, nor from the knowledge of another's happiness, nor from the experience of punishments which he has not. But sometimes from reprobate pastors children are born to the elect through doctrine. Whom indeed the fault of the pastors does not hold bound, because they follow the exhortations of his good preaching which they hear, and not the perverse works which they see. Whence also it is added:

(Vers. 33.) Yet I will not altogether take away from thee a man from my altar.

17. For they are men who shine forth in the lofty citadel of a rigid conversation. As if he should say. Therefore I do not take them away from my altar, because they are men. For by the merit of their conversation, strength and loftiness of power are preserved to them. Whence also through the prophet the Lord promulgates the edicts of equity, saying: The soul that shall sin, the same shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, nor the father that of the son (Ezek. XVIII, 20). Therefore the Lord would justly take away a man from his altar from him, if the son bore the iniquity of the father. But from this very fact that the elect hearer is seen in glory, the punishment for the reprobate teacher is accumulated. Wherefore also it is added:

(Vers. 33.) But that thy eyes may fail, and thy soul may waste away.

18. For his eyes fail, because they are confounded by the life of him who completed his own exhortation. His soul also wastes away, because he is compelled to grieve more abundantly, while he knows that the good which he taught flourishes through the glory of retribution in his subjects, and he himself did not care to do this. In which words also it is to be noted that he who promises that he will not altogether take away from him a man from his altar, he whom he receives is found to be rare, because forsooth there are more hearers of a reprobate teacher who follow the evil things which they do, than the right things which they teach. Whence also here a great part of his house is said to be about to die in the manly age.

19. Aetas namque virilis tempus est administrandi sacerdotii. Imitator itaque doctoris reprobi ad virilem aetatem ducitur cum ad sacri ordinis celsitudinem promovetur. Ad quam profecto aetatem cum pervenerit, moritur, quia ad tantum ministerium 90 quisquis indignus accesserit, vel in eo indigne vixerit, condemnatur. Unde et Paulus dominici corporis et sanguinis mentionem faciens, ait: Qui manducat et bibit indigne, judicium sibi manducat et bibit (I Cor. XI, 29). In virili ergo aetate moriuntur, quia de praesumptione et ausu ministerii sublimioris intereunt. Hinc ergo, hinc jam quippe praecipites colligant, et tanti ministerii subire onera non ambiant sed expavescant. Nam qui mori praedicitur quando ad virilem, aetatem pervenerit, donec ad eam perveniat vivit, quia nimirum infirmi quique, et illi tanto ministerio impares, si pusillitatis suae modum considerant, habent in sancta Ecclesia locum in quo se custodientes vivant. Unde et per Moysen Dominus denuntiat, dicens: Bestia, si montem tetigerit, lapidetur (Exod. XIX, 12; Hebr. XII, 20). Hinc est etiam quod cum Loth exiret de Sodomis, ab ascensu montis abstinuit, et in Segor parvulam civitatem declinavit (Gen. XIX, 20, seq.) ne dum parvulus adhuc ad altiora nititur, virilem aetatem impingens moriatur. Sodomam quippe eximus cum ardentis concupiscentiae incendia declinamus. Qui statim ad sublimia non ascendimus, quia superioris ministerii summa non tangimus, dum infirmitatem propriam metiendo consideramus, ne si infirmae aetatis nostrae tenere modum contemnimus, qui parvuli viximus, in virili aetate moriamur. In signum vero morituræ domus ambo Heli filii una die mori praedicuntur. Quos nimirum filios illos signare diximus qui ad sacros ordines a propinquis carnalibus promoverentur, non ad intentionem administrandi ordinis, sed ad gloriam mundanae dignitatis. In una ergo die ambo moriuntur, quia in appetitu mundanae felicitatis intereunt. Gloria saecularis, honoris reverentia, potestas culminis, claritas dignitatis, frequentia obsequentium, affluentia rerum saeculariter amata, dies est, sed quae interficit.

20. Audiant ergo filii Heli quia in una die ambo moriuntur. Qui enim de accepto pastorali culmine labentis vitae felicitatem diligunt, intentionem quidem habent gaudii, fructum vero lamenti, propositum in exsultatione vitae, et perventionem in mortis moerorem. Ad mortem itaque properant, quoties vane de temporali felicitate gratulantur. Quod et Apostolus probat, cum apostatantis viduae meminit, dicens: Quae autem in deliciis est, vivens mortua est (I Tim. V, 6). In die namque hac mori perhibuit, qui causam mortis viduae esse delicias ostendit.

19. For the manly age is the time for administering the priesthood. Therefore the imitator of a reprobate teacher is led to the manly age when he is promoted to the loftiness of the sacred order. When indeed he shall have reached that age, he dies, because whosoever 90 shall have approached so great a ministry unworthily, or shall have lived unworthily in it, is condemned. Whence also Paul, making mention of the Lord's body and blood, says: He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself (I Cor. XI, 29). They die therefore in the manly age, because they perish from the presumption and daring of the more sublime ministry. Hence therefore, hence already forsooth let them gather the precipices, and let them not aim for but dread undergoing the burdens of so great a ministry. For he who is foretold to die when he shall have reached the manly age, lives until he reaches it, because indeed all the weak, and those unequal to so great a ministry, if they consider the measure of their own smallness, have a place in the holy Church in which they may live guarding themselves. Whence also through Moses the Lord denounces, saying: The beast, if it shall touch the mountain, shall be stoned (Exod. XIX, 12; Heb. XII, 20). Hence it is also that when Lot went out from Sodom, he abstained from ascending the mountain, and turned aside into the little city of Segor (Gen. XIX, 20, seq.), lest while yet a little one he strives for higher things, he should die striking against the manly age. For we go out of Sodom when we decline the fires of burning concupiscence. We who do not immediately ascend to the sublime things, because we do not touch the heights of the superior ministry, while we consider by measuring our own infirmity, lest if we despise holding the measure of our weak age, we who lived as little ones, should die in the manly age. But as a sign of the house about to die, both of Heli's sons are foretold to die in one day. Which sons indeed we have said signify those who are promoted to sacred orders by carnal kinsmen, not with the intention of administering the order, but for the glory of worldly dignity. In one day therefore both die, because they perish in the appetite for worldly happiness. Secular glory, reverence of honor, power of the height, brightness of dignity, frequency of those following, abundance of things secularly loved, is a day, but one which kills.

20. Let the sons of Heli therefore hear that they both die in one day. For they who love the happiness of a falling life from the accepted pastoral height, have indeed an intention of joy, but the fruit of lamentation, a purpose in the exultation of life, and an arrival in the sorrow of death. Therefore they hasten to death, as often as they vainly congratulate themselves on temporal happiness. Which also the Apostle proves, when he mentions the apostatizing widow, saying: But she that is in pleasures, living is dead (I Tim. V, 6). For he held that she died in this day, who showed that the cause of the widow's death was pleasures.

Sed mors filiorum minus pessima esset, si ipsa causa mortis alienae non fieret. Unde et non simpliciter mori, sed in signum morituraе domus mori praedicuntur, quia cum ii qui de vicino doctorem reprobum imitantur in eodem praecipitio corruunt, et secutores sequentium in ruina cumulantur. Hoc itaque de officio suscepti culminis temporalem felicitatem amantes audiant, et reatus sui magnitudinem pertimescant. Tanto denique graviori poena digni sunt, quanto aperte conspiciunt quia de vanitate quam diligunt non soli moriuntur, quia dum in praetextu mundanae laetitiae mortem ebibunt, potus sui pestem ad sequentium se multitudinem transmittunt. Quibus tamen verbis potest doctoribus reprobis praesentis vitae brevitas intimari. In una quippe die moriuntur, quia cum ad terminum hujus vitae perveniunt, breve eis omnino fuisse cernitur quod vixerunt. Unde per quemdam sapientem dicitur: Gaudium hypocritae ad instar puncti (Job. XX, 5). Hinc iterum de hujus mundi amatoribus beatus Job loquitur, dicens: Ducunt in bonis dies suos, 91 et in puncto ad inferna descendunt (Ibid. XXI, 13). Sed raptis ad poenam reprobis, ad gregis dominici curam sapientes et electi pastores excitantur. Quare et subsequenter adjungit:

(Vers. 35.) Et suscitabo mihi sacerdotem fidelem.

21. Fidelem namque sacerdotem sibi Dominus excitat, quia videlicet eum summus locus ad sui curam exigit qui non solum recte intelligat, sed qui fideliter ministret. Ministrare autem tunc recte poterit, cum ministerii sui modum de sacro eloquio recognoscit. Unde et cum fidelis sacerdos promittitur, juxta cor et animam omnipotentis Dei facturus esse perhibetur. Quid enim cor et animam Dei, nisi sacram ejus Scripturam accipimus? Nam corde cogitamus ad deliberationem, anima vero afficimur ad amorem. Quia ergo in sacro eloquio consilia omnipotentis Dei agnoscimus, ibique amorem quo humanum genus dilexit invenimus, ipsum eloquium cor et anima ejus rationabiliter designant. Illum itaque omnipotens Deus ad suum ministerium sacerdotem eligit, qui juxta cor ejus et animam facit, quia profecto non alius tanto ordine dignus est, nisi qui voluntatem ejus de sacro eloquio didicit, et hoc quod didicit proximorum utilitatibus per studium charitatis impendit. Sed vigilanter est adhuc intuendum quod dicitur:

(Vers. 35.) Juxta cor et animam meam.

But the death of the sons would be less worse, if it were not itself the cause of another's death. Whence also they are foretold to die not simply, but as a sign of the house about to die, because when those who closely imitate a reprobate teacher fall in the same precipice, the followers of those following are also accumulated in the ruin. Let those therefore who love temporal happiness from the office of the accepted height hear this, and let them greatly fear the magnitude of their guilt. They are worthy of so much the more grievous punishment, as they clearly perceive that from the vanity which they love they do not die alone, because while under the pretext of worldly gladness they drink in death, they transmit the pest of their drink to the multitude of those following them. By which words nevertheless the brevity of the present life can be intimated to reprobate teachers. For they die in one day, because when they come to the end of this life, that which they lived is seen to have been altogether brief for them. Whence it is said by a certain wise man: The joy of the hypocrite is like a point (Job XX, 5). Hence again blessed Job speaks of the lovers of this world, saying: They lead their days in good things, 91 and in a point they go down to hell (Ibid. XXI, 13). But when the reprobate are snatched away to punishment, wise and elect pastors are excited to the care of the Lord's flock. Wherefore also he subsequently adds:

(Vers. 35.) And I will raise me up a faithful priest.

21. For the Lord raises up for himself a faithful priest, because namely the highest place requires him for its care who may not only rightly understand, but who may faithfully minister. But he will then be able to minister rightly, when he recognizes the manner of his ministry from the sacred eloquence. Whence also when a faithful priest is promised, he is said to be about to act according to the heart and soul of almighty God. For what do we take the heart and soul of God to be, but his sacred Scripture? For with the heart we think for deliberation, but with the soul we are affected for love. Because therefore in the sacred eloquence we recognize the counsels of almighty God, and there we find the love with which he loved the human race, the eloquence itself reasonably designates his heart and soul. Therefore almighty God chooses that priest for his ministry who acts according to his heart and soul, because forsooth no other is worthy of so great an order, except him who has learned his will from the sacred eloquence, and bestows that which he has learned upon the utilities of neighbors through the study of charity. But it is still to be vigilantly considered what is said:

(Vers. 35.) According to my heart and my soul.

22. Nam quaedam in Scriptura sacra inveniuntur praecepta quae dispensatione quidem Dei praecepta sunt, et non amore Dei. Quae profecto si sacerdos qui excitandus promittitur adimpleret, juxta cor quidem Dei, et non juxta animam, faceret, dum consilium divinae dispensationis, et non amoris praeceptum operibus reddidisset. An non de dispensatione Dei illa mandata ejus fuerant, de quibus loquitur, dicens: Dei eis mandata non bona (Ezech. XX, 25)? Et cum Pharisaei de dando repudii libello cum ipsa veritate disputarent, audierunt: Ad duritiam vestram dedit vobis legem Moyses (Matth. XIX, 8). Quia itaque de dispensatione consilii ejus illa fuere, quisquis eisdem praeceptis usus est, juxta cor quidem Domini, et non juxta animam fecit. Nam cordis et animae praeceptum illud est de quo dicitur: Hoc est praeceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos (Joan. XV, 12). Quia hoc quod per consilium praecipit per amplexum charitatis apprehendit. Hinc item dicit: Diligite inimicos vestros, benefacite iis qui oderunt vos (Luc. VI, 27). Hinc item praecipit, dicens: Quae vultis ut faciant vobis homines, haec facite eis. Haec itaque et hujusmodi cordis et animae Dei praecepta sunt, quia hoc revelatione ostenditur secreti ejus consilii quod in ejus conspectu suscipitur probatione charitatis. Sacerdos ergo fidelis per hoc indicium noscitur. Si videlicet juxta cor et animam ejus operatur, quia profecto tunc vere fidelis est, si non dispensationis ejus licentiam, sed praecepta sequatur amoris. Sed quia non frustra, sed ad lucrum subjectae plebis eligitur, subdit, atque ait:

(Vers. 35.) Et aedificabo ei domum fidelem.

23. Domus namque sacerdotis est amplitudo in qua conversantur populi subjecti. Quae profecto domus ei fidelis a Domino aedificatur, quia ad obedientiae studium divina inspiratione erigitur. Infidelis namque domus est ea subditorum societas quae boni rectoris quotidie praedicationem suscipit, cui tamen obedire per studium boni operis non intendit. Infidelis enim domus esse cognoscitur, quia verbi Dei pecunia quae ei praedicatoris sui ministerio creditur per negligentiam prodigae vitae dissipatur, 92 et quod sibi ad negotii lucrum committitur nequaquam in tempore reddendae rationis invenitur.

22. For certain precepts are found in sacred Scripture which were indeed commanded by the dispensation of God, and not by the love of God. Which forsooth if the priest who is promised to be raised up should fulfill, he would act according to the heart of God, and not according to his soul, while he would have rendered by his works the counsel of divine dispensation, and not the precept of love. Were not those mandates of his from the dispensation of God, of which he speaks, saying: I gave them statutes that were not good (Ezek. XX, 25)? And when the Pharisees disputed with Truth itself about giving a bill of divorce, they heard: Moses because of the hardness of your hearts gave you the law (Matth. XIX, 8). Because therefore those things were of the dispensation of his counsel, whosoever used those same precepts acted according to the heart of the Lord, and not according to his soul. For that precept of the heart and soul is that of which it is said: This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you (John XV, 12). Because that which he commands through counsel, he apprehends through the embrace of charity. Hence also he says: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you (Luke VI, 27). Hence also he commands, saying: Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them. These therefore and the like are the precepts of the heart and soul of God, because by revelation that is shown of his secret counsel which is received in his sight by the proof of charity. A faithful priest therefore is known by this sign. If namely he works according to his heart and soul, because forsooth he is then truly faithful, if he follows not the license of his dispensation, but the precepts of love. But because he is chosen not in vain, but for the gain of the subject people, he adds, and says:

(Vers. 35.) And I will build him a faithful house.

23. For the house of a priest is the amplitude in which the subject people dwell. Which house indeed is built for him as faithful by the Lord, because it is raised to the study of obedience by divine inspiration. For an unfaithful house is that society of subjects which daily receives the preaching of a good rector, yet does not intend to obey it through the study of good work. For it is known to be an unfaithful house, because the money of the word of God which is credited to it by the ministry of its preacher is dissipated through the negligence of a prodigal life, 92 and that which is committed to it for the gain of business is by no means found in the time of rendering an account.

Bono itaque praedicatori fidelis a Domino domus construitur cum ad obediendum voci ejus subjectae plebis divinitus corda praeparantur, ut non solum id quod in ea reconditur de verbi talento custodiat, sed lucro multiplici cumulatum ad mensam aeternae susceptionis ducat. Et notandum quia fidelis domus a Domino aedificari dicitur, ut de bona conversatione subjecti populi praedicator nequaquam inaniter glorietur. Notandum quoque quia sacerdotem fidelem sibi Dominus excitat, ut subjectorum corda hoc ipsum, quod optimo rectore reguntur, tribuere suis meritis non praesumant. Notandum etiam quod sacerdotem quem excitat Dominus dicit fidelem sibi, domum autem quam ei aedificat fidelem ipsi sacerdoti dicit futuram; quia profecto praedicator Deo obedientiam debet, subjectus praelato. Sed ante subjectum tunc recte praelatus graditur, si ad omnia dirigenda vitae suae itinera veritas ipsa videatur. Sequitur ergo:

(Vers. 35.) Et ambulabit coram Christo meo omnibus diebus.

24. Christus autem Domini Redemptor est generis humani. Qui nimirum, quia jam ad coelos ascendisse creditur, a fidelibus suis nunc non oculis corporeis, sed mente, videtur. Coram ipso itaque omnibus diebus ambulat qui cogitatione subita nihil operatur. Nam ut rectos gressus foris ponat in opere, intus ad Christum respicit, quem per considerationem portat in corde. Sed quia adhuc reprobo pastori loquitur, subjungens, ait:

(Vers. 36.) Futurum est autem ut quicunque remanserit de domo tua veniat ut oretur pro eo.

25. Remansurus namque de ejus domo aliquis dicitur, quia magna pars illius moritura perhibetur. De domo namque reprobi pastoris remanet quem conscientia peccati a spe consequendae veniae non exstinguit. Remanet ergo quia pondus conscientiae per poenitentiae propositum laevigatur spe consequendae vitae. Qui profecto ut oretur pro eo venit, et ad Deum poenitendo properat, a quo peccando recessit. Ut oretur itaque pro eo venit, quia qui indignum Deo se fecit, dignum intercessorem exigit, ut alienis precibus expietur, qui propriis mundari non posse cognoscitur. Unde et pie Jacobus admonet, dicens: Confitemini alterutrum peccata vestra, et orate pro invicem, ut salvemini (Jac. V, 16). Hinc iterum: Multum valet oratio justi assidua. Sed pro eo oratio valet, qui dum se a peccati immunditia cohibet, ad Dei se similitudinem redigit, qua se peccando spoliavit. Unde et hic quoque subditur:

(Vers. 36.) Ut offerat nummum argenteum.

For a faithful house is constructed by the Lord for a good preacher when the hearts of the subject people are divinely prepared to obey his voice, so that he may not only guard that which is laid up in it of the talent of the word, but may lead it back accumulated with manifold gain to the table of eternal reception. And it is to be noted that a faithful house is said to be built by the Lord, so that the preacher may by no means vainly glory in the good conversation of the subject people. It is to be noted also that the Lord raises up for himself a faithful priest, so that the hearts of the subjects may not presume to attribute this very fact, that they are governed by a most excellent rector, to their own merits. It is to be noted also that the priest whom the Lord raises up he calls faithful to himself, but the house which he builds for him he says will be faithful to the priest himself; because forsooth the preacher owes obedience to God, the subject to the prelate. But the prelate then rightly walks before the subject, if Truth itself is seen for the directing of all the journeys of his life. It follows therefore:

(Vers. 35.) And he shall walk before my Christ all days.

24. But the Christ of the Lord is the Redeemer of the human race. Who indeed, because he is already believed to have ascended to the heavens, is now seen by his faithful not with bodily eyes, but with the mind. He therefore walks before him all days who does nothing by sudden thought. For that he may place right steps without in work, he looks within to Christ, whom he carries in his heart through consideration. But because he still speaks to the reprobate pastor, subjoining, he says:

(Vers. 36.) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall remain of thy house shall come that he may be prayed for.

25. For someone is said to be about to remain of his house, because a great part of it is said to be about to die. For he remains of the house of the reprobate pastor whom the consciousness of sin does not extinguish from the hope of obtaining pardon. He remains therefore because the weight of conscience is lightened through the purpose of penance by the hope of obtaining life. Who indeed comes that he may be prayed for, and hastens to God by repenting, from whom he departed by sinning. He comes therefore that he may be prayed for, because he who made himself unworthy of God, requires a worthy intercessor, that he may be expiated by another's prayers, who is known not to be able to be cleansed by his own. Whence also James piously admonishes, saying: Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be saved (James V, 16). Hence again: The continual prayer of a just man availeth much. But prayer avails for him, who while he restrains himself from the uncleanness of sin, brings himself back to the likeness of God, of which he despoiled himself by sinning. Whence also here it is added:

(Vers. 36.) That he may offer a piece of silver.

26. In nummo igitur imago Domini sculpitur, ut ejus esse cognoscatur a quo formari praecipitur. Nummus itaque Dei similitudo ejus accipitur. Unde in Genesi loquitur, dicens: Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram (Genes. I, 26). Et quia de sacro eloquio Dei imaginem et similitudinem ad quam redigamur agnoscimus, argenteus nummus esse perhibetur. Qui ergo a peccati via ut pro se oretur venit, nummum argenteum offerre debet, quia nihil ei prodest quod poenitendo compungitur, nec quod flendo confitetur, si, inemendata et incorrepta, interius pulchritudine bonae voluntatis, luce Dei imaginis nequaquam radiare cognoscitur. Imago etenim et similitudo Dei est inclyto odio malum odire, et amore perfecto Deum diligere. Unde et Propheta claritatem divinae similitudinis ab humano genere periisse intuens, ad eum 93 qui cum inclyta reparationis nostrae luce de coelo venit respicit, dicens: Dilexisti justitiam, et odisti iniquitatem (Psal. XLIV, 8). Hinc se jam de ejus contemplatione in perfectionis formam renovatum considerans, ait: Iniquos odio habui, et legem tuam dilexi (Psal. CXVIII, 113). Qui ergo de domo reprobi per confessionem venit, qui per humilitatem pro se orari Dominum petit, curet omnino necesse est ut nummum argenteum offerat, quatenus, sumpto splendore bonae voluntatis, perfecte oderit malum quod fecit, et bonum integro amore diligat quod neglexerit. Unde et justi judicis examine propitiationis edicta promulgantur. In quacunque die, vel hora, ait, peccator convertitur, vita vivet, et non morietur (Ezech. XVIII, 21, 27). Conversio autem peccatoris non est in humilitate confessionis, sed in renovatione interioris hominis, cum peccatori, jam divina inspiratione correcto, et malum displicet quod amavit, et bonum placet quod odit. Nam sunt nonnulli qui se et de nequitia accusant criminis, et pravitatem non corrigunt voluntatis. Qui profecto converti ad Dominum non creduntur, quia vera conversio in ore non accipitur, sed in corde. Converti etenim simul verti est. Conversio itaque peccatoris vera tunc est, cum ad Creatoris nostri beneplacitum uterque noster homo reducitur, cum et caro nostra per iniquitatis odium cohibetur a perpetratione facinoris, et per amorem justitiae mens se extendit ad intentionem bonae operationis.

26. On the coin, therefore, the image of the Lord is carved, that it may be known to be his by whom it is commanded to be formed. The coin, therefore, is taken as the likeness of God. Whence he speaks in Genesis, saying: Let us make man to our image and likeness (Gen. I, 26). And because from the sacred eloquence we recognize the image and likeness of God to which we are to be brought back, it is said to be a silver coin. He therefore who comes from the way of sin that he may be prayed for, ought to offer a silver coin, because it profits him nothing that he is pricked by repenting, nor that he confesses by weeping, if, with the beauty of good will remaining unamended and uncorrected within, he is by no means known to radiate with the light of the image of God. For the image and likeness of God is to hate evil with a glorious hatred, and to love God with perfect love. Whence also the Prophet, beholding that the brightness of the divine likeness had perished from the human race, looks back to him 93 who came from heaven with the glorious light of our reparation, saying: Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity (Psal. XLIV, 8). Hence now considering himself renewed into the form of perfection from the contemplation of him, he says: I have hated the unjust, and have loved thy law (Psal. CXVIII, 113). He therefore who comes from the house of the reprobate through confession, who through humility asks the Lord to be prayed for on his behalf, must altogether take care that he offer a silver coin, so that, having taken up the splendor of good will, he may perfectly hate the evil which he did, and love the good with an integral love which he neglected. Whence also by the examination of the just judge the edicts of propitiation are promulgated. In whatsoever day, or hour, he says, the sinner shall be converted, he shall live by life, and shall not die (Ezek. XVIII, 21, 27). But the conversion of a sinner is not in the humility of confession, but in the renovation of the interior man, when to the sinner, already corrected by divine inspiration, both the evil which he loved is displeasing, and the good which he hated is pleasing. For there are some who both accuse themselves of the wickedness of crime, and do not correct the perversity of will. Who indeed are not believed to be converted to the Lord, because true conversion is not received in the mouth, but in the heart. For to be converted is to be turned together. Therefore the conversion of a sinner is true then, when both our men are brought back to the good pleasure of our Creator, when both our flesh is restrained from the perpetration of a deed by the hatred of iniquity, and the mind extends itself to the intention of good operation through the love of justice.

Sed quia nonnulli intra Ecclesiam sunt, qui tantum in vitae suae terminum ad poenitentiae satisfactionem veniunt, et judicio Veritatis dicitur: Quacunque hora peccator convertitur, vivit, a nonnullis valde quaeri solet si statim vitam post carnis mortem inveniant qui magnae vitae tempore peccata perpetrant, et tantum in vitae exitu se nequiter egisse accusant. Ad quod dicendum est quia ex vi conversionis magnitudo deletur criminis. Vis autem conversionis est affectio charitatis cordi infusae visitatione sancti Spiritus. Et scriptum est de eodem Spiritu: Quia ipse remissio peccatorum est. Nam cum electorum corda dignanter visitat, ab omni peccatorum immunditia potenter purgat, quia ut se menti infuderit, eam protinus in peccatorum et vitiorum odia et in virtutum amorem ineffabiliter excitat. Facit eam statim odisse quod amabat, et quod odio habuerat ardenter diligere, atque in utroque valde ingemiscere, quia et mala quae odit se damnabiliter amasse recolit, et bona quae diligit odisse. Quis enim audeat dicere, licet omnimoda peccatorum sarcina praegravetur, quod perire possit aliquis visitatus gratia Spiritus sancti? Quia ergo peccator nulla hora convertitur, nisi qua a sancto Spiritu illustratur, quid restat, nisi quia sicut peccati mortem exsecrando descrit, ita vita justitiae ad quam se desideranter convertit vivat? Qui statim post mortem in vita recipitur, si tantum amoris ignem recipit in conversione qui consumere in anima possit omnem congestam peccati rubiginem. Unde et de peccatrice muliere dicitur: Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum (Luc. VII, 47). Hinc ab eadem Veritate in cruce pendente dicitur: Amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in paradiso (Ibid., XXIII, 43). In vitae igitur exitu hi solummodo salubriter resipiscunt, qui et per internam visitationem perfecte bona diligunt, et mala oderunt quae amaverant. Qui tamen si sufficienter pro admissis iniquitatibus dolere non possunt, nihilominus et isti in hora qua convertuntur vivunt. 94 Nam qui perfectionem bonae voluntatis habuerunt in confessione peccati, post mortem purgatoria poena peccati ad vitam transeunt, si ad delenda peccata sufficientem vim amoris nequaquam habuerunt. Unde et Paulus dicit: Sic salvi fient, quasi per ignem (I Cor. III, 15). Sed peccator, qui ibi salvari per ignem meruit, hic per afflictionem carnis adimpleat hoc quod sibi de vi amoris deesse cognoscit.

(Vers. 36.) Et tortam panis.

27. Panis namque nomine aliquando terrenae delectationis refectio designatur. Quare et propheta Jeremias in appetitu saeculari corruptae Judaeae populum memorans, ait: Omnis populus ejus gemens (Thren. I, 11), et quaerens panem. Panem itaque peccator conversus torquet cum praeteritam delectationem cruciat per afflictionem poenitentiae. Panem namque torquere est carnem pro perpetrata delectatione affligere.

But because there are some within the Church, who only at the end of their life come to the satisfaction of penance, and it is said by the judgment of Truth: In whatsoever hour the sinner is converted, he lives, it is often much asked by some if they immediately find life after the death of the flesh who perpetrate sins for a long time of life, and only at the exit of life accuse themselves of having acted wickedly. To which it must be said that from the force of conversion the magnitude of the crime is deleted. But the force of conversion is the affection of charity infused into the heart by the visitation of the Holy Spirit. And it is written of the same Spirit: That he himself is the remission of sins. For when he worthily visits the hearts of the elect, he powerfully purges them from all uncleanness of sins, because as soon as he has infused himself into the mind, he forthwith ineffably excites it to the hatred of sins and vices and to the love of virtues. He makes it immediately to hate what it loved, and to love ardently what it had hated, and to groan greatly in both, because it recalls that it loved damnably the evils which it hates, and hated the goods which it loves. For who would dare to say, although he be weighed down by every kind of burden of sins, that anyone visited by the grace of the Holy Spirit can perish? Because therefore a sinner is converted at no hour, except that in which he is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, what remains, except that as he deserts the death of sin by execrating it, so he may live by the life of justice to which he convertedly desires? Who is immediately received into life after death, if he receives so great a fire of love in conversion as can consume in the soul all the gathered rust of sin. Whence also it is said of the sinful woman: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much (Luke VII, 47). Hence it is said by the same Truth hanging on the cross: Amen I say to thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise (Ibid., XXIII, 43). At the exit of life, therefore, those only piously repent, who both through internal visitation perfectly love good things, and hate the evils which they had loved. Who nevertheless if they cannot sufficiently grieve for the iniquities committed, nevertheless even these live in the hour in which they are converted. 94 For those who had the perfection of good will in the confession of sin, pass to life after death by the purgatorial punishment of sin, if they by no means had sufficient force of love for deleting sins. Whence also Paul says: So they shall be saved, yet as by fire (I Cor. III, 15). But let the sinner, who there merited to be saved through fire, fulfill here through the affliction of the flesh that which he knows to be wanting to him of the force of love.

(Vers. 36.) And a cake of bread.

27. For by the name of bread sometimes the refreshment of earthly delight is designated. Wherefore also the prophet Jeremiah, mentioning the people of a Judea corrupted in secular appetite, says: All her people sigh (Lam. I, 11), and seek bread. Therefore the converted sinner twists the bread when he tortures past delight through the affliction of penance. For to twist the bread is to afflict the flesh for the delight perpetrated.

Qui ergo sine tormento ignis ad salutem transire desiderat, cum nummo argenteo tortam panis offerat, ut qui per bonam voluntatem peccata deserit, ea nimirum valida carnis afflictione penitus exstinguat. Nummum namque argenteum offerebat, qui, recepta jam Dei similitudine, confitendo exsecrabatur quod fecerat, dicens: Computruerunt cicatrices meae a facie insipientiae meae (Psal. XXXVII, 6). Et item: Incurvatus sum, et humiliatus usquequaque. Sed qui nummum argenteum sibi non sufficere ad oblationem timuit, panis tortam addere curavit. Nam confitetur, et dicit: Rugiebam a gemitu cordis mei (Ibid., 9). Rugitus enim fletum magni doloris insinuat in afflictione poenitentis. Hunc tortum panem argenteo nummo socians idem ipse loquitur, dicens: Quoniam iniquitatem meam annuntiabo, et cogitabo pro peccato meo (Ibid., 19). Pro peccato etenim cogitare est delectationi praeteritae dignam carnis afflictionem proponere. Offerendum ergo panem torquebat, qui et flagitia perpetrata pronuntians, qualiter ea delere posset cogitabat. Et quia de austeritate conversationis poenitentibus subrepere aliquando solet cupido laudis, intentio vere conversi peccatoris insinuatur per hoc quod subditur:

(Vers. 36.) Dicatque: Dimitte me, obsecro, ad unam partem sacerdotalem.

28. Pars namque sacerdotalis uniuscujusque est in aeterna vita retributio electi. Sacerdotes etenim Dei omnes electi ejus sunt, quia cui per oblationem ministerii sui incessanter serviunt sacra semper offerre munera non desistunt. Unde etiam illi in regno tripudiantes, dicunt: Redemisti nos Deo in sanguine tuo, et fecisti nos Deo nostro regnum, et sacerdotes (Apoc. V, 9, 10). Dicere ergo peccatori converso: Dimitte me, obsecro, ad unam partem sacerdotalem, est de austeritate vitae et poenitentiae solam partem aeternae beatitudinis exspectare, ut videlicet securitatem delectationis inveniat, quam et perenni perfruitione possideat, et post se tortiones poenitentiae nunquam trahat. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 36.) Ut comedam buccellam panis.

29. Si enim panis in sacro eloquio pro delectatione accipitur, buccella panis est indeficiens delectamentum aeternae vitae. De quo nimirum oblectamento per prophetam dicitur: Gaudium et laetitia invenietur in ea, gratiarum actio, et vox laudis (Isai., LI, 3). Hinc item jam ad mensam non tortae panis, sed buccellae invitatos convivas intuens, ait: Laetitia sempiterna super capita eorum, gaudium et exsultationem obtinebunt (Ibid., XXXV, 10).

He therefore who desires to pass to salvation without the torment of fire, let him offer a cake of bread with the silver coin, so that he who deserts sins through good will, may forsooth altogether extinguish them by valid affliction of the flesh. For he was offering a silver coin, who, having already received the likeness of God, by confessing execrated what he had done, saying: My scars are putrefied because of my foolishness (Psal. XXXVII, 6). And again: I am bowed down, and humbled on every side. But he who feared that the silver coin would not suffice him for an oblation, took care to add a cake of bread. For he confesses, and says: I roared from the groaning of my heart (Ibid., 9). For a roaring insinuates the weeping of great grief in the affliction of the penitent. Joining this twisted bread to the silver coin, the same one speaks, saying: For I will declare my iniquity, and I will think for my sin (Ibid., 19). For to think for sin is to propose a worthy affliction of the flesh for past delight. He therefore twisted the bread to be offered, who both pronouncing the outrages perpetrated, thought how he might be able to delete them. And because from the austerity of conversation the desire for praise sometimes creeps in upon the penitent, the intention of a truly converted sinner is insinuated through that which is added:

(Vers. 36.) And let him say: Dismiss me, I beseech thee, to one priestly part.

28. For the priestly part of each one is the retribution of the elect in eternal life. For all the elect of God are his priests, because they never cease to offer sacred gifts to him whom they incessantly serve through the oblation of their ministry. Whence also they, triumphing in the kingdom, say: Thou hast redeemed us to God in thy blood, and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests (Apoc. V, 9, 10). Therefore to say to a converted sinner: Dismiss me, I beseech thee, to one priestly part, is to expect from the austerity of life and penance only the part of eternal beatitude, so that namely he may find security of delight, which he may both possess by perennial enjoyment, and never drag after him the twistings of penance. Wherefore also it is added:

(Vers. 36.) That I may eat a morsel of bread.

29. For if bread in the sacred eloquence is taken for delight, a morsel of bread is the unfailing delight of eternal life. Of which enjoyment indeed it is said through the prophet: Joy and gladness shall be found in it, thanksgiving, and the voice of praise (Isai. LI, 3). Hence also now beholding the guests invited to the table not of a cake of bread, but of a morsel, he says: Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and exultation (Ibid. XXXV, 10).

Hinc Psalmista voce correpti poenitentis pronuntians, dicit: Notas mihi fecisti vias vitae, adimplebis 95 me laetitia cum vultu tuo, delectationes in dextera tua usque in finem (Psal. XV, 10). Viae etenim vitae sunt afflictiones poenitentiae, quibus nimirum a damnationis suae barathro peccator ad supernam patriam ducitur, dum pro commissis iniquitatibus sponte cruciatur. Unde et cum correptum se esse peccatorem insinuat, praesumit, dicens: Tu es, Domine, qui restituisti haereditatem meam mihi (Psal. XV, 5). Et item confidens, ait: Quoniam non derelinques animam meam in inferno (Ibid. 10). Viae namque vitae peccatori notae fiunt quando afflictiones poenitentiae ei divinitus insinuantur, quando videlicet illuminata mente considerat quam vitae amaritudinem singulis praeteritae culpae delectationibus apponat. Qui nimirum cum vultu omnipotentis Dei jucunda laetitia adimpleri gloriatur, quia de manifesta divinae contemplationis satietate reficitur, et qui in laeva vitae praesentis ad tempus poenitendo compungitur, in dextra aeternae vitae usque in finem delectationibus satiatur. Qui ergo tortam panis obtulit, ad buccellae comestionem perducitur, quia qui amore supernae vitae noxias delectationes cruciat, in discubitu aeterni gaudii sibi perpetuam refectionem parat. Sequitur:

CAPUT IV.

(I Reg. III, 1.) Puer autem Samuel ministrabat Domino coram Heli.

1. Illud autem hoc in loco repetiisse ostenditur, quod de electo puero superius memoratur, ubi dicit: Puer autem Samuel erat minister in conspectu Domini ante faciem Heli. Hoc quidem est ministrare Domino coram Heli, quod esse ministrum Domini ante faciem Heli. Et quia ibi istud, Domino adjuvante, plenius exposuimus, in iteranda ejus expositione penitus non moramur. Verum quia divinus sermo est, qui hoc in isto loco, et in illo loquitur, sine utilitate rationis nequaquam hoc egisse monstratur. Pro fastidio itaque lectoris explanationem tacemus, repetitionis vero causam dicimus ad ejus utilitatem. Quidam namque praelatorum sanctae Ecclesiae magisterio subditi rudes obediunt; sed cum paulo altius per conversationem proficiunt, in eadem obedientiae humilitate nequaquam persistunt. Quos bene Agar Sarae ancilla spiritaliter designat, quae cum de Abraham viro ejus concepisse se vidit, dominam despexerit (Gen. XVI, 5). Agar quippe concipit quando reproba mens subditi, aut per eruditionem scientiae se proficere, aut per vitae conversationem, credit.

Hence the Psalmist, pronouncing with the voice of a corrected penitent, says: Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt fill 95 me with joy with thy countenance, delights in thy right hand even to the end (Psal. XV, 10). For the ways of life are the afflictions of penance, by which indeed from the abyss of his own damnation the sinner is led to the supernal country, while he is spontaneously tortured for the iniquities committed. Whence also when he insinuates that he is a corrected sinner, he presumes, saying: Thou art he, O Lord, who hast restored my inheritance to me (Psal. XV, 5). And again trusting, he says: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (Ibid. 10). For the ways of life become known to the sinner when the afflictions of penance are divinely insinuated to him, when namely with an enlightened mind he considers what bitterness of life he should apply to each delight of past fault. Who indeed glories in being filled with pleasant gladness with the countenance of almighty God, because he is refreshed by the manifest satiety of divine contemplation, and he who on the left of the present life is pricked for a time by repenting, on the right of eternal life is satisfied with delights even to the end. He therefore who offered a cake of bread, is led to the eating of a morsel, because he who for the love of the supernal life tortures noxious delights, prepares for himself a perpetual refreshment in the banquet of eternal joy. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

(I Kings III, 1.) But the child Samuel ministered to the Lord before Heli.

1. But that is shown to have been repeated in this place, which is mentioned above concerning the elect child, where it says: But the child Samuel was a minister in the sight of the Lord before the face of Heli. This indeed is to minister to the Lord before Heli, which is to be a minister of the Lord before the face of Heli. And because we have more fully explained that there, the Lord helping, we do not linger at all in repeating its exposition. But because it is the divine word which speaks this in this place, and in that, it is shown by no means to have done this without utility of reason. Therefore, to avoid the reader's tedium, we are silent as to the explanation, but we tell the cause of the repetition for his utility. For some who are subject to the magistery of the prelates of the holy Church obey as unpolished ones; but when they profit a little higher through conversation, they by no means persist in the same humility of obedience. Whom Hagar, Sarah's handmaid, well designates spiritually, who when she saw that she had conceived from Abraham her husband, despised her mistress (Gen. XVI, 5). For Hagar conceives when the reprobate mind of a subject believes that it profits either through the instruction of knowledge, or through conversation of life.

Quae profecto praegnans dominam suam despexisse dicitur, quia jam praesidenti sibi praepositi sui voluntati per obedientiam subdi dedignatur. Sed quae dominam despicit, ancilla esse perhibetur, quia superbi subjecti et infirmi sunt per elationem, et ad filiorum Dei numerum non pertingunt. Samuelis autem profectus exponitur, quia superius dictum est: Puer autem Samuel proficiebat et crescebat et placebat tam Deo quam hominibus (I Reg. II, 18). Quae profecto tria qua sublimitate conversationis percurrerit, supra expositum est. Quia ergo etiam nunc coram magistro ministrare memoratur, quid est, nisi quia electis auditoribus formam praebet, ut quo altiori vita proficiunt, servare bonum obedientiae nunquam obliviscantur? Nam tunc vere proficiunt, si ad altitudinem meritorum et fortitudine conantur operis, et virtute humilitatis.

2. Quo in loco est aliud quod notari debeat: quia tunc Samuel coram Heli Domino ministrare ostenditur, quando ipse de filiorum negligentia a Domino objurgatur. Nonnulli namque subjecti, dum fortitudinis suae modum considerant, praelatorum suorum malunt esse severi judices quam auditores pii. Qui nimirum quia exaggerare et discutere eorum vitas consueverunt, si in eorum conversatione vel levioris delicti maculas intuentur, subdi eorum praecepto obediendo renuunt. Sed vere fortes existerent, si majorum quae infirma existimant humiliter sustinerent. Nam ante Deum ille magnus per meritum noscitur, qui ei in bono praecepto subjicitur qui ex parte aliqua venerabilis non videtur. Ecce enim Heli aperta Dei sententia de negligentiae suae perpetrata culpa reprehenditur, sed puer Domini Samuel coram eo ministrare Domino memoratur, ut profecto apud se colligat qualis sit qui in leviori culpa sibi praelatum despicit, si ei se Samuel obediendo subdidit quem omnipotens Deus sui examinis tanta districtione reprobavit. Sed quia Heli non valde supra peccantes subditos honorasse reprehenditur, ipsae sacrorum ordinum dignitates pensandae sunt. Nam rector peccantem subditum nisi correptum honorare debet, subjectus autem nec tunc praelatum despicere, cum se justum et illum agnoverit peccatorem, quia aeternus judex subditorum judicium sanctae Ecclesiae rectoribus tribuit, sed eosdem rectores discutiendos suo examini reservavit. Hoc tamen ipsum rectoribus valde timendum est, quod Dei servantur examini, quia tanto subtiliores rationes vitae et doctrinae suae parare debent, quanto sapientior est judex quem sustinent.

Who indeed being pregnant is said to have despised her mistress, because she already disdains to be subjected by obedience to the will of her superior presiding over her. But she who despises her mistress is said to be a handmaid, because proud subjects are also weak through elation, and do not reach the number of the children of God. But Samuel's progress is explained, because it was said above: But the child Samuel profited and grew and pleased both God and men (I Kings II, 18). Through what sublimity of conversation he ran through those three things, has been explained above. Because therefore even now he is mentioned to minister before his master, what is it, except that he offers a form to the elect hearers, that by how much they profit in a higher life, they may never forget to keep the good of obedience? For they then truly profit, if they strive for the height of merits both with fortitude of work, and with the virtue of humility.

2. In this place there is another thing that should be noted: that Samuel is shown to minister to the Lord before Heli at the very time when he is rebuked by the Lord for the negligence of his sons. For some subjects, while they consider the measure of their own fortitude, prefer to be severe judges of their prelates rather than pious hearers. Who, indeed, because they are accustomed to exaggerate and discuss their lives, if they behold the stains of even a lighter fault in their conduct, refuse to be subjected to their command by obeying. But they would exist as truly strong if they humbly bore those things of their elders which they think weak. For before God he is known as great through merit who is subjected in a good command to him who in some part does not seem venerable. For behold, Heli is reproved by the open sentence of God for the fault of his negligence committed, but the child of the Lord, Samuel, is mentioned to minister to the Lord before him, so that indeed one may gather within himself what sort of person he is who despises a prelate for a lighter fault, if Samuel subjected himself by obeying him whom Almighty God reproved with such severity (districtione) of His examination. But because Heli is reproved for having honored sinning subjects not a little, the very dignities of the sacred orders are to be weighed. For a rector ought not to honor a sinning subject unless corrected, but a subject ought not even then to despise a prelate, when he has recognized himself as just and him as a sinner, because the eternal Judge has granted the judgment of subjects to the rectors of the holy Church, but He has reserved those same rectors to be discussed by His own examination. Yet this very thing is greatly to be feared by rectors, that they are kept for the examination of God, because they ought to prepare accounts of their life and doctrine all the more subtle, by how much wiser is the Judge whom they sustain.

Nec tantum ejus futurum judicium in futura vita, quasi in longinquo positum, timeant, ne qui ubique praesens est incautum feriat de vicino. Negligentes namque pastores ad evadendam futurae vindictae poenam longa vitae praesentis spatia ad poenam cogitant; sed judex, qui ubique est, de vicino poenitentiam irrogat, quia prius eis lumen contemplationis subtrahit, deinde ad tormenta per mortem rapit. Unde et de eodem Heli, qui de paulo inferius, fracta cervice, moritur, subjunctum est:

(Vers. 1.) In diebus illis non erat visio manifesta.

3. Nam dum rector agenda quae novit despicit, agitur cum eo districto judicio, ut agenda non videat, quia implere noluit quod videbat. Manifesta namque visio negligentis pastoris non est, sed amantis. Unde et per seipsam Veritas dicit: Qui diligit me diligetur a Patre meo, et ego diligam eum, et manifestabo ei meipsum (Joan. XIV, 21). Claritas namque manifestae visionis, est revelatio amatae veritatis. Quae profecto veritas si merito dilectionis ostenditur, iis qui torpent a bono opere dignissime occultatur, quia signum amoris non est in affectione animi, sed in studio bonae operationis. Unde et in Evangelio Dominus praemisit, dicens: Qui habet mandata mea, et facit ea, hic est qui me diligit (Ibid.). Quia ergo de negligentia operis caligo incurritur internae visionis, apte nimis, dum de contemptu mandatorum sacerdos arguitur, visio occultata memoratur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 1.) Et sermo Domini erat pretiosus.

4. Quantum ad sacrae historiae veritatem pertinet, pretiosum pro raro posuit. Pretiosus itaque sermo erat, quia dum rarus esset qui summa contemplando cerneret, frequens esse non poterat qui bona loquendo praedicaret. Quod nunc quoque in sancta Ecclesia fieri videmus, quia dum plerique de reverentia culminis gloriam affectant honoris, dum sacri ordinis ministeria negligunt, summa quae videre nequeunt subjectis plebibus praedicare non possunt, atque in eorum familia pretiosus sermo esse cognoscitur, quia raro bonae praedicationis hortamenta audiunt, quorum praelati ex desiderio non quaerunt superna quae dicant, sed terrena quae agant. Quos profecto sacra Scriptura notat, quae dicit: Canes muti non valentes latrare (Isa. LVI, 10).

Nor let them fear His future judgment in the future life only, as if placed far off, lest He who is everywhere present strike the unwary from nearby. For negligent pastors, to escape the penalty of future vengeance, think of long spaces of the present life for the penalty; but the Judge, who is everywhere, imposes penance from nearby, because first He withdraws from them the light of contemplation, and then He snatches them to torments through death. Whence also concerning the same Heli, who a little later dies with a broken neck, it is subjoined:

(Vers. 1.) In those days there was no manifest vision.

3. For while a rector despises the things to be done which he knows, it is dealt with him by a strict judgment, so that he may not see the things to be done, because he would not fulfill what he saw. For the manifest vision is not of a negligent pastor, but of a loving one. Whence also Truth itself says through itself: He who loves me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and I will manifest myself to him (John XIV, 21). For the clarity of manifest vision is the revelation of loved truth. Which indeed truth, if it is shown by merit of love, is most worthily hidden from those who are sluggish in good work, because the sign of love is not in the affection of the mind, but in the zeal of good operation. Whence also in the Gospel the Lord sent before, saying: He who has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is who loves me (Ibid.). Because therefore the darkness of internal vision is incurred from negligence of work, quite aptly, while the priest is reproved for contempt of the commandments, the hidden vision is mentioned. It follows:

(Vers. 1.) And the word of the Lord was precious.

4. As far as pertains to the truth of the sacred history, he put "precious" for "rare." Therefore the word was precious, because while there was rarely one who perceived the highest things by contemplating, there could not be a frequent one who preached good things by speaking. Which we see happening even now in the holy Church, because while most affect the glory of honor from the reverence of the summit, while they neglect the ministries of the sacred order, they cannot preach to the subject peoples the highest things which they cannot see; and in their family the word is known to be precious, because they rarely hear the exhortations of good preaching, whose prelates do not seek out of desire the celestial things which they may speak, but the earthly things which they may do. Whom indeed sacred Scripture notes, which says: Dumb dogs not able to bark (Isa. LVI, 10).

Non dixit non volentes, sed non valentes, quia certe dum mundi gloriam ex toto corde, et ex tota anima, et ex tota mente et virtute diligunt, vellent populo sublimia dicere, ut etiam de sublimitate verbi possent gloriam habere. Canes ergo muti volentes latrare, non possunt, quia dum pravo corde terrena meditantur, occulta veritatis quae proferant revelatione nulla comprehendunt. Sed quia quod pretiosum est magna cum diligentia custodiri solet, potest hoc quod dicitur: Non erat visio manifesta, ad carnalium praelatorum negligentiam referri.

5. Quod vero additur: Et sermo Domini erat pretiosus, ad bonorum ardens studium subditorum, cum fideles subjecti etsi non habent qui eis frequenter de thesauro sacri eloquii superna praedicet, hoc tantum quod aliquando scire potuerunt mira devotione complectuntur, et velut rem ineffabiliter pretiosam custodiunt, dum per bona opera in coelo collocant, ubi fures qui id auferre valeant nequaquam appropinquant. Unde et in Evangelio de emptore bonae margaritae dicitur: Inventa una pretiosa margarita, dedit, omnia sua et comparavit eam (Matth. XIII, 46). Cum itaque in occultatae visionis tempore pretiosus sermo esse describitur electorum, subditorum laudes nuntiantur, quia tanto sublimiori gloria praedicandi sunt, quanto id bonum, quod de eminentiori loco periit, perfectione magnae charitatis in inferioribus remansit. Quorum profecto bona conversatione plerumque agitur, ut ea quae occultata fuerat visio, manifestetur, ut qui devote custodiunt minima, scire debeant quae faciant, et majora. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 2-4.) Factum est igitur in die quadam, Heli jacebat in loco suo, et oculi ejus caligaverant, nec poterat videre lucernam Dei, antequam exstingueretur. Samuel autem dormiebat in templo Domini, ubi erat arca Dei. Et vocavit Dominus Samuelem.

6. Samuel quippe puer a Domino vocatur quoties humilibus subjectis divini consilii arcana revelantur, et humilitatis suae merito lumen contemplationis acquirunt, quod superbiae suae retributione elati praedicatores perdunt. Sed notandum quia id quadam die factum ostenditur, qua videlicet Heli et in loco suo jacere, et videre non posse perhibetur. In die namque vocatur, qui pro sua et aliorum salute ad supernae sapientiae scienda secreta sustollitur.

It did not say "not willing," but "not able," because surely while they love the glory of the world with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind and strength, they would wish to speak sublime things to the people, so that even from the sublimity of the word they might have glory. Therefore dumb dogs, wishing to bark, are unable, because while they meditate on earthly things with a depraved heart, they comprehend none of the hidden things of truth which they might bring forth by revelation. But because that which is precious is accustomed to be guarded with great diligence, this which is said: "There was no manifest vision," can be referred to the negligence of carnal prelates.

5. But that which is added: "And the word of the Lord was precious," pertains to the ardent zeal of good subjects, since faithful subjects, even if they do not have one who frequently preaches celestial things to them from the treasure of sacred eloquence, embrace with wonderful devotion only this which they were able to know at some time, and guard it as a thing ineffably precious, while through good works they lay it up in heaven, where thieves who might be able to take it away do not at all approach. Whence also in the Gospel it is said of the buyer of a good pearl: Having found one precious pearl, he gave all his own things and bought it (Matt. XIII, 46). Since therefore in the time of the hidden vision the word is described as precious for the elect, the praises of the subjects are announced, because they are to be preached with all the more sublime glory, by how much that good, which perished from a more eminent place, remained in the lower ones by the perfection of great charity. By whose good conversation, indeed, it often happens that the vision which had been hidden is made manifest, so that they who devotedly guard the least things, ought to know what they should do, and the greater things. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Vers. 2-4.) It happened therefore on a certain day, Heli was lying in his place, and his eyes had grown dim, nor could he see the lamp of God, before it was extinguished. But Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. And the Lord called Samuel.

6. For the child Samuel is called by the Lord as often as the secrets of the divine counsel are revealed to humble subjects, and by the merit of their humility they acquire the light of contemplation, which proud preachers lose by the retribution of their pride. But it should be noted that this is shown to have happened on a certain day, in which day Heli is said both to be lying in his place and to be unable to see. For he is called "in the day" who is raised up to know the secrets of celestial wisdom for his own and others' salvation.

Quo contra et Salomon sapientiam in nocte percepit, ut caligo temporis indicaret quia eamdem sapientiam non perseveratus acciperet (III Reg. III, 5, 12). Quod intelligi et aliter potest, quia videlicet Heli caligo memoratur. Positione itaque diei, ejus ostenditur magnitudo caecitatis, quia profecto magnas tenebras habuit, qui in die non vidit. Nunc quoque si ad Ecclesiae statum respicimus, generalis gratia luminis est. Venit namque qui verae claritatis radios spargens, diceret: Ego sum lux mundi, qui sequitur me non ambulat in tenebris (Joan. VIII, 12). Et quia interni splendoris ejus gloria ineffabilis est, non dicitur de die isto, vel illo, sed die quadam: cujus profecto diei claritas non est; claritatis vero magnitudo incognita. Magnas ergo tenebras Pastor sustinet, si is qui Ecclesiae oculus esse per officium noscitur in gratia tantae lucis visionem non habet. Quare et ejusdem oculi tenebras per semetipsam veritas magnas ostendit, dicens: Ipsae tenebrae quantae erunt (Matth. VI, 23)? Sed jam unde sibi tanta caligo oriatur insinuat, quia dicit: Jacebat in loco suo. Locus namque praedicatoris standi, non jacendi, officium habet. Unde et de seipso Dominus formam ejusdem praedicatoribus praebet, dicens: Ego autem in medio vestri sum, sicut qui ministrat (Luc. XXII, 27). Stare enim in medio fratrum est per laboriosam conversationem se in exemplum minoribus praebere. Stare itaque ad laborem operis pertinet, et ad pugnae necessitatem. Unde et agonotheta spiritualis certaminis praecipit, dicens: State ergo succincti lumbos in veritate (Ephes. VI, 14). Et quia jacere quiescentis est, in loco praelii et laboris quietis teporem sequi reprehenditur, qui in loco jacere memoratur. Stare etiam justi est. Unde et Paulus dicit: Fide enim statis (II Cor. I, 23). Jacere ergo etiam ad remissioris vitae negligentiam pertinet. Tunc itaque Heli jacet in loco suo, cum per lapsum pravitatis reprobus praedicator requiescit in sede justi. Jacentis ergo in loco suo oculi caligant, quia summa videre nequeunt, qui in arce pastoralis culminis non exsequuntur virtutis opera, sed remissioris vitae blanditiis immerguntur. Qui profecto lucerna Dei jam non veritate laudis, sed per improperium appellatur derisionis. Nam qui lucernae Dei appellatione fungitur, et videre non posse perhibetur, deridetur potius tanto nomine quo censetur. Nam in vera justi laude dicitur: Ipse erat lucerna ardens et lucens (Joan. V, 35). Nam veri luminis jubar quod amando hauserat loquendo fundebat. Praedicator etiam carnalis dicitur lucerna per officium, caeca per intentionem, quia dignitate fungitur praebendi luminis, sed mentem figit in tenebris vanitatis.

Contrariwise also Solomon perceived wisdom in the night, so that the darkness of the time might indicate that he would not receive the same wisdom while persevering (III Kings III, 5, 12). Which can also be understood otherwise, because indeed the blindness of Heli is mentioned. Therefore by the position of the day, the magnitude of his blindness is shown, because indeed he had great darkness who did not see in the day. Now also if we look to the state of the Church, there is a general grace of light. For He came who, scattering the rays of true clarity, said: I am the light of the world, he who follows me does not walk in darkness (John VIII, 12). And because the glory of His internal splendor is ineffable, it is not said of this day, or that, but of "a certain day": of which day indeed there is no clarity [i.e., of its own]; but rather the magnitude of its clarity is unknown. Therefore the Pastor sustains great darkness, if he who is known to be the eye of the Church by office has no vision in the grace of so great a light. Wherefore Truth itself through itself shows the darkness of that same eye to be great, saying: How great will those darknesses be (Matt. VI, 23)? But now it insinuates whence so great a darkness arises for him, because it says: He was lying in his place. For the place of a preacher has the duty of standing, not of lying. Whence also the Lord offers the form of the same through Himself to preachers, saying: But I am in the midst of you as he who ministers (Luke XXII, 27). For to stand in the midst of the brethren is to offer oneself as an example to the lesser ones through laborious conversation. Therefore to stand pertains to the labor of work, and to the necessity of the fight. Whence also the master of the spiritual contest commands, saying: Stand therefore, having your loins girt in truth (Eph. VI, 14). And because to lie belongs to one resting, he is reproved who, in the place of battle and labor, follows the lukewarmness of rest, and is mentioned as lying in that place. To stand is also of the just. Whence also Paul says: For by faith you stand (II Cor. I, 23). Therefore to lie also pertains to the negligence of a more remiss life. Then therefore Heli lies in his place, when through the lapse of depravity a reprobate preacher rests in the seat of the just. Therefore the eyes of one lying in his place grow dim, because they cannot see the highest things, who in the citadel of the pastoral summit do not follow out the works of virtue, but are immersed in the allurements of a more remiss life. Who indeed is called the "lamp of God" no longer by the truth of praise, but through the reproach of derision. For he who performs the function of the name "lamp of God," and is said to be unable to see, is rather derided by so great a name by which he is reckoned. For in the true praise of a just man it is said: He was a burning and shining lamp (John V, 35). For the radiance of true light which he had drawn in by loving, he poured out by speaking. A carnal preacher also is called a lamp by office, but blind by intention, because he performs the dignity of offering light, but fixes his mind in the darkness of vanity.

7. Cujus profecto consummata perversitas designatur, quia non dicitur non videbat, sed videre non poterat. Quare et malae arboris mentionem faciens Dominus, ait: Non potest arbor mala fructus bonos facere (Matth. VII, 18). Lucerna itaque Dei videri non potest, cum is qui pastorali dignitate praeeminet tanta spissitate saecularis amoris premitur, ut ad internae claritatis intuitum nulla gratiae inspiratione sublevetur; cum jam videlicet, justa Dei indignatione projectus, in caliginis suae caecitate relinquitur, ut ulterius per infusionem superni luminis nunquam visitetur. Bene autem dicitur: Antequam exstingueretur. Non videre enim poena peccatoris est in hoc tamen adhuc saeculo viventis, videre autem non posse est mortui impii in alio jam saeculo aeterna poena damnati. Unde et conditoris judicio in exterioribus tenebris claudi praecipitur, ut videlicet ad lucis intuitum nunquam reducatur. Cum ergo antequam exstingueretur videre non posse dicitur in isto adhuc saeculo vivens praedicator reprobus, damnato jam in perpetuum impio in caecitate similatur. Exstinguitur autem lucerna cum pastor moritur. Vel certe lucerna exstinguitur, quia cum reprobus praedicator per mortem carnis interit, quidquid in eo lucere videbatur, de gloria culminis amittit, et velut sola lucernae testa sine lumine remanet, cum ad aeternum judicium servari persona cogitur, quae omni penitus saeculi fulgore spoliatur. Antequam igitur exstinguatur lucerna Dei, videre non potest, quia et meritum futurae damnationis per aeternitatem suae caecitatis possidet, et tamen adhuc coram hominibus per splendorem acceptae dignitatis fulget.

(Vers. 3.) Samuel autem dormiebat in templo Domini, ubi erat arca Dei.

8. Bene autem reprobus praelatus non dormire, sed jacere dicitur, puer autem subditus et electus non jacere, sed dormire, quia dormire aliquando in bonam partem accipitur, jacere autem fere semper in malam. Unde et Sponsa in Cantico canticorum dicit: Ego dormio, et cor meum vigilat (Cant. V, 2). In somno itaque pueri perfecti uniuscujusque electi subditi a pravo opere requies designatur. In templo quippe et ubi est arca dormit, qui, in coelesti desiderio atque in sacrae Scripturae meditatione occupatus, ad ea quae ad perversitatem pertinent non intendit. Quidam namque in templo dormiunt, sed in loco ubi est arca Dei non dormiunt, quia nonnulli simplices in coelesti contemplatione per amorem requiescunt, sed sacri eloquii occulta meditari nesciunt.

7. Whose consummate perversity is indeed designated, because it is not said that he "did not see," but that he "could not see." Wherefore also the Lord, making mention of the bad tree, says: A bad tree cannot bring forth good fruits (Matt. VII, 18). Therefore the lamp of God cannot be seen, when he who pre-eminently stands in pastoral dignity is pressed by so great a thickness of secular love, that he is raised up to the intuition of internal clarity by no inspiration of grace; when indeed already, cast out by the just indignation of God, he is left in the blindness of his own darkness, so that he may never further be visited by the infusion of celestial light. But it is well said: Before it was extinguished. For not to see is the punishment of a sinner still living in this world, but to be unable to see is of the dead impious man already condemned to eternal punishment in the other world. Whence also by the judgment of the Creator he is commanded to be enclosed in exterior darkness, so that indeed he may never be brought back to the intuition of light. When therefore he is said to be unable to see before he was extinguished, a reprobate preacher living yet in this world is likened in his blindness to the impious man already condemned forever. But the lamp is extinguished when the pastor dies. Or certainly the lamp is extinguished because, when a reprobate preacher perishes through the death of the flesh, whatever seemed to shine in him, he loses from the glory of the summit, and remains as it were only the shell of the lamp without light, when the person is forced to be kept for the eternal judgment, who is spoiled of every luster of the world. Before therefore the lamp of God is extinguished, he cannot see, because he possesses even the merit of future damnation through the eternity of his blindness, and yet he still shines before men through the splendor of his accepted dignity.

(Vers. 3.) But Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.

8. But it is well said that the reprobate prelate does not "sleep," but "lies," but the subject and elect child does not "lie," but "sleeps," because to sleep is sometimes taken in a good sense, but to lie almost always in a bad one. Whence also the Spouse in the Song of Songs says: I sleep, and my heart watches (Cant. V, 2). Therefore in the sleep of the perfect child is designated the rest of each elect subject from depraved work. For he sleeps in the temple and where the ark is, who, occupied in celestial desire and in the meditation of sacred Scripture, does not intend those things which pertain to perversity. For some sleep in the temple, but do not sleep in the place where the ark of God is, because some simple ones rest through love in celestial contemplation, but do not know how to meditate on the hidden things of sacred eloquence.

Samuel autem, qui non solum in templo, sed coram arca Dei dormire dicitur, eruditos pariter et electos subditos designat, quia dum amoris sui flammas de sacro eloquio frequentius meditando hauriunt, ad supernae patriae desiderium altius assumuntur, et velut intima templi ad somnum eligunt, dum eo longius separantur a publico terreni operis, quo secretius per meditationem reconduntur in sacrario internae visionis.

(Vers. 4.) Et vocavit Dominus Samuelem.

9. Vocare etenim Dei per vim majoris gratiae excitare est. Dormientem namque Dominus vocat, quia a terrena intentione quiescentes ad augmentum supernae cognitionis excitat. Nam dum ad ea quae foris sunt per sollicitudinem vigilamus, interna et spiritualia non sentimus. Repulsio itaque terrenae curae praeparatio est nostra ad perceptionem supernae gratiae, quia in electis fit uberior infusio divini muneris, quo mens fuerit purior per custodiam internae meditationis. Sequitur:

(Vers. 4-9.) Et vocavit, inquit, Dominus Samuelem. Qui respondens, ait: Ecce ego, et cucurrit ad Heli, et dixit: Vocasti enim me, qui dixit: Non vocavi te, fili mi, revertere et dormi. Et abiit et dormivit. Et adjecit Dominus vocare rursum Samuelem. Consurgensque abiit ad Heli, et dixit: Ecce ego, quia vocasti me. Qui respondit: Non vocavi te, fili, revertere et dormi. Porro Samuel non sciebat Dominum, neque revelatus ei fuerat sermo Domini. Et adjecit Dominus, et vocavit Samuelem tertio. Qui consurgens abiit ad Heli, et dixit: Ecce ego, quia vocasti me. Intellexit igitur Heli quia Dominus vocaret puerum, et ait ad Samuelem: Vade et dormi, et si deinceps vocaverit te, dices: Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus.

10. Quid est ergo quod omnipotens Deus vocationem suam tanta arte insinuat, ut vocati mens teneatur, ne se vocantem cognoscat; Deum audiens, magistrum hunc esse hominem putet; vocationem emittat, et causam taceat; ire ad magistrum sinat, toties ad somni quietem redire, et tamen dormientem quiescere non permittat? Nunquid enim qui ad secreta sua cognoscenda vocavit quem voluit, voce tantum Heli simili, et non potuit voce qua voluit; et qui quando voluit vocavit, causam vocationis statim indicare non potuit; et qui excitare voluit, ut audiret, nisi per magistrum eum docere non potuit quemadmodum audire debuisset?

But Samuel, who is said to sleep not only in the temple, but before the ark of God, designates subjects equally learned and elect, because while they draw the flames of their love by meditating more frequently from sacred eloquence, they are assumed higher to the desire of the celestial fatherland, and choose as it were the inner parts of the temple for sleep, while they are separated all the further from the publicity of earthly work, by how much more secretly they are hidden through meditation in the sanctuary of internal vision.

(Vers. 4.) And the Lord called Samuel.

9. For the calling of God is to excite by the force of greater grace. For the Lord calls him who is sleeping, because He excites those resting from earthly intention to the increase of celestial knowledge. For while we watch through solicitude for those things which are without, we do not feel internal and spiritual things. Therefore the repulsion of earthly care is our preparation for the perception of celestial grace, because in the elect there is a more abundant infusion of the divine gift, by how much the mind shall have been more pure through the custody of internal meditation. It follows:

(Vers. 4-9.) And the Lord, it says, called Samuel. Who responding, said: Behold, here I am; and he ran to Heli, and said: For you called me; who said: I did not call you, my son; return and sleep. And he went and slept. And the Lord added to call Samuel again. And rising up he went to Heli, and said: Behold, here I am, because you called me. Who responded: I did not call you, son; return and sleep. Furthermore, Samuel did not know the Lord, nor had the word of the Lord been revealed to him. And the Lord added, and called Samuel a third time. Who rising up went to Heli, and said: Behold, here I am, because you called me. Heli therefore understood that the Lord called the child, and said to Samuel: Go and sleep, and if He shall call you henceforth, you shall say: Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.

10. What is it therefore that Almighty God insinuates His calling with such art, that the mind of the called one is held back, lest he recognize the One calling him; that hearing God, he thinks this master to be a man; that He sends forth the calling, and is silent as to the cause; that He allows him to go to his master, to return so many times to the quiet of sleep, and yet does not permit him to rest while sleeping? For could not He who called whom He willed to the knowledge of His secrets have done so with a voice similar only to Heli's, and not with the voice He willed; and could not He who called when He willed have immediately indicated the cause of the calling; and could not He who willed to excite him that he might hear, have taught him how he ought to have heard except through a master?

Sed hac in re magna omnipotens Deus dispensatione utitur, ut profecto electorum corda duplici eruditione doceantur, quatenus et in superficie historiae quod sequantur obedientiae bonum quique subjecti videant, et praelati intueantur occulta mysteria, quae ad lucem intelligentiae discutiendo perducant. Sed quod primo loco dicendum arbitror, puer qui loquentem Dominum esse magistrum putavit vocem corpoream audivit. Non itaque per semetipsum Deus, sed per evangelicum spiritum puero locutus est, quia qui non stringitur forma corporea, instrumento corporis non angustatur ad sonum vocis. Quod nimirum et puerili audientiae convenit. Nam etsi magna sunt merita inchoantis subditi, quia tamen adhuc non in perfectione esse, sed in profectu conversationis agnoscitur, ad eam locutionem qua omnipotens Deus per semetipsum loquitur non pertingit. Per se quidem omnipotens Deus, summus videlicet et incircumscriptus spiritus, magnis viris et spiritualibus spiritualiter loquitur, cum spirituali locutione eorum mentibus indicat, et agenda quae agant, et loquenda quae sciant. Exteriorem itaque vocem per evangelicum spiritum movit, sed gratiae suae praesentia Creator spiritus quae voluit indicavit. Vocans itaque voce, dum Heli putatus est, cognitione latuit, ut ad magistrum puer curreret, et dum se non fuisse vocatum audiret, deceptus ostenderet in quanto culmine virtutis staret. Puer ergo humilmente homini subjectus, atque obedientiae ardua arce sublimatus, dum vocatus accessit, jussus rediit, quid aliud nobis exemplo praebet, nisi altissimae formam obedientiae?

Vera namque obedientia nec praepositorum intentionem discutit, nec praecepta discernit, quia qui omne vitae suae judicium majori subdidit, in hoc solo gaudet, si quod sibi praecipitur operatur. Nescit enim judicare quisquis perfecte didicerit obedire, quia hoc tantum bonum putat, si praeceptis obediat. Sed in tanta perfectae conversationis ejus gloria vita nostra confunditur. Ecce etenim ad supernam patriam sub ducibus Christiani exercitus proficisci decrevimus, sed opera diversa etiamsi diversis temporibus jubemur agere, murmuramus. Quis enim sese a murmuratione compesceret, quis ab ira temperaret, si vocatum se bis et ter audiret, et tamen ex vocantis responso perciperet quia vocatus minime fuisset? Quam profecto desidiae nostrae caliginem patimur, quia tantae virtutis bonum qua praemii sui claritate respondeat non videmus. Unicum etenim bonum est ad recuperationem vitae, si inobedientiae culpa malum sufficiens fuit ad perpetrandam mortem. Si ergo in malo inobedientiae mors praevaluit, toties vitae reddimur, quoties obedimus.

But in this matter Almighty God uses a great dispensation, so that indeed the hearts of the elect may be taught by a double instruction, in as much as both in the surface of the history all subjects may see the good of obedience which they should follow, and the prelates may behold the hidden mysteries, which they may bring to the light of intelligence by discussing. But what I think should be said in the first place: the child who thought the Lord speaking to be his master heard a corporeal voice. Therefore God spoke to the child not through Himself, but through an angelic spirit, because He who is not bound by a corporeal form is not narrowed to the sound of a voice by the instrument of a body. Which indeed is appropriate for a childish hearing. For although the merits of a beginning subject are great, because nevertheless he is recognized not yet to be in perfection, but in the progress of conversation, he does not reach that locution by which Almighty God speaks through Himself. Through Himself indeed Almighty God, the highest and uncircumscribed Spirit, speaks spiritually to great and spiritual men, when by a spiritual locution He indicates to their minds both the things to be done which they should do, and the things to be spoken which they should know. Therefore He moved an exterior voice through an angelic spirit, but by the presence of His grace the Creator Spirit indicated what He willed. Thus calling by a voice, while He was thought to be Heli, He lay hidden from cognition, so that the child might run to his master, and while he heard that he had not been called, being deceived he might show in how great a summit of virtue he stood. The child therefore humbly subject to a man, and raised up on the arduous citadel of obedience, when being called he approached, and being commanded he returned, what else does he offer us for an example, except the form of the highest obedience?

For true obedience neither discusses the intention of superiors (*praepositorum*), nor discerns the precepts, because he who has subjected every judgment of his life to a superior rejoices in this alone, if he performs what is commanded of him. For whoever has perfectly learned to obey does not know how to judge, because he considers only this to be good, if he obeys the precepts. But in such great glory of his perfect conversation our life is confounded. For behold, we have decreed to set out for the heavenly homeland under the leaders of the Christian army, yet if we are commanded to perform diverse works, even at diverse times, we murmur. For who would restrain himself from murmuring, who would temper himself from anger, if he heard himself called twice or thrice, and yet perceived from the response of the one calling that he had not been called at all? How great a darkness of our sloth indeed we suffer, because we do not see with what brightness of its reward the good of such great virtue corresponds. For the only good for the recovery of life is if the fault of disobedience was an evil sufficient to perpetrate death. If, therefore, in the evil of disobedience death prevailed, as often as we obey, we are restored to life.

Puer itaque Samuel nec vocatus, nec repulsus offenditur, quia vocantis aut repellentis animum videre noluit, qui in hoc solo gaudere noverat quod obedivit. Et quia surgere ad laborem, redire autem ad dormiendum pertinet ad quietem, quid insinuat, nisi quia utrumque nobis vitam praeparat, si obedientis animus in eo quod agit nonnisi obedientiae bonum pensat? Praeceptum namque in hoc solo pensari debet, quod majoris praeceptum est; et qui obedientiae bonum exsequitur, non injunctum opus debet considerare, sed fructum, quia ad promerenda aeternae vitae gaudia non exquiritur qualitas operis, sed mortificatio propriae, et exsecutio alienae voluntatis. Unde et Paulus ait: Circumcisio nihil prodest, et praeputium nihil est, sed observatio mandatorum Dei (I Cor. VII, 19). Jam ergo apud omnipotentem Deum nec ea quae ad laborem, neque ea quae ad quietem pertinent parva sunt, si aeternam vitam parare obedientibus possunt. Quisquis ergo alieno arbitrio regitur, quid sibi eveniat non attendat, sed hoc solum penset, ut a majoris praecepto non recedat.

Operator itaque strenuus vitae socialis, et communiter secum Deo servientium pius aemulator, si aeterni meriti ampliorem retributionem per obedientiae bonum adipisci desiderat, in hoc solo se cognoscat excellere, si prae caeteris arbitrio majoris propriam subdiderit voluntatem. Nam nec magna lucra jejunii, nec asperae vitae studia devotis Christi militibus in majorum praecepto valde pensanda sunt. Majoris etenim est meriti charitatis injuncta refectio jejunio propria deliberatione suscepto. Qui enim jussus carnem reficit, invitus jejunii praemium devotione promeruit, et ampliorem mercedem obedientiae manducando conquisivit. Vocavit ergo Deus puerum, sed voce magistro simili, ut profecto modum suae locutionis indicaret. Causam vocationis tacuit, ut electus puer qua humilitate obedientiae esset sublimis ostenderet. Ire ad praeceptorem pertulit, ut devotionis suae munus offerret. Redire ad somni quietem sinitur, ut profecto nec ea quae sunt minima contemnamus. Iterato excitat, ut eum quem in forma electorum ponere volebat ostenderet, quia nec imperiorum instantia fatigaret. Per eum qui reprobandus erat audire quemadmodum debuisset didicit, ut profecto sciamus quia majorum imperia tunc etiam veneranda sunt, cum ipsi laudabilem non habent vitam, quia eorum doctrina, quae prava operatione potest superbis vilescere, humiles auditores facit ad divinae familiaritatis celsitudinem pervenire.

Thus the child Samuel is not offended whether called or repulsed, because he did not wish to see the mind of the one calling or repelling him, who knew how to rejoice in this alone, that he obeyed. And because rising for labor, and returning to sleep pertains to rest, what does it insinuate, except that both prepare life for us, if the mind of the obedient one considers in what he does nothing but the good of obedience? For a precept must be considered in this alone, that it is the precept of a superior; and he who executes the good of obedience should not consider the work enjoined, but the fruit, because for the merit of the joys of eternal life the quality of the work is not sought, but the mortification of one's own will and the execution of another's. Whence also Paul says: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Cor. 7:19). Now therefore before Almighty God neither those things which pertain to labor, nor those which pertain to rest are small, if they can prepare eternal life for the obedient. Whoever, therefore, is ruled by another's judgment, let him not attend to what happens to him, but let him consider this alone, that he may not depart from the precept of the superior.

Therefore, a strenuous operator of social life, and a pious emulator of those serving God together with him, if he desires to obtain a fuller retribution of eternal merit through the good of obedience, let him know himself to excel in this alone, if he has subjected his own will to the judgment of a superior before others. For neither the great gains of fasting, nor the studies of a harsh life are to be greatly weighed by the devoted soldiers of Christ against the precept of superiors. For it is of greater merit to have a meal enjoined by charity than a fast undertaken by one's own deliberation. For he who, being commanded, refreshes the flesh, has unwillingly merited the reward of fasting by devotion, and has acquired a fuller reward of obedience by eating. God therefore called the child, but with a voice similar to the master's, so that He might indeed indicate the mode of His locution. He was silent about the cause of the calling, so that the chosen child might show by what humility of obedience he was sublime. He endured going to the preceptor, that he might offer the gift of his devotion. He is allowed to return to the quiet of sleep, so that indeed we may not despise even those things which are smallest. He excites him repeatedly, that He might show him whom He wished to place in the form of the elect, because even the insistence of commands would not fatigue him. He learned from him who was to be rejected how he ought to have listened, so that indeed we may know that the commands of superiors are to be venerated even then, when they themselves do not have a laudable life, because their doctrine, which can become vile to the proud through wicked operation, makes humble listeners arrive at the height of divine familiarity.

Sed quia sequitur: Porro Samuel necdum sciebat Dominum, et superius ministrare Domino perhibetur, valde contrarium videtur esse quod dicitur, quia nescire non poterat cui ministrabat. Quis enim ei serviat quem ignorat? Sed profecto per id quod subjunctum est liquet id quod sonat contrarium, qua intelligi convenientia rationis debeat. Neque revelatus ei fuerat sermo Domini. Per quod nimirum datur intelligi quia quem amore et ministerio noverat, sermonis ejus revelatione nesciebat. Nondum enim sic vocantem audierat, quem se cognovisse et devotione ministerii et virtute testabatur amoris. Sed in conversatione fidelium convenienter accipitur; nam plerique sub aliena institutione bene proficiunt, qui novitatis suae tempore omnipotenti Deo ministeria persolvunt, et tamen puritate contemplationis ad internae pulchritudinis ejus speciem non pertingunt. Qui cum subjectionis suae merito etiam donum divinae contemplationis accipiunt, et experientia internae visionis intelligunt quia sic nondum sciebant cui ministrabant. Quod bene Jacob, ad accipiendam conjugem proficiscens, designat, qui post laborem itineris per soporem quietis Dominum vidit, sed a somno evigilans, ait: Vere Dominus est in loco isto, et ego nesciebam (Gen. XXVIII, 16). Neque enim illic esse Dominum antequam dormiret dubitare poterat, qui esse hunc ubique sentiebat; sed quia tunc eum perfectius didicit, ignorasse se illum perhibuit cum familiarius non agnovit. Via namque qua ad conjugem pergitur intentio devotae obedientiae est, qua fecunditas internae charitatis consequi desideratur. Jacob itaque dormit in via, cum fidelis subjectus, maligni spiritus supplantator, per laborem obedientiae ad quietem suscipitur internae visionis. Qui profecto tunc Dominum se agnovisse fatebitur, quia dum eam ad quam noviter est assumptus internae lucis miratur speciem, quantum ante nescierit experientia revelatae pulchritudinis agnoscit. Fide etenim, velut fama, Deum cognoscimus, amore autem contemplationis is qui fa...

Sed quia separatim dicitur: Nondum sciebat Dominum, neque revelatus ei fuerat sermo Domini, potest subtilius intelligi. Nam in una eademque interna Dei contemplatione et mira charitas contemplanti infunditur de fructu tantae gloriae, et stupor magnus in secreti verbi revelatione. Quidam ergo Dominum sciunt, et sermonis ejus revelationem percipiunt, quia et mira dulcedine replentur, ex ea quam ex consuetudine hauriunt infusione tantae charitatis, et magna crudiuntur sapientia revelatione verbi.

But because there follows: *Moreover Samuel did not yet know the Lord,* and above it is said that he ministered to the Lord, it seems very contrary what is said, because he could not be ignorant of Him whom he served. For who would serve him whom he does not know? But indeed, through that which is subjoined, it is clear what sounds contrary, by what agreement of reason it ought to be understood. *Neither had the word of the Lord been revealed to him.* By which, to be sure, it is given to be understood that Him whom he knew by love and ministry, he did not know by the revelation of His word. For he had not yet heard Him calling in such a way, whom he testified that he had known both by the devotion of ministry and the virtue of love. But in the conversation of the faithful it is fittingly accepted; for most people profit well under another's institution, who in the time of their novelty pay ministries to Almighty God, and yet by the purity of contemplation do not reach the beauty of His internal beauty. Who, when with the merit of their subjection they also receive the gift of divine contemplation, understand by the experience of internal vision that they did not yet know Him whom they were ministering to. Which Jacob well designates, setting out to take a wife, who after the labor of the journey saw the Lord through the sleep of rest, but waking from sleep, says: *Truly the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it* (Gen. 28:16). For neither could he doubt that the Lord was there before he slept, who felt that He was everywhere; but because he then learned Him more perfectly, he claimed that he had been ignorant of Him when he did not know Him more familiarly. For the way by which one goes to a wife is the intention of devoted obedience, by which the fecundity of internal charity is desired to be attained. Thus Jacob sleeps on the way, when the faithful subject, the supplanter of the malignant spirit, is received through the labor of obedience into the rest of internal vision. Who indeed will then confess that he has known the Lord, because while he marvels at that beauty of internal light to which he is newly assumed, he acknowledges how much he did not know before by the experience of revealed beauty. For by faith, as if by rumor, we know God, but by the love of contemplation He who was...

But because it is said separately: *He did not yet know the Lord, neither had the word of the Lord been revealed to him,* it can be understood more subtly. For in one and the same internal contemplation of God, both a marvelous charity is infused into the contemplator from the fruit of such great glory, and a great stupor in the revelation of the secret word. Some therefore know the Lord, and perceive the revelation of His word, because they are both filled with a marvelous sweetness from that infusion of such great charity which they draw from custom, and they are instructed with great wisdom by the revelation of the word.

A nonnullis vero scitur Dominus, quibus sermo Domini nequaquam revelatur; quia simplices quique, sed magna conversatione perfecti viri, de contemplationis divinae gloria ineffabilem quidem amoris dulcedinem contemplando percipiunt, sed tamen ad revelati verbi ejus altitudinem non pertingunt, quia ad amantium ordinem assumpti sunt, non ad celsitudinem praedicationis. Revelatur quidem ei verbum, ut ametur; et ne praedicetur, absconditur. Bene autem de eo qui ad ministerium praedicationis elevatur dicitur: Nondum sciebat Dominum, neque revelatus ei fuerat sermo Domini, ut dum ea quae nondum habet rudis insinuat quibus bonis ditari praedicator debeat patenter ostendat. Nam qui illam intimi amoris virtutem nondum percepit, profecto omnipotentem Dominum, quem fide velut fama novit, praesentia illius magna charitatis nescit. Et si ardenter diligit, et arcana mysteriorum discutere per spiritum nondum novit, jam quidem Dominum cognoscit, sed ad sermonis ejus revelationem non pervenit. Abiit ergo Samuel, et dormivit.

Jam quippe ad divinae locutionis notitiam puer instructus mittitur, cum electus subditus majoris consilio ad spiritalia cognoscenda praeparatur. Et dormire quidem ei est in desiderio aeternae vitae quiescere, cum videlicet animae jam sola superna sitienti cuncta praesentia in dedignatione sunt, ut quo studiosius ab intentione sua corporeum omne repellitur, amore invisibilium abundantius repleatur. Et notandum quia jam quater ad somni quietem redire praecipitur, quia dum negligenter utimur isto saeculo circa visibilia, opere, locutione et cogitatione vigilamus. Ter ergo dormire praecipimur, ut ad cognitionem supernorum per quietem operis, oris silentium et cogitationum superfluarum abjectionem praeparemur. Quarto autem loco ad somnum mittimur cum majorum nostrorum licentia ab utili etiam ministerio cessare praecipimur, ut dum nulla praepedimur cura sollicitudinis, totam se mens colligat ad intuitum supernae visionis.

Et notandum quia quiescentem puerum, nesciente Heli, Dominus excitat, sed tamen excitato, nisi eodem Heli praecipiente, vocationis suae causam nequaquam manifestat, quia electos subditos occulta inspiratione ad supernae patriae desiderium erigit, sed per quietem vocare eos ad eam quam diligunt patriam sine majorum licentia non permittit. Quia ergo quoties vocatur puer, toties ire ad magistrum sinitur, quid est aliud, nisi quia ipsa divinitus inspirata subjectorum desideria majorum judicio submittuntur?

By some indeed the Lord is known, to whom the word of the Lord is by no means revealed; because simple people, but men perfected by great conversation, perceive from the glory of divine contemplation an ineffable sweetness of love in contemplating, but nevertheless do not reach the height of His revealed word, because they are assumed to the order of lovers, not to the height of preaching. The word is indeed revealed to him, that it may be loved; and lest it be preached, it is hidden. Well, however, is it said of him who is elevated to the ministry of preaching: *He did not yet know the Lord, neither had the word of the Lord been revealed to him,* so that while he insinuates those things which he, as a novice, does not yet have, he may clearly show with what goods a preacher ought to be enriched. For he who has not yet perceived that virtue of intimate love, indeed does not know the Almighty Lord, whom he knew by faith as if by rumor, by the presence of that great charity. And if he loves ardently, and does not yet know how to discuss the secrets of mysteries through the Spirit, he already indeed knows the Lord, but has not arrived at the revelation of His word. *Samuel therefore went, and slept.*

Now indeed, having been instructed, the child is sent to the knowledge of the divine locution, when the chosen subject is prepared by the counsel of a superior for the knowledge of spiritual things. And to sleep is for him to rest in the desire for eternal life, when namely to the soul already thirsting for heavenly things alone, all present things are in disdain, so that the more studiously every corporeal thing is repelled from its intention, it may be more abundantly filled with the love of invisible things. And it should be noted that he is already commanded to return to the rest of sleep four times, because while we use this world negligently around visible things, we are awake in work, speech, and thought. Three times, therefore, we are commanded to sleep, so that we may be prepared for the knowledge of heavenly things through the rest from work, the silence of the mouth, and the rejection of superfluous thoughts. In the fourth place, however, we are sent to sleep when by the permission of our superiors we are commanded to cease even from useful ministry, so that while we are impeded by no care of solicitude, the mind may collect itself entirely for the intuition of the heavenly vision.

And it should be noted that the Lord excites the resting child while Heli is ignorant, but nevertheless He by no means manifests the cause of His calling to the one excited, except when the same Heli commands it, because He raises chosen subjects by an occult inspiration to the desire for the heavenly homeland, but He does not permit calling them through rest to that homeland which they love without the permission of superiors. Because therefore as often as the child is called, so often is he allowed to go to the master, what else is this, except that those very divinely inspired desires of subjects are submitted to the judgment of superiors?

Opus namque subjecti divinitus inspiratum tunc Deo gratum esse cognoscitur, si majoris imperio aut permissione peragatur. Quater ergo vocatur puer a Domino, quater somni quies praecipitur a magistro, quia ad temperamentum operis, silentium oris, abjectionem internae sollicitudinis, cessationem ministerii, pro amore secretioris vitae per divinam inspirationem succendimur, et tamen amoris nostri desideria adimplere sine majorum nostrorum permissione prohibemur. Vocat itaque Dominus, et vocationis causam tacet, ut permittente magistro semetipsum vocato subjecto insinuet. Nam qui non jusso audire postquam vocavit siluit, ubi doctor homo praecepit, vocans Deus vocationis causam indicavit. Abiit ergo Samuel, et dormivit in loco suo. Et venit Dominus, et stetit; et vocavit, sicut vocaverat secundo, Samuel. Et ait Samuel: Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus. Et ait Dominus ad eum.

Quibus profecto verbis, quia de incorporea et invisibili divina substantia illud dicitur quod ad corpus pertinere cognoscitur, necesse est ut rationabiliter intelligatur. Nam quo veniat qui ubique est? quo pacto stare et loqui dicitur qui corporea substantia non formatur? Sed in illa omnia dictante substantia ponuntur verba inopiae nostrae, per quae surgere valeamus ad cognoscenda mysteria operationis suae. Nam venire Domino est praesentia gratiae suae corda electorum tangere, stare ejus est, manenti ejusdem gratiae suae dono eas quas tangit mentes inconcessae gratiae suae dono retinere. Vocare autem ejus est electam mentem ad augmentum majoris gratiae excitare. Venit namque Dominus, et non stat, cum corda negligentium tanguntur per gratiam, et tamen in affectu et amore tangentis gratiae nequaquam perseverant. Velut enim praesens est veniens, et non stans recedens, cum ex praesenti tactu divinae gratiae repente bona facere proponunt, et statim derelicti, ejusdem boni propositi intentionem deserunt. Quod si ad vim contemplationis refertur, venit et stat Dominus cum electorum corda et repente per gratiam tangit, et tacta repente non deserit, ut veniendo visitet, stando confirmet, et qui ad gaudium sibi dilectae mentis ostenditur, non recedat ipse prius quam illa vivendo satietur. Sed quia stare dicitur, discessurus quandoque designatur, quia etsi aliquando electas animas in sua revelatione per aliquantulam moram satiat, praesentiae suae dulcedinem subtrahit, ut subtractam ardentius concupiscant.

For the work of a subject, divinely inspired, is then known to be pleasing to God, if it is performed by the command or permission of a superior. Four times, therefore, the child is called by the Lord, four times the rest of sleep is commanded by the master, because for the tempering of work, the silence of the mouth, the rejection of internal solicitude, and the cessation of ministry, we are enkindled through divine inspiration for the love of a more secret life, and yet we are prohibited from fulfilling the desires of our love without the permission of our superiors. Thus the Lord calls, and is silent about the cause of the calling, so that He might insinuate Himself to the called subject with the permission of the master. For He who was silent about hearing after He called when not commanded, once the human teacher commanded, the calling God indicated the cause of the calling. *Samuel therefore went, and slept in his place.* *And the Lord came, and stood; and He called, as He had called the second time, Samuel.* *And Samuel said: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.* *And the Lord said to him.*

Concerning which words, indeed—because that which is known to pertain to the body is said of the incorporeal and invisible divine substance—it is necessary that it be rationally understood. For whither should He come who is everywhere? In what way is He said to stand and speak who is not formed by corporeal substance? But in that substance which dictates all things, words of our poverty are placed, through which we may be able to rise to the knowledge of the mysteries of His operation. For the Lord to come is to touch the hearts of the elect by the presence of His grace; His standing is to retain, by the gift of His ungranted grace, those minds which He touches while the gift of His same grace remains. Moreover, His calling is to excite the chosen mind to the augment of greater grace. For the Lord comes, and does not stand, when the hearts of the negligent are touched through grace, and yet they by no means persevere in the affection and love of the touching grace. For He is as if present when coming, and not standing when receding, when from the present touch of divine grace they suddenly propose to do good things, and immediately being forsaken, they desert the intention of the same good purpose. But if it is referred to the power of contemplation, the Lord comes and stands when He both suddenly touches the hearts of the elect through grace, and does not suddenly desert them when touched, so that by coming He may visit, and by standing He may confirm; and He who is shown to the beloved mind for its joy, may not Himself recede before that mind is satiated by living. But because He is said to stand, He is designated as being about to depart at some time, because although He sometimes satiates chosen souls in His revelation through some little delay, He withdraws the sweetness of His presence, so that they may more ardently covet it when withdrawn.

Venit ergo Dominus visitans, stat suaviter se demonstrans, vocat ad amorem ostensae suae gloriae per ardentissimum desiderium excitans. Unde et toties excitatus puer repetito nomine. Vocatur, quia vocatio ex nomine designat affectum magnae charitatis et familiaritatis. Unde et Moysi loquitur, dicens: Novi te ex nomine (Exod. XXXIII, 12, 17). Vocati igitur nomen iteratur, cum in magnam jam familiaritatem internae Majestatis mens videntis excipitur, et ferentibus desideria sua fidelibus superna Majestas dicit: Ecce adsum.

Etiam, auctore Deo, cum Domino dicimus loquere, ipso donante dicimus, sed tamen quo affectu id ei perfectiores electi dicant dicere non valemus, quia quod desiderii est ineffabilis non exprimitur locutione rationis. Quem profecto affectum bene Petrus insinuat, qui cum transformato Domino in monte assisteret, refulgentemque faciem ejus sicut sol cerneret, et ad instar nivis albentia vestimenta ejus conspexisset, ait: Bonum est nos hic esse: si vis, faciamus hic tria tabernacula, tibi unum, Moysi unum, et Heliae unum (Matth. XVII, 4; Luc. IX, 33). Qui enim dicit: Bonum est nos hic esse, si posset, ab illa visione tantae gloriae nunquam deponi voluisset. Dum enim dicit Petrus, Domine, bonum est nos hic esse, et Samuel dicit: Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus, voces quidem diversae sunt, affectiones aequales. Hoc enim significat Petrus in monte, transfigurato Domino, quod Samuel a veniente, a stante, et stante Domino secundo vocatur. Sed etsi quasi nesciens Petrus quid diceret ab evangelista reprehenditur, huic tamen sensui contrarium non videtur. Evangelista quippe non affectum Petri, sed rationem reprehendit, quia cum Domino assumptus in gloria seorsum, sic esse semper cupiebat, et pro redemptione communi eum ad ignominiam crucis descendere nolebat. Nesciebat ergo quid diceret, sed ardenter quod videbat amabat, quia profecto tantum bonum videbat, quod sic non amari nullatenus poterat. Unde etsi juste Petrus reprehenditur, ei tamen rationabiliter indulgetur, quia amore tantae Majestatis per fruitionem vincebatur. Verumtamen cum de dicendi ignorantia Petrus arguitur, ejusdem ignorantiae causa memoratur. Nam subdens evangelista, ait: Erant enim timore exterriti. Illa enim internae Majestatis ineffabilis pulchritudo electam mentem cui se delectabiliter ostendit aliquando mirabili pavore concutit, ne de visionis magnitudine ad elationem prosiliat, si eam quam blanda contemplatio ad tam summa evehit provector suus spiritus timoris moderamine non refrenat. Et ait Dominus ad Samuelem: Ecce ego facio verbum in Israel, quod quicunque audierit, tinnient ambae aures ejus.

The Lord therefore comes visiting, stands sweetly showing Himself, calls to the love of His shown glory by exciting an most ardent desire. Whence also the child is excited so many times with his name repeated. He is called, because a calling by name designates an affection of great charity and familiarity. Whence also He speaks to Moses, saying: *I have known thee by name* (Exod. 33:12, 17). The name of the one called is therefore repeated, when the mind of the seer is received into the great familiarity of the internal Majesty, and to the faithful bearing their desires the heavenly Majesty says: Behold, I am here.

Also, by God's authorship, when we say to the Lord *Speak,* we say it by His gift; but nevertheless we are not able to say with what affection the more perfect elect say it to Him, because that which belongs to ineffable desire is not expressed by the locution of reason. Which affection Peter indeed well insinuates, who, when he assisted the transformed Lord on the mountain, and discerned His refulgent face like the sun, and had beheld His garments whitening like snow, said: *It is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias* (Matt. 17:4; Luke 9:33). For he who says: *It is good for us to be here,* if he were able, would never have wished to be deposed from that vision of such great glory. For while Peter says: *Lord, it is good for us to be here,* and Samuel says: *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,* the voices indeed are diverse, but the affections are equal. For Peter signifies this on the mountain, with the Lord transfigured, what Samuel is called to by the one coming, and standing, and the Lord standing and calling a second time. But even if Peter is rebuked by the Evangelist as if not knowing what he said, it nevertheless does not seem contrary to this sense. For the Evangelist rebuked not Peter's affection, but his reason, because having been taken up apart with the Lord in glory, he thus desired to be always, and for the common redemption he did not wish Him to descend to the ignominy of the cross. He knew not therefore what he said, but he ardently loved what he saw, because indeed he saw so great a good, which could in no way not be thus loved. Whence even if Peter is justly rebuked, he is nevertheless reasonably indulged, because he was overcome by the fruition of such great Majesty through enjoyment. Nevertheless, when Peter is argued with concerning his ignorance in speaking, the cause of the same ignorance is remembered. For subjoining, the Evangelist says: *For they were terrified with fear.* For that ineffable beauty of internal Majesty sometimes strikes the chosen mind to which it shows itself delightfully with a miraculous dread, lest it should leap forth to elation from the magnitude of the vision, if its own spirit of the one being advanced does not refrain it by the moderation of fear, whom bland contemplation carries away to such heights. And the Lord said to Samuel: Behold, I do a word in Israel, which whosoever heareth, both his ears shall tingle.

Inter dona quippe sublimia electa mens eo cautius ab elatione compescitur, quo per omnipotentis Dei justitiam etiam illos repulsos aspicit, qui donis sublimioribus fulti esse videbantur. Quare et de verbo quod facturum se esse Dominus minatur, tinnire aures audientium praedicuntur. Aures quippe corporis tinniunt, quando intolerabili sonitu impetuntur. Nam cum ultra auditus capacitatem ei clamor infunditur, hunc quem officii angustia sonitum rejicit, in tinnitum convertit, quia dum per aurium antra vox sibilat, quae infusa simul, ad interiora non intrat. Ad aures vero mentium intolerabilis clamor est alicujus magni repulsio praedicatoris. Clamoris ergo effusi magnitudo non capitur, quia dum sublimia dona praedicatori reprobo concessa recoluntur, quo divinae aequitatis examine projicitur ignoratur. In tinnitum ergo aurium effusae vocis magnitudo convertitur, quia etsi quo Dei judicio fiat, mentis intentione non capitur, dum diu per considerationem pensatur, corda consideratione timore consternantur. Velut enim de clauso magnae vocis sonitu aures tinniunt, quando de diu considerata magnorum virorum reprobatione justorum corda pertimescunt. Sed ambae aures tinnire referuntur, dextera videlicet et sinistra. Et quia per dexteram aeterna vita, per sinistram vero praesens designatur, et per aurem ea quae dicuntur audimus, quid per sinistram aurem nisi intentionem piae operationis, et quid per aurem dexteram nisi intentionem supernae visionis accipimus? Ambae itaque audientis aures tinnient, quia cum summorum virorum ruina ostenditur, electorum intentio utraque turbatur, quia et paventi corde ad contemplanda aeterna se erigunt, et sine ingenti formidine temporalia non disponunt. Hunc namque aurium tinnitum passus fuerat, qui Domino loquebatur, dicens: Justitia tua sicut montes Dei, judicia tua abyssus multa (Psal. XXXV, 7). Montes quippe Dei summi et electi viri intelliguntur. Praedixi enim quod judicaturus essem domum ejus usque in aeternum propter iniquitatem, eo quod noverat filios suos indigne agere, et non corripuit eos. Idcirco juravi domui Heli quod non expietur iniquitas domus ejus victimis et muneribus in aeternum.

Indeed, among sublime gifts the chosen mind is restrained from elation all the more cautiously as it beholds even those repulsed through the justice of Almighty God, who seemed to be supported by more sublime gifts. For which reason also, concerning the word which the Lord threatens He will do, the ears of those hearing are foretold to tingle. For indeed the ears of the body tingle when they are attacked by an intolerable sound. For when a clamor is infused into them beyond the capacity of hearing, that sound which the narrowness of the office rejects, it converts into a tingling, because while the voice hisses through the caves of the ears, which having been infused at the same time, does not enter to the interior. But to the ears of minds an intolerable clamor is the rejection (*repulsio*) of some great preacher. Therefore the magnitude of the diffused clamor is not grasped, because while the sublime gifts granted to the reprobate preacher are recollected, it is unknown by what examination of divine equity he is projected. Therefore the magnitude of the diffused voice is converted into a tingling of the ears, because although it is not grasped by the intention of the mind by what judgment of God it occurs, while it is weighed for a long time through consideration, hearts are consternated with fear by the consideration. For as if from the closed sound of a great voice the ears tingle, when the hearts of the just greatly fear concerning the long-considered reprobation of great men. But both ears are related to tingle, namely the right and the left. And because by the right ear eternal life, but by the left the present is designated, and by the ear we hear those things which are said, what do we accept by the left ear except the intention of pious operation, and what by the right ear except the intention of heavenly vision? Thus both ears of the hearer shall tingle, because when the ruin of the highest men is shown, both intentions of the elect are disturbed, because with a trembling heart they both raise themselves to contemplate eternal things, and they do not dispose temporal things without great dread. For he had suffered this tingling of the ears who spoke to the Lord, saying: *Thy justice is like the mountains of God, thy judgments are a great deep* (Psalm 35:7). For the highest and chosen men are understood as the mountains of God. For I have foretold that I would judge his house forever because of iniquity, because he knew his sons did act unworthily, and he did not rebuke them. Therefore I have sworn to the house of Heli, that the iniquity of his house shall not be expiated with victims and gifts forever.

Quia enim plerumque justae severitatis sententia per clementiam temperatur, magnae districtionis hoc judicium est, ubi animadversionis sententia replicando asseritur. Praedixit enim superius Heli, cum per virum Dei, suppresso nomine, dejectionis ejus sententiam nuntiavit. Quia vero et nunc idem se acturum jurat, profecto damnationis judicium replicat. Qua in re etiam notandum est quia qui inique agentes filios non corripuit, iniquitatem fecisse reprehenditur quae in aeternum victimis et muneribus nequaquam expietur. Quae ergo erit districtio iniquitatis propriae, si irremediabilis culpa est negligentia curae alienae? Nam si subditorum peccata incorrepta perenni reatu nos obligant, audacia iniquitatis propriae quibus nos poenis ligat? Merito ergo audientis aures tinniunt, quia nimirum electorum mentes, quae hoc attente considerant, de tanta districtione contremiscunt. Merito audientis hoc aures tinniunt, quia profecto immensitatem clamoris habet, quam electa corda vix sustinent. And dextera quidem audientis auris tinnit, quia etsi perfectionis suae merito se quisque ad superna contemplanda erigit, tamen de vitae suae celsitudine non confidit. Sinistra etiam auris tinnit, quia etsi dono scientiae habet, ut temporalia quis perfecte ordinet, tamen de perfectione ministerii sui fiduciam nullam habet. Inter dona quippe sublimia verbum audiunt, de cujus clamore auris utraque tinnitum patitur, sub quo, donec ista incertitudinis vita ducitur, pavere non desinit. Dormivit Samuel usque mane.

Usque mane enim dormit qui quousque venturi Redemptori splendor appareat in incoeptae bonae operationis conversatione requiescit. Usque mane dormit, qui tota praesentis vitae nocte per propositum inchoatae justitiae exspectat, ut ad gaudium emeritae retributionis claritas sibi promissi Redemptoris effulgeat. Verbum enim promissum in Israel audivit, de quo aures ejus tinnire non desinunt, quia de conspecta districtione divinae justitiae timoris spiritum hausit, sub cujus pondere ad saeculi amorem evigilare non poterit. But fortasse usque mane dormire dicitur, pro tinnitu auris dexterae. Nam dextera auris tinnit, quia dum perfectus interioris vitae amator de perfectione contemplationis dubitat, magis ac magis proficere in ea qua coepit vitae sublimitate appetit. But quandiu in hac mortali carne sumus, maligni spiritus ad summa tendentibus insidiantur; et ut eos ab internae gloriae visione retrahant, ineptarum cogitationum figmenta congregant, quae internis eorum oculis proponant. Bene itaque dicitur: Dormivit Samuel usque mane. Tentatio immundorum spirituum nox est; qui vero usque mane dormit oculos tota nocte non aperit.

Because for the most part the sentence of just severity is tempered by clemency, this judgment is of great strictness (*districtio*), where the sentence of animadversion is asserted by being repeated. For He foretold it above to Heli, when through a man of God, with his name suppressed, He announced the sentence of his dejection. Because indeed even now He swears that He will act in the same way, He surely repeats the judgment of damnation. In which matter it is also to be noted that he who did not rebuke his sons acting iniquitously is rebuked for having committed iniquity which shall by no means be expiated with victims and gifts forever. What therefore will be the strictness concerning one's own iniquity, if the negligence of another's care is an irremediable fault? For if the uncorrected sins of subjects bind us with perennial guilt, with what punishments does the audacity of our own iniquity bind us? Deservedly therefore the ears of the hearer tingle, because surely the minds of the elect, which consider this attentively, tremble at such great strictness. Deservedly the ears of the hearer tingle at this, because indeed it has an immensity of clamor which chosen hearts can scarcely sustain. And the right ear of the hearer indeed tingles, because even if by the merit of his perfection each one raises himself to contemplate heavenly things, nevertheless he does not trust in the height of his life. The left ear also tingles, because even if he has by the gift of knowledge that he may perfectly ordain temporal things, nevertheless he has no confidence in the perfection of his ministry. Indeed, among sublime gifts they hear a word, from whose clamor each ear suffers a tingling, under which, as long as this life of uncertainty is led, he does not cease to fear. *Samuel slept until morning.*

For he sleeps until morning who, until the splendor of the coming Redeemer appears, rests in the conversation of begun good operation. He sleeps until morning who, through the whole night of the present life, waits by the purpose of begun justice, so that the clarity of the promised Redeemer may shine forth for him into the joy of merited retribution. For he heard the promised word in Israel, from which his ears do not cease to tingle, because from the beheld strictness of divine justice he drew the spirit of fear, under whose weight he will not be able to awake to the love of the world. But perhaps he is said to sleep until morning for the tingling of the right ear. For the right ear tingles, because while the perfect lover of the interior life doubts concerning the perfection of contemplation, he desires more and more to profit in that sublimity of life which he began. But as long as we are in this mortal flesh, malignant spirits lie in wait for those tending to the highest things; and so that they may withdraw them from the vision of internal glory, they gather figments of inept thoughts, which they may propose to their internal eyes. Well therefore is it said: *Samuel slept until morning.* The temptation of impure spirits is night; but he who sleeps until morning does not open his eyes all night.

Dormit ergo in nocte qui figmenta daemonum dedignatur aspicere in tentatione. Tota nocte etiam dormit, quia caligine tentationis non vincitur, sed viriliter sustinet, donec per adventum gratiae claritatis supernae luce visitetur. Et tunc profecto velut mane evigilat, quia oblectamento refusi sibi post tenebras luminis hilarescit. Quasi evigilans quippe tunc oculos aperit, quia lucem qua respergitur laetanter aspicit, qui aspicere sibi illatas tenebras non curavit. De tinnitu quidem dexterae auris obtinet ut qui supernis innititur videre reproba dedignetur, et certitudinem sui profectus insinuat, dum quod pace proficit per aperta et violenta bella non perdit. Et timuit indicare visionem Heli.

22. Illud namque ei indicare timuit quod sibi Dominus ostendit, ut temeritatem humanae audaciae refrenaret vigore disciplinae. Quidam namque adeo sunt praecipites, ut ad praelatorum suorum reprehensionem facile proruant, atque eorum erratibus minari futura supplicia non pavescant. Qui nimirum, quia sanctae Scripturae morem nesciunt, loquentem sibi Dominum nequaquam audierunt. Nam quibus omnipotens Deus loquens praelatorum suorum poenas insinuat, ea quae audierunt eis dicere formidant. Hinc ergo praepositorum suorum reprehensores colligant quanta se inconsideratione praecipitent, et lapsus sui profunda pertimescant. Si enim ii quibus omnipotens Deus loquitur praelatis suis loqui metuunt, ii quibus nequaquam locutus est Deus recondere se sub linguae suae silentio quanto terrore debuerunt? Timor ergo Samuelis non pavorem servilem insinuat, sed reverentiam debitam culmini pastorali. Nam etsi negligens praedicator reprehensionem et minas ex reatu meretur proprio, timorem reverentiae exigit ejus ordinis celsitudo. Sequitur:

(Vers. 15.) Aperuitque ostia domus Domini.

23. Quidnam est quod is qui loqui timuit, domus Domini ostia reseravit, nisi quia obedire non erubuit, qui indicare tristia expavit? Nam superius dictum est: Samuel dormiebat in templo Domini, ubi erat arca Dei. Puer enim, qui in templo Domini dormisse et nunc ejusdem aperire ostia dicitur, injunctum ministerium habuisse ostenditur, ut horis congruentibus aperiret ostia, et obseraret. Qui ergo visionem indicare expavit, et ostia domus Domini aperuit, reverentiam magistro dupliciter impendit, videlicet cura ministerii, et custodia locutionis. Quam profecto loquendi custodiam quam districte tenuisset ostenditur, si ea quae sequuntur subtiliter attendantur. Nam repente subinfertur:

He sleeps therefore in the night who disdains to look at the figments of demons in temptation. He also sleeps all night because he is not conquered by the darkness of temptation, but manfully endures, until he is visited by the light of heavenly clarity through the advent of grace. And then indeed he awakes as if in the morning, because he becomes cheerful by the delight of the light poured back upon him after the darkness. As if awaking, indeed, he then opens his eyes, because he joyfully beholds the light by which he is sprinkled, who did not care to behold the darkness brought upon him. From the tingling indeed of the right ear he obtains that he who leans upon heavenly things disdains to see reprobate things, and he insinuates the certainty of his progress, while that which he profits in peace he does not lose through open and violent wars. *And he feared to tell the vision to Heli.*

22. For he feared to tell him that which the Lord had shown him, in order to restrain the temerity of human audacity with the vigor of discipline. For some are so headlong that they easily rush to the rebuke of their prelates, and do not fear to threaten future punishments for their errors. These, surely, because they do not know the custom of Holy Scripture, have by no means heard the Lord speaking to them. For those to whom almighty God, in speaking, hints at the punishments of their prelates, fear to tell them the things they have heard. Hence, therefore, let the rebukers of their provosts gather with how much inconsideration they cast themselves headlong, and let them fear deeply the depths of their fall. For if those to whom almighty God speaks fear to speak to their prelates, with how much terror ought those to whom God has by no means spoken hide themselves under the silence of their tongue? The fear of Samuel, therefore, does not hint at a servile dread, but at the reverence due to the pastoral height. For even if a negligent preacher deserves rebuke and threats from his own guilt, the loftiness of that order demands the fear of reverence. It follows:

(Verse 15.) And he opened the doors of the house of the Lord.

23. What is it that he who feared to speak, unlocked the doors of the house of the Lord, unless because he did not blush to obey who was terrified to indicate sad things? For it was said above: Samuel slept in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. For the boy, who is said to have slept in the temple of the Lord and now to open its doors, is shown to have had an enjoined ministry, so that at congruent hours he might open and shut the doors. He, therefore, who was terrified to indicate the vision and opened the doors of the house of the Lord, rendered double reverence to his master, namely, by care for the ministry and by the custody of speech. How strictly indeed he held that custody of speaking is shown if the things that follow are subtly attended to. For it is suddenly added:

(Vers. 16-18.) Venit ergo Heli ad Samuelem, et dixit: Samuel fili mi. Qui respondit: Praesto sum. Et interrogavit eum: Quis est sermo quem locutus est Dominus ad te: oro, ne celaveris mihi. Haec faciat tibi Deus, et haec addat, si absconderis a me sermonem ex omnibus quae dicta sunt tibi. Indicavit ergo ei Samuel universos sermones, et non abscondit ab eo.

24. Qui enim tanta imprecationis instantia ad loquendum coactus asseritur, magna districtione silentii obligatus fuisse declaratur. Et quia non tam pro custodia puritatis quam obstinatione proterviae quidam tacere subjecti solent, Samuel electi subditi formam ostendit, qui reverenter tacuit, sed tacere loqui jussus expavit. Itaque gemina luce conversationis enituit, dum qui filialis timoris virtute siluit, loquendi utilitatem loquendo conquisivit. Sequitur:

(Vers. 18.) Et ille respondit: Dominus est, quod bonum est in oculis suis faciat.

25. Qui simplicius quam debet istam Heli responsionem considerat, tam recte hunc respondisse quam humiliter putat. Nam sicut auditur exterius, quid humilius respondisse potuit, qui reprobationem suam audivit, et minanti Deo, imo reprobationis suae sententiam promulganti, quidquid de se facere vellet obtulit? Sed profecto ista responsionis humilitas si subtiliter inspiciatur, vera humilitas non est. Vera namque esse cognoscitur quae bonum obedientiae in majoris imperia consequenda comitatur. Vere itaque esset humilis, si sese ad emendationem culpae pro qua arguebatur obtulisset. Sed et fortasse verius esset humilis, si reprehensus nequaquam responderet, sed neglectam correptionem scelestis filiis adhiberet, si vel tunc pastorali zelo insisteret, et flagitiosorum sacerdotum scelera digna ultione vindicaret. Dum ergo dicit: Dominus est, quod bonum est in oculis suis faciat, electionis suae verbum apertius protulisse cognoscitur quam responsionem humilitatis, quia nimirum potius elegit minarum Dei causas incurrere quam de perpetratis iniquitatibus filios condemnare. O quanti sunt adhuc imitatores Heli, qui cum minantem sibi omnipotentem Deum quotidie de sacro eloquio sentiant, et tamen hominibus displicere trepidant, et divinae indignationis minas incurrere non formidant, et dum inimicitias hominum, velut implacabiles metuunt, de Dei misericordia etiam peccando confidunt!

26. Sed inordinata fiducia apud omnipotentem Deum vindictae locum habere potest, indulgentiam vero obtinere non potest. Incorrepto enim peccatori, et in culpae suae proposito perduranti, quid est de minanti sibi Deo dicere: Dominus est, quod bonum est in oculis suis faciat, nisi de ordinatissima Dei misericordia inordinate confidere? De omnipotentis etenim Dei misericordia ordinate confidit qui hoc quod peccando delinquit poenitendo corrigit, flendo tergit. Peccare ergo, et de Dei Creatoris clementia praesumere, pelago justitiae ejus exponi est.

(Verses 16-18.) Heli therefore came to Samuel, and said: Samuel, my son. Who answered: I am here. And he questioned him: What is the word that the Lord has spoken to thee: I pray thee, hide it not from me. God do so to thee, and so add, if thou shalt hide from me one word of all that have been said to thee. Samuel therefore told him all the words, and did not hide them from him.

24. For he who is asserted to have been compelled to speak by so much instance of imprecation, is declared to have been bound by a great severity of silence. And because some subjects are accustomed to be silent not so much for the custody of purity as for the obstinacy of protervity, Samuel shows the form of the elect subject, who reverently kept silence, but feared to keep silence when commanded to speak. And so he shone with a double light of conversation, while he who was silent by the virtue of filial fear, sought the utility of speaking by speaking. It follows:

(Verse 18.) And he answered: It is the Lord: let him do what is good in his eyes.

25. He who considers this response of Heli more simply than he ought, thinks that he answered as rightly as he did humbly. For as it is heard outwardly, what could he have answered more humbly who heard his reprobation, and to God threatening, or rather, promulgating the sentence of his reprobation, offered whatever he wished to do with him? But surely that humility of response, if it be subtly inspected, is not true humility. For that is known to be true which accompanies the good of obedience in following the commands of a superior. He would indeed be truly humble if he had offered himself to the amendment of the fault for which he was being argued. But perhaps he would more truly be humble if, being rebuked, he answered nothing, but applied the neglected correction to his wicked sons, if even then he insisted with pastoral zeal and vindicated the crimes of the flagitious priests with worthy vengeance. While, therefore, he says: It is the Lord: let him do what is good in his eyes, he is known to have brought forth the word of his election more clearly than a response of humility, because indeed he chose rather to incur the causes of God's threats than to condemn his sons for the iniquities they had committed. Oh, how many are there still as imitators of Heli, who, although they feel almighty God daily from the sacred eloquence threatening them, yet tremble to displease men, and do not fear to incur the threats of divine indignation, and while they fear the enmities of men as if implacable, they trust in the mercy of God even while sinning!

26. But inordinate trust with almighty God can have a place for vengeance, but cannot obtain indulgence. For to an uncorrected sinner, and one persisting in the purpose of his fault, what is it to say to God threatening him: It is the Lord: let him do what is good in his eyes, unless to trust inordinately in the most orderly mercy of God? For he trusts orderly in the mercy of almighty God who corrects that in which he fails by sinning through penitence, and wipes it away by weeping. To sin, therefore, and to presume upon the clemency of God the Creator, is to be exposed to the sea of his justice.

Sic nimirum peccata perpetrata non tergere poenitendo, et de Dei misericordia praesumere, in judicium districtionis ejus offendere est. Dum ergo Heli vita in reproborum praedicatorum forma describitur, non solum culpa lapsus ostenditur, sed etiam culpae in praecipitatione securitas. Nam qui timore poenitentiae divinae indignationis magnitudinem placare potuit, dum neglexit quod audivit, incurrit quod meruit.

27. Omnipotens enim Deus, etsi aequitate justus est, abundantior tamen creditur miseratione pius. Unde et per Prophetam dicitur: Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus (Psal. CXLIV, 9). Hinc est id quod per Jonam prophetam Ninivitis minas subversionis protulit, et tamen poenam evertendae civitatis poenitentibus indulsit (Joan. III, 1, 2, seq.). Hinc est enim quod Ezechiae regi (IV Reg. XX, 1, seq.) per prophetae oraculum mortis poena promittitur (Isa. XXXVIII, 1, seq.), sed quia rex, mori metuens, coram Domino se poenitentiae lacrymis afflixit, mortem, qua moreretur, apud eum, quem timuit, non invenit. Et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30). Si ergo bona promissa revocat omnipotens Deus, quia ii quibus promiserat male permutantur, quanto magis minarum effectus retrahit, cum bene conversos eos aspicit quibus pro admissis iniquitatibus poenam animadversionis intimavit? Quid ergo ad haec dicimus, qui quotidie delinquimus, atque in reatus nostri obligatione securi sumus? Hoc igitur ipsum, quod districtionem divinae justitiae non tenemus, nobis valde timendum est, quia ecce qui divina indignatione projicitur pro culpa perpetratae negligentiae nullo timore sollicitus fuisse perhibetur. Sed quia ad timorem reprobi praedicatoris repulsionem novimus, electi profectum audiamus. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 19.) Crevit autem Samuel, et Dominus erat cum eo.

28. Hoc profecto si ad historiam legitur, crevisse puer Samuel aetate corporis designatur; si vero ut caetera spiritali investigatione ista perquirimus, cum eo Dominus esse describitur, qui crevisse memoratur. Crescit autem qui in virum perfectum mentis aetate proficit. Unde et per Prophetam de electis proficientibus dicitur: Ambulabunt de virtute in virtutem, videbitur Deus deorum in Sion (Psal. LXXXIII, 8). Hinc Paulus ait: Donec occurramus ei in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi (Ephes. IV, 13). Verum nonnulli sunt qui dum virtutibus crescunt, elatione corruunt.

So indeed not to wipe away sins committed by repenting, and to presume upon God's mercy, is to offend against the judgment of his severity. While, therefore, the life of Heli is described in the form of reprobate preachers, not only the fall through guilt is shown, but also security in the precipitation of guilt. For he who could have appeased the magnitude of divine indignation by the fear of penitence, while he neglected what he heard, incurred what he deserved.

27. For almighty God, although he is just in equity, is yet believed to be more abundant in pious commiseration. Whence also it is said by the Prophet: His tender mercies are over all his works (Ps. 144, 9). Hence it is that through the prophet Jonah he brought forth threats of subversion to the Ninevites, and yet granted the punishment of the city to be overturned to the penitents (Jon. 3, 1 ff.). Hence it is also that to king Hezekiah (2 Kings 20, 1 ff.) the punishment of death is promised by the oracle of the prophet (Isa. 38, 1 ff.), but because the king, fearing to die, afflicted himself before the Lord with the tears of penitence, he did not find with him whom he feared the death by which he would die. And above indeed the Lord asserted that he had spoken so that the house of Heli and of his father should minister in his sight forever, but he who had spoken good things of one doing good, changed the sentence concerning the house now made reprobate, saying: But now, be it far from me (1 Sam. 2, 30). If, therefore, almighty God revokes promised goods because those to whom he had promised are badly changed, how much more does he withdraw the effect of threats when he sees those well-converted to whom, for the iniquities they had admitted, he intimated the punishment of animadversion? What therefore do we say to these things, who daily fail, and are secure in the obligation of our guilt? This very thing, therefore, that we do not hold the severity of divine justice, is greatly to be feared by us, because behold he who is cast off by divine indignation for the fault of committed negligence is reported to have been solicitous with no fear. But because we know the repulse of the reprobate preacher for his fear, let us hear the progress of the elect. For it follows:

(Verse 19.) And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him.

28. Surely, if this is read according to the history, the boy Samuel is designated to have grown in the age of the body; but if, as with other things, we search these out with spiritual investigation, the Lord is described as being with him who is recorded to have grown. For he grows who profits toward the perfect man in the age of the mind. Whence also it is said by the Prophet concerning the proficient elect: They shall go from virtue to virtue, the God of gods shall be seen in Zion (Ps. 83, 8). Hence Paul says: Until we all meet in a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4, 13). But there are some who, while they grow in virtues, fall by elation.

Hi nimirum crescere videntur, sed tamen cum eis Dominus non est, quia a se eum, alta sentiendo de se, ejiciunt, quem in profectu virtutum positi per humilitatem secum habere potuerunt. Vel si per exteriorem dignitatem crevisse intelligitur, Dominus cum eo esse memoratur, quia profecto plerique in humiliori ordine religiosi sunt; sed cum subito ad culmen dignitatis pervenerint, prima opera cum humilitate derelinquunt. Samuel igitur et proficit, et proficiens Dominum secum habuit, ut profecto electorum praedicatorum morem praeferret, qui cum dona, et dignitates, quibus prosint aliis, assequuntur, de semetipsis placere Deo non negligunt, et ex eo illa quae pro aliis acceperunt dona multiplicant, unde in semetipsis ostendunt bonum, quod in eis loquendo propagare concupiscunt. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 19.) Et non cecidit ex omnibus verbis ejus in terram.

29. In terra quippe verbum praedicatoris cadit, cum ex reproba praedicatoris conversatione vilescit. Unde et Veritatis voce dicitur: Ad nihilum valet ultra, nisi ut mittatur foras, et conculcetur ab hominibus (Matth. V, 13). Et notandum quia ex omnibus verbis ejus non cecidisse in terram dicitur, ut profecto praedicatori nihil agere liceat quod licet reprobare. Nam quidquid agi prohibet, is profecto si agit, verbum in terram cadit, quia dum a loquente contemnitur, hoc audientes nequaquam venerantur. Verbum namque aliquod in terram cadere prohibebat Dominus, cum negligentibus praedicatoribus negligentiae suae verbum exponebat, dicens: Quicunque solverit unum ex mandatis istis minimis, et docuerit sic homines, minimus vocabitur in regno coelorum; qui autem fecerit et docuerit, magnus vocabitur in regno coelorum (Ibid. V, 19). Mandatum namque nec minimum praedicator solvit, cujus verbum ex verbis omnibus in terram non cadit. Dum autem ex omnibus verbis Samuelis verbum in terram non cecidisse dicitur, cujus mores insinuat Samuel, nisi qui merito et praedicationis et operis magni sunt in regno coelorum? Itaque ex omnibus verbis ejus in terram non cadit, quia omne quod altum sanctae Ecclesiae perfectus praedicator loquitur, ab eo etiam sublimi praedicatur conversatione, cum, velut in ardua specula positus, et sapientes verbo erudit, et simplicibus iter, per quod ad aeternam patriam ingredi debeant, operibus ostendit. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 20.) Et cognovit universus Israel a Dan usque Bersabee, quod fidelis Samuel propheta esset Domini.

These indeed seem to grow, but yet the Lord is not with them, because they cast him out from themselves by thinking high things of themselves, whom they were able to have with them through humility when placed in the profit of virtues. Or if he is understood to have grown through exterior dignity, the Lord is recorded as being with him, because indeed very many are religious in a humbler order; but when they have suddenly reached the height of dignity, they abandon their first works along with their humility. Samuel, therefore, both profited, and profiting had the Lord with him, so that indeed he might present the custom of elect preachers, who, when they attain the gifts and dignities by which they may benefit others, do not neglect to please God concerning themselves, and from that multiply those gifts which they received for others, whence they show in themselves the good which they desire to propagate in others by speaking. Wherefore it is also added:

(Verse 19.) And not one of his words fell to the ground.

29. To the ground indeed the word of the preacher falls, when it becomes vile from the reprobate conversation of the preacher. Whence also it is said by the voice of Truth: It is good for nothing more, but to be cast out, and to be trodden on by men (Matt. 5, 13). And it is to be noted that it is said that from all his words not one fell to the ground, so that indeed it might not be lawful for a preacher to do anything which it is lawful to reprobate. For whatever he forbids to be done, if he indeed does it, the word falls to the ground, because while it is contemned by the speaker, those hearing by no means venerate it. For the Lord forbade any word to fall to the ground when he exposed the word of their negligence to negligent preachers, saying: Whosoever shall loose one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven (Ibid. 5, 19). For a preacher looses no commandment, not even the least, whose word from all his words does not fall to the ground. But when it is said that from all the words of Samuel the word did not fall to the ground, whose manners does Samuel hint at, unless his who by the merit of both preaching and great work is in the kingdom of heaven? And so from all his words it does not fall to the ground, because everything high which the perfect preacher of holy Church speaks, is also preached by him with sublime conversation, when, placed as if on a high watchtower, he both instructs the wise with the word, and shows to the simple by works the way through which they ought to enter the eternal country. Wherefore it is also added:

(Verse 20.) And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was a faithful prophet of the Lord.

30. Quid enim per Dan nisi simplices, et quid per Bersabee nisi sapientes designantur? A Dan usque Bersabee fidelis Samuel propheta Domini recognoscitur, quando electi praedicatoris vita simplicibus ad salutis exemplum proponitur, et sapientibus per doctrinam ejus sanctae Scripturae arcana revelantur. Quia vero Bersabee puteus septimus interpretatur, possunt per Bersabee non solum sapientes, sed etiam justi designari. Puteus enim septimus quid est, nisi gratia Spiritus septiformis? Per Dan peccatorum vita ostenditur, quia per veterem prophetam dicitur: Fiat Dan coluber in via, cerastes in semita, mordens ungulam equi, ut cadat ascensor ejus retro (Gen. XLIX, 17). A Dan itaque usque Bersabee Samuel Domini propheta cognoscitur, dum electi praedicatoris vita, atque doctrina, peccatoribus est venerabilis, et justis, ut in eo videlicet et lapsi bonum videant, in quo se poenitendo corrigant, et boni mirentur vitae celsitudinem, ad quam quotidie proficiendo convalescant. Sequitur:

(Vers. 21.) Et addidit Dominus ut appareret in Silo.

31. Superius de tempore reprobi pastoris dicitur: In diebus illis non erat visio manifesta. Cum itaque ex sacro eloquio optimus praedicator ostenditur, apparere iterum Dominus perhibetur, quia nimirum cognitio divini consilii, quae absconditur reprobis, puritatis merito revelatur electis. Si enim et hominum consilia nisi familiaribus non creduntur, omnipotens Deus secreta suae dispositionis aestimandus est suis patefacere inimicis? Prius ergo justi doctoris vita praedicatur, deinde addidisse ut appareret Dominus dicitur, quia profecto divinae lucis ostensio reprobos et fictos fugit, quae se electis, et mundis cordibus aperit. Unde et per semetipsam vera lux loquendo, nos illuminat, dicens: Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt (Matth. V, 8). Igitur, ut appareret Dominus, addidit quia mundum praedicatoris sui oculum vidit. Sed cum addidit Ut appareret in Silo, in eodem loco illum apparuisse vice alia designatur. Quia autem dixit ubi apparuit, ne Heli apparuisse crederetur, subsequenter et personam ejus cui apparuit ostendit, dicens:

(Vers. 21.) Quoniam revelatus fuerat Dominus Samueli in Silo, juxta verbum Domini.

32. Tunc namque se ei revelavit, cum ei secretum sui consilii de repulsione reprobi praedicatoris aperuit. Quod profecto juxta verbum Domini factum asseritur, ut hoc quod non valde superius per virum Dei ad Heli dictum fuerat, etiam secundum historiam impletum esse sentiatur: Et suscitabo mihi sacerdotem fidelem qui juxta cor meum, et animam meam faciat, et ambulabit coram Christo meo omnibus diebus (I Reg. II, 35). Et item: Videbis aemulum tuum in templo, in universis prosperis Israel (Ibid., 32).

30. For what is designated by Dan unless the simple, and what by Beersheba unless the wise? From Dan even to Beersheba Samuel is recognized as a faithful prophet of the Lord, when the life of the elect preacher is proposed to the simple as an example of salvation, and the secrets of Holy Scripture are revealed to the wise through his doctrine. Because indeed Beersheba is interpreted 'the seventh well,' there can be designated by Beersheba not only the wise, but also the just. For what is the seventh well, unless the grace of the sevenfold Spirit? Through Dan the life of sinners is shown, because it is said by the ancient prophet: Let Dan be a snake in the way, a serpent in the path, biting the horse's heels, that his rider may fall backward (Gen. 49, 17). From Dan therefore even to Beersheba Samuel is known as the prophet of the Lord, while the life and doctrine of the elect preacher is venerable to sinners, and to the just, so that in him indeed the fallen may see the good in which they may correct themselves by repenting, and the good may admire the height of life to which they may convalesce by profiting daily. It follows:

(Verse 21.) And the Lord added to appear in Shiloh.

31. Above it is said of the time of the reprobate pastor: In those days there was no manifest vision. When therefore an excellent preacher is shown from the sacred eloquence, the Lord is reported to appear again, because indeed the knowledge of the divine counsel, which is hidden from the reprobate, is revealed to the elect by the merit of purity. For if even the counsels of men are not trusted except to familiars, is almighty God to be thought to lay open the secrets of his disposition to his enemies? First, therefore, the life of the just doctor is preached, then the Lord is said to have added to appear, because indeed the showing of divine light flees the reprobate and the feigned, and opens itself to the elect and to the clean of heart. Whence also the true light, speaking through itself, illuminates us, saying: Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God (Matt. 5, 8). Therefore, he added to appear, the Lord, because he saw the clean eye of his preacher. But when he added To appear in Shiloh, it is designated that he had appeared in the same place at another time. But because he said where he appeared, lest it be believed that he had appeared to Heli, subsequently he also showed the person of him to whom he appeared, saying:

(Verse 21.) For the Lord was revealed to Samuel in Shiloh, according to the word of the Lord.

32. For then he revealed himself to him, when he opened to him the secret of his counsel concerning the rejection of the reprobate preacher. Which indeed is asserted to have been done according to the word of the Lord, so that this which had been said to Heli by the man of God not very long above, might be felt to be fulfilled also according to the history: And I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do according to my heart, and my soul, and he shall walk before my Christ all days (1 Sam. 2, 35). And likewise: Thou shalt see thy rival in the temple, in all the prosperities of Israel (Ibid. 2, 32).

Quod si juxta spiritalem intelligentiam perscrutamur, quomodo addit Dominus ut electis appareat, nisi quia qui electos suos de contemplatione justitiae suae mirabiliter terret, etiam de ostensione gloriae ineffabiliter demulcet. Qui enim apparendo justus, corda sanctorum terrore concutit, ut appareat addit, quando cordi territo dulcedo refunditur suae pietatis. Hinc est enim quod Moysi non semper in igne apparuit, sed in igne aliquando, aliquando in nube. In igne quippe terror judicii est. Unde et de secundo Redemptoris nostri adventu per Psalmistam dicitur: Ignis ante eum praeibit, et in circuitu ejus tempestas valida (Psal. XLIX, 3). In nube autem protectio miserationis exprimitur, quia ejusdem protectionis suae blandimentum electis suis promittens Dominus, ait: Tunc videbunt Filium hominis venientem in nube (Marc. XIII, 26; Luc XXI, 27). In igne itaque et nube per deserta gradientibus Dominus apparet, quia mentes contemplantium se in hac exsilii peregrinatione, etsi aliquando terret de justitia, pavore dejectas erigit blandimento protectionis. Dominus itaque Samueli apparuit, et, ut appareret, addidit, quia qui ab electorum mentibus in igne terroris aspicitur, in nube etiam dulcedinis exhibetur. Ignis namque visionem intus viderat, qui nuntiabat foris, dicens: Sanctum et terribile nomen ejus (Psal. CX, 10). In igne item eum visum ostendere cupiens, ait: Venite et videte opera Domini, terribilis in consiliis super filios hominum (Psal. LXV, 5). Sed qui ei in igne apparuit, ut appareret addidit, quia suavitatem gloriae, et dulcedinis suae, ei etiam de nube propinavit. Quare et exhilaratus, qui territus fuerat, dixit: Quam magna multitudo dulcedinis tuae, Domine, quam abscondisti timentibus te (Psal. XXX, 20). Hinc item additam apparitionem admirans, ait: Quam bonus Israel Deus iis qui recto sunt corde (Psal. LXXII, 1).

33. Sed attente considerandum est quod subjungitur: Juxta verbum Domini. Verbum ergo Domini cognoscendum est, antequam ad apparitionem Domini pertingere mereamur, ne injusta et indiscreta visio ignis et nubis, non solum nobis perfectionem non ostendat coelestis itineris, sed ad submersionem erroris nos impellat. Origenes quippe dum apparentem Dominum sine verbo Domini videre voluit, visionem nubis inordinate conspexit, quia ignis apparitionem horruit. Nam dum, abnegata vel minuta justitia Dei, superfluam ejus clementiam praedicaret, asseruit quod non solum omnibus damnatis hominibus parceret, sed etiam de aeterna poena reprobos angelos quandoque liberaret. Novatus autem ignis aspicere visionem amplius amavit, qui dum severam omnipotentis Dei justitiam implacabilem diceret, spe veniae consequendae et poenitentiae omne remedium peccatoribus abstulit. Nec Novato igitur, nec illi alii Dominus apparuit, quia uterque eorum juxta quod per veritatem sacri eloquii cernitur, omnipotentem Dominum non conspexit.

Which if we search out according to spiritual intelligence, how does the Lord add to appear to the elect, unless because he who wonderfully terrifies his elect from the contemplation of his justice, also ineffably soothes them from the showing of glory? For he who appearing as just, shakes the hearts of the saints with terror, adds to appear when sweetness of his piety is poured back into the terrified heart. Hence it is indeed that he did not always appear to Moses in the fire, but sometimes in the fire, sometimes in the cloud. In the fire indeed is the terror of judgment. Whence also it is said of the second advent of our Redeemer by the Psalmist: Fire shall go before him, and a mighty tempest round about him (Ps. 49, 3). But in the cloud the protection of commiseration is expressed, because promising the blandishment of his same protection to his elect, the Lord says: Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud (Mark 13, 26; Luke 21, 27). In the fire therefore and the cloud the Lord appears to those walking through the deserts, because he both terrifies the minds of those contemplating him in this pilgrimage of exile sometimes from justice, and raises them up when cast down by dread with the blandishment of protection. The Lord therefore appeared to Samuel, and added to appear, because he who is seen in the fire of terror by the minds of the elect, is also exhibited in the cloud of sweetness. For he had seen the vision of fire within, who announced it without, saying: Holy and terrible is his name (Ps. 110, 10). Desiring likewise to show him seen in the fire, he said: Come and see the works of the Lord, terrible in counsels over the sons of men (Ps. 65, 5). But he who appeared to him in the fire, added to appear, because he also gave him to drink the smoothness of glory, and of his sweetness, from the cloud. Wherefore, being exhilarated who had been terrified, he said: How great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for them that fear thee (Ps. 30, 20). Hence likewise admiring the added apparition, he said: How good is the God of Israel to them that are of a right heart (Ps. 72, 1).

33. But it must be attentively considered what is subjoined: According to the word of the Lord. For the word of the Lord must be known before we merit to arrive at the apparition of the Lord, lest an unjust and indiscreet vision of fire and cloud not only not show us the perfection of the heavenly journey, but impel us to the submersion of error. Origen indeed, while he wished to see the Lord appearing without the word of the Lord, inordinately beheld the vision of the cloud, because he dreaded the apparition of the fire. For while, denying or mincing the justice of God, he preached his superfluous clemency, he asserted that he would not only spare all damned men, but would even at some time deliver the reprobate angels from eternal punishment. Novatus, however, loved more to look at the vision of the fire, who while he said that the severe justice of almighty God was implacable, took away from sinners every remedy of obtaining pardon and of penitence. Neither to Novatus, therefore, nor to that other did the Lord appear, because each of them, according to what is discerned by the truth of the sacred eloquence, did not behold the almighty Lord.

Tunc ergo juxta verbum Dominus apparet, cum ea ostensione se menti revelat, quam sacrae Scripturae fides non reprobat. Unde et apte subjungitur:

(Vers. 21.) Et venit sermo Samuelis in universo Israeli.

34. Hoc profecto si ad historiam legitur, crevisse puer Samuel aetate corporis designatur; si vero ut caetera spiritali investigatione ista perquirimus, cum eo Dominus esse describitur, qui crevisse memoratur. Unde et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30). Et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30). Et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30). Et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30). Et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30). Et supra quidem se Dominus locutum fuisse asseruit, ut domus Heli et patris ejus in conspectu suo usque in sempiternum ministraret, sed qui de bono agente, bona locutus fuerat, de domo reproba jam effecta sententiam permutavit, dicens: Nunc autem absit hoc a me (I Reg. II, 30).

LIBRO SEGUNDO

CAPÍTULO I (I Reg. IV, 1-11)

1. Et factum est in diebus illis ut congregarentur Philisthiim ad bellum. In diebus illis, videlicet in quibus sacerdotes Domini, filii Heli, reprobo corde Domino serviebant. Per Philisthiim, qui cadentes potione interpretantur, daemones designantur. Hi ad pugnam congregantur, cum pastorum vitam vident esse reprobam. Cum enim pastores Ecclesiae carnalibus desideriis serviunt, et mundi amore inebriantur, invisibiles hostes, qui semper insidiantur, ad expugnandum Dei populum congregantur. Negligentia namque pastorum opportunitas est hostium.

Then indeed the Lord appears according to the word, when he reveals himself to the mind with that showing which the faith of Holy Scripture does not reprobate. Wherefore also it is aptly subjoined:

(Verse 21.) And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

34. This indeed is said that it may be believed that the historical Samuel was made a prophet before all Israel; but if we search it out spiritually, who is the faithful priest, unless our Redeemer? Wherefore also above it is said by the man of God to Heli: And I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do according to my heart and my soul, and he shall walk before my Christ all days. This faithful priest is our Redeemer, of whom it is said that he shall walk before his Christ all days, because indeed the humanity of Christ walks before his divinity all days. For the word of Samuel comes to all Israel when the preaching of our Redeemer, through the faith of the Church, is extended to all who believe. For Christ is the word of Samuel, because Samuel is interpreted 'name of God,' or 'his name is God.' And who is the name of God, or whose name is God, unless he of whom it is said: And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, God, Strong, Father of the world to come, Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6)? The word, therefore, of this Samuel came to all Israel, because the word of our Redeemer, through the preaching of the apostles, ran through the whole world for the salvation of those who believe.

BOOK SECOND

CHAPTER I (1 Sam. 4:1-11)

1. And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight. In those days, namely, in which the priests of the Lord, the sons of Heli, served the Lord with a reprobate heart. By the Philistines, who are interpreted 'those who fall from drinking,' are designated the demons. These gather together to fight when they see that the life of the pastors is reprobate. For when the pastors of the Church give themselves up to carnal desires and become drunk with the love of the world, the invisible enemies, who always lie in wait, gather together to fight against the people of God. For the negligence of the pastors is the opportunity of the enemies.

2. Et egressus est Israel obviam Philisthiim in praelium, et castrametatus est juxta Lapidem adjutorii (Eben-ezer). Et Philisthiim venerunt in Aphec, et instruxerunt aciem contra Israel. Et inito certamine, terga vertit Israel Philisthiis, et caesi sunt in eodem certamine per agros quasi quatuor millia virorum.

3. Et reversus est populus ad castra, dixeruntque majores natu de Israel: Quare percussit nos hodie Dominus coram Philisthiis? Ecce Israel majores, populi dejectionem videntes, non quaerunt qua ex causa percussi sint, sed quare eos Dominus percusserit. Qui enim quare quaerit, de Dei justitia videtur conqueri, quasi percussioni causa non esset. Sed profecto erat causa gravissima, peccata videlicet filiorum Heli, quae sacrificium Domini contaminabant. Non ergo debuerunt quaerere quare, sed culpas suas, suorumque sacerdotum recognoscere. Populus namque pastorum malitia percuti solet.

4. Trahamus ad nos de Silo arcam foederis Domini, et veniat in medium nostri, ut salvet nos de manu inimicorum nostrorum. Ecce Israel majores, non culpas suas recognoscentes, auxilium forinsecus quaerunt. Putant quod arca foederis, quae praesentiae Dei signum est, eos salvatura sit, etsi arcae Dominus per iniquitates suas a cordibus eorum extraneus sit.

5. Misit ergo populus in Silo, et tulerunt inde arcam foederis Domini exercituum sedentis super cherubim; erantque ibi duo filii Heli, Ophni et Phinees, cum arca foederis Dei. Et cum venisset arca foederis Domini in castra, vociferatus est omnis Israel clamore magno, et personuit terra.

6. Et audierunt Philisthiim vocem clamoris, dixeruntque: Quae est haec vox clamoris magni in castris Hebraeorum? Et cognoverunt quod arca Domini venisset in castra. Et timuerunt Philisthiim, dicentes: Venit Deus in castra. Et ingemuerunt, dicentes: Vae nobis!

7. Non enim fuit tanta exultatio heri et nudiustertius. Vae nobis! Quis nos liberabit de manu Deorum excelsorum istorum? Hi sunt Dii qui percusserunt Aegyptum omni plaga in deserto. Philisthiim quippe, per quos daemones designantur, timent cum Dei populum ad divina vident recurrere auxilia. Sed notandum quod Deos excelsos Dominum vocant, quia daemones, etsi Dei virtutem noverunt, ejus unitatem per fidem non confitentur, sed eum secundum errorum suorum multitudinem imaginantur.

2. And Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle, and encamped by the Stone of Help (Eben-ezer). And the Philistines came to Aphek, and set their troop in order against Israel. And when the battle was joined, Israel turned their backs to the Philistines, and there were slain in that fight throughout the fields about four thousand men.

3. And when the people were come back to the camp, the ancients of Israel said: Why hath the Lord struck us today before the Philistines? Behold the ancients of Israel, seeing the defeat of the people, do not ask for what cause they have been struck, but why the Lord has struck them. For he who asks why, seems to complain of the justice of God, as if there were no cause for the blow. But surely there was a most grave cause, namely, the sins of the sons of Heli, which contaminated the sacrifice of the Lord. Therefore they ought not to have asked why, but to have recognized their faults and those of their priests. For the people are often struck because of the wickedness of the pastors.

4. Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord from Shiloh, and let it come into the midst of us, that it may save us from the hand of our enemies. Behold the elders of Israel, not recognizing their faults, seek exterior help. They think that the ark of the covenant, which is the sign of the presence of God, will save them, although the Lord of the ark is far from their hearts because of their iniquities.

5. The people therefore sent to Shiloh, and they brought from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, who sitteth upon the cherubims: and the two sons of Heli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord was come into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, and the earth rang.

6. And the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, and said: What is this noise of a great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp. And the Philistines were afraid, saying: God is come into the camp. And they groaned, saying: Woe to us!

7. For there was not such joy yesterday nor the day before. Woe to us! Who shall deliver us from the hand of these high Gods? These are the Gods that struck Egypt with all the plagues in the desert. The Philistines indeed, by whom the demons are designated, fear when they see the people of God recurring to divine aids. But let us note that they call the Lord 'high Gods,' because the demons, although they know the power of God, do not confess his unity through faith, but imagine him according to the multitude of their errors.

8. Confortamini, et estote viri, Philisthiim, ne serviatis Hebraeis, sicut illi servierunt vobis; confortamini et bellate. Sic daemones, cum ab hominum conversione vinci metuunt, ad fortius certandum sese mutuo accendunt. Quanto enim magis in animas amittere dominium timent, tanto eas atrocius diversis tentationibus impugnant.

9. Pugnaverunt ergo Philisthiim, et caesus est Israel, et fugit unusquisque in tabernaculum suum; et facta est plaga magna nimis, et ceciderunt de Israel triginta millia peditum. Et arca Dei capta est; duoque filii Heli, Ophni et Phinees, mortui sunt.

10. Sed considerandum est cur Deus arcam suam capi, suosque sacerdotes occidi permiserit. Certe, quia in forinseco signo Israel confidebat, et interiorem munditiam negligebat. Putabant quod arcae lignum eos salvaret, dum ipsi in iniquitatibus quas Dominus abominatur permanerent. Idcirco arca capta est, ut discerent quod non locus, neque signum salvat, sed fides et obedientia cordis.

11. Arca foederis religionis formam, et Ecclesiae sacramenta designat. Cum interior religionis virtus per eorum malitiam qui eam profitentur amittitur, forinsecum signum non solum non salvat, sed in manus inimicorum traditur. Daemones namque de iis triumphant qui speciem quidem pietatis habent, sed virtutem ejus operibus abnegaverunt. Arcae ergo perditio, gratiae amissionem, et mentis in potestates adversas traditionem significat.

12. Cucurrit autem vir de Benjamin de acie, et venit in Silo in die illo, scissa veste et pulvere conspersus caput. Ecce nuntius de tribu Benjamin, qui filius dexterae interpretatur, cladis nuntia defert. Scissa vestis, et pulvis super caput, signa sunt magni luctus et poenitentiae. Spiritaliter hoc fidelem confessorem designat, qui de Ecclesiae damnis dolens, foris afflictionem spiritus sui per peccatorum confessionem et humanae fragilitatis memoriam ostendit.

13. Cumque ille venisset, Heli sedebat super sellam contra viam, spectans. Erat enim cor ejus pavens pro arca Dei. Heli, praelatus senex, sollicitudine exspectat. Pavet cor ejus non pro filiis, sed pro arca Dei. Hoc ostendit quod Heli, licet negligens pater exstiterit, reverentem tamen amorem erga divina habebat.

14. Ingressus autem homo ille urbem, nuntiavit; et ululavit omnis civitas. Et audivit Heli sonitum clamoris, dixitque: Quis est sonitus tumultus hujus? At ille festinavit, et venit, et nuntiavit Heli.

8. Take courage, and quit yourselves like men, O Philistines, that ye be not servants to the Hebrews, as they have served you: take courage and fight. Thus the demons, when they fear to be conquered by the conversion of men, incite one another to fight with greater strength. For the more they fear to lose their dominion over souls, the more fiercely they attack them with various temptations.

9. And the Philistines fought, and Israel was struck, and every man fled to his tent: and there was made a very great slaughter, and there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken: and the two sons of Heli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

10. But it must be considered why God permitted his ark to be taken and his priests killed. Surely, because Israel trusted in the exterior sign and neglected interior purity. They thought that the wood of the ark would save them, while they persisted in the iniquities which the Lord abominates. Therefore the ark was taken so that they might learn that it is not the place nor the sign that saves, but the faith and obedience of the heart.

11. The ark of the covenant represents the form of religion and the sacraments of the Church. When the interior virtue of religion is lost through the wickedness of those who profess it, the exterior sign not only does not save, but is delivered into the hands of the enemies. For the demons triumph over those who have the appearance of piety, but have denied its virtue by their works. The loss of the ark therefore signifies the loss of grace and the delivery of the mind to the enemy powers.

12. And a man of Benjamin ran out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes rent, and with dust upon his head. Behold a messenger of the tribe of Benjamin, which is interpreted 'son of the right hand,' brings the news of the defeat. The rent clothes and the dust upon the head are signs of great mourning and penitence. Spiritually, this represents the faithful confessor who, grieving for the losses of the Church, shows outwardly the affliction of his spirit by the confession of sins and the memory of human fragility.

13. And when he came, Heli sat upon a seat by the wayside, watching. For his heart was trembling for the ark of God. Heli, the aged prelate, waits with anxiety. His heart trembles not for his sons, but for the ark of God. This shows that, although Heli was a negligent father, he yet retained a reverent love for the things of God.

14. And when the man entered into the city, he told the news: and all the city cried out. And Heli heard the noise of the cry, and said: What meaneth the noise of this tumult? But that man made haste, and came, and told Heli.

15. Heli autem erat nonaginta et octo annorum, et oculi ejus caligaverant, et videre non poterat. Heli aetas et caecitas, non solum historica sunt, sed spiritalis discretionis inopiam in negligentibus pastoribus designant. Cum enim pastor ad finem vitae sine subditorum correptione pertingit, visus ejus spiritalis obscuratur, nec praevidere potest pericula Ecclesiae imminentia.

16. Et dixit ad Heli: Ego sum qui veni de praelio, et ego qui de acie fugi hodie. Cui ille ait: Quid gestum est, fili mi?

17. Respondens autem ille qui nuntiabat, ait: Fugit Israel coram Philisthiis, et ruina magna facta est in populo; insuper et duo filii tui, Ophni et Phinees, mortui sunt, et arca Dei capta est. Notandum nuntiorum ordinem: primo plebis fuga, deinde caedes magna, tum filiorum mors, et ad extremum arcae captio. Haec postrema denuntiatio gravissima est, et quae senis cor fortius percutit.

18. Cumque ille nominasset arcam Dei, cecidit de sella retrorsum juxta portam, et fractis cervicibus mortuus est. Senex enim erat et gravis; et ipse judicavit Israel quadraginta annis.

19. Vir de Benjamin fidelem nuntium designat qui veritatem nuntiat, quamvis amaram. Vestimenta scindere, a carnalibus desideriis rupturam significat, et pulvis in capite humilitatem qua nos terram esse, et in terram reversuros agnoscimus. Negligens praelatus haec audit, sed jam ad emendationem serum est.

Heli juxta viam sedens eos pastores designat qui, licet in via religionis sint, in otio et negligentia resident. Oculi ejus caligantes contemplativae lucis amissio est. Pavet tamen cor ejus pro arca, quod significat etiam in negligentibus pastoribus remanere posse aliquam divini honoris zeli scintillam, licet non suffecerit ad rigorem cum oportuisset adhibendum.

Heli moritur audito quod arca capta sit. Hoc significat quod religiosae menti, divini honoris et praesentiae amissio, letalius vulnus sit quam filiorum mors vel propria salus. Retrorsum cecidit, quia qui in hac vita divina negligunt, in invisible aeterni supplicii decidunt. Fractae cervices superbiae vel mentis vigoris amissionem signant, qui jam se tenere nequit cum se divina praesentia subtrahit.

15. Now Heli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, and he could not see. The age of Heli and his blindness are not only historical facts, but they designate the lack of spiritual discernment in negligent pastors. For when the pastor reaches the end of his life without having corrected the errors of his subjects, his spiritual sight is darkened and he cannot foresee the dangers that threaten the Church.

16. And he said to Heli: I am he that came from the battle, and I am he that fled today out of the battle. To whom he said: What is done, my son?

17. And the messenger answering said: Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there has been also a great slaughter among the people: and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead: and the ark of God is taken. Let us note the order of the news: first the flight of the people, then the great slaughter, then the death of his sons, and finally the capture of the ark. This last announcement is the most grave and the one that strikes the heart of the old man with the greatest force.

18. And when he had named the ark of God, he fell from his seat backward by the side of the gate, and, his neck being broken, he died. For he was an old man, and heavy: and he judged Israel forty years.

19. The man of Benjamin represents the faithful messenger who announces the truth, however painful it may be. The renting of the clothes signifies the breaking with carnal desires, and the dust on the head the humility of recognizing that we are earth and unto earth we shall return. The negligent prelate hears these things, but it is already late for amendment.

Heli sitting by the wayside represents the pastors who, although they are in the way of religion, are sitting in inaction and negligence. His dimmed eyes are the loss of the light of contemplation. Nevertheless, his heart trembles for the ark, which signifies that even in negligent pastors there may remain a spark of zeal for the honor of God, although it was not sufficient to act with rigor when it was necessary.

Heli dies when he hears that the ark has been taken. This signifies that for the religious soul, the loss of the glory of God and of his presence is a blow more mortal than the loss of the life of sons or of one's own safety. He fell backward, because those who neglect the things of God in this life, fall toward the invisible things of eternal punishment. The broken neck signifies the loss of pride or of the strength of the mind, which can no longer sustain itself when the presence of God is withdrawn.

34. Haereticorum quippe sermo non venit. Novati enim sermo fuit, quia justus Deus semel lapsis fidelibus nequaquam parcit. Origenis sermo fuit quia misericors Dominus nullam creaturam rationalem perire per aeternam damnationem sinit. Sed quia conversi ad Dominum peccatores nequaquam pereunt, et semel lapsi angeli et in peccato suo mortui peccatores nunquam salvantur, haereticorum profecto sermo non venit. Sermo igitur Samuelis venit in universo Israeli, quia catholici viri praedicatio completur, quae in veritate sacri eloquii recte cognoscitur. Et notandum quia ejus sermo venisse dicitur, cui visionem suam Dominus addidisse perhibetur, quia nimirum ejus praedicatio vera est, cui sic divinae justitiae terror ostenditur, ut benignitatis ejus abundans gratia non celetur; videlicet ut mentem videntis sic conspecta veritas terreat, ut etiam ostensa benignitas mentem territam in desperationem cadere non permittat; ut sic de benignitate praesumat, quatenus ad praevaricationis ausum non proruat.

Haec autem in secundo libello praesentis operis disputata sufficiant, ut dum ea quae sequuntur novo principio inchoare disponimus, dicendi etiam studium per devotionem renovetur.

LIBER TERTIUS.

111 CAPUT PRIMUM.

1. Cum sacrae historiae sensus qualiter electorum moribus conveniret studiose quaereremus, allegoriae ordinem repetere exponendo distulimus. Ut ergo ea quae omisisse cernimur suppleamus, quaeritur: Quid est quod dum Samuel ministrare Domino coram Heli memoratur, pretiosus sermo Domini esse describitur? Sed, sicut superius est dictum, per Samuelem praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae, per Heli etiam electi patres testamenti veteris designantur. Puer ergo Samuel ministrabat Domino coram Heli, cum novus doctorum ordo Redemptoris fidem praedicabat. De quo nimirum ministerio Paulus loquitur, dicens: Quandiu sum gentium apostolus, ministerium meum honorificabo (Rom. XI, 13). Hinc iterum dicit: Hebraei sunt, et ego: Israelitae sunt, et ego: ministri Christi sunt, et ego (II Cor. XI, 22). 112 Ministrare ergo Domino, in laborem praedicationis pergere est. Quod profecto ministerium Samuel coram Heli Domino impendisse dicitur, quia quidquid de religione novae fidei, novus praedicatorum ordo asseruit, hoc Patrum veterum auctoritate roboravit.

34. For the word of heretics does not come. For it was the word of Novatus that the just God in no way spares the faithful who have once fallen. It was the word of Origen that the merciful Lord allows no rational creature to perish through eternal damnation. But because sinners who turn to the Lord in no way perish, and the angels who once fell and the sinners who died in their sin are never saved, the word of heretics surely does not come. Therefore, the word of Samuel came to all Israel, because the preaching of the Catholic man is fulfilled, which is rightly recognized in the truth of the sacred word. And it should be noted that his word is said to have come, to whom the Lord is held to have added His vision, because his preaching is undoubtedly true, to whom the terror of divine justice is so shown that the abundant grace of His kindness is not hidden; namely, so that the truth beheld may so terrify the mind of the one who sees, that the shown kindness also does not permit the terrified mind to fall into despair; so that he may so presume upon kindness that he does not rush into the daring of transgression.

Let these things discussed in the second book of the present work suffice, so that while we prepare to begin what follows with a new beginning, the zeal for speaking may also be renewed through devotion.

BOOK THREE.

111 CHAPTER ONE.

1. While we were studiously seeking how the sense of sacred history might agree with the character of the elect, we deferred repeating the order of allegory in our exposition. Therefore, so that we may supply those things which we are seen to have omitted, it is asked: What is it that while Samuel is remembered to minister to the Lord before Eli, the word of the Lord is described as being precious? But, as was said above, through Samuel the preachers of the holy Church are designated, and through Eli also the elect fathers of the Old Testament. Therefore, the child Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli, when the new order of teachers was preaching the faith of the Redeemer. Of which ministry Paul undoubtedly speaks, saying: As long as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I will honor my ministry (Rom. 11:13). Hence again he says: They are Hebrews, and I; they are Israelites, and I; they are ministers of Christ, and I (2 Cor. 11:22). 112 To minister to the Lord, therefore, is to go forth into the labor of preaching. Which ministry Samuel is said to have truly rendered to the Lord before Eli, because whatever the new order of preachers asserted concerning the religion of the new faith, this it strengthened by the authority of the ancient Fathers.

Domino quippe ministrabat Samuel, quando novus praedicator asserebat, dicens: Dico enim Christum Jesum ministrum fuisse circumcisionis propter veritatem Dei, gentes autem super misericordia honorare Deum (Rom. XV, 8). Qui profecto ut ministerium, quod Domino exhibebat, coram Heli quoque impenderet, adjunxit, dicens: Sicut scriptum est: Laudate, omnes gentes, Dominum, et collaudate eum, omnes populi (Psal. CXVI, 1). Et ut se arctius coram Heli in ministerio Domini cohiberet, adjunxit: Isaias enim dicit: Erit radix Jesse, qui exsurget regere gentes, in eum gentes sperabunt (Rom. XV, 12; ex Isa. XI, 10). Puer Samuel Domino ministrabat, cum dominicae Resurrectionis gloriam 113 Petrus assereret, dicens: Jesum Nazarenum virum approbatum a Deo in vobis signis et prodigiis, traditum per manus impiorum interemistis; hunc Deus suscitavit a mortuis praefinito consilio tertia die, sicut impossibile erat teneri eum doloribus inferni (Act. II, 22, seq.).

2. Sed hoc ministerium, quod Domino exhibuit, etiam coram Heli exhibuit, quia subjunxit, dicens: David enim dicit: Quoniam non derelinques animam meam in inferno, nec dabis sanctum tuum videre corruptionem (Act. II, 27; Psal. XV, 10). Coram Heli itaque Samuel ministrare Domino apte dicitur, quia electi sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatores, dum statum novae fidei praedicando erigerent, quod ratione asserere conati sunt, Patrum veterum auctoritate firmaverunt.

3. Et tunc quidem sermo Domini pretiosus fuisse perhibetur. Pretiosa quippe res parvo pretio emi non potest. Pretium autem, quo sermo Dei emitur, labor est sanctae operationis. Velut enim rem quam habere volumus pretio emimus, cum per sermonem praedicationis quem accipimus laborem operis exhibemus. Tunc autem erat sermo pretiosus, cum pro qualicunque labore operis non dabatur, cum omnis qui emptorem sermonis interficiebat obsequium Deo se praestare cogitabat. Eo igitur tempore sermonis emptor multo pretio eguit, quia sine magno labore verbum fidei servare non potuit, qui pro eo quod credidit ad tormenta pervenit. Tempus namque tunc erat quo is qui emebatur sermo, non typo figurata moralitatis, sed apertae locutionis praecepto hortabatur, dicens: Qui vult venire post me, tollat crucem suam quotidie, et sequatur me (Matth. XVI, 24). Hinc item dicit: Qui autem amat patrem aut matrem plus quam me, non est me dignus (Ibid., X, 37). Et: Qui non renuntiaverit omnibus quae possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus (Luc. XIV, 33). Itaque cum ministerium Samuelis asseritur, pretiosus sermo Domini esse perhibetur, quia profecto inter initia fidei, illi qui praedicantibus aeternae vitae doctoribus crediderunt, pro accepto verbo fidei magni laboris opera expendisse credendi sunt.

Indeed, Samuel was ministering to the Lord when the new preacher asserted, saying: For I say that Christ Jesus was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, but that the Gentiles honor God for His mercy (Rom. 15:8). And in order that he might also render before Eli the ministry which he was exhibiting to the Lord, he added, saying: As it is written: Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and praise Him together, all you people (Psalm 116:1). And that he might restrain himself more closely before Eli in the ministry of the Lord, he added: For Isaiah says: There shall be a root of Jesse, who shall rise to rule the Gentiles; in Him the Gentiles shall hope (Rom. 15:12; from Isa. 11:10). The child Samuel was ministering to the Lord when 113 Peter asserted the glory of the Lord's Resurrection, saying: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved by God among you by signs and wonders, being delivered up, you have put to death by the hands of the wicked; Him God has raised from the dead by a preordained counsel on the third day, as it was impossible for Him to be held by the pains of hell (Acts 2:22, seq.).

2. But this ministry, which he exhibited to the Lord, he also exhibited before Eli, because he added, saying: For David says: For You will not leave my soul in hell, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption (Acts 2:27; Psalm 15:10). Thus Samuel is aptly said to minister to the Lord before Eli, because the elect preachers of the holy Church, while they were establishing the state of the new faith by preaching, strengthened by the authority of the ancient Fathers what they endeavored to assert by reason.

3. And then indeed the word of the Lord is held to have been precious. For a precious thing cannot be bought at a small price. But the price by which the word of God is bought is the labor of holy activity. For just as we buy at a price the thing we wish to have, so we exhibit the labor of works through the word of preaching which we receive. At that time the word was precious, when it was not given for just any labor of works, when everyone who killed a buyer of the word thought he was offering an obeisance to God. Therefore, at that time the buyer of the word needed a great price, because he could not keep the word of faith without great labor, he who for that which he believed came to torments. For it was the time then in which the word that was being bought was urged not by the figure of a typified morality, but by the precept of open speech, saying: If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him take up his cross daily and follow Me (Matt. 16:24). Hence again He says: But he who loves father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me (Ibid. 10:37). And: He who has not renounced all things which he possesses, cannot be My disciple (Luke 14:33). Therefore, when the ministry of Samuel is asserted, the word of the Lord is held to be precious, because certainly in the beginnings of the faith, those who believed the teachers of eternal life as they preached, must be believed to have expended works of great labor for the received word of faith.

Et quia Judaicus populus jam lumen divinae cognitionis amiserat, sequitur: (I Reg. 3, 1.) In diebus illis non erat visio manifesta.

4. Manifesta namque visio ejus esset, si in Redemptorem, quem ad visitationem suam venisse audierat, credidisset. De qua nimirum ejus caecitate subjungitur: (Vers. 2.) Factum est autem, Heli jacebat in loco suo, nec poterat videre lucernam Dei, antequam exstingueretur. Visio namque Heli manifesta non est, quia Judaeorum sacerdotium in perfidiae suae caecitate sepultum est. Heli ergo jacet in loco suo, quia et litteram legis habet, et in lege et prophetis non habet statum luminis, sed lapsum caecitatis. Locus namque Heli, videlicet Judaici praedicatoris, sacra lex est. Quia ergo Judaicum sacerdotium adhuc sacram Scripturam habet, in loco suo est. Et quia virtutem sanctae Scripturae nesciens ad statum fidei non erigitur, nimirum in loco suo non stare, sed jacere perhibetur. Quia item usque ad mundi finem projectus est, lucernam Dei videre non posse memoratur. Unde et cum quotidie tot a sancta Ecclesia praedicationis hortamenta suscipiant, cum tot sacrae fidei assertionibus Judaei victi non credant, quid aliud, nisi hoc quod in sancta Scriptura 114 de eis legimus, et etiam per experimentum tenemus, quia videlicet projecti sunt, non solum ut non videant, sed etiam ut videre non possint? Unde et apostoli superfluum laborem reputantes eorum qui videre non poterant, in Actibus suis dicunt: Quia indignos vos fecistis aeternae vitae, ecce convertimur ad gentes (Act. XIII, 46). Sed qui videre non posse relatus est, Dei lucerna vocatur. Synagogae namque ministerium Dei lucerna fuit, quando in electis Patribus et per verae praedicationis lumen, et per venturi Redemptoris promissionem luxit. Quae profecto lucerna, ministrante Samuele, videri non potuit, quia tempore novae praedicationis, Synagogae magisterium poenam perpetuae repulsionis incurrit.

5. Et notandum quia non dicitur, lucere non poterat, quia profecto adhuc lumen sanctae Scripturae pro nobis portat, sed quod portat ignorat. Unde et antequam exstingueretur, videre non posse dicitur. Nondum enim exstinguitur, et videre non potest, quia certe, ut jam dixi, lumen gerit, quod non attendit, ante enim quam exstinguatur, est, donec lucet. Et quia ab eo usque ad mundi finem sacra Scriptura non tollitur, si antequam exstinguatur, non videt, cum mundi fine extenditur in caecitate. Quod si accensio ejus refertur ad zelum perfidiae, idcirco non potest videre, quia non exstinguitur.

And because the Jewish people had already lost the light of divine knowledge, there follows: (1 Sam. 3:1.) In those days there was no manifest vision.

4. For its vision would be manifest if it had believed in the Redeemer, whom it had heard had come for its visitation. Concerning which blindness of its indeed it is added: (Verse 2.) And it came to pass, Eli was lying in his place, and he could not see the lamp of God, before it was extinguished. For the vision of Eli is not manifest, because the priesthood of the Jews is buried in the blindness of its perfidy. Therefore Eli lies in his place, because he both has the letter of the law, and in the law and the prophets he has not the state of light, but the lapse of blindness. For the place of Eli, namely of the Jewish preacher, is the holy law. Because, therefore, the Jewish priesthood still has the sacred Scripture, it is in its place. And because, not knowing the power of the holy Scripture, it is not raised to the state of faith, it is certainly held not to stand in its place, but to lie down. Because likewise it is cast out until the end of the world, it is remembered that it cannot see the lamp of God. Whence also when daily they receive so many exhortations of preaching from the holy Church, when the Jews, conquered by so many assertions of the holy faith, do not believe, what else is it but this which we read 114 about them in the holy Scripture, and even hold by experience, that they are cast out, not only so that they may not see, but even so that they may not be able to see? Whence also the apostles, considering the labor of those who could not see to be superfluous, say in their Acts: Since you have made yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). But that which was reported to be unable to see is called the lamp of God. For the ministry of the Synagogue was the lamp of God, when it shone in the elect Fathers both through the light of true preaching and through the promise of the coming Redeemer. Which lamp indeed, while Samuel was ministering, could not be seen, because in the time of the new preaching, the magisterium of the Synagogue incurred the punishment of perpetual rejection.

5. And it should be noted that it is not said, it could not shine, because truly it still carries for us the light of the holy Scripture, but it is ignorant of what it carries. Whence also it is said that he could not see before it was extinguished. For it is not yet extinguished, and he cannot see, because certainly, as I have already said, he bears the light which he does not heed; for before it is extinguished, it exists as long as it shines. And because the sacred Scripture is not taken away from him until the end of the world, if he does not see before it is extinguished, he is extended in blindness with the end of the world. But if its burning refers to the zeal of perfidy, for that reason he cannot see, because it is not extinguished.

Nam si ignem perfidiae de mente exstingueret, ablato impietatis zelo, ad placitum verae fidei lumen mentis oculos aperiret. Sed dum videre non posse dicitur, indigna lucerna perhibetur, et ad videndum ea quae digna est quaeritur. Nam subdit, dicens: (Vers. 3.) Samuel autem dormiebat in templo Domini, ubi erat arca Domini, et vocavit Dominus Samuelem.

6. Confirmata caecitate Heli, Samuelem Dominus vocavit, quia, damnato Judaeorum sacerdotio, ad majorem gratiam novum praedicatorum ordinem assumpsit. Sed qui exposuit quem vocavit, unde etiam vocaret ostendit; quia in templo Domini, ubi erat arca, Samuelem dormire perhibuit. Templum enim Dei est locus ubi habitat Deus. Unde et per Psalmistam dicitur: Dominus in templo sancto suo, Dominus in coelo sedes ejus (Psal. X, 5). Quem profecto locum Paulus insinuat, dicens: Templum Dei sanctum est, quod estis vos (I Cor. III, 17). Templum itaque Dei uniuscujusque est anima electi. Templum ubi arca Dei reconditur mens est, in qua divini eloquii sacramenta per intelligentiam reservantur. Quid ergo ei aliud dormire in templo, nisi per intentionis custodiam in propria circumspectione persistere? Samuel itaque dormiebat in templo Dei, quia novae gratiae unusquisque praedicator, dum cuncta quae mundi sunt perfecte contempsit, in electae suae mentis intima circumspectione requievit. Et quia in sacramentis divinae Scripturae eruditus fuit, in templo dormiebat, ubi erat arca.

7. Et notandum quia non dicitur dormivit, sed dormiebat, quia nimirum eamdem mentis suae circumspectionem non in transitu servare studuit, sed in diuturnitate perseverantiae. Sumnus itaque Samuelis perfectum mundi contemptum designat in mente doctoris. Dormit ergo praedicator in templo, dum, repulsa a se penitus mundana sollicitudine, sese per considerationem rerum spiritualium recondit in mente. Hujus namque somni quietem Petrus elegerat, cum dicebat: Non est bonum relinquere 115 verbum Dei, et ministrare mensis (Act. VI, 2). Hinc Jetro Madianita Moysen cognatum suum juste arguit, dicens: Stulto labore consumeris tu; sed audi verba mea, et erit Dominus tecum. Esto tu populo in iis quae ad Deum pertinent, ut referas quae dicuntur ad eum (Exod. XVIII, 18, 19). Hinc Paulus ad templi somnum Corinthios revocat, dicens: Jam quidem delictum est in vobis, quod judicia habetis inter vos. Quare non magis fraudem patimini (I Cor. VI, 7)? Dormire quippe in templo Dei non posse conspexerat, quos judiciorum occupatio a spiritali meditatione retrahebat.

For if he would extinguish the fire of perfidy from his mind, having taken away the zeal of impiety, he would open the eyes of his mind to the light of the true faith as it pleases God. But while it is said that he cannot see, the lamp is held to be unworthy, and someone worthy to see those things is sought. For he adds, saying: (Verse 3.) But Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of the Lord was, and the Lord called Samuel.

6. Eli's blindness having been confirmed, the Lord called Samuel, because, having condemned the priesthood of the Jews, He assumed a new order of preachers to a greater grace. But He who set forth whom He called, also showed whence He called him; because He related that Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the Lord, where the ark was. For the temple of God is the place where God dwells. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord, His throne is in heaven (Psalm 10:5). Which place indeed Paul suggests, saying: The temple of God is holy, which you are (1 Cor. 3:17). The temple of God, therefore, is the soul of each one of the elect. The temple where the ark of God is hidden is the mind, in which the mysteries of the divine word are reserved through understanding. What else then is it for him to sleep in the temple, but to persist in his own circumspection through the custody of intention? Samuel therefore was sleeping in the temple of God, because each preacher of the new grace, while he perfectly despised all things which are of the world, rested in the inward circumspection of his elect mind. And because he was learned in the mysteries of the divine Scripture, he was sleeping in the temple, where the ark was.

7. And it should be noted that it is not said he slept, but he was sleeping, because he undoubtedly studied to preserve that same circumspection of his mind not in passing, but in the duration of perseverance. Thus the sleep of Samuel designates the perfect contempt of the world in the mind of the teacher. Therefore the preacher sleeps in the temple while, having utterly repelled from himself worldly anxiety, he hides himself through the consideration of spiritual things in his mind. For Peter had chosen the quiet of this sleep when he said: It is not good for us to leave 115 the word of God and serve tables (Acts 6:2). Hence Jethro the Midianite rightly rebuked his kinsman Moses, saying: You are consumed with foolish labor; but hear my words, and the Lord will be with you. Be you for the people in those things which pertain to God, that you may refer what is said to Him (Exod. 18:18, 19). Hence Paul recalls the Corinthians to the sleep of the temple, saying: Already indeed it is a fault in you that you have judgments among yourselves. Why do you not rather suffer fraud? (1 Cor. 6:7). For he had perceived that those whom the occupation of judgments withdrew from spiritual meditation could not sleep in the temple of God.

Dormiens ergo in templo vocatus a Domino dicitur, quia ille tunc doctor ad cognoscenda divina secreta assumptus est, qui per cordis intentionem non in exterioribus, sed in interioribus morabatur.

Sequitur: (Vers. 4, 5.) Qui respondens, ait: Ecce ego. Et cucurrit ad Heli et dixit: Vocasti enim me. Qui dixit: Non vocavi te, fili mi, revertere et dormi.

8. Cur is qui vocantem se Domino audivit, ad Heli cucurrit, nisi quia se ab Heli vocatum putavit? Et quia explanationis typicae ordinem tenemus, quomodo Heli putatur, cum vocato puero Deus loquitur? Sed quaecunque in Scripturas sanctas Patres nostri veteres locuti sunt, ad Heli referuntur locutionem. Qui nimirum, quia a semetipsis non sunt locuti, dum Deus per eos quae voluit locutus est, ea quae in Scripturis sanctis auditur vox Dei esse cognoscitur, quae per Heli profertur. Puer autem, quia, loquente Deo, ad Heli cucurrit, vocem profecto Deus Heli similem protulit. Quid ergo est quod divinae locutionis vox ab Heli voce non differt, nisi quia et per Patres veteres ipse locutionem profert? Vox namque Heli Dei esse cognoscitur, quoniam electi Patres quidquid per sacra eloquia loquuntur, non a semetipsis, sed a Domino acceperunt. Unde et in prophetis per omnem fere locutionem repetitur: Haec dicit Dominus, ut ea quae prophetae oraculo vox resonat sentiamus non esse loquentis hominis, sed praecipientis Dei.

9. Aliquando autem per Scripturam loquitur Deus, aliquando per occultam inspirationem. Revelatione autem occulta loquitur, cum electae menti per Spiritum, aut agenda, aut docenda panduntur. Samuel itaque, cum vocantem se Dominum audivit, ad Heli cucurrit, quia electus ordo praedicatorum sanctae Ecclesiae hoc quod, Deo revelante, cognoverat, quale esset in sacro eloquio perquirebat. Regula quippe rectae intelligentiae in Scripturae sacrae libris expressa est, quia divina consilia ibi per venerabiles Patres nostros exposita sunt, qui Spiritum sanctum habuerunt. Vocatus ergo tam saepius a Domino Samuel, ad Heli cucurrit, quia ordo praedicatorum in omni quod spiritali revelatione didicit Patrum veterum dicta consuluit, ut tunc demum a Domino sibi fuisse revelatum crederet, cum ab eo quod in sacra Scriptura legebat nequaquam differre cognovisset. Nam facile fallitur qui hoc quod occulta contemplatione colligit in praeclara sanctae Scripturae veritate nescit discutere quale sit. Unde et Apostolus denuntiat, dicens: Transfigurat se Satanas in angelum lucis (II Cor. XI, 14). Quomodo autem falsa in verae lucis claritate discernuntur? Ad Heli ergo currit Samuel, quoties a Domino vocatur, quia sancti praedicatores, ne falsae lucis imagine in intima contemplatione fallantur, modum occultae revelationis in 116 aperta Scripturae sanctae veritate discutiunt.

Therefore he who is sleeping in the temple is said to be called by the Lord, because that teacher was then assumed to the knowledge of divine secrets, who stayed not in exterior things but in interior things through the intention of the heart.

There follows: (Verses 4, 5.) Who answering, said: Here I am. And he ran to Eli and said: For you called me. Who said: I did not call you, my son; return and sleep.

8. Why did he who heard the Lord calling him run to Eli, except because he thought he was called by Eli? And because we hold the order of typical explanation, how is it thought to be Eli when God speaks to the called boy? But whatever our ancient Fathers have spoken in the holy Scriptures are referred to the speech of Eli. Who indeed, because they did not speak of themselves, while God spoke through them what He willed, that which is heard in the holy Scriptures is recognized as the voice of God which is brought forth through Eli. But the boy, because he ran to Eli when God was speaking, truly God brought forth a voice similar to Eli's. What is it then that the voice of the divine speech does not differ from Eli's voice, except because He Himself brings forth the speech even through the ancient Fathers? For the voice of Eli is recognized as being of God, since the elect Fathers received whatever they spoke through the sacred words not from themselves but from the Lord. Whence also in the prophets it is repeated in almost every speech: Thus says the Lord, so that we may feel that those things which the voice resounds by the oracle of the prophet are not of the man speaking, but of God commanding.

9. But sometimes God speaks through Scripture, sometimes through hidden inspiration. And He speaks by hidden revelation when to an elect mind through the Spirit things to be done or things to be taught are opened. Samuel therefore, when he heard the Lord calling him, ran to Eli, because the elect order of preachers of the holy Church sought in the sacred word of what kind that was which he had known by God's revelation. For the rule of right understanding is expressed in the books of the sacred Scripture, because the divine counsels are there explained through our venerable Fathers who had the Holy Spirit. Therefore Samuel, called so often by the Lord, ran to Eli, because the order of preachers consulted the sayings of the ancient Fathers in everything it learned by spiritual revelation, so that it might then at last believe that it had been revealed to it by the Lord, when it had recognized that it in no way differed from that which it read in the sacred Scripture. For he is easily deceived who does not know how to discuss in the brilliant truth of the holy Scripture the nature of that which he gathers in hidden contemplation. Whence also the Apostle denounces, saying: Satan transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). But how are false things discerned in the clarity of true light? Therefore Samuel runs to Eli as often as he is called by the Lord, because holy preachers, lest they be deceived by the image of false light in inward contemplation, discuss the manner of hidden revelation in 116 the open truth of the holy Scripture.

13. Ter igitur est Samuel vocatus a Domino, quia dum ordo praedicatorum rudis adhuc Ecclesiae ad superna se studia extendit, et veritatem de ratione consilii, et bonitatem de electione voluntatis, et verum gaudium appetiit de intentione affectionis. Ter etiam ad Heli vocatus accessit, quia de omni appetitu suo sacram Scripturam meditationis festinatione consuluit. Ter item, quia ab eo non vocaretur audivit, quia meditando didicit quod Patres nostri ad eruditionem nostram sacra nobis eloquia scripta tradiderunt; verumtamen dona nobis spiritalia dare minime possunt. Quid est ergo dicere Non te vocavi, nisi desiderium donorum spiritalium ego non dedi? Nam si sacra Scriptura, aut aliquis scriptorum dona spiritalia conferret, quotquot sacra eloquia legerent, quotquot sanctae Scripturae tractatores audirent, donis spiritalibus ornarentur. Nunc vero cum multi sacram Scripturam legant, et tractantes praedicatores audiant, et post studium lectionis, et praedicationis adhortationem, alii in pristino frigore vitiorum suorum remaneant, alii per gratiam in amorem sanctarum virtutum ferveant; aperte liquet quia 117 ordo Patrum venerabilium dona nobis virtutum per editas Scripturas ostendit, sed amorem virtutum, quas insinuat, solus nobis conditor tribuit. Quare et Jacobus pie admonet, dicens: Omne datum optimum, et omne donum perfectum desursum est, descendens a Patre luminum (Jac. I, 17). Hinc Paulus ait: Neque qui plantat est aliquid, sed qui incrementum dat, Deus (I Cor. III, 7). Quid est ergo aliud dicere: Non te vocavi, nisi aperta eruditione ostendere quia hoc quod fidelis anima ad superna desideria erigitur, ex sola divinae gratiae infusione generatur? Quia ergo ter vocatur a Domino, ter ad dormiendum a magistro reverti praecipitur, tres ille gradus dilectionis insinuat qualiter acquirantur. Nam quia cordi consilium aptavimus, consilium vero invenire veritatem desiderat, magnus utique sopor est necessarius, ne prius amans evigilet quam quaesita veritas inveniatur. Revertatur ergo puer, et dormiat, ut qui veritatis lucem invenire desiderat, per quietem caveat, ut ad se errorum tenebras non admittat. Secundo etiam dormiat, ut amoris obsequium omnipotenti Deo ex tota mente impendat, ut bona quae amat pura simplicitate nulloque malorum velamine pallientur. Quod profecto quia non nisi magna discretionis subtilitate cognoscitur, vocatus puer a Domino ab Heli reverti ut dormiat jubetur.

13. Therefore Samuel was called three times by the Lord, because while the order of preachers of the still inexperienced Church extends itself to heavenly studies, it sought truth from the reason of counsel, and goodness from the choice of the will, and true joy from the intention of affection. Three times also, being called, he went to Eli, because in every desire of his he consulted the holy Scripture with the haste of meditation. Three times likewise, he heard that he was not called by him, because by meditating he learned that our Fathers delivered to us the sacred words (eloquia) written for our instruction; however, they are by no means able to give us spiritual gifts. What then is it to say 'I did not call you,' except that I did not give the desire for spiritual gifts? For if holy Scripture, or any of the writers conferred spiritual gifts, as many as read the sacred words, as many as heard the treatisers of the holy Scripture, would be adorned with spiritual gifts. But now, since many read the holy Scripture, and hear the preachers treating it, and after the study of reading, and the exhortation of preaching, some remain in the former coldness of their vices, others through grace burn in the love of holy virtues; it is clearly evident that 117 the order of venerable Fathers shows us the gifts of virtues through the published Scriptures, but the creator alone bestows upon us the love of the virtues which he suggests. Wherefore also James piously admonishes, saying: Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights (James 1:17). Hence Paul says: Neither is he who plants anything, but God who gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:7). What else then is it to say: 'I did not call you,' except to show by open instruction that this, that a faithful soul is raised to heavenly desires, is generated from the infusion of divine grace alone? Because therefore he is called three times by the Lord, and is commanded three times by his master to return to sleep, he suggests how three degrees of love are acquired. For because we have fitted counsel to the heart, and counsel indeed desires to find the truth, a great sleep is surely necessary, lest the lover wake up before the sought-for truth is found. Therefore let the boy return and sleep, so that he who desires to find the light of truth may beware through quiet, so that he does not admit into himself the darkness of errors. Let him also sleep a second time, that he may bestow the service of love upon almighty God with his whole mind, so that the good things which he loves may be cloaked with pure simplicity and with no veil of evils. Because this indeed is not known except by great subtlety of discretion, the boy, called by the Lord, is commanded by Eli to return so that he may sleep.

Nam si dormire pro ascendendo isto amoris gradu negligit, hoc quod de virtute appetit non acquirit, quia etsi jam bona, Deo aspirante, amare possumus, nisi magna mentis quiete qualia sint ipsa bona quae volumus non dijudicamus. Ter ergo ad dormiendum Samuel mittitur, quia profecto novus praedicatorum ordo ut ex tota virtute diligat admonetur. Et quia virtutem ad affectionem retulimus, affectio autem mentis de gaudio spiritali perficitur, magnam somni quietem Samuel habuit; et dum spiritualia per quietem ordo praedicatorum certus didicit, sub specie veri gaudii gaudium extraneum non recepit. Nam sicut de virtutibus caeteris, ita et de profectu contemplationis mens contemplantis plerumque inaniter hilarescit. Dormivit ergo iterum Samuel, quia nimirum ordo doctorum nisi caute se in contemplatione circumspiceret, aliquando vane gaudendo se vero gaudio gaudere existimaret. Primo itaque dormivit, quia dum cognoscendae veritati animum intendit, magna consilii subtilitate erronea cuncta reprobavit. Secondo dormivit, quia cum conditorem diligere ex tota mente didicit, magna apud se quiete disposuit ut bonis quae cuperet aliqua reproba non misceret. Tertio etiam dormivit, ut dum supremum gaudium de divina contemplatione perciperet, vanam laetitiam reprobare consulta mente potuisset.

(Vers. 7.) Porro Samuel necdum sciebat Dominum, nec revelatus ei fuerat sermo Domini.

14. Dominum namque tunc ordo praedicatorum nesciit ea perfectione qua postea profecit. Vel fortasse idcirco nescire Dominum dicitur, quia alta et profunda quae noverat infirmis adhuc et rudibus auditoribus non pandebat. Unde et volentibus diem dominici adventus agnoscere ea quae omnia noverat, et indicare nolebat, Veritas dicit: De die autem illa et hora nemo scit, neque angeli coelo, neque Filius, nisi solus Pater (Marc. XIII, 32). Quid est quod sciens omnia Filius judicii diem nescit, 118 nisi quia inter cuncta quae noverat, diem sciens, nesciebat eum ut diceret, sed ejus tempus et qualitatem sciebat? Hinc Joannes Baptista, qui Dominum perfecte noverat, ad eum quasi nesciens discipulos mittebat, dicens: Tu es qui venturus es, an alium exspectamus (Luc. VII, 20)? Velut enim Dominum nesciens Samuel praedicabat, cum evangelista Matthaeus, divinitatem Redemptoris praeteriens, a sola humanitate ejus inchoavit, dicens: Liber generationis Jesu Christi filii David, filii Abraham (Matth. I, 1, seq.).

For if he neglects to sleep for the sake of ascending this degree of love, he does not acquire that which he desires concerning virtue, because even if we can now love good things, God inspiring us, unless by great quiet of mind, we do not discern of what kind are those very good things which we will. Therefore Samuel is sent a third time to sleep, because indeed the new order of preachers is admonished to love with all strength. And because we have referred strength to affection, and the affection of the mind is perfected from spiritual joy, Samuel had a great quiet of sleep; and while the order of preachers certainly learned spiritual things through quiet, it did not receive a foreign joy under the appearance of true joy. For as with the other virtues, so also concerning the progress of contemplation, the mind of the contemplator often rejoices in vain. Therefore Samuel slept again, because indeed unless the order of teachers circumspectly looked around itself in contemplation, sometimes by rejoicing vainly it would think that it rejoiced with true joy. First therefore he slept, because while he intended his mind to the truth to be known, by great subtlety of counsel he rejected all erroneous things. Secondly he slept, because when he learned to love the creator with his whole mind, he disposed with great quiet in himself that he should not mix any reprobate things with the good things which he desired. Thirdly also he slept, so that while he perceived the supreme joy from divine contemplation, he might have been able to reject vain gladness with a consulted mind.

(Verse 7.) Moreover Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither had the word of the Lord been revealed to him.

14. For the order of preachers did not then know the Lord with that perfection in which it afterwards progressed. Or perhaps he is said not to know the Lord for this reason, because he did not yet open the high and deep things which he knew to weak and inexperienced listeners. Whence also to those wishing to know the day of the Lord's advent, those things which he knew all, and was unwilling to indicate, the Truth says: But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone (Mark 13:32). What is it that the Son, knowing all things, does not know the day of judgment, 118 except that among all the things which he knew, knowing the day, he did not know it so as to speak of it, but he knew its time and quality? Hence John the Baptist, who had known the Lord perfectly, sent disciples to him as if not knowing, saying: Are you he who is to come, or do we look for another (Luke 7:20)? For Samuel preached as if not knowing the Lord, when the evangelist Matthew, passing over the divinity of the Redeemer, began from his humanity alone, saying: The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1, seq.).

Sed sciebat profecto Dominum, et revelatus erat ei sermo Domini, cum Joannes, divinitatem ejus alta exponendo suscipiens, ait: In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum (Joan. I, 1). Nesciebat Dominum, cum Paulus loqueretur, dicens: Factus sum omnia omnibus, ut omnes facerem salvos (I Cor. IX, 22). Qui enim infirmis infirmus, et parvulis fiebat parvulus, et omnibus omnia, nimirum cum ignorantibus etiam ignorabat. Nam ut ejusdem ignorantiae verbo uteretur, Corinthiis loquens, ait: Nihil judicavi me scire inter vos, nisi Christum Jesum, et hunc crucifixum (Ibid., II, 2). Nam cum sapientibus et Dominum noverat, et sermonem ejus revelatum habebat. Unde et dicit: Nos autem revelata facie Domini gloriam speculantes, in eamdem imaginem transformamur, tanquam a Domini spiritu (II Cor. III, 18). Hinc item loquitur, dicens: Sapientiam loquimur inter perfectos, non sapientiam hujus mundi, neque principum hujus saeculi, sed loquimur Dei sapientiam, quae in mysterio est abscondita (Ibid., 6, 7).

(Vers. 9.) Intellexit ergo Heli quia Dominus vocaret puerum.

15. Nam si non intelligeret, per sacra eloquia ei salutis consilia nequaquam ministrasset. Intellexit namque, quia praevidit. Quidquid enim omnipotens Deus in constructione futurae Ecclesiae agere disposuit, hoc veteribus Patribus per sanctum prophetiae spiritum revelavit. Nam per Amos prophetam dicitur: Non faciet Dominus Deus verbum, quod non revelaverit servis suis prophetis (Amos. III, 7). Quid enim aliud quam novorum praedicatorum vocationem intellexerat qui dicebat: Pro patribus tuis nati sunt tibi filii, constitues eos principes super omnem terram (Psal. XLIV, 17). Sed ei quem vocandum intellexit etiam consilium subministravit, dicens:

(Vers. 9.) Vade et dormi, et si deinceps vocaverit te, dices: Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus.

16. Jam quidem de somno Samuelis satis, ut arbitror, quia internae meditationis quietem designet ostensum est. Qui profecto somnus ab Heli Samueli praecipitur, quia ad contemplanda interna mysteria vacare doctor per sacrum eloquium docetur. Sed quid est quod Samuel quoties vocatur, toties ad dormiendum remittitur, et tamen ei adhuc nequaquam jubetur ut dicat Deo: Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus. Ibi enim dormire jubetur, non tamen loqui; hic autem etiam cum obedienda somni etiam licentia injungitur locutionis. 119

But he surely knew the Lord, and the word of the Lord had been revealed to him, when John, undertaking to expound his divinity on high, said: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word (John 1:1). He did not know the Lord, when Paul spoke, saying: I have become all things to all men, that I might save all (1 Cor. 9:22). For he who became weak for the weak, and a little one for the little ones, and all things to all, surely also did not know with those who were ignorant. For so that he might use the word of the same ignorance, speaking to the Corinthians, he said: I judged myself to know nothing among you, except Jesus Christ, and him crucified (Ibid., 2:2). For with the wise he both knew the Lord, and had his word revealed. Whence also he says: But we, beholding the glory of the Lord with revealed face, are transformed into the same image, as if by the spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). Hence likewise he speaks, saying: We speak wisdom among the perfect, not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this age, but we speak the wisdom of God, which is hidden in mystery (Ibid., 6, 7).

(Verse 9.) Eli therefore understood that the Lord was calling the boy.

15. For if he did not understand, he would by no means have administered the counsels of salvation to him through the sacred words. For he understood, because he foresaw. For whatever almighty God disposed to do in the construction of the future Church, he revealed this to the ancient Fathers through the holy spirit of prophecy. For through the prophet Amos it is said: The Lord God will not do a word, which he has not revealed to his servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). For what else had he understood than the calling of the new preachers, who said: For your fathers, sons are born to you, you shall constitute them princes over all the earth (Psalm 44:17). But to him whom he understood was to be called, he also supplied counsel, saying:

(Verse 9.) Go and sleep, and if henceforth he calls you, you shall say: Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.

Now indeed enough has been shown, as I think, concerning the sleep of Samuel, that it designates the quiet of internal meditation. Which sleep indeed is commanded by Eli to Samuel, because the teacher is taught through the sacred word (eloquium) to be free for contemplating internal mysteries. But what is it that as often as Samuel is called, so often he is sent back to sleep, and yet he is not yet commanded to say to God: Speak, Lord, for your servant hears. For there he is commanded to sleep, but not however to speak; here however even with the permission of sleep being enjoined, the license of speaking is also joined. 119

Ibi etiam ad dormiendum misso, non dicitur: Vade, sed, Revertere; hic quoque nequaquam dicitur Revertere, sed Vade. Quid enim sibi vult tanta praecipiendi varietas? Quam nimirum varietatem clarius agnoscimus, si illud quod hoc in loco Samuelis somnus significat attendamus. Et quia superiores somni modos ad probationem donorum sanctae dilectionis retulimus (Supra, num. 11, 12), quid est hoc loco Samueli, id est novo praedicatori dormire, nisi probata jam et cognita eadem dona cum securitatis quiete possidere? Merito igitur ei prius non dicebatur Vade, sed Revertere; nunc autem non Revertere, sed Vade. Qui enim adhuc examinabat reverti jubebatur, ut mentis tranquillitate aliud donum discuteret, qui aliud jam eadem mentis quiete cognovisset. Ei autem quia jam cuncta examinando probaverat, Vade dicitur, quia ad possidenda cognita secura jam intentione mittebatur. Cur ergo prius somnus sine locutione praecipitur, nunc autem somnus cum locutione, nisi quia non licebat dicere Loquere, nisi ei qui vera cognitione certus existeret quia is qui loqueretur mentis suae affectibus Deus esset? Examinanti ergo non dicitur, quia nisi loquentem intus perfecte dijudicet, locutionem spiritalem sibi adhuc incertam non debet cupere, et excipere quasi certam. Dicere enim menti Deo Loquere, est internam ejus aspirationem secure excipere. Igitur perfecte cognoscenti hoc competit, non probanti, quia ante judicium interni examinis, sicut divina locutio non probatur, ita quod de Deo nobis est incognitum pro certo et cognito non excipitur. Dictum namque est Samueli Vade et dormi, quia cum ordo sanctorum praedicatorum dona spiritalia per sacri eloquii probationem didicit, ejusdem sanctae scripturae eruditione cognovit, ut in ejusdem donis eo securius per amorem requiesceret, quo eorum virtutem apertiori ratione cognovisset. Praeceptum quoque est ei ut vocanti Deo diceret Loquere, Domine. Quia sacrae locutionis studio doctus est, non solum per internae visitationis gratiam loquentem Dominum devote audire, sed silentem etiam, ut loqui dignaretur, magnis desideriis implorare.

(Vers. 9.) Abiit ergo Samuel, et dormivit in loco suo.

17. Tot habet loca praedicator sanctae Ecclesiae, quot profectus vitae. Unde et profectus sui loca divinis laudibus consecrans, beatus Job dicit: Per singulos gradus meos pronuntiabo eum (Job. XXXI, 37). Non enim jam in loco examinis, sed certe cognitionis sistitur, cum ad altiora sublevatur. Locus namque praedicatoris rerum cognoscendarum certa cognitio est. Nam de reprobis praedicatoribus Dominus dicit: Tenentes legem meam, nescierunt me (Jerem. II, 8). In loco igitur suo Samuel dormivit, cum ordo doctorum spiritalium rerum cognitionem cum certitudine veritatis retinuit. Sed in quem gradum proficiat ostenditur, quia repente subinfertur.

(Vers. 10.) Venit ergo Dominus, et stetit.

There also to him being sent to sleep, it is not said: Go (Vade), but: Return (Revertere); here also it is by no means said Return, but Go. For what does such a variety of commanding mean? Which variety indeed we recognize more clearly if we attend to that which the sleep of Samuel signifies in this place. And because we have referred the superior modes of sleep to the proof of the gifts of holy love (Above, num. 11, 12), what is it to sleep in this place for Samuel, that is for the new preacher, except to possess those same gifts already proved and known with the quiet of security? Merely therefore it was not said to him before Go, but Return; but now not Return, but Go. For he who was still examining was commanded to return, so that with tranquility of mind he might discuss another gift, who had already known another by the same quiet of mind. But to him, because he had already proved all things by examining, it is said Go, because he was sent to possess known things with a now secure intention. Why then is sleep first commanded without speech, but now sleep with speech, except because it was not permitted to say Speak, except to him who existed certain by true cognition because he who spoke to the affections of his mind was God? Therefore it is not said to him while examining, because unless he perfectly judges the one speaking within, he ought not yet to desire spiritual speech which is uncertain to him, and receive it as if certain. For to say Speak to the mind of God is to securely receive His internal aspiration. Therefore this belongs to one perfectly knowing, not to one proving, because before the judgment of internal examination, just as divine speech is not proved, so that which is unknown to us concerning God is not received as for certain and known. For it was said to Samuel: Go and sleep, because when the order of holy preachers learned spiritual gifts through the proof of the sacred word, it knew them by the instruction of the same holy scripture, so that it might rest in its gifts so much more securely through love, as it had known their virtue by more open reason. It was also commanded to him that to God calling he should say Speak, Lord. Because he was taught by the study of sacred speech, not only to devotedly hear the Lord speaking through the grace of internal visitation, but even while silent, that He might deign to speak, to implore with great desires.

(Verse 9.) Samuel therefore went, and slept in his place.

17. The preacher of the holy Church has as many places as he has progresses of life. Whence also consecrating the places of his progress with divine praises, blessed Job says: Through each of my steps I will pronounce him (Job 31:37). For he is not now placed in the place of examination, but of certain cognition, when he is raised to higher things. For the place of the preacher is the certain cognition of things to be known. For concerning reprobate preachers the Lord says: Holding my law, they knew me not (Jer. 2:8). Therefore Samuel slept in his place, when the order of teachers retained the cognition of spiritual things with the certainty of truth. But into what degree he progresses is shown, because it is suddenly subjoined.

(Verse 10.) Therefore the Lord came, and stood.

18. Quia non redire, sed venire Dominus dicitur, Judaeae destitutio et sanctae Ecclesiae visitatio designatur. Unde non solum venire, sed stare perhibetur. Ad Judaeae visitationem se venisse insinuat, dicens: Non sum missus nisi ad oves quae perierunt domus Israel (Matth. XV, 24). Sed veniens non stetit, quia salutis suae bonum contemnentem deseruit. Unde et Synagogae principibus minatur, dicens: Relinquetur vobis domus vestra deserta (Ibid., XXIII, 38). Hinc item denuntians, ait: Amen dico vobis quia auferetur a vobis 120 regnum, et dabitur genti facienti fructus ejus. Ad Samuelem itaque venit, et stetit, quia praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae semel assumpsit, a quibus per custodiam suae gratiae ulterius non recedit. Nam ad Samuelem venerat, cum novos praeferens orbi praedicatores, dicebat: Ite in orbem universum, et praedicate Evangelium omni creaturae; qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit; qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur (Marc. XVI, 15, seq.). Sed si stare debeat qui venit Dominus, dicat: Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem saeculi (Matth. XXVIII, 20). Venerat ergo Dominus, non ut recederet, sed ut staret, quia novos fidei ministros elegit, quos usque in mundi finem per sanctarum virtutum sibi patrimonium succedentes protegit. Sed qui venit per gratiam visitans, qui stat per electionis suae immutabilitatem perseverans, quid adjungat audiamus.

(Vers. 10.) Et vocavit, sicut vocaverat secundo, Samuel, Samuel.

19. Secundo quippe vocavit, quia ei in ministerio praedicationis officium duplex praebuit, ut videlice Synagogae superbiam repellendo contereret, et humilitatem gentilitatis ad finem vocando sublevaret. Vel certe secundo vocatur, quia in destructionem veteris hominis atque in novi aedificationem excitatur. Vocatus est ergo semel cum per spiritum instruebatur qualiter peccata et vitia in peccatorum cordibus delere potuisset; secundo vocatus, cum interni magisterii eum Deus documento instruxit, ut, destructa in mente conversorum impietatis aedificatione, novam sanctarum virtutum fabricam erigere deberet. Quod profecto magisterium, quia ordo sanctorum praedicatorum et libenter didicit, atque ad obediendum devote se obtulit, subditur:

(Vers. 10.) Ait ergo Samuel: Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus.

20. Audire loquentem Deum praecepta ejus operibus adimplere est. Quod contra in Evangelio reprobis per semetipsam Veritas dicit: Qui ex Deo est verba Dei audit; propterea vos non auditis, quia ex Deo non estis (Joan. VIII, 47). Sed audienti quod insinuare appetit subdit; namque sequitur:

Because the Lord is said not to return, but to come, the destitution of Judea and the visitation of the holy Church is designated. Whence he is presented not only as coming, but as standing. He suggests that he had come to the visitation of Judea, saying: I am not sent except to the sheep of the house of Israel which have perished (Matt. 15:24). But coming he did not stand, because he deserted the one contemning the good of her salvation. Whence also he threatens the princes of the Synagogue, saying: Your house shall be left to you deserted (Ibid., 23:38). Hence likewise denouncing, he says: Amen I say to you that the kingdom 120 shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation doing the fruits thereof. Therefore he came to Samuel, and stood, because he once assumed the preachers of the holy Church, from whom through the custody of his grace he does not further recede. For he had come to Samuel when, bringing forth new preachers to the world, he said: Go into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned (Mark 16:15, seq.). But if he who came as Lord ought to stand, let him say: Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the age (Matt. 28:20). Therefore the Lord had come, not that he might recede, but that he might stand, because he chose new ministers of the faith, whom he protects succeeding him through the patrimony of holy virtues even unto the end of the world. But let us hear what he who comes visiting through grace, who stands persevering through the immutability of his election, subjoins.

(Verse 10.) And he called, as he had called a second time, Samuel, Samuel.

He called indeed a second time, because he provided a double office for him in the ministry of preaching, namely that by repelling the pride of the Synagogue he might crush it, and by calling the humility of the Gentiles he might raise it to the end. Or certainly he is called a second time, because he is excited into the destruction of the old man and into the building of the new. He was called therefore once when he was instructed through the spirit how he might have been able to delete sins and vices in the hearts of sinners; called a second time, when God instructed him by the document of internal mastery, so that, the building of impiety in the mind of the converts being destroyed, he ought to erect a new fabric of holy virtues. Which mastery indeed, because the order of holy preachers both learned willingly, and devotedly offered itself for obeying, is subjoined:

(Verse 10.) Samuel therefore said: Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.

To hear God speaking is to fulfill his precepts in works. Which on the contrary the Truth says through itself in the Gospel to the reprobate: He who is from God hears the words of God; therefore you do not hear, because you are not from God (John 8:47). But to the one hearing he subjoins what he desires to suggest; for there follows:

(Vers. 11.) Et ait Dominus ad Samuelem: Ecce facio verbum in Israel, quod quicunque audierit tinnient ambae aures ejus. Et idem verbum aperiens, ait:

(Vers. 13 et 14.) Praedixi enim ei quod judicaturus essem domum ejus usque in aeternum propter iniquitatem, eo quod noverat indigne agere filios suos, et non corripuit eos. Idcirco juravi domui Heli quod non expietur iniquitas domus ejus victimis et muneribus in aeternum.

21. Quid enim his verbis aliud quam toties jam explicata Judaeorum repulsio designatur? Domus namque praedicatoris est multitudo populi subjecti, quam velut possidendo inhabitat, dum per suae sollicitudinis curam servat. Domus ergo Heli, id est sacerdotii veteris, Judaea fuit, quam dum per conversationem reprobam coluit, pravitatis suae maculis immundam fecit. Qui profecto filios suos indigne agere conspexit, quia summum sacerdotium minoris ordinis sacerdotes in Redemptorem saevientes vidit, et eos non corripuit, nec ab effusione tanti sanguinis ulla eos auctoritate revocavit. Idcirco ei divina comminatione promittitur quod domus ejus in aeternum judicetur. Judicare etenim Dei damnare est. In aeternum ergo 121 judicatur, quia perire aeterna poena decernitur.

(Vers. 15.) Dormivit Samuel usque mane.

22. Quid enim aliud per mane nomen quam lux Evangelii, quae legum umbram dissipavit, designatur? Dormivit enim Samuel usque mane, quia ordo praedicatorum in internae meditationis quiete quievit, quousque Redemptoris claritas mundo exorta est. Mane autem surgens, januas domus Domini aperuisse perhibetur.

(Vers. 15.) Et aperuit januas domus Domini.

23. Januas domus Domini aperire est regni coelestis aditum fidelibus populis pandere. Nam quia ipse dicit: Ego sum ostium; si quis per me introierit, salvabitur (Joan. X, 9); ipse profecto januas domus Domini aperit, qui ad fidem venientibus regni coelestis introitum ostendit. Unde et primo praedicatorum dicitur: Tibi dabo claves regni coelorum (Matth. XVI, 19). Claves enim januarum acceperat quas aliis aperiret. Sed quia Samuel visionem Heli indicare timuisse dicitur, subditur:

(Vers. 15.) Et timebat Samuel indicare visionem Heli.

24. Visio namque Samuelis fuit Heli expulsio severa. Quia ergo novi praedicatores vetustam plebem pro sua iniquitate repellendam videbant, repulsionis severitatem eis ostendere primo formidabant. Tales enim eos invenire magis cupiebant quos Redemptoris misericordia consolari possent, quam tales quibus judicis severitate terrere cogerentur. Sed oigamos quomodo Heli puerum ad se vocat, ut divinae visitationis verbum addiscat.

(Verse 11.) And the Lord said to Samuel: Behold I do a word in Israel, which whoever hears, both his ears shall tingle (tinnient). And opening the same word, he says:

(Verses 13 and 14.) For I have foretold to him that I was about to judge his house forever for iniquity, because he knew that his sons acted unworthily, and he did not correct them. Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of his house shall not be expiated by victims and gifts forever.

21. For what else is designated by these words than the already so often explained rejection of the Jews? For the house of a preacher is the multitude of the subject people, which he inhabits as if by possessing, while he preserves it through the care of his solicitude. Therefore the house of Eli, that is of the ancient priesthood, was Judea, which while he cultivated through reprobate conversation, he made unclean with the stains of his depravity. Who indeed saw his sons acting unworthily, because the highest priesthood saw the priests of the lesser order raging against the Redeemer, and did not correct them, nor by any authority revoke them from the effusion of so much blood. Therefore it is promised to him by divine threat that his house should be judged forever. For to judge for God is to damn. Therefore it is 121 judged forever, because it is decreed to perish by eternal punishment.

(Verse 15.) Samuel slept until morning.

22. What else is designated by the name of morning than the light of the Gospel, which dissipated the shadow of the law? For Samuel slept until morning, because the order of preachers rested in the quiet of internal meditation, until the clarity of the Redeemer arose in the world. But rising in the morning, he is said to have opened the doors of the house of the Lord.

(Verse 15.) And he opened the doors of the house of the Lord.

23. To open the doors of the house of the Lord is to open the access to the heavenly kingdom to faithful peoples. For because he says: I am the door; if anyone enters through me, he shall be saved (John 10:9); he indeed opens the doors of the house of the Lord, who shows the entrance of the heavenly kingdom to those coming to the faith. Whence also to the first of the preachers it is said: I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19). For he had received the keys of the doors which he was to open to others. But because Samuel is said to have feared to tell the vision to Eli, it is subjoined:

(Verse 15.) And Samuel feared to tell the vision to Eli.

24. For the vision of Samuel was the severe rejection of Eli. Because therefore the new preachers saw that the ancient people were to be rejected for their iniquity, they at first feared to show them the severity of the rejection. For they wished rather to find them such as they might be able to console with the mercy of the Redeemer, than such as they were compelled to terrify with the severity of the judge. But let us hear how Eli calls the boy to himself, so that he may learn the word of the divine visitation.

(Vers. 16.) Vocavit ergo Heli Samuelem, et dixit: Samuel, fili mi. Qui respondens, ait: Ecce ego.

25. Filium nominat, quem sibi praeferendum sciebat. Nam quia per prophetiae spiritum novum praedicatorum ordinem subrogandum noverat, eum ut filium diligebat quem jam ut Dominum deserviebat. Cui et adjunxit, dicens:

(Vers. 17.) Quid est verbum quod locutus est ad te Dominus? Oro te, ne me celes. Haec faciat tibi Deus, et haec addat, si absconderis a me verbum ex omnibus verbis quae dicta sunt tibi.

26. Cur Heli tam fortiter insistit ut ei nihil de divina locutione celetur, nisi quia veteres Patres futurae Ecclesiae ordinem etiam cum sua repulsione cognoscere cupiebant? Sciebant enim se transituros, sed claritatem subsequentis nosse cupiebant. Cui Samuel compulsus, cuncta narravit.

(Vers. 18.) Indicavit ergo ei Samuel universos sermones, et non abscondit ab eo.

27. Universos sermones indicat et nihil abscondit, qui veteri plebi et venturi Redemptoris gratiam et suae repulsionis severitatem ostendit. Quos sermones Heli suscipiens, ait:

(Vers. 18.) Dominus est: quod bonum est in oculis suis, faciat.

28. Quae vox est divino judicio consentientis. Nam vetusta plebs etsi in suae perfidiae tenebras cecidit, in suis tamen Patribus juste se repelli cognovit, et idcirco divinae sententiae non contradixit, quia eum qui judicaret Dominum esse noverat.

22. Quid est quod per sacrum eloquium Samuelis somnus tam attente describitur? Et quia jam quater repetisse somnum dicitur, multum desipit qui a Dei Spiritu hoc non spiritualiter dictum credit. Nam etsi dormisse toties recte intelligitur pro veritate historiae, ad hoc scribitur, ut in veritate litterae intellectus proferantur allegoriae. Quid ergo designat Samuelis haec quinta dormitio? Sed quia primum somnum retulimus ad exquisitionem veritatis, secundum ad probationem veri operis, tertium ad explorationem veri gaudii, quartum ad perfruitionem inventae et probatae cognitaeque perfectionis, quinta somni species refertur ad studium disponendae locutionis.

(Verse 16.) Eli therefore called Samuel, and said: Samuel, my son. Who answering, said: Here I am.

25. He calls him son, whom he knew was to be preferred to himself. For because he had known by the spirit of prophecy that the new order of preachers was to be raised, he loved as a son him whom he already served as a Lord. To whom also he added, saying:

(Verse 17.) What is the word which the Lord has spoken to you? I beseech you, do not hide it from me. May God do these things to you, and add these, if you hide from me a word of all the words which have been said to you.

26. Why does Eli so strongly insist that nothing of the divine speech be hidden from him, except because the ancient Fathers desired to know the order of the future Church even with their own rejection? For they knew that they were to pass away, but they wished to know the clarity of the one coming after. To whom Samuel, being compelled, told everything.

(Verse 18.) Samuel therefore told him all the words, and did not hide them from him.

27. He tells all the words and hides nothing, who shows to the ancient people both the grace of the coming Redeemer and the severity of their own rejection. Whose words Eli receiving, said:

(Verse 18.) It is the Lord: let him do what is good in his eyes.

28. Which voice is of one consenting to the divine judgment. For the ancient people, though it fell into the darkness of its perfidy, yet in its Fathers it knew that it was justly rejected, and therefore it did not contradict the divine sentence, because it knew that he who judged was the Lord.

22. Why is it that the sleep of Samuel is described so attentively by the sacred eloquence? And because it is said that he has already repeated sleep for the fourth time, he is very foolish who does not believe that this was spoken spiritually by the Spirit of God. For although he is correctly understood to have slept so many times according to the truth of the history, it is written for this purpose: that in the truth of the letter the understandings of allegory may be brought forth. What, therefore, does this fifth sleep of Samuel designate? But because we referred the first sleep to the seeking of truth, the second to the proof of true work, the third to the exploration of true joy, the fourth to the full enjoyment of the perfection found, proved, and known; the fifth kind of sleep is referred to the study of disposing speech.

Samuel igitur quinta repetitione dormivit, quia ordo praedicatorum, etsi per cordis consilium veritatem didicit, per voluntatem mentis bona elegit, per affectionem virtutis verum gaudium recepit, per certitudinem inventae et cognitae beatitudinis in virtutum sublimium securitate requievit, hoc tamen quod in semetipso cognovit sine magni dispensatione consilii subditis praedicare non potuit. Plerumque etenim doctor et quae praedicet apud semetipsum habet, sed tamen ea quae habet prout debet praedicare ea non potest, quia si ea quae dicat jam Domino revelante didicit, modum quo ad populum sunt proferenda non novit. Dormivit ergo Samuel iterum, quia ordo praedicatorum apud se magna quietis intentione disposuit ne praedicando verbi Dei semen inutiliter spargeret, quod utili contemplatione collegisset. Nam dum praedicator considerar compellitur quid et quantum, sive quando, loquitur, quae dicat simul omnibus, qualiter moneat aliquos seorsum, quia magna sanctae meditationis quiete utitur, apte nimis in typo novi praedicatoris Samuel iterum dormire perhibetur. Dormire quippe ei tunc est dicendi modum tranquilla mente disponere. Et evigilare ei est a quiete meditationis ad loquendum exire. Et quia rationabiliter non evigilat antequam dicenda disponat, sequitur: Usque mane. Mane enim perfecta pronuntiandi verbi cognitio.

(Vers. 15.) Et timuit indicare visionem Heli.

23. Quidnam est quod timebat, nisi quia hoc dormiendo didicerat? Nam qui meditando verbum ordinat, ratione statuit quando etiam verbum dicat. Visionem quippe Samuel vidit, et Heli indicare timuit, quia doctorum ordo sanctae Ecclesiae, et Judaeae repulsionem debitam conspexit, atque ei eam objicere ante repulsionis suae tempora formidavit. Unde et ad poenitentiae remedium eam potius cohortatur, dicens: Poenitentiam agite, et baptizetur unusquisque vestrum (Act. II, 38). Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 15.) Aperuit ostia domus Domini.

24. Quaenam est alia domus Domini quam sancta Ecclesia? Et quae sunt hujus domus ostia, nisi spirituales virtutes? Ostia namque domus Domini Samuel aperuit quando concurrentibus ad unitatem verae fidei praedicatorum ordo virtutum spiritalium dona patefecit. Velut enim clausa erant domus ostia cum sanctae Ecclesiae virtutes ignorabantur.

Samuel, therefore, slept with the fifth repetition, because the order of preachers, although it learned the truth through the counsel of the heart, chose good things through the will of the mind, received true joy through the affection of virtue, and rested in the security of sublime virtues through the certainty of the found and known beatitude; yet, this same thing which it knew in itself it could not preach to its subjects without the dispensation of a great counsel. For frequently the teacher has within himself what he should preach, but yet he cannot preach those things which he has as he ought, because if he has already learned through the Lord's revelation what he should say, he does not know the manner in which they are to be brought forth to the people. Samuel, therefore, slept again, because the order of preachers disposed within itself with a great intention of quietness lest by preaching it should uselessly scatter the seed of the word of God, which it had collected by useful contemplation. For while the preacher is compelled to consider what and how much, or when, he speaks; what he says to all at once, how he warns some privately; because he uses a great quiet of holy meditation, it is subjoined very aptly in the type of the new preacher that Samuel is said to sleep again. To sleep, indeed, is for him then to dispose the manner of speaking with a tranquil mind. And to wake is for him to go forth from the quiet of meditation to speak. And because he does not reasonably wake before he disposes what is to be said, it follows: Until morning. For morning is the perfect knowledge of pronouncing the word.

(Verse 15.) And he feared to tell the vision to Eli.

23. What was it that he feared, except what he had learned by sleeping? For he who by meditating orders the word, establishes by reason when he should also speak the word. Samuel indeed saw the vision, and feared to tell it to Eli, because the order of teachers of the holy Church perceived the due rejection of Judea, and feared to cast it against her before the times of her rejection. Whence also he exhorts her rather to the remedy of penance, saying: Do penance, and be baptized every one of you (Acts 2:38). Wherefore it is also subjoined:

(Verse 15.) He opened the doors of the house of the Lord.

24. What other is the house of the Lord than the holy Church? And what are the doors of this house, if not the spiritual virtues? For Samuel opened the doors of the house of the Lord when the order of preachers laid open the gifts of spiritual virtues to those flocking to the unity of the true faith. For the doors of the house were as if closed when the virtues of the holy Church were unknown.

Bene autem, cum visionem Heli indicare Samuel timuit, domus Domini ostia aperuisse memoratur, quia prius quam apertam Judaeae repulsionem praedicatorum ordo indicaret, dum ad poenitentiam monuit, electis ad fidem currentibus virtutum spiritalium occulta reseravit. Nam qui misericordiae tempore dicere visa timuit, tempore exquirendae justitiae visionem justitiae indicavit, dicens: Quia indignos vos fecistis aeternae vitae, ecce convertimur ad gentes. (Act. XIII, 45). Ex qua profecto ratione quaestio oritur, quia videlicet visionem Samuelis prece magis et imprecatione Heli indicatam fuisse perhibetur.

(Vers. 16---18.) Venit ergo Heli ad Samuelem, et dixit: Samuel, fili mi. Qui respondit: Praesto sum. Et interrogavit eum: Quis est sermo quem locutus est Dominus ad te? oro, ne celaveris mihi. Haec faciat tibi Deus, et haec addat, si absconderis a me sermonem ex omnibus quae dicta sunt tibi. Indicavit igitur ei Samuel universos sermones, et non abscondit ab eo.

25. Quomodo enim ab exsecutore divinae sententiae visionem suae repulsionis didicit, qui hoc non tam a comminante quam ab eo qui magis precibus cogebatur audivit? Sed qui istud quaerunt primo intelligant quia non ad litteram, sed ad spiritalem et typicam significationem ista discutimus. Hoc enim loco venire Heli, neque ad motum corporis Judaici sacerdotii refertur, neque ad affectum mentis, sed tamen venire ei fuit hoc ipsum quod rationalis Dei creatura est praedicatoribus apparere. Venit itaque cum in humana natura visus est, doctorumque corda sibi ad miserandum movit. Venire ergo Heli non est in veteri populo accessus mentis, aut corporis, sed ostensio humanae conditionis. Vel fortasse venire ei fuit ex eo quod ex omnibus populis ad Dei cultum electus fuit. Eum quoque filium appellavit qui ab illo respicitur qui in electis Patribus institutor sanctae Ecclesiae fuisse memoratur. Vocat ergo filium non affectu appellationis, sed ostensione amissae dignitatis. Et quia in caligine caecitatis aspicitur, indicari sibi visionem postulasse perhibetur. Obsecrare etenim ei est respectu communis naturae praedicatorum mentes ad misericordiam provocare. Qui etiam imprecationem precibus addidit, quia ordo praedicantium, dum in tanta miseria positum Judaeorum sacerdotium attenderet, irasci sibi omnipotentem Dominum timuit, si non ei verbo subveniret. Unde et apte subjungitur: Indicavit ei Samuel universos sermones, et non abscondit ab eo. Omnia quippe ei visa indicavit, ut, audito quod meruit, magnitudo formidinis ad sollicitudinem eum converteret impetrandae divinae miserationis. Universos ei Domini sermones indicavit, ut dum in vetustate sua se projectum cognosceret, per poenitentiae lacrymas ad verae fidei renovationem festinaret. Qui profecto respondit, dicens:

(Vers. 18.) Dominus est, quod bonum est in oculis suis faciat.

But it is aptly remembered that Samuel opened the doors of the house of the Lord when he feared to show the vision to Eli, because before the order of preachers indicated the open rejection of Judea, while it warned to penance, it unlocked the hidden things of spiritual virtues to the elect running to the faith. For he who in the time of mercy feared to say what he had seen, in the time of demanding justice indicated the vision of justice, saying: Because you have made yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the gentiles (Acts 13:46). From which reason indeed a question arises, because namely the vision of Samuel is said to have been indicated to Eli more by his prayer and imprecation.

(Verses 16-18.) Eli therefore came to Samuel, and said: Samuel, my son. Who answered: I am here. And he asked him: What is the word that the Lord has spoken to you? I pray, do not hide it from me. May God do these things to you, and add these, if you hide from me a word of all that has been said to you. Samuel therefore told him all the words, and did not hide them from him.

For how did he learn the vision of his own rejection from the executor of the divine sentence, who heard this not so much from one threatening as from him who was rather compelled by prayers? But let those who ask this first understand that we discuss these things not according to the letter, but according to the spiritual and typical significance. For in this place, the coming of Eli refers neither to the movement of the body of the Jewish priesthood, nor to the affection of the mind, but yet to come for him was this very thing: that he appears to the preachers as a rational creature of God. He came, therefore, when he was seen in human nature, and moved the hearts of the teachers to pity him. Therefore, Eli's coming is not an access of mind or body in the ancient people, but an appearance of the human condition. Or perhaps to come for him was from the fact that he was chosen from all peoples for the worship of God. He also called him son who is looked upon by him who in the elect Fathers is remembered to have been the institutor of the holy Church. He calls him son, therefore, not by affection of the name, but by the showing of the lost dignity. And because he is seen in the darkness of blindness, he is said to have asked that the vision be told to him. For to beseech for him is, in respect of the common nature, to provoke the minds of the preachers to mercy. Who also added an imprecation to his prayers, because the order of preachers, while it considered the priesthood of the Jews placed in such misery, feared that the almighty Lord would be angry with it if it did not help him with the word. Whence it is aptly subjoined: Samuel told him all the words, and did not hide them from him. He indeed indicated to him all the things seen, so that, having heard what he deserved, the magnitude of fear might turn him to the anxiety of obtaining divine mercy. He told him all the words of the Lord, so that while he recognized himself cast off in his old age, he might hasten through the tears of penance to the renewal of the true faith. Who indeed answered, saying:

(Verse 18.) It is the Lord, let him do what is good in his eyes.

26. Quibus nimirum verbis quid aliud quam Judaici populi perfidia clarius agnoscitur? Nam qui omnipotentem Deum Dominum vocat, adhuc ei servire se existimat. Cum igitur Judaico populo repulsio sua a sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus insinuatur, dicit: Dominus est, quod bonum est in oculis suis faciat. Quia dum Deo se placere per veterem institutionem credit, sanctae Ecclesiae nequaquam minas expavescit. Quasi enim apertiori voce Judaica perfidia asserat, et comminantibus sibi sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatoribus dicat; Eo nobis minis vestris terrorem nullum incutitis, quo circa fidem ei nos ministrare credimus a cujus gratia nos decidisse praedicatis. Cum ergo adjungit: Faciat quod bonum est in oculis suis, sanctae Ecclesiae doctores subsannat potius quam se divinae sententiae offerat. Quasi alia intentione loquatur, et dicat: Eo nobis tale aliquid non facit, quo noster est Dominus ille quem nobis ad vindictam proponitis.

Sequitur:

(Vers. 19.) Crevit autem Samuel, et Dominus erat cum eo.

27. Quid est quod postquam Heli visionem exposuit, crevisse Samuel dicitur, nisi quia doctorum nostrorum ordo, postquam verbo Synagogae filios repulit, majoris reverentiae gloriam apud gentilitatem invenit? Crevit ergo, quia qui per verbi ministerium se prius in una gente cohibuit, postmodum sanctitatis atque doctrinae famam in universo mundo dilatavit. Unde et per Psalmistam dicitur: In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum (Psal. XVIII, 5). Hinc iterum sanctae Ecclesiae loquens, ait: Pro patribus tuis nati sunt tibi filii, constitues eos principes super omnem terram (Psal. XLIV, 17). Crevit itaque cum in universo mundo radiavit. Cum quo etiam Dominus esse perhibetur, quia omne quod de fama sanctitatis redoluit, omne quod clarum per verbum luxit, de praesentia Redemptoris accepit, quem secum habuit. Nam etsi verbo Paulus non solum infirma et terrena, sed etiam summa et coelestia penetrat, ex eo hanc dicendi virtutem obtinet, quem secum esse affirmat, dicens: An experimentum ejus quaeritis qui in me habitat Christus (II Cor. XIII, 3)? Qui enim in se loquebatur secum erat. Redolet omni mundo per vitam, sed ex eo vitae odorem trahit quem ostendit: dicens: Christi bonus odor sumus in omni loco (Ibid. II, 15). Omnia esse de praesentia Redemptoris Joannes insinuat, quia dicit: De plenitudine ejus omnes accepimus (Joan, I, 16). Samuel ergo cum crevisse dicitur, cum eo Dominus esse memoratur, quia doctorum ordo cum magnae sanctitatis atque doctrinae gratia omni mundo resplenduit, ex eo tam magnus apparere potuit qui eum in mundo positum non reliquit.

Sequitur:

26. By which words, indeed, what else is more clearly recognized than the perfidy of the Jewish people? For he who calls the almighty God Lord, still thinks that he serves him. Therefore, when their rejection is insinuated to the Jewish people by the teachers of the holy Church, they say: It is the Lord, let him do what is good in his eyes. Because while they believe they please God through the ancient institution, they are by no means terrified by the threats of the holy Church. As if with a more open voice Jewish perfidy asserted, and said to the preachers of the holy Church threatening them: By your threats you strike no terror into us, in that we believe we minister in faith to him from whose grace you preach that we have fallen. Therefore, when he adds: Let him do what is good in his eyes, he mocks the teachers of the holy Church rather than offering himself to the divine sentence. As if he spoke with another intention, and said: He does not do such a thing to us, in that that one is our Lord whom you propose to us for vengeance.

It follows:

(Verse 19.) And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him.

Why is it that after he set forth the vision to Eli, Samuel is said to have grown, unless because the order of our teachers, after it rejected the sons of the Synagogue by the word, found the glory of greater reverence among the gentiles? He grew, therefore, because he who through the ministry of the word first confined himself in one nation, afterwards spread the fame of his holiness and teaching in the whole world. Whence also it is said through the Psalmist: Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Ps. 18:5). Hence again speaking to the holy Church, he says: In place of your fathers sons are born to you, you shall constitute them princes over all the earth (Ps. 44:17). He grew, therefore, when he radiated in the whole world. With whom also the Lord is said to be, because everything that smelled of the fame of holiness, everything that shone clear through the word, he received from the presence of the Redeemer, whom he had with him. For although Paul by the word penetrates not only weak and earthly things, but also high and heavenly things, he obtains this virtue of speaking from him whom he affirms to be with him, saying: Do you seek a proof of him who dwells in me, Christ? (2 Cor. 13:3). For he who spoke in him was with him. He is fragrant to the whole world through his life, but from him he draws the odor of life which he shows, saying: We are a good odor of Christ in every place (2 Cor. 2:15). John insinuates that all things are from the presence of the Redeemer, because he says: From his fullness we have all received (John 1:16). Samuel, therefore, when he is said to have grown, the Lord is remembered to be with him, because the order of teachers, when it shone to the whole world with the grace of great holiness and doctrine, was able to appear so great from him who did not leave him placed in the world.

It follows:

(Vers. 20.) Et cognovit universus Israel a Dan usque Bersabee quod fidelis Samuel propheta esset Domini.

28. Quibus profecto terrae nominibus Judaeae universitas designatur. Quid ergo in universa Judaea nisi omnis designatur Ecclesia? Universitas itaque Israel quia Samuel propheta est Domini recognoscit, quia profecto omnis qui fidelis est credit quod sanctorum praedicatorum ordo vera de futuris dicit. Prophetae namque officium est, et futura praedicere, et occulta revelare. Praedicatores autem sanctae Ecclesiae dum latentia quaeque vitia in mente deprehendunt, dum spiritalium virtutum secreta aperiunt, dum sanctarum Scripturarum latentes intellectus ad communem notitiam proferunt, dum futura coelestis patriae gaudia electis fidelibus repromittunt, prophetae ministerio utuntur. Ab universo igitur Israele propheta Domini fidelis Samuel esse cognoscitur, quia omnipotentem Dominum fide videre non potest, qui sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus fidem non adhibet. Et quia eadem divinae cognitionis gloria in sancta Ecclesia remansit, quae se doctoribus primis aperuit, subditur:

(Vers. 21.) Et addidit Dominus ut appareret in Silo.

29. Silo quippe missus interpretatur. Et quia usque in mundi finem in praedicationis ministerium mittit, in Silo Dominus apparet, quia se eis clarius ostendit per quos lucis suae gloriam aliis aperit. Bene autem dicitur Addidit ut appareret, quia incessanter eliguntur quibus claritas divinae lucis infunditur. Unde et causam cur auditam visionem asserat subdit, dicens:

(Vers. 21.) Quoniam revelatus fuerat Dominus Samueli.

30. Idcirco enim ut appareat addit, quoniam qui revelatus fuerat Dominus se iterum atque iterum revelat, et suae ostensionis donum a sancta Ecclesia nequaquam subtrahit, quam ei exhibere ex ejus exordio non cessavit. Sed qui Samueli revelatus asseritur, quoties apparere addiderit non refertur, quia nimirum usque in mundi finem sancta Ecclesia ducitur, cui praedicatores praesunt, qui ex eo in infimis alta aeternitatis gaudia praedicent, quo summa quae praedicant in alta Dei manifestatione vident. Quam profecto apparitionem juxta verbum Domini factam perhibetur. Quid est autem verbum Domini, nisi promissio Redemptoris? Addidit ergo ut appareret juxta verbum Domini, quia promissionis suae veritatem exhiberet non desinit. Verbum namque Domini in additione apparitionis est: Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem saeculi (Matth. XXVIII, 20). Sequitur:

(Vers. 21.) Et venit sermo Samuelis in universo Israeli.

(Verse 20.) And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was a faithful prophet of the Lord.

By which names of the land, indeed, the university of Judea is designated. What, therefore, is designated in the whole of Judea but the whole Church? Therefore, the university of Israel recognizes that Samuel is a prophet of the Lord, because indeed everyone who is faithful believes that the order of holy preachers speaks the truth about future things. For the office of a prophet is both to predict future things and to reveal hidden things. But the preachers of the holy Church, while they detect any latent vices in the mind, while they open the secrets of spiritual virtues, while they bring forth the latent understandings of the holy Scriptures to common knowledge, while they promise the future joys of the heavenly country to the faithful elect, they use the ministry of a prophet. By all Israel, therefore, faithful Samuel is known to be the prophet of the Lord, because he cannot see the almighty Lord by faith who does not yield faith to the teachers of the holy Church. And because the same glory of divine knowledge remained in the holy Church, which opened itself to the first teachers, it is subjoined:

(Verse 21.) And the Lord added to appear in Shiloh.

29. Shiloh, indeed, is interpreted as sent. And because he sends into the ministry of preaching until the end of the world, the Lord appears in Shiloh, because he shows himself more clearly to them through whom he opens the glory of his light to others. But it is well said: He added to appear, because they are incessantly chosen into whom the clarity of divine light is infused. Whence also he subjoins the cause why he asserts that the vision was heard, saying:

(Verse 21.) Because the Lord had been revealed to Samuel.

For this reason he adds that he might appear, since the Lord who had been revealed reveals himself again and again, and by no means withdraws the gift of his manifestation from the holy Church, which he has not ceased to exhibit to her from her beginning. But of him who is asserted to have been revealed to Samuel, it is not related how many times he added to appear, because namely the holy Church is led even to the end of the world, over which preachers preside, who for this reason preach from the lowest parts the high joys of eternity, in that they see in the high manifestation of God the highest things which they preach. Which appearance indeed is mentioned to have been made according to the word of the Lord. But what is the word of the Lord, if not the promise of the Redeemer? He added therefore to appear according to the word of the Lord, because he does not cease to exhibit the truth of his promise. For the word of the Lord in the addition of the appearance is: Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. 28:20). It follows:

(Verse 21.) And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

31. Sermo etenim venire cognoscitur, cum praedicatorum nostrorum promissio adimpletur. Promissio enim verbi est gaudium sine fine mansurum. Universo igitur Israeli sermo Samuelis venit, quia omnis multitudo sanctae Ecclesiae ad gaudium aeternae beatitudinis pervenit, et quod nunc in fide sermonis a sanctis ejus praedicatoribus repromittitur, per rei veritatem eidem in regnis coelestibus exhibetur. Verbum namque doctorum in repromissione fidelium est: Omnis qui credit in ipsum non perit, sed habebit vitam aeternam (Joan. III, 15). Vel certe sermo doctorum in repromissione munerum est: Quae oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae preparavit Deus diligentibus se (Isa. LXIV, 4; I Cor. II, 9). Sermo itaque Samuelis in universo Israeli venit, quia quisquis sanctis praedicatoribus et vitae praesentis religiosam conversationem suadentibus et aeterna gaudia justis promittentibus credit, ad ea quae pie vivendo exspectavit gaudia aeterna carne moriendo transivit. Unde et is in cujus fide promiserat affirmat, dicens: Amen dico vobis, coelum et terra transibunt, verba autem mea non transibunt (Marc. XIII, 31). Vel certe sermo Samuelis in universo Israeli jam venit, quia per effectum divinae animadversionis generalis impleta cognoscitur repulsio Judaeorum. Unde et ordinem quo idem sermo in universo Israeli venerit latius exponens, ait:

CAPUT II.

(I Reg. IV, 1-3.) Egressus namque est Israel obviam Philisthiim in praelium, et castrametatus est juxta Lapidem Adjutorii. Porro Philisthiim venerunt in Aphec, et instruxerunt aciem contra Israel. Inito autem certamine, terga vertit Israel, et caesa sunt in illo certamine passim per agros quatuor millia virorum. Et reversus est Israel in castra.

1. Esse spiritalia praelia beatus Apostolus ostendit, dum sanctae Ecclesiae castra ad victoriam cohortatur, dicens: Non est nobis colluctatio adversus carnem et sanguinem, sed adversus principes et potestates, et contra spiritales nequitias in coelestibus (Ephes. VI, 12). De quibus profecto praeliis etiam consequendae victoriae consilium praebens, ait: Et scutum fidei, in quo possitis omnia tela nequissimi ignea exstinguere, et galeam salutis assumite, et gladium spiritus, quod est verbum Dei (Ibid., 16, 17).

For the word is known to come when the promise of our preachers is fulfilled. For the promise of the word is joy to remain without end. Therefore, to all Israel the word of Samuel came, because the whole multitude of the holy Church attains to the joy of eternal beatitude, and what is now promised in the faith of the word by his holy preachers, is exhibited to the same by the truth of the thing in the heavenly kingdoms. For the word of the teachers in the promise of the faithful is: Everyone who believes in him does not perish, but shall have eternal life (John 3:15). Or certainly the word of the teachers in the promise of gifts is: What eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it ascended into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him (Isa. 64:4; 1 Cor. 2:9). The word of Samuel, therefore, came to all Israel, because whoever believes the holy preachers both persuading to the religious conversation of the present life and promising eternal joys to the just, has passed by the death of the flesh to the eternal joys which he expected by living piously. Whence also he in whose faith he had promised affirms, saying: Amen I say to you, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away (Mark 13:31). Or certainly the word of Samuel has already come to all Israel, because through the effect of divine punishment the general rejection of the Jews is known to be fulfilled. Whence also more widely setting forth the order by which the same word came to all Israel, he says:

CHAPTER II.

(1 Kings 4:1-3.) For Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle, and encamped near the Stone of Help. Moreover, the Philistines came into Aphek, and set their army in array against Israel. And when the battle was joined, Israel turned their backs, and there were slain in that battle here and there through the fields four thousand men. And Israel returned to the camp.

1. The blessed Apostle shows that there are spiritual battles, while he exhorts the camps of the holy Church to victory, saying: Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against princes and powers, and against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12). Concerning which battles also giving counsel for obtaining victory, he says: And take the shield of faith, in which you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:16, 17).

Hinc Petrus exhortans dicit: Solliciti estote, et vigilate in orationibus, quia adversarius vester diabolus circuit, quaerens quem devoret; cui resistite fortes in fide (I Petr. IV, 7; V, 8). Dum ergo Israelitis praelia per litteram referuntur, interna et spiritalia designantur. Philisthiim namque cadentes poculo interpretantur; quo nimirum nomine reprobi angeli exprimuntur, quia per abundantiorem potum superbiae statum perdiderunt aeternae vitae. Eis quippe velut poculo cadere fuit potum superbiae sine omni mora retractionis assumere. Nam quod potatur facile sumitur. De quorum profecto cadentium principe velut de potante Dominus dicit: Quia in veritate non stetit (Joan. VIII, 44). Velut enim potu corruit, qui, superbiae suae velocitate ebrius, in ea qua fuerat conditus veritate nec ad momentum stetit.

2. Sed valde quaerendum est quomodo Israel secundum carnem egredi in praelium contra istos cadentes poculo intelligatur. Nemo enim pugnat cum eo qui sibi subjicitur. Judaicus ergo populus, qui malignis spiritibus per infidelitatem subjectus, contra eos in praelium quomodo egredi dicitur? Pugnare tamen asseritur non veritate fortitudinis, sed fallacia aestimationis. Veritate quippe fortitudinis a malignis spiritibus victus est, sed tamen dum Patrum veterum traditiones servat, cum malignis spiritibus se certamen habere existimat. Unde et sub captivitatis suae vinculis tanto strictius ligatur, quanto ipsa libertatis quam non habet fiducia ab eorum sibi calliditate suggeritur. Versuti namque adversarii occultis suggestionibus ei falsae libertatis fortitudinem praedicant, ut eam qua premitur caliginem non attendat, et eo securius jam eum deceptum possideant quo ab eis quibus tenetur infidelitatis vinculis solvi in Redemptorem nostrum credendo non curat. Et notandum quia de repulso populo dicitur: Egressus est Israel. 126 Tunc recte exiit cum sacrae fidei monumenta dereliquit. Unde et de iis qui a Scripturae sanctae mysteriis errando deviaverant, Joannes dicit: Ex nobis exierunt, sed non erant ex nobis (I Joan. II, 19). Exire igitur Israeli secundum carnem est rectae fidei terminos errando praeterire. Sed quia alium Christum exspectare non desinunt, juxta Adjutorii Lapidem castra ponunt. Merito igitur terga vertisse Israel dicitur, quia et egressus fuisse perhibetur. Nam si intus maneret, vinci nequaquam potuisset, quia si se intra munitiones servaret fidei, armatos spiritus debellaret erroris.

Hence Peter exhorting says: Be solicitous, and watch in prayers, because your adversary the devil goes about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, strong in faith (1 Pet. 4:7; 5:8). While therefore battles are related to the Israelites according to the letter, internal and spiritual ones are designated. For Philistines are interpreted as falling by the cup; by which name indeed the reprobate angels are expressed, because through the over-abundant drink of pride they lost the state of eternal life. For to them to fall as if by a cup was to take the drink of pride without any delay of withdrawal. For what is drunk is easily taken. Concerning whose prince indeed, as of one drinking, the Lord says: Because he stood not in the truth (John 8:44). For he fell as if by a drink, who, drunk with the velocity of his pride, did not stand even for a moment in that truth in which he had been created.

2. But it must be greatly asked how Israel according to the flesh is understood to go out to battle against those falling by the cup (cadentes poculo). For no one fights with one who is subject to him. How, therefore, is the Jewish people, who are subject to evil spirits through infidelity, said to go out to battle against them? Yet they are asserted to fight not by the truth of fortitude, but by the fallacy of estimation. For by the truth of fortitude they were conquered by evil spirits, but yet while they preserve the traditions of the ancient Fathers, they think they have a struggle with the evil spirits. Whence they are bound so much more strictly under the bonds of their captivity, as the confidence of that very liberty which they do not have is suggested to them by their craftiness. For the crafty adversaries, by occult suggestions, preach to them the fortitude of a false liberty, so that they may not attend to that darkness by which they are oppressed, and they may possess them already deceived more securely as they do not care to be loosed from the bonds of infidelity by which they are held, by believing in our Redeemer. And it is to be noted that it is said of the rejected people: Israel went out. 126 Then they rightly went out when they abandoned the monuments of the sacred faith. Whence also of those who had strayed by wandering from the mysteries of Holy Scripture, John says: They went out from us, but they were not of us (1 John 2:19). To go out, therefore, for Israel according to the flesh is to pass beyond the boundaries of the right faith by wandering. But because they do not cease to expect another Christ, they pitch their camp near the Stone of Help (Lapis adjutorii). Deservedly, therefore, Israel is said to have turned their backs, because they are also reported to have gone out. For if they remained within, they could by no means have been conquered, because if they kept themselves within the fortifications of faith, they would have vanquished the armed spirits of error.

Et quia fraude superatur, Philisthiim in Aphec aciem instruxisse perhibentur. Malignis namque spiritibus aciem instruere est incautis Judaeorum cordibus argumenta deceptionis ordinare. Sed inito certamine, terga vertit Israel, quia dum mori metuit, malignis spiritibus non resistit. Ideo quippe pugnae profugi terga hostibus vertunt, ne resistentes moriantur. Quia vero, si in Redemptorem Judaei credant, mori trepidant, idcirco non resistunt, ut vivant, quia in Redemptorem non credunt, ut in veteri circumcisione salventur. Resisterent quippe malignis spiritibus, si arma suae fortitudinis in Redemptoris nostri fide tenuissent. Sed ideo ne moriantur fugiunt, et ideo quia fugiunt moriuntur. Hostis namque insequens eo facilius fugientem interficit, quo is qui fugiendo percutitur imminentis victoris sui gladio non resistit. Unde et in eodem certamine quatuor Judaeorum millia caesa memorantur. Quae enim sunt haec quatuor millia, nisi qui recipere quatuor Evangeliorum veritatem noluerunt? Quare et in agris mori perhibentur, quia in errorum suorum latitudine immorantur. Et quia erroris sui latibula adhuc nequaquam derelinquunt, Israel in castra reversus asseritur. Nam, ut jam dixi, cum malignis spiritibus adhuc habere certamen se aestimat cum eorum voluntati potius obediat quam repugnet.

3. Quia vero etiam in bona significatione poculum accipitur, cadentes poculo intelligi sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatores possunt. De quo nimirum poculo Propheta gloriatur, dicens: Impinguasti in oleo caput meum, et poculum meum inebrians, quam praeclarum est (Psal. XXII, 5)! Poculum namque inebrians, abundans est gratia Spiritus sancti, quae apte poculum dicitur, quia ejus plenitudine electorum corda in momento inebriantur. Unde et de primis sanctae Ecclesiae pastoribus dicitur: Factus est repente de coelo sonus, tanquam advenientis spiritus vehementis, et replevit totam domum ubi erant sedentes (Act. II, 2). Quo nimirum poculo praedicatores cadunt, quia dum sancti Spiritus gratiam abundanter excipiunt, statum vitae carnalis ex toto derelinquunt. Quotidie namque per hoc poculum velut nimiae potantes cadunt, quia etsi eos aliquando carnales motus ad perpetrandas culpas erigunt, virtute tamen potati spiritus in statu peccati non inveniuntur. Cum quibus profecto quia Judaicus populus certamen habet fidei contra Philisthaeos istos, carnalis Israel quotidie egreditur ad campum belli.

4. Possunt autem Philisthinorum appellatione idcirco sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatores intelligi, quia de errore gentilium ad gratiam fidei per Dei misericordiam sunt perducti. Cum quibus nimirum Israel praelians terga vertit, quia loquenti per ora praedicatorum spiritui non resistit. In praelium namque Israel contra Philisthiim exierat cum praedicanti Stephano Judaei obsisterent, et de fidei nostrae ratione disputarent. Sed praelians terga vertit, quia 127 resistere disputando non potuit.

And because they are overcome by fraud, the Philistines are reported to have drawn up their battle line in Aphek. For for evil spirits to draw up a battle line is to arrange the arguments of deception in the incautious hearts of the Jews. But when the contest had begun, Israel turned their backs, because while they fear to die, they do not resist the evil spirits. For therefore fugitives from battle turn their backs to the enemies, lest by resisting they should die. But because, if the Jews believe in the Redeemer, they tremble to die, for that reason they do not resist, so that they may live, because they do not believe in the Redeemer, that they may be saved in the old circumcision. For they would indeed resist the evil spirits, if they had held the arms of their fortitude in the faith of our Redeemer. But they flee for this reason, lest they should die, and they die for this reason, because they flee. For the following enemy kills the fugitive so much more easily, as he who is struck by fleeing does not resist the sword of his imminent victor. Whence also in that same contest four thousand of the Jews are recorded to have been slain. For what are these four thousand, except those who refused to receive the truth of the four Gospels? Why also are they reported to have died in the fields, because they dwell in the latitude of their errors? And because they by no means yet abandon the hiding places of their error, Israel is asserted to have returned to the camp. For, as I have already said, they think they still have a struggle with evil spirits when they rather obey their will than resist it.

3. But because the cup is also taken in a good sense, those falling by the cup (cadentes poculo) can be understood as the preachers of the Holy Church. Concerning which cup indeed the Prophet glories, saying: You have anointed my head with oil, and my inebriating cup, how excellent it is (Psalm 22:5)! For the inebriating cup is the abundant grace of the Holy Spirit, which is aptly called a cup, because by its fullness the hearts of the elect are inebriated in a moment. Whence also of the first pastors of the Holy Church it is said: Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting (Acts 2:2). By which cup indeed the preachers fall, because while they receive the grace of the Holy Spirit abundantly, they entirely abandon the state of carnal life. For daily they fall through this cup as if drinking to excess, because even if carnal motions sometimes rouse them to commit faults, yet by the power of the inebriated spirit they are not found in the state of sin. With whom indeed, because the Jewish people has a contest of faith against those Philistines, carnal Israel daily goes out to the field of war.

4. Moreover, the preachers of the Holy Church can be understood by the name of the Philistines for this reason, because they were led from the error of the Gentiles to the grace of faith by the mercy of God. With whom indeed Israel battling turns its back, because it does not resist the spirit speaking through the mouths of the preachers. For Israel had gone out to battle against the Philistines when the Jews opposed Stephen preaching, and disputed concerning the reason of our faith. But battling it turned its back, because it could not resist by disputing.

Nam de terga vertentibus in apostolorum Actibus dicitur: Non poterant resistere sapientiae et spiritui qui loquebatur (Act. VI, 10). Caedi autem Israelitis est ab infidelitatis vita separari. Bene quoque in agris mori perhibentur; agri enim certaminis sunt sacri eloquii virentes intellectus. In agris igitur caesa pugnatorum Israelitarum millia assignantur, quia qui sanctorum praedicatorum ministerio de Judaea conversi sunt in Redemptorem humani generis per sanctarum Scripturarum documenta crediderunt. Quatuor vero millia caesorum fuisse memorantur, quia eamdem sacri eloquii auctoritatem de lege, prophetis, psalmis, atque de Evangelio voverunt. Sed et caecis aliis, alii in castra revertuntur, quia de Judaea nonnulli praedicatorum ministerio ad cognitionem Redemptoris perducti sunt, sed ejusdem gentis plenitudo sanctae Ecclesiae assertionibus tanto audacius adversatur, quanto, in infidelitatis suae tenebris profundius ejecta, ad veritatis lumen non ducitur. In castra quippe ei reverti est adversari non desistere. Et quia eos qui crediderant velut stultos, et nulla sufficienti ratione superatos arguunt, sequitur:

(Vers. 3.) Dixeruntque majores natu Israel: Quare percussit nos hodie Dominus coram Philisthiim?

5. Quare enim hoc loco non est inquisitionis interrogatio, sed querela admirationis. Sub admiratione ergo de percussione interrogant, quia ad eam rationem qua religionis suae homines fidem Redemptoris excepisse conspexerant pertingere non valebant. Et notandum quia qui admiranter interrogant, majores natu de Israel fuisse memorantur, quia profecto superbi quique, in sua sapientia gloriantes, ad divinorum mysteriorum cognitionem pertingere nequaquam potuerunt. Unde et in Evangelio Dominus ad Patrem loquitur, dicens: Confiteor tibi, Pater, rex coeli et terrae, quia abscondisti haec a prudentibus et sapientibus, et revelasti ea parvulis (Matth. XI, 25). Qui profecto se percussos fuisse conqueruntur, quia dum per eos qui crediderant veterem legis consuetudinem solvi conspicerent, quaedam percussionis vulvera incomprehensibili judicio Dei inflicta sibi arbitrati sunt, quae communi dolore declamarent. Sed qui cecidisse alios conqueruntur, quo se consilio ad resistendum praeparent, subdunt:

(Vers. 3.) Afferamus ad nos de Silo arcam foederis Domini, et veniat in medio nostri, et salvet nos de manu inimicorum nostrorum. Et de affectu ejusdem consilii protinus subinfertur:

(Vers. 4.) Misit ergo populus in Silo, et tulit inde arcam foederis Domini exercituum sedentis super cherubim.

For of those turning their backs it is said in the Acts of the Apostles: They could not resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke (Acts 6:10). But for the Israelites to be slain is to be separated from the life of infidelity. Well also are they reported to die in the fields; for the fields of the contest are the green understandings of the sacred word. In the fields, therefore, the slain thousands of the Israelite fighters are assigned, because those who were converted from Judea by the ministry of the holy preachers believed in the Redeemer of the human race through the documents of the Holy Scriptures. But four thousand are recorded to have been slain, because they vowed the same authority of the sacred word from the Law, the Prophets, the Psalms, and from the Gospel. But while some are blind, others return to the camp, because some from Judea were led to the knowledge of the Redeemer by the ministry of the preachers, but the fullness of the same nation opposes the assertions of the Holy Church so much more boldly, as, cast deeper into the darkness of its infidelity, it is not led to the light of truth. For to return to the camp is for them not to cease to oppose. And because they accuse those who had believed as if foolish, and overcome by no sufficient reason, there follows:

(Verse 3) And the elders of Israel said: Why has the Lord struck us today before the Philistines?

5. For Why in this place is not an interrogation of inquiry, but a complaint of wonder. Under wonder, therefore, they ask concerning the striking, because they were not able to reach that reason by which they had seen men of their religion receive the faith of the Redeemer. And it is to be noted that those who ask wonderingly are recorded to have been the elders of Israel, because indeed all the proud, glorying in their own wisdom, were by no means able to reach the knowledge of the divine mysteries. Whence also in the Gospel the Lord speaks to the Father, saying: 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 (Matthew 11:25). Who indeed complain that they have been struck, because while they saw the old custom of the Law being loosed through those who believed, they thought certain wounds of striking were inflicted on them by the incomprehensible judgment of God, which they would proclaim with common grief. But those who complain that others have fallen, in order to prepare themselves for resisting by what counsel, they add:

(Verse 3) Let us bring to us from Shiloh the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and let it come into the midst of us, and save us from the hand of our enemies. And of the affection of the same counsel it is immediately added:

(Verse 4) So the people sent to Shiloh, and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts sitting upon the cherubim.

6. Hoc est certe consilium, hoc opus Israelis contra certamen cadentium poculo, sed profecto consilium, et opus inauditum, quia non est Israelis secundum spiritum, sed Israelis secundum carnem, videlicet non Deum videre videntis, sed Deum quem despicit se videre arbitrantis. Quid est enim ad Silo mittere, nisi ad legem Moysi recurrere, cui a Domino dicitur: Veni, mittam te ad Pharaonem (Exod. III, 10)? Quid est afferre arcam Domini, nisi veteris legis sacramenta ad reprobandam novae fidei veritatem recolendo adducere? Et quia eamdem legis scientiam suorum neminem ignorare patiuntur, in medium eorum arca adduci praecipitur. 128 Quid est item quod dicunt: Et salvet nos de manu inimicorum nostrorum, nisi quia dum pertinaciter defendunt vetera, repellunt nova, et hoc habent in fiducia salutis, si ad verae fidei rationem bonorum praedicatorum studio trahi non possunt? Quia igitur veritatem divinae cognitionis per veterem legem habere se jactant, eamdem arcam, quam ad salvationem suam deferri praecipiunt, Domini exercituum esse confirmant. Et quia incomparabili scientia ejus dem legis se pollere arbitrantur, dum arca deferri dicitur, Domini exercituum sedentis super cherubim esse perhibetur.

(Vers. 5.) Cumque arca venisset, omnis Israel grandi clamore vociferatus est.

7. Quia profecto de eo quod carnaliter scientiam legis accipiunt, in sanctae Ecclesiae exprobratione garriunt, sine ostensione rationis. Qui enim clamasse, et nihil dicuntur dixisse, hoc profecto exprimunt quod agunt, quia dum loqui spiritualia carnaliter satagunt, clamorem quidem in garrulitate habent, sed rationem veritatis non habent. Voce quidem multa dicunt, sed, sine ratione loquentes, sanctae Ecclesiae electis in nullo obsunt, et, in semetipsa Synagoga loquens, inani devotione concutitur, quia ejus verbis sancta Ecclesia non movetur. Unde apte nimis terra tantum sonuisse relata est. Terra quippe Judaea nunc dicitur, non quia Deo fructificet, sed propter carnalitatem, quia nimirum, dum Redemptoris fidem recipere noluit, coelestem conversationem penitus amisit. Sed dum vociferatione sua concutitur, ea existimatione qua semetipsam considerat esse se terribilem sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatoribus exsultat.

(Vers. 6.) Et audierunt Philisthiim vocem clamoris, dixeruntque: Quaenam est haec vociferatio in castris Hebraeorum?

8. Terrae quippe sonitum et castrorum vociferationem Philisthiim audiunt, quia ii qui in sancta Ecclesia poculo sancti Spiritus refecti sunt Judaeae quidem et garrulitatem et vanam perfidiae devotionem cognoscunt. Et quia eorum aestimationem in contemptu derisionis habent, subditur:

6. This is certainly the counsel, this is the work of Israel against the contest of those falling by the cup (cadentes poculo), but indeed a counsel and a work unheard of, because it is not of Israel according to the spirit, but of Israel according to the flesh, namely, not of one seeing who sees God, but of one thinking he sees God whom he despises. For what is it to send to Shiloh, except to recur to the law of Moses, to whom it is said by the Lord: Come, I will send you to Pharaoh (Exodus 3:10)? What is it to bring the ark of the Lord, except to bring forward by recalling the sacraments of the old law for rejecting the truth of the new faith? And because they allow none of their own to be ignorant of that same knowledge of the law, the ark is commanded to be brought into their midst. 128 What is it likewise that they say: And let it save us from the hand of our enemies, except that while they pertinaciously defend old things, they reject new things, and they have this in confidence of salvation, if they cannot be drawn to the reason of the true faith by the study of good preachers? Because, therefore, they boast that they have the truth of divine knowledge through the old law, they confirm that same ark, which they command to be carried for their salvation, to be of the Lord of hosts. And because they think they excel by the incomparable knowledge of that same law, while the ark is said to be carried, it is reported to be of the Lord of hosts sitting upon the cherubim.

(Verse 5) And when the ark had come, all Israel shouted with a great shout.

7. Because indeed concerning the fact that they receive the knowledge of the law carnally, they chatter in reproach of the Holy Church, without showing reason. For those who are said to have shouted, and to have said nothing, indeed express by this what they do, because while they busy themselves to speak spiritual things carnally, they indeed have a shout in their chatter, but they do not have the reason of truth. By voice indeed they say many things, but, speaking without reason, they in no way obstruct the elect of the Holy Church, and the Synagogue speaking in itself is shaken with vain devotion, because the Holy Church is not moved by its words. Whence appropriately enough the earth is related to have only resounded. For the land of Judea is now called earth, not because it bears fruit to God, but on account of carnality, because indeed, since it refused to receive the faith of the Redeemer, it entirely lost celestial conversation. But while it is shaken by its own shouting, it exults in that estimation by which it considers itself to be terrible to the preachers of the Holy Church.

(Verse 6) And the Philistines heard the voice of the shout, and they said: What is this shouting in the camp of the Hebrews?

8. For the Philistines hear the sound of the earth and the shouting of the camp, because those who have been refreshed in the Holy Church by the cup of the Holy Spirit know both the chatter and the vain devotion of the perfidy of Judea. And because they have their estimation in contempt of derision, there is added:

(Vers. 6, 7.) Et cognoverunt quod arca Domini venisset in castra, timueruntuqe Philisthiim dicentes: Venit Deus in castra, et ingemuerunt.

Arca in castra Hebraeorum venisse, et cadentes poculo timuisse, atque ingemuisse per ironiam dicitur, quia ad conflictum sanctae Ecclesiae sacramenta legis veteris a Synagogae carnalibus defensoribus carnaliter exponuntur. De eo namque disputant, quod si secundum Dei spiritum saperent, hostibus suis, si quos haberent, in veritate terribiles esse potuissent. Dum ergo pertimuisse et ingemuisse cadentes poculo dicuntur, non passiones mentium in sanctis praedicatoribus Scriptura ostendit, sed subsannationem Judaicae disputationis; quae tanto contemptibilior, et risu dignior noscitur, quanto ad spiritalem conversationem Judaicus populus legem a Domino spiritalem accepit, et hoc quod spiritu donante acceperat, in spiritu non attendit. Quare et ejusdem Judaicae derisionis verba addentes dicunt:

(Vers. 8.) Vae nobis, non fuit tanta exsultatio heri, et nudiustertius.

Et quia abundantius deridendi sunt, subdentes dicunt: (Vers. 8.) Quis nos liberabit de manu deorum istorum sublimium?

129 9. Et notandum quia deorum appellatione deridentur qui, a fide veterum Patrum recedentes, se in veritate fidei existere, atque in filiorum Dei numero confidunt. In se quidem illa divinae laudationis praeconia prolata asserunt, quae per Prophetam Dominus pronuntiat, dicens: Ego dixi, dii estis, et filii excelsi omnes (Psal. LXXXI, 6). Si itaque mendaci existimatione omnes Israelitae secundum carnem nuncupative dii sunt, sublimes dii ejusdem Judaicae existimationis mendacio sunt sapientes Judaeorum. Et quia periti Synagogae ad sanctae Ecclesiae conflictum veniunt, ipsi sanctorum praedicatorum voce deridentur, qui de ea quam non habent doctrinae virtute gloriantur. Et quia de antiqua Patrum veterum conversatione superbiunt, verba subsannationum supponuntur.

(Vers. 8.) Hi sunt dii qui percusserunt Aegyptum omni plaga in deserto.

10. Ipsi namque essent, si nobilitatem quam trahunt ex carnis origine rectae fidei virtutibus illustrarent. Nunc autem quia per carnis propaginem eorum sunt filii quorum virtutes non habent, de amissa earumdem virtutum successione per contraria verba deridentur: Hi sunt, inquiunt, dii. Quasi aperta derisione Judaeorum sapientes doctorum nostrorum ordo reprobet, dicens: Carne quidem magnorum virorum se filios esse gloriantur, sed eorum de quorum generatione superbiunt nobilitatem fidei non consequuntur.

(Verses 6, 7) And they knew that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp, and the Philistines were afraid, saying: God has come into the camp, and they groaned.

That the ark had come into the camp of the Hebrews, and those falling by the cup had feared, and had groaned, is said by irony, because for the conflict of the Holy Church the sacraments of the old law are expounded carnally by the carnal defenders of the Synagogue. For they dispute concerning that which, if they were wise according to the spirit of God, they could have been in truth terrible to their enemies, if they had any. While, therefore, those falling by the cup are said to have feared and groaned, the Scripture does not show the passions of the minds in the holy preachers, but the mockings of the Jewish disputation; which is known as so much more contemptible and more worthy of laughter, as the Jewish people received a spiritual law from the Lord for spiritual conversation, and that which they had received by the gift of the Spirit, they did not attend to in the spirit. Why also adding the words of the same Jewish derision they say:

(Verse 8) Woe to us, there was not such great exultation yesterday, and the day before.

And because they are more abundantly to be derided, adding they say: (Verse 8) Who will deliver us from the hand of these sublime gods?

129 9. And it is to be noted that by the name of gods those are derided who, receding from the faith of the ancient Fathers, trust that they exist in the truth of faith, and in the number of the sons of God. They indeed assert those heraldings of divine praise to have been brought forth in themselves, which the Lord pronounces through the Prophet, saying: I said, you are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High (Psalm 81:6). If therefore by a mendacious estimation all Israelites according to the flesh are by name gods, the sublime gods of that same Jewish estimation's lie are the wise men of the Jews. And because the skilled men of the Synagogue come to the conflict of the Holy Church, they themselves are derided by the voice of the holy preachers, who glory in that power of doctrine which they do not have. And because they are proud of the ancient conversation of the ancient Fathers, the words of mockings are subjoined.

(Verse 8) These are the gods who struck Egypt with every plague in the desert.

10. For they would be the ones, if they illustrated the nobility which they draw from the origin of the flesh by the virtues of the right faith. Now however, because through the propagation of the flesh they are the sons of those whose virtues they do not have, they are derided concerning the lost succession of those same virtues by contrary words: These are the gods, they say. As if by open derision the order of our teachers should reprove the wise men of the Jews, saying: By the flesh indeed they glory that they are the sons of great men, but they do not follow the nobility of faith of those of whose generation they are proud.

Ipsi ergo sunt dii subsecutione generis, sed quia ipsi non sunt imitatione virtutis, cum ipsi esse dicuntur qui virtute claruerunt, deridentur potius quam laudantur. Et quia eorum assertiones sanctae Ecclesiae doctores pro nihilo ducunt, sequitur:

(Vers. 9.) Confortamini, et estote viri, Philisthiim, ne serviatis Hebraeis, sicut ipsi servierunt vobis.

11. Contra Judaeorum quippe vanas assertiones sanctae Ecclesiae doctores eo nihil fortius noviter praeparant, quo quidquid a Judaeis de Redemptoris contemptu falso asseritur pro nullo pensant. Contra eorum quippe congressionem confortarentur, et quasi virili fortitudine decertarent, si velut a sapientioribus et rationabiliter disputantibus assertionis suae munimenta infringi timuissent. Quasi enim dicat: Contra eorum objectiones eo robusta et acuta aliqua nobis exquirenda non sunt, quo ipsi nequaquam subtilia et timenda, sed debilia et contemnenda objiciunt. Sed, ut dixi, praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae etsi contra Judaeorum vaniloquia noviter nulla praeparant, plana tamen et humili verae fidei nostrae ratione quocunque modo defensorum Synagogae impetum debellant. Unde et subdit:

(Vers. 10, 11.) Pugnavit ergo Philisthiim, et aversus est Israel, unusquisque in tabernaculum suum, et facta est plaga magna nimis, et arca Dei capta est. Duo quoque filii Heli mortui sunt, Ophni et Phinees.

12. Philisthiim, id est poculo cadentes pugnant, cum doctores sanctae Ecclesiae cum catholicae fidei vexillo Judaeis impugnantibus obviant. Israel autem avertitur, quia in omni disputatione Judaeorum versutia superatur. Averti enim ei est ex pari virtute adversari non posse. Qui autem praeliando avertitur, in praelio quidem est, sed fugiens, etsi virtute deficiens, nocendi tamen desiderium non amittens. Sic namque est omnis repulsus Israel. Fugit quippe, quia doctoribus sanctae Ecclesiae respondere non sufficit; sed fugiens vellet resistere, quia victus et confusus cuperet sibi 130 suppetere unde veritati, qua vincitur, refragari potuisset. Bene itaque cum aversus Israel dicitur; caute subjunctum est: Unusquisque in tabernaculum suum. Tabernaculum quippe uniuscujusque Israelitae est cor perfidiae conclusione circumseptum. Quia igitur, victi a sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatoribus, erroris sui latibula repetunt, singuli fugientes de praelio in suum tabernaculum revertuntur. Et quia hoc totum de adimpletione verbi Samuelis, videlicet de Ecclesiae primitivae comminatione, dicitur, plaga magna nimis facta fuisse perhibetur, quae profecto plaga, pro lectoris arbitrio, et secundum spiritalem percussionem, et secundum materialem accipi convenienter potest.

They are therefore the gods by the following of the race, but because they themselves are not by the imitation of virtue, when they are said to be the ones who were bright in virtue, they are derided rather than praised. And because the teachers of the Holy Church consider their assertions as nothing, there follows:

(Verse 9) Take courage, and be men, Philistines, lest you serve the Hebrews, as they have served you.

11. Against the vain assertions of the Jews, indeed, the teachers of the Holy Church prepare nothing more strongly anew, for they weigh as nothing whatever is falsely asserted by the Jews concerning the contempt of the Redeemer. Against their encounter they would indeed take courage, and struggle as if with manly fortitude, if they had feared that the fortifications of their assertion would be broken as if by wiser and reasonably disputing men. As if he should say: Against their objections, we do not need to seek out anything robust and sharp, as they by no means object subtle and to be feared things, but weak and to be despised things. But, as I said, even if the preachers of the Holy Church prepare nothing anew against the empty talk of the Jews, yet they vanquish the impetus of the defenders of the Synagogue by the plain and humble reason of our true faith in whatever way. Whence also he adds:

(Verses 10, 11) So the Philistines fought, and Israel was turned away, every man into his own tabernacle, and there was made an exceeding great slaughter, and the ark of God was taken. Also the two sons of Eli died, Hophni and Phinehas.

12. The Philistines, that is, those falling by the cup, fight when the teachers of the Holy Church meet the attacking Jews with the banner of the Catholic faith. But Israel is turned away, because in every dispute the craftiness of the Jews is overcome. For to be turned away for them is not to be able to oppose with equal virtue. But he who is turned away by fighting is indeed in the battle, but fleeing, although failing in virtue, yet not losing the desire of harming. For such is every rejected Israel. For they flee, because they do not suffice to answer the teachers of the Holy Church; but fleeing they would wish to resist, because conquered and confused they would desire to have means available to them whence they could have resisted the truth by which they are conquered. Well therefore when Israel is said to be turned away; it is cautiously added: Every man into his own tabernacle. For the tabernacle of each Israelite is a heart surrounded by the enclosure of perfidy. Because therefore, conquered by the preachers of the Holy Church, they seek again the hiding places of their error, they return each fleeing from the battle into his own tabernacle. And because all this is said concerning the fulfillment of the word of Samuel, namely, concerning the threat of the primitive Church, it is reported that an exceeding great slaughter was made, which slaughter indeed, according to the judgment of the reader, can be taken appropriately both according to a spiritual striking and according to a material one.

13. Nam de spiritali eorum plaga ad discipulos in praedicatione destinatos Dominus dicit: Quicunque non receperint vos exeuntes foras de domo, vel civitate, excutite pulverem de pedibus vestris. Amen dico vobis: tolerabilius erit terrae Sodomorum et Gomorrhaeorum in die judicii, quam illi civitati (Matth. X, 14). Hinc iterum dicit: Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit; qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur (Marc. XVI, 16). Secundum materialem quoque percussionem plagam magnam insinuat, cum ad Jerusalem loquitur, dicens: Venient dies in te, et circumdabunt te inimici tui vallo, et coangustabunt te undique et filios tuos, et ad terram prosternent te, et non relinquetur in te lapis super lapidem (Luc. XIX, 43, 44). Hinc compatientibus sibi atque lugentibus mulieribus, ad passionis suae dignationem proficiscens, loquitur, dicens: Filiae Jerusalem, nolite flere super me, sed super vos ipsas flete, et super filios vestros, quoniam ecce venient in te dies in quibus dicent: Beatae steriles, et ventres qui non genuerunt, et ubera quae non lactaverunt. Tunc incipient dicere montibus: Cadite super nos; et collibus: Operite nos. Quia si in viridi ligno haec faciunt, in arido quid fiet (Luc. XXIII, 28, seq.)? Quibus profecto verbis ea quae Judaeorum populo a Romanis principibus Vespasiano et Tito illata est et mors et captivitas designatur. Tunc quippe plaga magna facta fuit, quando cum internecione populi Judaeorum civitas et capta exstitit et eversa, quando pro ultione divini sanguinis, et hostili gladio populus corruit, et qui evadere ferrum potuit poenam sustinuit aeternae captivitatis. Quae profecto plagae immensitas averso jam Israeli perhibetur, quia Judaicus populus ante fuit a sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus et victus et reprobatus quam a Romano exercitu expugnatus, peremptus et in captivitatem ductus. Nam inde expugnari, occidi et in captivitatem duci temporaliter potuit, quia aeternae libertatis securitatem oblatam sibi a sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus non recepit. Sed et eadem plaga in Israelem veterem alta divinae bonitatis dispensatione decernitur, ut arca Dei a gentilibus caperetur, et divinorum sacramentorum intellectus sanctae Ecclesiae fideles tanto securius sub spiritali explanatione perciperent, quanto in Judaea nihil remanere cernerent, quod carnaliter exhiberet. Volente namque Deo, civitatem, templum, arcam foederis vetus populus perdidit, ut nova plebs sanctae Ecclesiae eo plenius veri et novi sacrificii mysterium recognoscat, quo apud Judaeos, novis apparentibus, vetera penitus defecisse considerat.

13. For concerning their spiritual slaughter the Lord says to the disciples sent out in preaching: Whosoever shall not receive you, going forth out of the house, or the city, shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you: it shall be more tolerable for the land of the Sodomites and Gomorrheans in the day of judgment, than for that city (Matthew 10:14). Hence again He says: He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believes not, shall be condemned (Mark 16:16). According to the material striking also He intimates a great slaughter, when He speaks to Jerusalem, saying: The days shall come upon you, and your enemies shall surround you with a trench, and enclose you on every side and your children, and beat you flat to the ground, and there shall not be left in you a stone upon a stone (Luke 19:43, 44). Hence to the women suffering with Him and mourning, as He went to the worthiness of His passion, He speaks, saying: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep over yourselves, and over your children, for behold the days shall come in you in which they shall say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the breasts that have not given suck. Then they shall begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us. For if they do these things in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry (Luke 23:28, seq.)? By which words indeed both the death and captivity which was brought upon the people of the Jews by the Roman princes Vespasian and Titus is designated. For then indeed a great slaughter was made, when with the destruction of the people the city of the Jews was both taken and overturned, when for the vengeance of the divine blood, the people fell by the hostile sword, and he who could escape the iron sustained the punishment of eternal captivity. Which immensity of the slaughter indeed is reported to an already turned Israel, because the Jewish people was first both conquered and rejected by the teachers of the Holy Church before being fought, destroyed, and led into captivity by the Roman army. For they could be fought, killed, and led into captivity temporally for this reason, because they did not receive the security of eternal liberty offered to them by the teachers of the Holy Church. But also that same slaughter in old Israel is decreed by a high dispensation of divine goodness, so that the ark of God should be taken by the Gentiles, and the faithful of the Holy Church might perceive the understanding of the divine sacraments so much more securely under spiritual explanation, as they would see nothing remaining in Judea which might be exhibited carnally. For by the will of God, the old people lost the city, the temple, the ark of the covenant, so that the new people of the Holy Church may recognize so much more fully the mystery of the true and new sacrifice, as among the Jews, new things appearing, they consider the old things to have entirely failed.

Arca itaque Dei a Philisthaeis capta asseritur, quia, destructo more veteris Scripturae, sacramenta a gentilibus secundum veritatem spiritus fideliter accipiuntur. Capit quippe arcam Dei qui divinae cognitionis mysteria in sacro eloquio per veritatem 131 intelligentiae, mentis devotione comprehendit. Sed capta arca, duo protinus Heli filii moriuntur, quia profecto et majoris ordinis sacerdotes, atque minoris, in officio immolationis veteris nusquam vivunt. Mori namque perhibentur, qui offerre sacra omnino desiere. Sequitur:

(Vers. 12, 13.) Currens autem vir unus de Benjamin ex acie, venit in Silo in die illo, scissa veste, et conspersus pulvere caput. Cumque ille venisset, Heli sedebat super sella, spectans contra viam. Vir autem ille, postquam ingressus est, nuntiavit urbi, et ululavit omnis civitas.

14. Quid per virum istum exprimitur, qui de acie fugit, nisi ea pars Judaici populi quae ad Redemptoris cognitionem veniendo Judaicam perfidiam dereliquit? Currere namque ei fuit a pravitate erroris sui devotionis velocitate desistere. Quia vero fortia agere in Redemptoris professione disposuit, vir fuit. Qui nimirum eo die quo victus est de praelio currit, quia ea fidei illuminatione qua perfidiae tenebras deseruit ad praedicandum veritatem quam noverat accessit. Unde et in Silo venisse perhibetur, quia ad praedicationem mittitur. Qui vestem scidit, quia veterem se hominem exuit; caput pulvere conspersit, quia de splendore novi hominis, quo se induit, nequaquam superbivit. Scissa namque vestis ad decorem sanctae conversationis pertinet, conspersio pulveris ad aestimationem humilitatis. Quia ergo sanctis praedicatoribus, nec vitae munditia sine humilitate, nec humilitas sufficit sine sancta conversatione, vir qui in doctorum typo ad annuntiandum Israelis interitum venit, et vestem scidit, et caput pulvere conspersit. Hoc namque pulvere caput conspersum portabat, qui, Domino loquens, ait: Loquar ad Dominum meum, cum sim pulvis et cinis (Gen. XVIII, 27)? Consperso item capite loquebatur Propheta, cum supplicaret, dicens: Memento, Domine, quia pulvis sumus (Psal. CII, 15). Vestem quoque sciderat, qui confitens, dixit: Conscidisti saccum meum, et praecinxisti me laetitia (Psal. XXIX, 12).

15. Sed cum ecclesiastici praedicatoris humilitas commendatur, pariter et superbia Judaici doctoris exprimitur, quia videlicet Heli super sella sedere perhibetur. In isto quippe loco Heli non pontifices, sed legisperitos Synagogae insinuat. Quid est autem quod sedet super sella, nisi quia superbe extollitur de doctrina? Quid est quod spectat contra viam, nisi quia dum superbe Scripturas accipit, ei per quem ire ad aeternam patriam debuit contradicit? Via quippe salutis illa est quae semetipsam asserit, dicens: Ego sum Via, Veritas et Vita (Joan. XIV, 6).

The ark of God, therefore, is asserted to be taken by the Philistines, because, the custom of the old Scripture being destroyed, the sacraments are faithfully received by the Gentiles according to the truth of the spirit. For he takes the ark of God who comprehends the mysteries of divine knowledge in the sacred word through the truth 131 of understanding, by the devotion of the mind. But the ark being taken, immediately the two sons of Eli die, because indeed both priests of the higher order, and of the lower, live nowhere in the office of the old immolation. For they are reported to die, who have entirely ceased to offer sacred things. There follows:

(Verses 12, 13) And a man of Benjamin running out of the battle line, came into Shiloh on that day, with his garment rent, and his head sprinkled with dust. And when he had come, Eli sat upon a stool, watching over against the way. But that man, after he entered, told the city, and all the city howled.

14. What is expressed by this man, who flees from the battle line, except that part of the Jewish people which abandoned Jewish perfidy by coming to the knowledge of the Redeemer? For to run was for him to desist from the depravity of his error by the velocity of devotion. But because he disposed to act strongly in the profession of the Redeemer, he was a man. Who indeed runs from the battle on that day on which he was conquered, because by that illumination of faith by which he deserted the darkness of perfidy, he approached to preach the truth which he knew. Whence also he is reported to have come to Shiloh, because he is sent to preaching. He rent his garment, because he put off the old man; he sprinkled his head with dust, because he by no means became proud of the splendor of the new man with which he clothed himself. For the rent garment pertains to the beauty of holy conversation, the sprinkling of dust to the estimation of humility. Since therefore for holy preachers, neither the purity of life without humility, nor humility suffices without holy conversation, the man who came in the type of teachers to announce the destruction of Israel, both rent his garment and sprinkled his head with dust. For was he not carrying his head sprinkled with this dust, who, speaking to the Lord, said: I will speak to my Lord, since I am dust and ashes (Genesis 18:27)? Likewise the Prophet spoke with his head sprinkled when he supplicated, saying: Remember, Lord, that we are dust (Psalm 102:15). He also had rent his garment, who confessing, said: You have rent my sackcloth, and have girded me with gladness (Psalm 29:12).

15. But when the humility of the ecclesiastical preacher is commended, likewise also the pride of the Jewish teacher is expressed, because forsooth Eli is reported to sit upon a stool. In that place indeed Eli intimates not the high priests, but the lawyers of the Synagogue. But what is it that he sits upon a stool, except that he is proudly extolled concerning doctrine? And what is it that he watches over against the way, except that while he receives the Scriptures proudly, he contradicts Him through whom he ought to go to the eternal fatherland? For that is the way of salvation which asserts itself, saying: I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).

Non itaque viam, sed contra viam respicit, quia Redemptorem non cognoscit, cui contradicit. Et bene mortuis filiis pater super sella sedere dicitur, quia qui veteri more sacrificent Synagoga non habet, et tamen qui veteri more doceant adhuc habet. Et quia per sapientes doctores ad ministerium erudiebantur, dum cessavit qui sacrificaret, et adhuc qui doceat remaneret, apte filii referuntur mortui, et pater super sella sedere; sed de ea quam audivit annuntiatione Redemptoris multitudo Synagogae non gaudium, sed moerorem habuit. Unde et postquam vir de praelio venit, et captionem arcae annuntiavit, ululasse omnis civitas dicitur. Quae nimirum tristitia, quia usque ad doctores pervenit, sequitur:

(Vers. 14.) Et audivit Heli sonitum clamoris, dixitque: Quis est hic sonitus tumultus hujus?

132 16. Tumultus est vociferatio populi, sed confusa, cum videlicet sine disciplina audiendi, multis simul loquentibus, magnitudo fit murmuris sine ostensione rationis. Heli ergo cum ululatum civitatis audivit, dixit: Quis est sonitus tumultus hujus? Quia videlicet magisterium Synagogae, subjectis sibi perfidis, de praedicatione Jesu Christi dolentibus, dum causam doloris audire voluit, non percepit responsionem rationabilem, sed confusionem querelae. Ut autem excusationem ignorantiae habere non posset, qui de circumcisione ad ministerium ecclesiasticae praedicationis accesserat, ei rei veritatem aperuit. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 14.) At ille festinavit, et venit, et nuntiavit Heli.

Sed quia idem Heli statim mortuus annuntiationem suscepit viri venientis, qualis sit ipse audiens subsequenter innotescit:

(Vers. 15.) Heli autem erat nonaginta et octo annorum, et oculi ejus caligaverant, et videre non poterat.

17. Perfectae namque senectutis esset, si centenarium numerum annorum vivendo peregisset. Cui profecto numero, quia duo anni deesse conspiciuntur, quid est aliud, nisi quia perfectae maturitatis existeret, si sacramentum geminum in Redemptoris nostri incarnatione cognovisset, videlicet veram divinitatem in humanitate ejus, et veram humanitatem in divinitate? Nunc autem, quia multa de lege veteri, plurima de mandatis coelestibus recte intelligit, nonaginta et octo annorum est.

He does not therefore look at the way, but over against the way, because he does not know the Redeemer, whom he contradicts. And well is the father said to sit upon a stool when his sons are dead, because the Synagogue does not have those who may sacrifice in the old manner, and yet it still has those who may teach in the old manner. And because they were erudite for the ministry through wise teachers, while he who might sacrifice ceased, and he who might teach still remained, the sons are appropriately reported dead, and the father to sit upon a stool; but concerning that announcement of the Redeemer which it heard, the multitude of the Synagogue had not joy, but sorrow. Whence also after the man came from the battle, and announced the capture of the ark, all the city is said to have howled. Which sadness indeed, because it reached even to the teachers, there follows:

(Verse 14) And Eli heard the sound of the shout, and he said: What is this sound of this tumult?

132 16. Tumult is the shouting of the people, but confused, when namely without discipline of hearing, many speaking at once, there becomes a magnitude of murmur without showing reason. Eli therefore when he heard the howling of the city, said: What is the sound of this tumult? Because forsooth the mastership of the Synagogue, with the perfidious subject to it grieving concerning the preaching of Jesus Christ, while it wished to hear the cause of the grief, did not perceive a reasonable response, but the confusion of a complaint. But that he might not be able to have an excuse of ignorance, he who from the circumcision had approached the ministry of ecclesiastical preaching, opened to him the truth of the matter. Whence also it is added:

(Verse 14) But he made haste, and came, and told Eli.

But because that same Eli received the announcement of the coming man as immediately dead, what kind of hearer he was is subsequently made known:

(Verse 15) Now Eli was ninety and eight years old, and his eyes were dim, and he could not see.

17. For he would have been of perfect old age if he had completed the hundredfold number of years in living. To which number, because two years are seen to be missing, what else is it except that he would have existed in perfect maturity if he had known the twofold sacrament in the incarnation of our Redeemer, namely, true divinity in His humanity, and true humanity in His divinity? But now, because he rightly understands many things concerning the old law, and very many things concerning the celestial mandates, he is ninety and eight years old.

Et dum Deum credit, et ex Virgine nasci potuisse per carnem, et humanitatis ejus naturam suscipi abnegat in divinitate, centum annorum non est. Unde et, audita viri relatione, juste moritur, quia sine fide Redemptoris ei bona quae cognoscit et alia nequaquam prosunt. Et quia alto et incomprehensibili judicio Dei caecitas ignorantiae ejus menti incutitur, caligasse et videre non potuisse memoratur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 16.) Et dixit ad Heli: Ego sum qui veni de praelio, ego qui de acie fugi hodie.

18. Quasi in praelio se fuisse memorabat ille qui dicebat: Audistis conversationem meam aliquando in Judaismo; quoniam supra modum persuequebar Ecclesiam Dei, et expugnabam illam, et proficiebam in Judaismo supra multos coaetaneos meos, in genere meo, abundantius aemulator existens paternarum mearum traditionum (Gal. I, 13, 14). Sed de praelio venit qui dicit: Qui prius fui blasphemus et persecutor; sed misericordiam consecutus sum, quia ignorans feci (I Tim. I, 13). Fugere ergo de acie Judaeo quid est aliud quam a perfidorum errore separari? et de praelio venire quid est, nisi rectae fidei bonum aliis nuntiare? Fugere namque metuentis est; venire, volentis. Quo in loco, quia prius dicitur venire de praelio, quam ex acie fugere, cum prius deseratur perfidia quam veritas praedicetur, mirum non est. Nam hoc, quod de acie se fugisse posterius dicit, non ad ordinem quo factum est dicitur, sed ad certitudinem verbi quod praemisit. Quod etiam secundum historiae ordinem demonstratur, quia nisi prius de acie fugisset, venire de praelio nequaquam potuisset.

19. Nos autem qui secundum spiritum spiritalia etiam in rebus Judaeorum carnaliter gestis inquirimus, illum virum quem loquentem paulo superius introduximus attendamus. Nam auditum est ab Ecclesia quia is qui quondam persequebatur evangelizaret, sicut scriptum de eo jam evangelizante est: Cum autem venisset Jerusalem, tentabat 133 se jungere discipulis, et omnes timebant eum, non credentes quia esset discipulus (Act. IX, 26). Hinc item ad Ananiam discipulum Dominus Damasci apparens, ait: Surgens vade in vicum qui vocatur Rectus, et quaere in domo Judae Saulum nomine Tarsensem, et impone sibi manum, ut visum recipiat (Ibid., 11 et 12). Qui nimirum confestim Domino respondit, dicens: Domine, audivi a multis quanta mala sanctis tuis fecerit in Jerusalem, et potestatem habet a principibus sacerdotum alligandi omnes qui invocant nomen tuum (Ibid., 13 et 14). Cum ergo illum Judaeis praedicabat, quem impugnare minis solebat et caedibus, nimirum de praelio veniebat.

And while he believes God could be born of a Virgin through the flesh, and yet denies that the nature of His humanity was taken up in divinity, he is not a hundred years old. Whence also, having heard the report of the man, he justly dies, because without the faith of the Redeemer the good things which he knows and others by no means profit him. And because by the high and incomprehensible judgment of God the blindness of ignorance is struck into his mind, he is recorded to have been dim and not able to see. There follows:

(Verse 16) And he said to Eli: I am he who came from the battle, I who fled from the battle line today.

18. He was recording that he had been as if in battle who said: You have heard of my conversation sometime in Judaism; how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it, and profited in Judaism above many of my equals in my own nation, being more abundantly an emulator of my paternal traditions (Galatians 1:13, 14). But he comes from the battle who says: Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly (1 Timothy 1:13). To flee therefore from the battle line for a Jew, what else is it than to be separated from the error of the perfidious? and to come from the battle what is it, except to announce the good of the right faith to others? For to flee is of one fearing; to come, of one willing. In which place, because he is first said to come from the battle than to flee from the battle line, since perfidy is first deserted than truth is preached, it is no wonder. For this, that he says afterwards that he fled from the battle line, is not said according to the order in which it was done, but for the certainty of the word which he sent before. Which is also demonstrated according to the order of the history, because unless he had first fled from the battle line, he could by no means have come from the battle.

19. But we who inquire after spiritual things according to the spirit, even in the things of the Jews carnaly performed, let us attend to that man whom we introduced speaking a little above. For it was heard by the Church that he who formerly persecuted was evangelizing, as it is already written of him evangelizing: But when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted 133 to join himself to the disciples, and they all feared him, not believing that he was a disciple (Acts 9:26). Hence likewise to the disciple Ananias the Lord appearing at Damascus, said: Arising go into the street that is called Straight, and seek in the house of Judas one named Saul of Tarsus, and lay hand upon him, that he may receive his sight (Ibid., 11 and 12). Who indeed immediately answered the Lord, saying: Lord, I have heard from many how great evils he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, and he has power from the princes of the priests to bind all who invoke your name (Ibid., 13 and 14). When therefore he preached Him to the Jews, whom he was accustomed to attack with threats and slaughters, he indeed was coming from the battle.

Sed dum ei praedicanti discipuli omnes se jungere timerent, de acie eum fugisse dubitabant. De praelio quippe veniebat, cum a vocante Domino in terram prostrato dictum fuerat: Surge, et ingredere civitatem, et dicetur tibi quid te oporteat facere (Ibid., 7). Sed fugisse eum de acie, Ananias non credidit, qui ea mala quae sanctis in Jerusalem fecerat, et potestatem quam acceperat, Domino praecipienti intimavit. Ut ergo eum venisse de praelio et fugisse de acie veraciter demonstraret, eidem Ananiae Dominus praecipit, dicens: Vade, quia vas electionis est mihi iste, ut portet nomen meum coram Gentibus, et regibus et filiis Israel (Act. IX, 15). Et notandum, quia eo die quo haec nuntiabat, se venisse de praelio et fugisse de acie asserebat. In die quippe fugiunt: quia, attestante Veritate: Qui in tenebris est, nescit quo vadat (Joan. XII, 35). Hinc etiam scriptum est: Qui dormiunt, in nocte dormiunt; et qui ebrii sunt, in nocte ebrii sunt (I Thess. V, 7). Et quia in exemplo beati apostoli Pauli, virum de acie fugientem videre coepimus, hoc quod in die fugiat attendamus. Nam nox erat quando aciem contra sanctam Ecclesiam construebat, quando acceptis epistolis a principibus sacerdotum ad Damascum, minarum et caedis spirans in discipulos, festinabat (Act. IX, 1, 2). Sed qui in nocte bellum paravit, in die fugit; quia in itinere lux de coelo eum subito circumfulsit, in terramque prostravit, ineffabili pavore terruit, ut tenebras immensi erroris agnosceret, et pro ea quam expugnabat nocte Ecclesia in diei lumine dimicaret. In die igitur fugit, quem ut perfidiae noctem desereret, de coelo ostensa Redemptoris claritas circumfulsit. Quid est ergo quod eo die se fatetur venire de praelio quo de acie fugerit, nisi quia rectae praedicationis intentio designatur? Quidam namque eo die de acie fugiunt, sed alio veniunt de praelio: quia errores pristinos amore aeternae vitae derelinquunt, sed, cum ad praedicationis ministerium assumuntur, de sua praedicationis facundia temporales retributiones appetunt. Alio igitur die quam eo quo fugerant veniunt: quia nimirum recti sunt conversatione, sed praedicationis intentione perversi. Sancti ergo praedicatores, qui per Redemptoris nostri gratiam de circumcisione crediderunt, non alio die, sed eo quo de acie fugerant de praelio venerunt: quia profecto utrumque donum in superni amoris splendore consecuti sunt, veritatem scilicet conversationis, cum praedicatione verbi. Et quia Judaicum magisterium, etsi non intentione cognoscendae veritatis, curiositatis tamen sollicitudine sanctorum praedicatorum assertiones audire voluit, sequitur:

But while all the disciples feared to join themselves to him preaching, they doubted that he had fled from the battle line. For he was coming from the battle when it had been said by the calling Lord to him prostrate on the ground: Arise, and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you ought to do (Ibid., 7). But Ananias did not believe that he had fled from the battle line, who intimated to the commanding Lord those evils which he had done to the saints in Jerusalem, and the power which he had received. That therefore He might truly demonstrate that he had come from the battle and fled from the battle line, the Lord commands the same Ananias, saying: Go, for this man is a vessel of election to me, to carry my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). And it is to be noted, that on that day on which he announced these things, he asserted that he had come from the battle and fled from the battle line. For they flee in the day: because, Truth attesting: He that is in darkness, knows not whither he goes (John 12:35). Hence also it is written: They that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that are drunk, are drunk in the night (1 Thessalonians 5:7). And because in the example of the blessed apostle Paul, we have begun to see the man fleeing from the battle line, let us attend to this that he flees in the day. For it was night when he was constructing the battle line against the Holy Church, when having received letters from the princes of the priests to Damascus, breathing threats and slaughter against the disciples, he made haste (Acts 9:1, 2). But he who prepared war in the night, fled in the day; because on the journey a light from heaven suddenly shone round about him, and prostrated him on the ground, and terrified him with ineffable fear, so that he might acknowledge the darkness of his immense error, and for that Church which he was attacking by night, he might fight in the light of day. In the day therefore he fled, whom, that he might desert the night of perfidy, the brightness of the Redeemer shown from heaven shone round about. What is it therefore that on that day he confesses he comes from the battle on which he fled from the battle line, except that the intention of right preaching is designated? For some flee from the battle line on that day, but on another they come from the battle: because they abandon their former errors for the love of eternal life, but, when they are taken up to the ministry of preaching, they desire temporal retributions from the eloquence of their preaching. On another day therefore than that on which they had fled they come: because indeed they are right in conversation, but perverse in the intention of preaching. The holy preachers therefore, who through the grace of our Redeemer believed from the circumcision, did not come from the battle on another day, but on that on which they had fled from the battle line: because indeed they obtained both gifts in the splendor of supernal love, namely the truth of conversation, with the preaching of the word. And because the Jewish mastership, even if not with the intention of knowing the truth, yet with the solicitude of curiosity wished to hear the assertions of the holy preachers, there follows:

(Vers. 16.) Cui ille ait: Quid actum est, fili mi?

20. Sub unius quippe descriptione omnibus loquitur, quia gentis suae homines vidit, quos aliquando doctrina Legis instruxit. Vel fortasse filium vocavit, non affectu amoris, sed adulatione calliditatis: 134 ut eo hunc facilius per deceptionem caperet, quo se eum paterno affectu diligere demonstraret. Eum itaque filium vocat, a quo quid actum fuerit scire appetit: ut profecto ille, pro impenso honore adulationis, seriem perverteret veritatis. Honor igitur appellationis non ad amorem refertur, sed ad calliditatem. Sed qui praelatae laudis favorem respuit, constanter vera patefecit. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 17.) Respondens autem qui nuntiabat: Fugit, inquit, Israel coram Philisthiim, et ruina magna facta est in populo. Insuper et duo filii tui mortui sunt, Ophni et Phinees. Et arca Dei capta est.

21. Hoc namque vir fugiens nuntiavit, quod experientia didicit. Quid est igitur quod fugisse Israelem asserit, nisi quia constanter affirmat quod, dum Judaicus populus Legis sensum carnaliter retinet, spiritalibus sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus resistere disputando non potest? Et quid est quod magnam ruinam factam fuisse in populo praedicat, nisi quia omnes qui de Judaico populo verbum fidei repulerunt aeterna morte periisse confirmat? Et quid est quod duo Heli filii mortui referuntur, nisi quia uterque ordo veteris sacerdotii defecisse asseritur? Et quid est quod arcam Dei captam fuisse dicit, nisi quia cognitionem divinorum sacramentorum a Judaeis ablatam, atque a Gentibus fideliter apprehensam asserit? quia a Gentibus jam, Dei gratia vocante, fidelibus divina mysteria cognoscuntur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 18.) Cumque ille nominasset arcam Dei, cecidit Heli de sella retrorsum juxta ostium, et fractis cervicibus, mortuus est.

22. Quid est quod Heli, audita Israelis fuga, relata sibi ruina populi, intimata filiorum morte, de sella nequaquam cadit: cognita autem arcae captione, et de sella cadit, et vitam perdit? Sed quia in Heli sapientes Judaeorum et legisperitos designari diximus, audita Israelis fuga, de sella non cecidit: quia, quod simplices Synagogae filii a sanctae Ecclesiae doctoribus in praedicatione superentur, pro parvo ducit. Non cadit relata sibi ruina populi: quia, dum perire audit eos qui in Judaismo moriuntur, nequaquam expavescit.

(Verse 16) To whom he said: What is done, my son?

20. For under the description of one he speaks to all, because he saw the men of his nation, whom the doctrine of the Law sometime instructed. Or perhaps he called him son, not with the affection of love, but with the flattery of craftiness: 134 so that he might take him more easily through deception, as he would demonstrate that he loved him with paternal affection. He therefore calls him son, from whom he desires to know what has been done: so that forsooth he, for the bestowed honor of flattery, might pervert the series of truth. The honor of the name therefore is not referred to love, but to craftiness. But he who rejected the favor of the offered praise, constantly laid open the truth. Whence also it is added:

(Verse 17) And he who brought the news answered: Israel, said he, has fled before the Philistines, and there has been a great ruin among the people. Moreover also your two sons are dead, Hophni and Phinehas. And the ark of God is taken.

21. For the fleeing man announced this, which he learned by experience. What is it therefore that he asserts Israel to have fled, except that he constantly affirms that, while the Jewish people retains the sense of the Law carnally, they cannot resist the spiritual teachers of the Holy Church by disputing? And what is it that he preaches that a great ruin has been made among the people, except that he confirms that all who rejected the word of faith from the Jewish people have perished by eternal death? And what is it that the two sons of Eli are reported dead, except that both orders of the ancient priesthood are asserted to have failed? And what is it that he says the ark of God was taken, except that he asserts the knowledge of the divine sacraments to be taken away from the Jews, and faithfully apprehended by the Gentiles? because the divine mysteries are now known by the faithful Gentiles, the grace of God calling. There follows:

(Verse 18) And when he had named the ark of God, Eli fell from his stool backward by the door, and his neck was broken, and he died.

22. Why is it that Eli, having heard the flight of Israel, the ruin of the people reported to him, the death of his sons intimated, by no means falls from his stool: but knowing the capture of the ark, he both falls from his stool, and loses his life? But because we said that the wise men and lawyers of the Jews are designated in Eli, having heard the flight of Israel, he did not fall from his stool: because he considers it as a small thing that the simple sons of the Synagogue are overcome by the teachers of the Holy Church in preaching. He does not fall when the ruin of the people is reported to him: because, while he hears that those perish who die in Judaism, he is by no means terrified.

Intimata filiorum morte non cadit: quia, et objecta sibi sacerdotii utriusque cessatione, superbire non desinit. Illata autem sibi arcae captione cadit: quia, dum sacramenta Scripturae suae profunde et spiritualiter sciri a sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatoribus et fidelibus videt, de ea quam carnaliter tantum intelligit, sacri eloquii eruditione superbire non audet. De sella igitur cadit, quia, spiritali cognito, superbire de carnali magisterio non praesumit. Sed, quia vera praedicari sublimiter audit et nequaquam credit, dum confunditur et non salvatur, cadit et moritur. Capit quippe de sella, quia extolli desinit de doctrina. Sed cadens moritur, quia si ratione vincitur, ejusdem tamen rationis judicio, pervenire ad aeterna gaudia non meretur.

23. Qua in re notandum est, quia qui cadens moritur, juxta ostium cadit. Quid est enim quod cadit juxta ostium, nisi quia, dum caecus errat, impingit in Redemptorem? Qui nimirum de semetipso asserit, dicens: Qui ceciderit super lapidem istum, confringetur; super quem vero ceciderit, conteret eum (Matth. XXI, 44). Ipse quoque de semetipso ait: Ego sum ostium; per me si quis introierit, salvabitur et egredietur, et regredietur, et pascua inveniet (Joan. X, 9). Juxta ostium ergo mortuus est Heli, quia Synagogae magisterium idcirco 135 periit, quia in Redemptorem offendit. Ibi enim cecidit, ubi deliquit. Qui etiam cadens, cervices fregit. In cervice tumor temporalis potentiae designatur. Fracta ergo cervice moritur, qui perfidiae magnitudine, amissa regni potentia, condemnatur.

24. Potest quoque per ostium sacrae Scripturae littera designari. Nam velut per ostium ad aeterni templi atria ducimur, dum per sacri eloquii litteram ad allegoricam et spiritualem intelligentiam sublevamur. Intus quoque rex cernitur: quia promissus Redemptor humani generis in spirituali sacrae Scripturae intelligentia invenitur. Heli ergo juxta ostium mortuus cecidit: quia profecto Synagogae magisterium idcirco interiit, quia per spiritalem Scripturam eum qui in spiritu promissus fuerat Redemptorem humani generis, non spiritaliter, sed carnaliter, quaesivit. Juxta ostium namque mortuus est: quia de eo interiit, quod spiritalem Redemptoris promissionem, non secundum intelligentiam spiritalem, sed secundum simplicem locutionem historiae intellexit. Et quia per doctrinae suae studium multo tempore, Judaeae, non amore bona operanti, sed timore a malo declinanti, praefuit, sequitur:

(Vers. 18.) Senex enim erat, et grandaevus: et ipse judicavit Israel quadraginta annis.

He does not fall when the death of his sons is intimated: because, even with the cessation of both priesthoods objected to him, he does not cease to be proud. But he falls when the capture of the ark is brought to him: because, while he sees the sacraments of his Scripture deeply and spiritually known by the preachers and faithful of the Holy Church, he does not dare to be proud concerning the erudition of the sacred word, which he understands only carnally. He falls from the stool therefore, because, having known the spiritual, he does not presume to be proud concerning the carnal mastership. But, because he hears true things preached sublimely and by no means believes, while he is confounded and not saved, he falls and dies. He indeed falls from the stool, because he ceases to be extolled concerning doctrine. But falling he dies, because if he is conquered by reason, yet by the judgment of the same reason, he does not deserve to reach eternal joys.

23. In which matter it is to be noted, that he who dying falls, falls by the door. For what is it that he falls by the door, except that, while he wanders blind, he strikes against the Redeemer? Who indeed asserts concerning himself, saying: Whosoever shall fall upon this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder (Matthew 21:44). He also says of himself: I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in, and go out, and find pasture (John 10:9). By the door therefore Eli died, because the mastership of the Synagogue 135 perished for this reason, because it offended against the Redeemer. For there he fell, where he sinned. Who also falling, broke his neck. In the neck the swelling of temporal power is designated. With his neck broken therefore he dies, who by the magnitude of perfidy, having lost the power of the kingdom, is condemned.

24. The letter of Holy Scripture can also be designated by the door. For as through a door we are led to the courts of the eternal temple, while through the letter of the sacred word we are raised to allegorical and spiritual understanding. Within also the King is seen: because the promised Redeemer of the human race is found in the spiritual understanding of Holy Scripture. Eli therefore fell dead by the door: because indeed the mastership of the Synagogue perished for this reason, because through the spiritual Scripture it sought not spiritually, but carnally, Him who had been promised in the spirit as the Redeemer of the human race. For he died by the door: because he perished concerning this, that he understood the spiritual promise of the Redeemer, not according to spiritual understanding, but according to the simple speech of history. And because through the study of his doctrine he presided over Judea for a long time, which worked good not from love, but declined from evil through fear, there follows:

(Verse 18) For he was an old man, and far advanced in years: and he judged Israel forty years.

25. Senex etenim fuit, et grandaevus diuturnitate temporum. Quadraginta vero annis praefuit, per timorem legalium mandatorum. Quadragenarius quippe numerus ad peccatores pertinet. Unde et Quadragesimae tempus in sancta Ecclesia eodem dierum numero consecratum est, ut videlicet ea quae committimus peccata tergere poenitendo studeamus. Quadragenarius quippe numerus ex denario et quaternario consummatur. Et quia, peccando, Decalogum divinae Legis transgredimur, ipsam vero peccandi facultatem ex ea qua consistimus, quatuor elementorum compactione contrahimus; sub numero quadragenario, quandiu in peccato existimus, continemur. Heli ergo quadraginta annis Israelem judicavit, quia Synagogae magisterium et austeram Legis disciplinam ad timorem subjectae plebis exhibuit: ut materiam humanae conditionis, per concupiscentiam fragilem, in statu justitiae per timorem retineret. Sed jam mortuus est Heli, jam fractis cervicibus juxta ostium jacet; sed tamen pravae doctrinae ejus virus in semine remanet. Jam quippe, qui non credit de Judaeorum sapientibus, judicatus est; sed quia in ejus instructione pravitatis semina mentes concipiunt, qui ejus doctrina filii nascuntur perfidiae ejus vesaniam non relinquunt. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 19, 20.) Nurus autem ejus uxor Phinees praegnans erat, vicinaque partui: quae, audito nuntio, quia capta esset arca, et mortuus socer suus, et vir suus, incurvavit se, et peperit. Irruerunt enim in eam dolores subiti. In ipso autem momento mortis ejus dixerunt ei, quae stabant juxta eam: Ne timeas, quia filium peperisti. Quae non respondit, neque animadvertit.

26. Quae autem fuit nurus Heli, nisi plebs Judaeorum, reprobis sacerdotibus subjecta? Quae quia per eorum praedicationem semina perfidiae in mente susceperat, praegnans erat. Et quia conceptam malitiam ipsa quoque cogitabat effundere, non solum praegnans fuisse dicitur, sed etiam partui vicina. Quid est autem quod, audita arcae captione et soceri atque viri sui morte, peperisse dicitur, nisi quia Judaicae plebis residuum, dum spiritalia sacramenta Scripturarum ad Gentium eruditionem transisse cognoscit, dum sapientes Synagogae cum utroque sacerdotio interiisse jam conspicit, ea quae concepit, haeresis suae semina, loquendo effundere non desistit? Parere autem ei, est conceptam pravitatem loquendo aliis aperire. Et quia reproba praedicat, dum parere asseritur, incurvata memoratur.

25. For he was an old man, and far advanced in years by the long duration of times. But he presided forty years, through the fear of the legal mandates. For the number forty pertains to sinners. Whence also the time of Lent (Quadragesima) in the Holy Church is consecrated by the same number of days, so that forsooth we may study to wipe away those sins which we commit by repenting. For the number forty is completed from ten and four. And because, by sinning, we transgress the Decalogue of the divine Law, and we contract the very faculty of sinning from that compaction of the four elements by which we consist; we are contained under the number forty as long as we exist in sin. Eli therefore judged Israel for forty years, because he exhibited the mastership of the Synagogue and the austere discipline of the Law for the fear of the subject people: so that he might retain the matter of the human condition, fragile through concupiscence, in the state of justice through fear. But Eli is now dead, he now lies by the door with his neck broken; but yet the poison of his perverse doctrine remains in the seed. For already, he who does not believe among the wise men of the Jews, is judged; but because in his instruction minds conceive the seeds of depravity, those who are born as sons by his doctrine do not relinquish the madness of his perfidy. Why also it is added:

(Verses 19, 20) And his daughter-in-law the wife of Phinehas was big with child, and near her time: and hearing the news that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and fell in labor. For sudden pains came upon her. And in the very moment of her death, they that stood about her said to her: Fear not, for you have borne a son. She answered them not, nor did she heed it.

26. And who was the daughter-in-law of Eli, if not the Jewish people, subjected to wicked priests? Because she had received the seeds of perfidy in her mind through their preaching, she was pregnant. And because she herself also thought to pour out the malice she had conceived, she is said not only to have been pregnant, but also near to giving birth. But what does it mean that, having heard of the capture of the ark and the death of her father-in-law and her husband, she is said to have given birth, unless that the remnant of the Jewish people, while it recognizes that the spiritual sacraments of the Scriptures have passed to the instruction of the Gentiles, while it beholds that the wise of the Synagogue have already perished along with both orders of priesthood, does not cease to pour out by speaking the seeds of its heresy which it conceived? For to give birth, for her, is to open to others by speaking the depravity she conceived. And because she preaches wicked things, while she is asserted to give birth, she is remembered as bowed down.

Velut enim non se curvantes pariunt, qui coelestia loquuntur: quia in statu fidei auditorum suorum corda ad studium erigunt bonae operationis. Quae igitur prava asserit, incurvata parit: quia profecto hoc sibi loquendo agitur, ut quo attentius loquitur, in damnationis suae barathro profundius deponatur. Recte igitur dum ad partum incurvatur, mori dicitur. Pariens namque moritur, quia in blasphemiae suae merito condemnatur. Et quia mortis suae tormenta non praevidet, subiti dolores in eam irruere dicuntur. Subiti namque dolores sunt repentinae afflictiones mortis sine praevisione venientis. Subito enim dolores irruunt, cum Judaicae plebi suppliciorum perennium retributiones obviant: quae nunc in contemptu veritatis posita, non formidat. Quia enim pro paternarum traditionum observatione, ad aeternam vitam moriendo se transire aestimat, in subitos dolores tunc corruit, cum sustinere tormenta inchoat, quae non speravit. Et notandum, quia de moriente dicitur: Irruerunt in eam dolores subiti: quia videlicet dum per carnis molestias ad exitum vitae cogitur, tunc flagella dolorum irruere in eam temporaliter incipiunt, quibus ejus impietas aeterna vindicta puniatur; et quia vicino exitu reproborum mentes suppliciis aeternis addicuntur, antequam spiritum exhalent, jam dolores inferni sentiunt.

(Vers. 21, 22.) Et vocavit puerum Hichaboth, dicens: Translata est gloria Domini, quia capta est arca Dei.

27. Arca quidem capitur: quia jam, auctore Deo, a veris fidelibus, sanctae Scripturae sacramenta verae intelligentiae capacitate retinentur. Et gloria Israel translata est: quia, postquam a vera religione cecidit, redolere per bonae famae opinionem cessavit. Bene autem non perire Israel gloria dicitur, sed transferri: quia religionis fama, quam perdidit, ad Gentilitatem transivit. Translata quippe est gloria: quia in sancta Ecclesia verae religionis fragrantia redolet, quae in fide Redemptoris posita, pro aeterni splendoris certitudine, quem exspectat, donum sancti Spiritus pignus tenet. Idcirco de nato filio laetari refugit: quia profecto, dum ad Gentes transisse praeteritam gloriam conspicit, ad captivitatem se parere ingemiscit. A translatione etiam gloriae filium nominat: quia profecto impietatem in qua permanet, quasi praelato nomine, perpetuo repraesentat. Potest autem per hoc, quod a matre ei nomen imponitur, aperte intelligi quod videmus. Ex ea enim nomen suscepit, a qua ei meritum impietatis venit. Sequitur:

CAPUT III.

For those who speak heavenly things give birth as it were not bowing themselves down: because in the state of faith they raise the hearts of their hearers to the pursuit of good work. Therefore she who asserts depraved things, gives birth bowed down: because certainly this is done for her in speaking, that the more attentively she speaks, the more deeply she is cast down into the pit of her damnation. Rightly therefore, while she is bowed down for the birth, she is said to die. For giving birth she dies, because she is condemned in the merit of her blasphemy. And because she does not foresee the torments of her death, sudden pains are said to rush upon her. For sudden pains are the unexpected afflictions of death coming without foresight. For pains rush upon her suddenly, when the retributions of everlasting punishments meet the Jewish people: which now placed in contempt of the truth, does not fear. For because for the sake of the observation of paternal traditions, it estimates that by dying it passes to eternal life, it then falls into sudden pains, when it begins to endure torments which it did not hope for. And it is to be noted, that it is said of the dying woman: 'Sudden pains rushed upon her': because namely while she is forced to the end of life through the troubles of the flesh, then the scourges of pains begin to rush upon her temporally, by which her impiety may be punished with eternal vengeance; and because at the near end of the wicked their minds are sentenced to eternal punishments, before they breathe out their spirit, they already feel the pains of hell.

(Verses 21, 22) And she called the boy Ichabod, saying: The glory of the Lord is translated, because the ark of God is taken.

27. The ark is indeed captured: because now, by God's authority, the sacraments of Holy Scripture are held by true believers with the capacity of true understanding. And the glory of Israel is translated: because, after it fell from true religion, it ceased to be fragrant through the reputation of good fame. But well is the glory of Israel said not to perish, but to be translated: because the fame of religion, which it lost, passed to Gentility. For the glory is translated: because in the Holy Church the fragrance of true religion is redolent, which being placed in the faith of the Redeemer, for the certainty of the eternal splendor which it expects, holds the gift of the Holy Spirit as a pledge. Therefore she refuses to rejoice over the born son: because certainly, while she beholds that the past glory has passed to the Gentiles, she groans that she gives birth to captivity. From the translation also of the glory she names the son: because certainly she perpetually represents the impiety in which she remains, as if by a preferred name. But by this, that the name is imposed on him by the mother, what we see can be openly understood. For from her he received the name, from whom the merit of impiety came to him. It follows:

CHAPTER III.

(I Reg. V, 1-3.) Philisthiim autem tulerunt arcam, et asportaverunt a Lapide Adjutorii in Azotum. Tulerunt Philisthiim arcam Dei, et intulerunt eam in templum Dagon, et surrexerunt Azotii altera die, et invenerunt Dagon jacentem ante arcam, pronum in terra.

1. Quid est quod arca a Lapide Adjutorii asportatur, nisi quia praecones veritatis ab eo, quem Judaei falsa opinione exspectant, Christo mysteria Scripturarum auferunt? Dum enim ad veri Redemptoris cognitionem sanctae Scripturae testimonia convertunt, ab eo nimirum in quem sui auxilii spem Judaei posuerant arcam tollunt. Et quia Gentibus fidei mysteria creduntur, arca Dei in Azotum perducitur. Quae profecto arca in templum infertur. Quid ergo fuit templum Dagon, nisi unaquaeque anima infidelis, quondam idololatriae superstitione polluta? Quid simulacrum Dagon, nisi totius idololatriae superstitionem designat? Quid igitur erat aliud, mysteria fidei cordibus Gentilium intimare, quam arcam Dei in templum Dagon inferri? Velut enim juxta Dagon statuebatur arca, dum praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae Gentiles admonerent, ut, ad probandam fidei veritatem, et praedicationem quam audiebant, et idololatriae quam tenebant errores discuterent. Bene itaque die alia Dagon pronum in terra ante arcam jacentem Azotii repererunt. Unam quippe diem Azotus habuit, in audita praedicatione veritatis, alteram in cognitione fidei. Primo namque die arca Dei juxta Dagon statuitur, quia in audita praedicatione Redemptoris, erroris vetusti tenebras deprehendunt. Altera vero die surgentes, pronum in terra ante arcam jacentem Dagon invenerunt: quia et in cognitione veritatis statum idololatria perdidit. Unde et bene cum lapsus Dagon asseritur, jacere pronus in terra memoratur. Ante arcam quidem cadit, quia ex mysteriorum divinorum scientia innotescit. Sed pronus in terra jacet, quia, auctore jam Deo, ad aspectum fidelium simulatae rationis imaginem non habet. Qui enim pronus in terra jacet, faciem in terra deprimit. Per faciem vero simulacri, simulatio exprimitur rationis. Pronum itaque in terra jacere, est jam vera cognoscentibus, simulationis suae fraudibus illudere nequaquam posse. Sed tamen, ut certius Gentiles vera cognoscerent, eamdem fidei nostrae auditam rationem, et superstitionis suae vana figmenta subtiliore rursus deliberatione discutiunt. Quare et dicitur:

(Vers. 3.) Tulerunt Dagon, et restituerunt eum in locum suum.

(I Kings 5:1-3) And the Philistines took the ark, and carried it from the Stone of Help into Azotus. And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it into the temple of Dagon, and the Azotians rose early the next day, and found Dagon lying before the ark, face down on the ground.

1. What is it that the ark is carried away from the Stone of Help, unless because the heralds of truth take away the mysteries of the Scriptures from him whom the Jews expect in false opinion, Christ? For while they convert the testimonies of Holy Scripture to the knowledge of the true Redeemer, they surely take the ark from him in whom the Jews had placed the hope of their help. And because the mysteries of faith are entrusted to the Gentiles, the ark of God is led into Azotus. Which ark indeed is brought into the temple. What then was the temple of Dagon, if not each infidel soul, formerly polluted by the superstition of idolatry? What does the image of Dagon designate, if not the superstition of all idolatry? What then was it other, to intimate the mysteries of faith to the hearts of the Gentiles, than for the ark of God to be brought into the temple of Dagon? For the ark was placed as it were next to Dagon, while the preachers of the Holy Church admonished the Gentiles that, to prove the truth of faith, they should discuss both the preaching which they heard and the errors of idolatry which they held. Well therefore on the next day the Azotians found Dagon lying face down on the ground before the ark. For Azotus had one day in hearing the preaching of the truth, another in the knowledge of faith. For on the first day the ark of God is placed next to Dagon, because in hearing the preaching of the Redeemer, they detect the darkness of the old error. But on the next day rising, they found Dagon lying face down on the ground before the ark: because also in the knowledge of the truth idolatry lost its standing. Wherefore also well, when the fall of Dagon is asserted, he is remembered to lie face down on the ground. He falls indeed before the ark, because he becomes known from the knowledge of the divine mysteries. But he lies face down on the ground, because, God being now the author, he has no image of simulated reason to the sight of the faithful. For he who lies face down on the ground, presses his face to the ground. But by the face of the image, the simulation of reason is expressed. To lie face down on the ground, therefore, is for those who now know the true things, to be by no means able to be mocked by the frauds of its simulation. But yet, that the Gentiles might know the true things more certainly, they again discuss with more subtle deliberation the same heard reason of our faith and the vain figments of their superstition. Wherefore also it is said:

(Verse 3) They took Dagon, and restored him to his place.

2. Id est, in templo, ubi arca Dei posita fuerat. Quid est ergo Dagon in locum suum restituere, nisi juxta jam cognitam spiritualium sacramentorum veritatem, idololatriae statum subtili consideratione perquirere? Et quia quo subtilius idololatriae error aspicitur, verius condemnatur, subjunctum est:

(Vers. 4.) Rursusque diluculo surgentes, invenerunt Dagon jacentem super faciem suam coram arca Domini.

3. Quid enim Dagon, id est idololatriae caput, est aliud, nisi ipsum initium omnis iniquitatis diabolus? Et quae sunt palmae manuum ejus, nisi universa opera idololatriae? Caput itaque Dagon amisit: quia per idolorum culturam regnare maligni spiritus in corde Gentilium desinunt. Palmae etiam manuum ejus abscissae sunt, quia idolis vanis sacrificia nusquam offeruntur. Et quia a cunctis fidelibus ejus deformitas ubique conspicitur, truncus Dagon in loco suo remansisse memoratur. Caput vero et manus abscissae, et super limen positae memorantur: quia profecto quisquis ad veram fidem ingreditur, principia diabolicae suasionis repellere, atque universis ejusdem Satanae operibus renuntiare praecipitur. Posita ergo haec sunt in limine, ut ab introeuntibus conculcentur: quia vere fidelis esse non poterit, qui et pravis maligni spiritus consiliis adversari, atque iniquis operibus, non proponit. Nam qui Dagon caput atterere, et manus vitat, etsi fidelium numero contineri videtur, idololatra quodam modo esse convincitur. In oblectatione etenim daemonum non solum exteriora sacrificia, sed etiam iniqua desideria ab eorum cultoribus offeruntur. Qui ergo in verae fidei cognitione receptus est, et ab immundis desideriis et pravis operibus non remotus, quia Dagon collidere caput et manus despicit, maligno spiritui, quem in oblatione caerimoniarum despicit, per internae concupiscentiae, et exterioris vitae immunditiam, oblationem facit. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 5.) Propter hoc non calcant sacerdotes Dagon super limen usque in hodiernum diem.

4. Sacerdotes quippe Dagon se esse insinuant, qui super limen non calcant. Quibus in verbis caute inspiciendum est, quia non dixit, limen, sed super limen, ut caput et manus Dagon calcanda esse doceantur, quae super limen abscissa esse referuntur. Idcirco autem sacerdotes super limen non calcant, quia abscissas ejus manus et caput pede conterere vitant. Sacerdotes namque Dagon usque in hodiernum diem remanent: quia qui per immunda desideria antiquo hosti sacrificent, adhuc sunt. Qui profecto super templi limen calcare refugiunt: quia nec immundis suggestionibus, nec malis operibus resistunt.

2. That is, in the temple, where the ark of God had been placed. What is it then to restore Dagon to his place, if not to investigate the state of idolatry by subtle consideration next to the already known truth of the spiritual sacraments? And because the more subtly the error of idolatry is looked at, the more truly it is condemned, it is added:

(Verse 4) And rising again at dawn, they found Dagon lying on his face before the ark of the Lord.

3. For what is the head of Dagon, that is, of idolatry, other than the very beginning of all iniquity, the devil? And what are the palms of his hands, if not all the works of idolatry? Therefore he lost the head of Dagon: because through the worship of idols evil spirits cease to reign in the heart of the Gentiles. The palms of his hands also were cut off, because sacrifices are nowhere offered to vain idols. And because his deformity is everywhere beheld by all the faithful, the trunk of Dagon is remembered to have remained in his place. But the head and the hands are remembered to have been cut off and placed upon the threshold: because surely whoever enters into the true faith is commanded to repel the principles of diabolical persuasion, and to renounce all the works of the same Satan. These therefore were placed on the threshold, so that they might be trampled upon by those entering: because he truly cannot be faithful, who does not propose both to oppose the depraved counsels of the evil spirit and to renounce wicked works. For he who avoids crushing the head and hands of Dagon, although he seems to be contained in the number of the faithful, is convinced in a certain way to be an idolater. For in the delight of demons not only outward sacrifices, but also wicked desires are offered by their worshipers. Therefore he who has been received into the knowledge of the true faith, and is not removed from unclean desires and depraved works, because he despises to collide with the head and hands of Dagon, makes an offering to the evil spirit, whom he despises in the offering of ceremonies, through the uncleanness of internal concupiscence and of external life. Wherefore also it is added:

(Verse 5) Therefore the priests of Dagon do not step on the threshold even to this day.

4. Indeed they intimate that they are priests of Dagon, who do not step on the threshold. In which words it is to be carefully inspected, because he did not say, the threshold, but *upon* the threshold, so that the head and hands of Dagon might be taught to be trampled upon, which are reported to have been cut off upon the threshold. For this reason the priests do not step on the threshold, because they avoid treading under foot his cut-off hands and head. For the priests of Dagon remain even to this day: because those who sacrifice to the ancient enemy through unclean desires, are still here. Who surely refuse to step on the threshold of the temple: because they resist neither unclean suggestions nor evil works.

Dagon itaque sacerdotes sunt, quia etsi manufactis se idolis non humiliant, concupiscentiarum tamen simulacris per nefaria opera se incurvant. Sequitur:

(Vers. 6.) Aggravata est manus Domini super Azotios.

5. Manus Domini est virtus divinae potestatis. Et quia in Azotiis primordia gentilitatis designata sunt, quid est quod manus Domini super Azotios aggravata perhibetur? Sed manum super Azotum aggravavit, cum Gentilium corda virtute suae potentiae ad conversionem movit. Nam dum per internam aspirationem eis vim aeternae mortis innotuit, de perpetratis iniquitatibus, Gentium mentes mirabili terrore percussit. Quia ergo dum manus Domini aggravata dicitur, interfici Azotii perhibentur, gravedo haec manus accipitur in multiplicatione conversorum. Nam mori Gentilibus fuit, ab infidelitate separari. Manu quoque Domini occidi, est eamdem verae fidei cognitionem, non ministerio hominum, sed divina virtute, promereri. Levis itaque erat manus Domini super Azotum, cum adhuc per paucos ministros fidei pauci errorem desererent gentilitatis. Unde et quasi de aggravatione manus orare verbi ministros Dominus admonet, dicens: Messis quidem multa est, operarii autem pauci: rogate Dominum messis, ut mittat operarios in messem suam (Matth. IX, 38). Quasi aliter dicat: Qui per paucos ministros, velut levi manu paucos ab infidelitate separat, rogate ut ministros multiplicet, ut quasi in conversorum multitudine manum gravet. Sed et modus interfectionis exponitur: quia quisquis mori hac interfectione dicitur, dum ad purgandum ventrem exiret, in secretiori parte natium morderi a muribus perhibetur. Ad litteram una percussio hic ostenditur, sed in typica expositione geminatur. Nam per litterae significationem, et gravationem manus Domini, et murium morsus ad ejusdem mortis effectum pertinet: quia ad hoc dicitur manus Domini super Azotios aggravari quod per murium morsus interfici.

6. Quia vero per spiritalem significationem duas mortes agnovimus: unam videlicet qua peccatores justitiae peccando moriuntur, alteram qua justi a peccatis in quibus vixerant poenitendo se erigunt; unam quae ad humana corda, diabolo suadente, ingreditur, alteram quam omnipotentis Dei virtus operatur: necesse est ergo ut utramque mortem in hoc loco spiritualiter attendamus. Mors quidem, qua peccatores a peccatis poenitendo resurgunt, designatur, quia dicit: Aggravata est super Azotios manus Domini.

Therefore they are priests of Dagon, because although they do not humble themselves to man-made idols, yet they bow themselves to the simulacra of concupiscences through nefarious works. It follows:

(Verse 6) The hand of the Lord was heavy upon the Azotians.

5. The hand of the Lord is the power of divine majesty. And because in the Azotians the beginnings of gentility are designated, what is it that the hand of the Lord is said to be heavy upon the Azotians? But He made the hand heavy upon Azotus, when He moved the hearts of the Gentiles to conversion by the power of His majesty. For while through internal aspiration He made known to them the force of eternal death, He struck the minds of the Gentiles with marvelous terror concerning the iniquities they had committed. Because therefore while the hand of the Lord is said to be heavy, the Azotians are said to be killed, this heaviness of the hand is understood in the multiplication of converts. For to die to the Gentiles was to be separated from infidelity. To be killed also by the hand of the Lord, is to merit the same knowledge of true faith, not by the ministry of men, but by divine power. Therefore the hand of the Lord was light upon Azotus, when as yet through few ministers of faith few deserted the error of gentility. Wherefore also as if to pray for the heaviness of the hand, the Lord admonishes the ministers of the word, saying: 'The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few: pray the Lord of the harvest, that He send laborers into His harvest' (Matt. 9:38). As if He says otherwise: You who through few ministers, as if with a light hand, separate few from infidelity, pray that He may multiply the ministers, so that He may weigh down His hand as it were in the multitude of converts. But also the manner of the killing is explained: because whoever is said to die by this killing, when he went out to purge the belly, is reported to be bitten by mice in the more secret part of the buttocks. Literally one stroke is shown here, but in the typical exposition it is doubled. For through the meaning of the letter, both the weighing down of the hand of the Lord and the biting of mice belong to the effect of the same death: because for this it is said that the hand of the Lord is heavy upon the Azotians that they are killed by the biting of mice.

6. But because through the spiritual meaning we have recognized two deaths: one namely by which the sinners of justice die by sinning, the other by which the just rise from the sins in which they had lived by repenting; one which enters into human hearts, at the persuasion of the devil, the other which the power of almighty God works: it is necessary therefore that we attend to both deaths in this place spiritually. The death indeed, by which sinners rise from sins by repenting, is designated, because it says: 'The hand of the Lord was heavy upon the Azotians.'

Illa autem mors qua Gentiles se immunditiae et iniquitati servos exhibuerunt, designatur, cum morderi a muribus, et interfici, dicuntur. Mus quippe immundum est animal, et per Legem edi prohibitum (Levit. XI, 29). Quid ergo per mures, nisi daemonia designantur? Et quid est morderi a muribus, nisi peccati poena lacerari? Sed mordebantur a muribus, cum ad purgandum ventrem egrediebantur. Quid est ergo purgare ventrem, nisi expletione peccati, miserae famae fetorem proferre? Qui ergo ad purgandum ventrem egreditur, murium morsu perimitur: quia qui peccando ad aliorum notitiam per exemplum pravitatis extenditur, ad aeternam quoque mortem gravi daemonum obligatione retinetur. In secretiori enim parte natium percussi perhibentur: quia peccator quisque ex ea parte vulnus accipit animae quam incurvat ad peccati delectationem. Cum ergo manus Domini super Azotum aggravatur, a muribus percussus asseritur: quia praedicantibus aeternae vitae doctoribus, dum ab infidelitate Gentiles conversi sunt, qua peccatorum morte, suasione daemonum, obligati essent, cognoverunt. Morderi igitur Azotiis post aggravatam manum Domini, est post verae fidei cognitionem, daemonibus non subjici, sed quibus se peccati fetoribus poenae mortis obtulerant, per fidei illuminationem intueri. Quasi enim tunc morsi sunt, quando peccatorum suorum morsus agnoverunt. Sequitur:

(Vers. 7.) Videntes autem viri Azotii hujuscemodi plagam, dixerunt: Non maneat arca Dei apud nos, quoniam dura est manus ejus super nos, et super Dagon deum nostrum.

(Vers. 8.) Et mittentes congregaverunt omnes satrapas Philisthinorum, responderuntque Gethaei: Circumducatur arca Dei.

8. Quia satrapas Philisthinorum congregaverunt dicitur, quare autem congregaverunt non dicitur. Sed quia respondisse satrapae dicuntur, et circumducendae arcae consilium tribuisse, quia ad tribuendum pro eadem arca consilium vocati essent aperte cognoscitur. Qui ergo sunt satrapae Philisthinorum, nisi electi praedicatores Gentilium? Satrapae quidem principes dicuntur. De quibus profecto principibus per Psalmistam dicitur: Principes populorum congregati sunt cum Deo Abraham (Psal. XLVI, 10). Populorum namque appellatione Gentes designantur.

But that death by which the Gentiles exhibited themselves as servants of uncleanness and iniquity, is designated when they are said to be bitten by mice and killed. For the mouse is an unclean animal, and forbidden by the Law to be eaten (Lev. 11:29). What then is designated by mice, if not demons? And what is it to be bitten by mice, if not to be torn by the punishment of sin? But they were bitten by mice, when they went out to purge the belly. What then is it to purge the belly, if not by the fulfillment of sin, to bring forth the stench of wretched fame? Therefore he who goes out to purge the belly, is destroyed by the bite of mice: because he who by sinning is extended to the notice of others through the example of depravity, is also held to eternal death by the heavy obligation of demons. For they are reported to be struck in the more secret part of the buttocks: because each sinner receives a wound of the soul from that part which he bows down to the delight of sin. When therefore the hand of the Lord is heavy upon Azotus, he is asserted to be struck by mice: because while the Gentiles were converted from infidelity by the doctors of eternal life preaching, they recognized by what death of sins they had been bound by the persuasion of demons. Therefore for the Azotians to be bitten after the hand of the Lord was heavy, is after the knowledge of the true faith, not to be subjected to demons, but to behold through the illumination of faith with what stenches of sin they had offered themselves to the punishment of death. For they were as if then bitten, when they recognized the bites of their sins. It follows:

(Verse 7) But the men of Azotus seeing this kind of plague, said: Let not the ark of God stay with us, for His hand is hard upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

(Verse 8) And sending, they gathered together all the satraps of the Philistines, and the Gathites answered: Let the ark of God be carried about.

8. Because it is said they gathered together the satraps of the Philistines, why they gathered them is not said. But because the satraps are said to have answered, and to have given counsel for carrying about the ark, it is clearly recognized that they had been called to give counsel for the same ark. Who then are the satraps of the Philistines, if not the elect preachers of the Gentiles? Satraps indeed are called princes. Concerning which princes it is said by the Psalmist: 'The princes of the people are gathered together with the God of Abraham' (Ps. 46:10). For by the name of 'peoples', the Gentiles are designated.

Qui ergo populorum nomen et principum posuit, nimirum eos, de quibus loquitur, Philisthinorum satrapas designavit. Qui certe populorum principes cum Abraham Deo convenerunt, quando ad salutem convertendarum Gentium, hoc praedicatores sonuerunt verbo, quod omnipotens Deus interno eis aspirabat desiderio. Quasi enim in auditorum Gentilium cordibus mira erat convenientia Dei et principum, cum simul et a sanctis praedicatoribus rationem rectae praedicationis acciperent, atque a Domino fructum bonae voluntatis. Et quia adversarii esse cognoscuntur, qui dixerant: non maneat arca Dei apud nos: quomodo principes mittentes congregant? Sed mittere, et principes congregare, est sanctorum praedicatorum mentes ad praedicationis instantiam provocare: quia illic erat attentius praedicandum, ubi Gentilium corda in errore profundius mergebantur. Hinc est quod egregius doctor nobiliorem de indomitis hostibus se elegisse victoriam gloriatur, dicens: Ab Jerusalem usque Illyricum per circuitum replevi Evangelium Christi: sic autem hoc praedicavi Evangelium, non ubi de eo annuntiatum fuerat, ne super alienum fundamentum aedificarem (Rom. XV, 19, 20). Provocati ergo sunt principes non desiderio, sed errore infidelium, cum inde Deo lucrum majus facere arbitrati sunt, unde caligo errorum per flatum superbiae sublimius ferebatur. Quare et sanctae praedicationis instantia designatur, cum subditur: Responderuntque Gethaei: Circumducatur arca Dei.

(Vers. 9.) Illis autem circumducentibus eam, fiebat manus Domini per singulas civitates interfectionis magnae nimis, et percutiebat viros uniuscujusque urbis a parvo usque ad majorem, et computrescebant prominentes extales eorum.

9. Arca quippe circumducitur, cum mysteria fidei palam et sine timore praedicantur. Et quia inter initia fidei innumeri convertebantur, interfectio magna nimis per civitates singulas facta perhibetur. Item quia non solum simplices, sed sapientes conversi sunt: eadem interfectio a parvo usque ad majorem facta asseritur. Sed per eamdem percussionem computrescere extales referuntur. Extales quippe putrescere, est peccati meatus ab effusione consueti fetoris penitus interire. Bene namque percussus est, cujus prominentes extales computrescunt: quia nimirum nonnulli sunt, qui post munditiam conversionis, pristina involvuntur sorde flagitii. Horum profecto prominentes extales minime computrescunt: quia ad consuetum peccatorum fluxum per iniqua opera recurvantur. Hos nimirum ab imperfecta percussione male sanos ille redarguit, qui ad fetores pristinos devolutos insinuat, Canis reversus ad vomitum, et sus lota in volutabro luti (Prov. XXVI, 11; II Petr. II, 22).

Therefore he who placed the name of peoples and of princes, undoubtedly designated those of whom he speaks as the satraps of the Philistines. Which princes of the peoples surely met with the God of Abraham, when for the salvation of the Gentiles to be converted, the preachers sounded this in word, which almighty God inspired in them by internal desire. For as it were in the hearts of the Gentile hearers there was a marvelous agreement of God and the princes, when they simultaneously received the reason of right preaching from the holy preachers, and from the Lord the fruit of good will. And because they are recognized to be adversaries, who had said: 'Let not the ark of God stay with us': how do they gather the princes by sending? But to send, and to gather the princes, is to provoke the minds of the holy preachers to the urgency of preaching: because there it was to be more attentively preached, where the hearts of the Gentiles were more deeply merged in error. Hence it is that the eminent doctor glories that he chose for himself a more noble victory over untamed enemies, saying: 'From Jerusalem round about as far as Illyricum, I have replenished the Gospel of Christ: and so I have preached this Gospel, not where it had been announced, lest I should build upon another man's foundation' (Rom. 15:19, 20). Therefore the princes were provoked not by the desire, but by the error of the infidels, when they thought to make greater gain for God from there, whence the darkness of errors was carried higher by the breath of pride. Wherefore also the urgency of holy preaching is designated, when it is added: 'And the Gathites answered: Let the ark of God be carried about.'

(Verse 9) And while they were carrying it about, the hand of the Lord came upon every city with a very great slaughter, and He struck the men of every city from the least to the greatest, and their protruding secret parts rotted.

9. For the ark is carried about, when the mysteries of faith are preached openly and without fear. And because in the beginnings of faith countless numbers were converted, a very great slaughter is reported to have occurred through every city. Likewise because not only the simple, but also the wise were converted: the same slaughter is asserted to have been made from the least to the greatest. But through the same stroke the secret parts are reported to have rotted. For the rotting of the secret parts is for the passages of sin to perish utterly from the pouring out of the accustomed stench. For he is well struck, whose protruding secret parts rot: because indeed there are some who, after the cleanness of conversion, are involved in the former filth of wickedness. The protruding secret parts of these surely do not rot: because they are turned back to the accustomed flow of sins through wicked works. Surely those who are poorly healed from an imperfect stroke are rebuked by him who intimates those returned to their former stenches: 'The dog is returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire' (Prov. 26:11; 2 Pet. 2:22).

Quasi enim ad computrescendum extales percutiebat ille, qui verbi gladium ingerens, ait: Non regnet peccatum in vestro mortali corpore, ut obediatis concupiscentiis ejus (Rom. VI, 12).

10. Potest autem per hoc, quod Azotii dicunt: Non maneat arca apud nos, eorum, qui de eisdem Gentibus et verbum fidei audierunt, et ad aeternam vitam minime praedestinati credere noluerunt, perversitas designari. Circumducere ergo arcam Dei satrapis fuit, sanctis praedicatoribus ejus verbum veritatis subtrahere, atque illis, qui digni erant, mysteria fidei revelare. Circumducta ergo est arca: quia fidei nostrae sacramenta ab aliorum notitia sublata sunt, atque aliis revelata. Unde et cum circumduceretur, interfectio magna nimis per singulas civitates fieri perhibetur: quia ubicunque verbum ducebant fidei, gratia multiplicabatur conversionis. Et quia ubicunque praedicantant, inter eos qui credebant erant qui praedestinati ad aeternam vitam non erant, sequitur:

(Vers. 10, 11.) Miserunt arcam Dei in Accaron. Cumque venisset arca Dei in Accaron, exclamaverunt Accaronitae, dicentes: Miserunt ad nos arcam Dei, ut interficiat nos et populum nostrum. Miserunt ergo et congregaverunt omnes satrapas Philisthinorum, qui dixerunt: Dimittite arcam Domini in locum suum.

11. Satrapae, ut diximus, sancti praedicatores intelliguntur. Accaronitae, qui interpretantur steriles, Gentiles designant inconvertibiles. Qui nimirum praedicatores dimittendae arcae consilium tribuerunt, ut si salutem suam de divina praedicatione recusarent, fidelibus ad aeternam patriam cum sacramentis fidei tendentibus, non obsisterent. Locus namque arcae, divinorum videlicet sacramentorum ibi esse cognoscitur, ubi quidquid de omnipotente Deo nunc per Scripturarum mysterium dicitur, aperta postmodum nobis cognitione revelatur. Proprium quippe arcae locum cognoverat, qui dicebat: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem: nunc cognosco ex parte, tunc cognoscam, sicut et cognitus sum (I Cor. XIII, 12). Consilium itaque satraparum fuit, ut in locum suum reverti arcam Dei permitterent: ut videlicet, qui de verbi praedicatione nullum fidei fructum ferebant, eam saltem illis dimitterent, qui ex ea fructum sibi in aeternitate praepararent. Bene igitur, qui remittendae arcae consilium accipiunt, Accaronitae nominantur. Accaronitae quippe interpretantur steriles. Quia enim de audita fidei veritate, nullum credulitatis, aut boni operis fructum dederant, steriles erant. Tollendae ergo arcae principes consilium praebuerunt, sed a sterilibus; ut videlicet verbi Dei semen, quod in pessima terra germinare non poterat, terrae optimae servaretur, quae de hoc labore hiemis, in perenni vita fructum centesimum proferret aestatis. Et causam protinus relaxandae arcae ostendunt, cum praedicatores subdunt:

For as if to rot the secret parts he struck, who bringing in the sword of the word, says: 'Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey its concupiscences' (Rom. 6:12).

10. But by this, that the Azotians say: 'Let not the ark stay with us,' the perversity of those can be designated, who from the same Gentiles both heard the word of faith and, being by no means predestined to eternal life, refused to believe. Therefore to carry about the ark of God was for the satraps, the holy preachers, to withdraw the word of truth from them and reveal the mysteries of faith to those who were worthy. Therefore the ark was carried about: because the sacraments of our faith were taken from the notice of some and revealed to others. Whence also when it was carried about, a very great slaughter is reported to occur through every city: because wherever they led the word of faith, the grace of conversion was multiplied. And because wherever they preached, among those who believed there were those who were not predestined to eternal life, it follows:

(Verses 10, 11) They sent the ark of God into Ekron. And when the ark of God had come into Ekron, the Ekronites cried out, saying: They have sent the ark of God to us, to kill us and our people. They sent therefore and gathered together all the satraps of the Philistines, who said: Send away the ark of the Lord into its place.

11. The satraps, as we have said, are understood as holy preachers. The Ekronites, which is interpreted as 'sterile', designate inconvertible Gentiles. Which preachers surely gave counsel for sending away the ark, so that if they refused their salvation from the divine preaching, they might not obstruct the faithful tending toward the eternal fatherland with the sacraments of faith. For the place of the ark, namely of the divine sacraments, is recognized to be there, where whatever is now said concerning almighty God through the mystery of the Scriptures, is afterwards revealed to us by open knowledge. For he had known the proper place of the ark, who said: 'We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I am known' (1 Cor. 13:12). Therefore the counsel of the satraps was that they should permit the ark of God to return to its place: so that namely, those who bore no fruit of faith from the preaching of the word, should at least leave it to those who would prepare fruit for themselves from it in eternity. Well therefore are they named Ekronites, who receive the counsel for sending back the ark. For Ekronites is interpreted as 'sterile'. For because they had given no fruit of belief or of good work from the heard truth of faith, they were sterile. Therefore the princes gave counsel for taking away the ark, but from the sterile; so that namely the seed of the word of God, which could not germinate in the worst soil, might be preserved for the best soil, which from this labor of winter, would bring forth a hundredfold fruit of summer in perennial life. And they immediately show the cause for releasing the ark, when the preachers add:

(Vers. 11.) Ne interficiat nos cum populo nostro.

12. Accaronitae clamaverunt: Miserunt arcam Dei ad nos, ut interficiat nos et populum nostrum. Satrapae consilium tribuunt, dicentes: Dimittite arcam Dei Israel, ut non interficiat nos cum populo nostro. Quis est populus, de quo satrapae, id est principes, dicunt: ut non interficiat nos cum populo nostro? Quis est populus, nisi populus Christianus? Dicunt ergo principes, Dimittite arcam Dei Israel, ut revertatur in locum suum. Quasi dicat hoc: Unde vos mori pertimescitis, nobis ad aeternae vitae meritum excercere non prohibeatis. Sed quod addunt: Ut non interficiat nos cum populo nostro, Gentilium quidem reproborum corda in errore suo per hanc responsionem confunduntur, dum inde se isti affirmarent mortem evadere, unde illi trepidarent mori. Arcam quoque Dei sancti praedicatores auferunt: quia dum contemptoribus spiritalia panduntur, ad damnationem indiscreti praedicatoris agitur, si eadem divina mysteria, non imitanda perfidis, sed irridenda, et concludenda deserantur. Nam quasi transferendae arcae non tam satrapae, quam satraparum Dominus praeceptum ponebat, dicens: Nolite sanctum dare canibus, neque ponatis margaritas ante porcos, ne conversi conculcent eas pedibus suis (Matth. VII, 6). Hinc iterum dicit: Si persecuti vos fuerint in una civitate, fugite in aliam (Matth. X, 23). Arcam itaque, ne moriantur, auferunt: quia contemptoribus idcirco spiritualia abscondunt, ne de eorum contemptu ii qui temere ea proferunt, ex indiscretione puniantur. Sed quia Accaronitis arca praecipitur dimitti, hoc profecto insinuat, quod praemisi: quia tempore persecutionis sanctorum praedicatorum exhortatio facta est, ut ipsi crederent; aliquando autem, ut si ipsi vitae verbum non reciperent, illud recipientibus non obstarent: et si ipsi tormentorum metu, salutis viam non arriperent, eis impedimento non essent, qui ad regna coelestia festinare nec minis, nec poenis destitissent. Sequitur:

(Vers. 12.) Fiebat enim timor mortis in singulis urbibus, et gravissima valde manus Domini.

(Vers. 12.) Viri quoque, qui mortui non fuerant, percutiebantur in secretiori parte natium: et ascendebat ululatus uniuscujusque civitatis in coelum.

13. De natium quidem percussione, quia superius diximus, dicendum hic non esset, si hic aliud quam ibi nequaquam diceretur. Quid est ergo, quod dicit: Viri quoque, qui mortui non fuerant, percutiebantur? Numquid vero ii, qui mortui fuerant, morderi iterum pro arcae poena debuerunt? Sed et cum percussorum clamor in coelum ascendisse dicitur, satis ostendi poterat, quia de vivis, et non de mortuis diceretur. Neque enim in coelum ascendere clamor poterat virorum mortuorum. Sed quia percussionem natium superius retulimus ad cognitionem peccatorum, sunt profecto viri, qui non sunt mortui.

(Verse 11) Lest it kill us with our people.

12. The Ekronites cried out: 'They have sent the ark of God to us, to kill us and our people.' The satraps give counsel, saying: 'Send away the ark of the God of Israel, that it may not kill us with our people.' Who is the people, of whom the satraps, that is the princes, say: 'that it may not kill us with our people'? Who is the people, if not the Christian people? Therefore the princes say: 'Send away the ark of the God of Israel, that it may return to its place.' As if he says this: From where you fear to die, do not prohibit us from exercising ourselves for the merit of eternal life. But what they add: 'That it may not kill us with our people,' the hearts of the wicked Gentiles are surely confounded in their error by this response, while these affirmed that they escaped death from where those trembled to die. The holy preachers also take away the ark of God: because while spiritual things are opened to despisers, it leads to the damnation of the indiscreet preacher, if the same divine mysteries are left to be not imitated by the perfidious, but mocked and concluded. For as it were for the transferring of the ark not so much the satraps, but the Lord of the satraps placed the precept, saying: 'Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they turn and trample them under their feet' (Matt. 7:6). Hence again He says: 'If they shall persecute you in one city, flee into another' (Matt. 10:23). Therefore they take away the ark, lest they die: because they hide spiritual things from despisers for this reason, lest those who rashly bring them forth be punished for their indiscretion because of their contempt. But because the ark is commanded to be sent away to the Ekronites, this surely insinuates what I promised: that in the time of persecution the exhortation of holy preachers was made that they themselves should believe; but sometimes, that if they themselves did not receive the word of life, they should not obstruct those receiving it: and if they themselves, through fear of torments, did not seize the way of salvation, they should not be an impediment to those who had not ceased to hasten to the heavenly kingdoms either by threats or by punishments. It follows:

(Verse 12) For there was a fear of death in every city, and the hand of the Lord was exceeding heavy.

(Verse 12) Also the men that did not die, were struck in the more secret part of the buttocks: and the wailing of every city went up to heaven.

13. Concerning the striking of the buttocks, because we have spoken above, it would not be to be said here, if here nothing other than there were said. What then is it, that he says: 'Also the men that did not die, were struck'? Did those, forsooth, who had died, have to be bitten again for the punishment of the ark? But also when the cry of the struck ones is said to have ascended to heaven, it could be sufficiently shown that it was said of the living, and not of the dead. For the cry of dead men could not ascend to heaven. But because we have referred the striking of the buttocks above to the knowledge of sins, there are surely men who are not dead.

Viri quippe sunt, qui pro aeterna vita quam appetunt, agere fortia decreverunt. Sed viri adhuc non sunt mortui, qui agere magna deliberant, et tamen ad dolorem compunctionis mala praeterita nequaquam pensant. Mordentur ergo a muribus, ut moriantur: quia in quibus nequiter ceciderunt, recolunt, et pro praeteritis actibus se promereri aeternae vitae amissionem credunt. Quia ergo viri sunt, de Dei misericordia non desperant: et quia mordentur, ut moriantur, de eo quod magni esse incipiunt, se non exaltant.

14. Quorum profecto clamor in coelum ascendit quia omnipotens Deus conversorum gemitus clementer accipit. Et quia in tempore conversionis Gentium magnus erat ad fidem concursus, non ab aliqua una, sed a pluribus civitatibus clamor ascendisse perhibetur. Unde et in persona universalis Ecclesiae propheta deprecatur, dicens: Intende orationi meae, a finibus terrae ad te clamavi (Psal. LX, 2, 3). Et in coelum ascendisse clamorem a finibus terrae clamantis ostendens, ait: Exaudivit de templo sancto suo vocem meam, et clamor meus in conspectu ejus introivit in aures ejus (Psal. XVII, 7). Cum ergo unaquaeque civitas in coelum clamasse dicitur, universalis poenitentia conversionis commendatur.

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For they are men, who for the sake of the eternal life which they desire, have decreed to do brave things. But they are men as yet not dead, who deliberate to do great things, and yet by no means weigh their past evils for the pain of compunction. Therefore they are bitten by mice, that they may die: because they recall in what things they wickedly fell, and for their past acts they believe they merit the loss of eternal life. Because therefore they are men, they do not despair of God's mercy: and because they are bitten, that they may die, they do not exalt themselves concerning that which they begin to be great in.

14. Whose cry surely ascends to heaven because almighty God mercifully receives the groans of the converted. And because in the time of the conversion of the Gentiles there was a great gathering to the faith, the cry is reported to have ascended not from any one, but from many cities. Whence also in the person of the universal Church the prophet prays, saying: 'Hear my prayer, from the ends of the earth I have cried to you' (Ps. 60:2, 3). And showing that the cry of him crying from the ends of the earth has ascended to heaven, he says: 'He heard my voice from His holy temple, and my cry in His sight entered into His ears' (Ps. 17:7). When therefore each city is said to have cried to heaven, the universal penitence of conversion is commended.

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Praemiserat enim: Cantate Domino canticum novum, cantate Domino omnis terra (Ibid. 1). Commotio quippe terrae pertinet ad dolorem poenitentiae: cantare Domino, sive annuntiare in Gentibus quia Dominus regnavit, ad studium praedicationis, et ad devotionem divinae laudis. Uniuscujusque civitatis clamor in coelum ascendit: quia in universo orbe tam praedicationis veritas, quam devotionum laudes a fidelibus sanctae Ecclesiae declamatur.

CAPUT IV.

(I Reg. VI, 1.) Fuit ergo arca Domini in regione Philisthinorum septem mensibus.

1. Quid septem menses isti, nisi totam vitae praesentis prolixitatem designant? Quanquam Azotii et Accaronitae clamarent, Circumducatur arca Dei Israel, et non maneat arca Dei apud nos: veritate tamen sanctae historiae dicitur, quod in typo sanctae Ecclesiae cognoscamus, quia in regione Philisthinorum arca Dei septem mensibus fuit. Non ergo malorum et impiorum hominum voluntas, sed Dei dispensatio in salute Gentilium adimpleta est. Jam quidem de gentilitate sublati sunt impii, jam mortui sunt, qui Christi confessores persequebantur, et tamen arca Dei a Philisthinorum regione non tollitur: quia divina sacramenta apud Gentes, sancti Spiritus poculo debriatas, per studiosam sollicitudinem reservantur. Bene autem dicitur septem mensibus, quia sanctarum Scripturarum mysteria usque in mundi finem cum Christi fidelibus perdurabunt. Sed quisquis ejusdem sanctae Scripturae mysteria per gratiam intimae charitatis apprehendit, non de loco, in quo temporaliter arca dimittitur, sed de eo, in quo aeternaliter sistitur, sollicitus fuit. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 2.) Et vocaverunt Philisthaei sacerdotes, et divinos dicentes: Quid faciemus de arca Dei? Indicate nobis. Et quomodo remittamus eam in locum suum.

3. Quidnam est arca vacua, nisi divina scientia sine bona operatione? Vacuam namque arcam remittere, est de cognitione spiritualium sacramentorum fructum boni operis nullum ferre. Vacua ergo arca remittitur, cum mens ad fidem venientis, ad aeternam Dei contemplationem jam transire desiderat, et tamen in hac vita bonis operibus insudare nequaquam curat. Praedicatorum ergo voce praecipitur, ut arca cum dimittitur, vacua non relaxetur, ut, si bona opera, quisquis fidelis est, non multiplicat, ad aeternam Dei omnipotentis cognitionem, quod transiturus sit, confidere non praesumat.Â 145Â

For he had sent before: 'Sing to the Lord a new song, sing to the Lord all the earth' (Ibid. 1). For the motion of the earth pertains to the pain of penitence: to sing to the Lord, or to announce among the Gentiles that the Lord has reigned, to the pursuit of preaching, and to the devotion of divine praise. The cry of every city ascends to heaven: because in the whole world both the truth of preaching and the praises of devotions are declaimed by the faithful of the Holy Church.

CHAPTER IV.

(I Kings 6:1) And the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

1. What are these seven months, if not designating the whole length of the present life? Although the Azotians and Ekronites cried out: 'Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about,' and 'Let not the ark of God stay with us': yet by the truth of holy history it is said, which we recognize in the type of the Holy Church, that the ark of God was in the country of the Philistines for seven months. Therefore not the will of evil and impious men, but the dispensation of God in the salvation of the Gentiles was fulfilled. Indeed the impious have already been taken from gentility, those who persecuted the confessors of Christ are already dead, and yet the ark of God is not taken from the country of the Philistines: because the divine sacraments are reserved through studious solicitude among the Gentiles, intoxicated with the cup of the Holy Spirit. But it is well said 'seven months', because the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures will endure with the faithful of Christ until the end of the world. But whoever apprehends the mysteries of the same Holy Scripture through the grace of internal charity, was solicitous not about the place in which the ark is temporally left, but about that in which it is eternally placed. Wherefore also it is added:

(Verse 2) And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying: What shall we do with the ark of God? Tell us. And how shall we send it back to its place.

3. What is an empty ark, if not divine knowledge without good work? For to send back an empty ark is to bear no fruit of good work from the knowledge of spiritual sacraments. Therefore, an empty ark is sent back when the mind of one coming to faith already desires to pass over to the eternal contemplation of God, and yet in this life does not care at all to labor in good works. Therefore, by the voice of the preachers it is commanded that when the ark is released, it should not be let go empty, so that if any faithful person does not multiply good works, he may not presume to trust that he is about to pass over to the eternal knowledge of Almighty God.Â 145Â

Vacua autem arca non dimittitur, si illud ei pro peccato redditur, quod debetur. Quid est quod pro peccato debetur arcae, nisi afflictio devotae poenitentiae? Quo in loco notandumÂ Â est, quia eis loquitur qui a muribus morsi sunt. Qui enim sunt morsi a muribus, nisi qui in fidei catholicae illuminatione positi, ante ejusdem fidei cognitionem, sive post, prava egisse se recolunt? Nam qui ante gratiam regenerationis nulla crimina admisit, et regenerationis donum digna conversatione retinuit, arcae quidem debet, sed ei pro peccato non debet. Cognitione quidem divini eloquii, boni operis reddere fructum cogitur, sed ad poenitentiae satisfactionem ex scelerum, quae respuit, debito non urgetur. Qui ergo mordentur adhuc, debitum arcae pro peccato reddant; ut pro criminum memoria, humilem poenitentiae oblationem omnipotenti Deo restituant. Et tunc quidem curantur; quia tum conscientiae vulnus obducitur, cum afflicta mens perÂ Â poenitentiam ad sperandae veniae securitatem relevatur. Tunc etiam sciunt, quare manus Domini non recedat ab eis: quia tunc utilitatem compunctionis, seu afflictae carnis bonum intelligunt, cum de fiducia divinae indulgentiae ineffabiliter laetantur. Quid est enim dolor poenitentiae, nisi plagae molestia ex daemonum percussione? Nam quasi in dolore plagae adhuc acriter pungentis suspirabat conversus ille, cum diceret:Â Conversus sum in aerumna mea, dum configitur spinaÂ (Psal. XXXI, 4). Quid enim aerumna, nisi afflictionem insinuat poenitentiae? Sed in eadem aerumna conversum se asserit, dum spinae confixuram sentit. Quasi dicat: Dum recordatione flagitii mordeor, arcae debitum reddere non desisto. Spina quippeÂ Â configitur, dum per omnipotentis Dei dispensationem, ad lacrymas conversorum anima criminum recordatione inflammatur. Et arcae debitum solvitur, quando jam pro qualitate criminis, mensura extenditur lamentationis: cum post diuturnas lacrymas afflictae diu menti, interni solatii lux infunditur, atque a percussionis intimae pondere divino dono levigatur: cum jam purgatae menti per gratiam suae inspirationis omnipotens Deus appropiat, atque ex fiducia consecutae indulgentiae eam exhilarat, quam ei ex praesentiae suae gratia subministrat. Quasi enim de percussione tunc sanatur, cum per refusae indulgentiae: gratiam magnitudo doloris de poenitentis afflicta mente removetur.

4. Unde et is, qui in aerumna convertebatur, dumÂ Â configeretur spina, in eodem psalmo omnipotentem Deum curationis suae auctorem laetanter alloquitur, dicens:Â Tu es mihi refugium a pressura, quae circumdedit me, exsultatio meaÂ (Psalm. XXXI, 7). Pressuram quippe vocat gravissimam valde manum Domini. De qua percussione gravissimae manus etiam Paulus loquitur, dicens:Â Ipse enim spiritus pro nobis postulat gemitibus inenarrabilibusÂ (Rom. VIII, 26).

But the ark is not let go empty if that which is owed is returned to it for sin. What is it that is owed to the ark for sin, if not the affliction of devout penance? In which place it must be noted that he speaks to those who have been bitten by mice (*muribus*). For who are bitten by mice, if not those who, having been placed in the illumination of the Catholic faith, remember that they have done evil things, whether before or after the knowledge of the same faith? For he who admitted no crimes before the grace of regeneration, and retained the gift of regeneration with a worthy conversation, owes indeed to the ark, but does not owe to it for sin. By the knowledge indeed of the divine word, he is compelled to return the fruit of good work, but he is not urged to the satisfaction of penance from the debt of crimes which he rejected. Let those, therefore, who are still bitten, return the debt of the ark for sin; that for the memory of their crimes, they may restore a humble offering of penance to Almighty God. And then indeed they are cured; because then the wound of conscience is covered over, when the afflicted mind is raised up through penance to the security of hoped-for pardon. Then they also know why the hand of the Lord does not recede from them: because then they understand the utility of compunction, or the good of the afflicted flesh, when they rejoice ineffably in the trust of divine indulgence. For what is the pain of penance, if not the trouble of a blow from the striking of demons? For as if in the pain of a blow still sharply piercing, that convert sighed when he said:Â *I am turned in my anguish, while the thorn is fastened*Â (Psal. XXXI, 4). For what does anguish insinuate, if not the affliction of penance? But he asserts that he is turned in the same anguish, while he feels the fastening of the thorn. As if he were to say: While I am bitten by the record of my disgrace, I do not cease to return the debt of the ark. For the thorn is fastened when, through the dispensation of Almighty God, the soul of converts is inflamed to tears by the record of their crimes. And the debt of the ark is paid when the measure of lamentation is extended according to the quality of the crime: when after long-lasting tears, the light of internal solace is infused into the mind long afflicted, and it is lightened by the divine gift from the weight of the inward striking: when Almighty God now approaches the purged mind through the grace of His inspiration, and cheers it from the trust of obtained indulgence, which He administers to it from the grace of His presence. For it is then cured, as it were, from the striking, when the greatness of the pain is removed from the afflicted mind of the penitent through the grace of the poured-back indulgence.

4. Whence also he who was being converted in his anguish while the thorn was being fastened, in the same psalm joyfully addresses Almighty God, the author of his healing, saying:Â *You are my refuge from the pressure which has surrounded me, my exultation*Â (Psalm. XXXI, 7). Indeed, he calls the very heavy hand of the Lord "pressure." Paul also speaks of this striking of the very heavy hand, saying:Â *For the Spirit Himself asks for us with unspeakable groanings*Â (Rom. VIII, 26).

Qui ergo a pressura invenisse Domini refugium, et exsultationem insinuat, ab interni doloris percussione, gaudio divinae indulgentiae curatum se esse manifestat. Hinc item dolens adhuc confitetur, dicens:Â Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feciÂ (Psal. L, 6). Sed quia de curatione praesumit, insinuans, ait:Â Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam, et exsultabunt ossa humiliataÂ Â (Ibid., 7). Debitum ergo arcae redditur pro peccato, cum peccatores ex Scripturae sacrae cognitione affliguntur, et cruciatu tergere culpas satagunt, quas carnis delectatione traxerunt. Curantur autem, quando jam expleta mensura afflictionis, ad fiduciam divinae indulgentiaeÂ 146Â per auxilium relevantur interni solatii. Unde et Psalmista loquitur, dicens:Â Cibabis nos pane lacrymarum, et potum dabis nobis in lacrymis in mensuraÂ (Psal. LXXIX, 6). Lacrymarum quippe potus ad mensuram dat: quia profecto peccator, etsi ex interna Dei aspiratione pro culpa compungitur, ex eadem compunctionis afflictione eodem consolante relevatur. Unde et per Moysen Dominus dicit:Â Ego occidam, et ego vivere faciam: percutiam, et ego sanaboÂ (Deut. XXXII, 39). Percutit namque, etÂ Â sanat: quia quos per compunctionem sauciat, per indulgentiae securitatem curat. Bene itaque curatis jam dicitur:Â Et scietis, quare manus ejus non recedat a vobis. Nam antequam curet, quare manus Domini ab eis non recedat, scire non possunt: quia tunc poenitentiae bonum intelligunt, cum in purificato jam corde sancti Spiritus gratiam recognoscunt, et divinae indulgentiae dona concupiscunt, de quibus ineffabili exsultatione gratulantur. Nam curantis jam manus Domini causam, qua ab afflictione non recesserat, eos scisse conspexerat, qui percussorum exsultationes exprimit, Deo loquens et dicens:Â Repleti sumus mane misericordia tua, exsultavimus et delectati sumus pro diebus, quibus nos humiliasti, annisÂ Â quibus vidimus malaÂ (Psal. LXXXIX, 14, 15). Velut enim in nocte poenitentiae luctum exceperant, qui mane, videlicet divinae dignationis apparente claritate, se repletos misericordia congaudebant, qui se delectatos pro diebus, in quibus humiliati fuerant, asserunt: per donum curationis, gravitatem manus Domini, quare ab eis non recesserat, scire demonstrantur. Sed quia a principibus adhuc per consilium dicitur, ut quod debetur pro peccato arcae reddatur; et quid sit illud quod debetur, non exponitur, adjunctum est:

He, therefore, who insinuates that he has found a refuge of the Lord from pressure, and exultation, manifests that he has been cured from the striking of internal pain by the joy of divine indulgence. Hence, likewise, still grieving, he confesses, saying:Â *To You alone have I sinned, and done evil before You*Â (Psal. L, 6). But because he presumes concerning the healing, insinuating, he says:Â *To my hearing You shall give joy and gladness, and the humbled bones shall exult*Â Â (Ibid., 7). Therefore, the debt of the ark is returned for sin when sinners are afflicted from the knowledge of sacred Scripture, and strive to cleanse with torture the faults which they drew by the delight of the flesh. But they are cured when, the measure of affliction now being fulfilled, they are raised to the trust of divine indulgenceÂ 146Â through the help of internal solace. Whence also the Psalmist speaks, saying:Â *You will feed us with the bread of tears, and You will give us drink in tears in measure*Â (Psal. LXXIX, 6). Indeed, He gives the drink of tears unto measure: because surely the sinner, although he is struck with compunction for his fault from the internal inspiration of God, is raised up by the consolation of the same One from the affliction of that same compunction. Whence also through Moses the Lord says:Â *I will kill, and I will make to live: I will strike, and I will heal*Â (Deut. XXXII, 39). For He strikes and heals: because those whom He wounds through compunction, He cures through the security of indulgence. Well, therefore, is it said to those already cured:Â *And you shall know why His hand does not recede from you.* For before He cures, they cannot know why the hand of the Lord does not recede from them: because they then understand the good of penance when they recognize the grace of the Holy Spirit in a heart already purified, and they desire the gifts of divine indulgence, for which they give thanks with ineffable exultation. For he had seen that those who were already being cured knew the cause of the hand of the Lord, by which it had not receded from affliction, who expresses the exultations of those struck, speaking to God and saying:Â *We were filled in the morning with Your mercy, we exulted and were delighted for the days in which You humbled us, the years in which we saw evils*Â (Psal. LXXXIX, 14, 15). For as if in the night of penance they had received mourning, they who in the morning, namely, the clarity of divine worthiness appearing, rejoiced that they were filled with mercy, and asserted that they were delighted for the days in which they had been humbled: through the gift of healing, they are shown to know the gravity of the hand of the Lord, why it had not receded from them. But because it is still said by the princes through counsel that what is owed for sin should be returned to the ark; and what that is which is owed is not explained, it is added:

(Vers. 4, 5.)Â Qui respondentes dixerunt: Quid est quod pro delicto reddere debeamus? Responderunt illi: Juxta numerum provinciarum Philisthiim quinque anos aureos facietis, et quinque mures: quia plaga una fuitÂ Â vobis et satrapis vestris. Facietisque similitudines anorum vestrorum, et similitudines murium, qui demoliti sunt terram, et dabitis Deo Israel gloriam, si forte relevet manum suam a vobis, et a diis vestris, et a terra vestra.

5. Quid est, quod quinque anorum similitudines, et totidem similitudines murium, juxta provinciarum numerum, fieri jubentur, et sic arcae debitum solvitur? Haec profecto, si more Judaico secundum litterae vilitatem pensantur, non solum despicienda sunt, sed nec auditu digna. Quae profecto digne accipit, qui quo viliora per litterae sonum audit, eo ea per spiritalem significationem utiliora esse intelligit. Nam sanctus Spiritus, quo inspirante tota haec sacra historia scribitur, nunquam tam vilia promeret, si inÂ Â hujus vilitatis arcano magna quaedam, et pretiosa valde mysteria non signaret. Unde doctor egregius fatetur, dicens:Â Omnia in figura contingebant illis; scripta sunt autem propter nos, in quos fines saeculorum deveneruntÂ (I Cor. X, 11). Eo igitur per spiritum altius requirenda sunt, quo in exposita velut carne litterae vile cernitur quod loquuntur. Quae ergo sunt anorum similitudines, quae murium imagines? Et quia haec tam ad tentantia daemonia, quam ad membra peccatorum fetoribus exposita, superius retulimus, similitudines anorum et murium, qua significatione deaurantur? Sed profecto tunc arcae debitum pro peccato bene solvitur, si anorum et murium similitudines ex auro fabricentur.

In ani quippe similitudine emittendiÂ 147Â fetoris membrum cernitur:Â Â et tamen, quia similitudo, non veritas est, fetore jam nullo maculatur. And because it is made of gold, this indeed insinuates: that the appearance of deformity is changed from the splendor of beauty. Peccator ergo conversus ani similitudinem facit, cum quibus peccati fetoribus membra sua deposuerat, ad memoriam ducit. Ani ergo similitudinem fabricare, est membrorum suorum nuper peccantium turpitudinem poenitenti corde recolere.

(Vers. 4, 5.)Â Who answering said: What is it that we ought to return for the trespass? They answered them: According to the number of the provinces of the Philistines, you shall make five golden tumors (*anos*), and five mice: because there was one plague on you and your lords. And you shall make likenesses of your tumors, and likenesses of the mice, which have destroyed the land, and you shall give glory to the God of Israel, if perhaps He may lighten His hand from you, and from your gods, and from your land.

5. What is it that five likenesses of anuses (*anorum*), and as many likenesses of mice, are commanded to be made according to the number of the provinces, and thus the debt of the ark is paid? These things, indeed, if they are weighed according to Jewish custom according to the vileness of the letter, are not only to be despised, but are not even worthy of being heard. He, indeed, receives them worthily who, the more vile they sound through the sound of the letter, the more he understands them to be more useful through their spiritual significance. For the Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration all this sacred history is written, would never bring forth such vile things if He did not signify in the secret of this vileness certain great and very precious mysteries. Whence the excellent teacher confesses, saying:Â *All things happened to them in figure; but they are written for us, upon whom the ends of the ages have come*Â (I Cor. X, 11). Therefore, they are to be sought more deeply through the Spirit, the more vile that which they speak appears in the exposed flesh, as it were, of the letter. What, then, are the likenesses of anuses, what the images of mice? And because we have referred these above as much to the tempting demons as to the members of sinners exposed to stenches, by what significance are the likenesses of anuses and mice gilded? But indeed, the debt of the ark for sin is well paid then, if the likenesses of anuses and mice are fabricated from gold.

For in the likeness of the anus (*ani*) is seen the member for emittingÂ 147Â stench:Â Â and yet, because it is a likeness, not the truth, it is now defiled by no stench. And because it is made of gold, this indeed insinuates: that the appearance of deformity is changed from the splendor of beauty. Therefore, the converted sinner makes a likeness of an anus when he brings to memory with what stenches of sin he had laid down his members. Therefore, to fabricate a likeness of an anus is to recollect with a penitent heart the foulness of one's lately sinning members.

Non itaque anum, sed ani similitudinem fabricat, qui et a peccati fetoribus membra abluit, et eadem membra, quibus peccatis subdiderit, recolere non omittit. And indeed, the likeness of the anus is seen to be made from gold, because the foulnesses of sins are worn away unto the price of eternal salvation. Vel fortasseÂ Â memorando similitudines anorum fiunt, flendo deaurantur: quia et recolendo, quae fecimus, fingimus: et dum commissa attentius lugemus, in justitiae splendorem membra deauramus. Anorum ergo similitudo, non veritas cernitur, quia tunc peccator suae deformitatis ignominiam respicit, cum prava opera non solum committendo non exercet, sed etiam in praeterito se commisisse vehementer dolet. Quinque autem ani fieri jubentur, quia universalis omnium Gentilium satisfactio imperatur. Unde et caute notatum est:Â Juxta numerum provinciarum Philisthiim. Quare enim quinque sunt Philisthinorum provinciae, nisi quia carnalis vita Gentilium designatur? Quia enim quinque sensus corporis non ad laudem Creatoris, sed ad carnalem vitam contulit, per quinariumÂ Â numerum Philisthinorum provinciae exprimuntur. Quinque anos aureos praecipiuntur ut faciant, ut de omnibus compungantur sensibus: et quia omnes peccaverunt, ideo ad supernae vitae claritatem membra omnia redigant, quae per oblectamenta carnis omnimoda polluerunt sorde flagitii. In auro quippe supernae conversationis fulgor ostenditur, quia per Joannem de superna civitate dicitur:Â Ipsa vero civitas aurum munaum, similis vitro mundoÂ (Apoc. XXI, 18). Membra igitur deaurantur, cum corpus terrena et coenosa concupiscentiarum foeditate deforme, in splendorem commutatur aeternae vitae: cum videlicet per sanctae conversationis pulchritudinem radiat, quod in appetitu mundanae delectationis peccatorum fetore sordebat. Ad istam namque deaurationem beatus Paulus auditores suos admonebat, dicens:Â SicutÂ Â exhibuistis membra vestra servire immunditiae, et iniquitati ad iniquitatem, ita exhibeatis membra vestra servire justitiae in sanctificationemÂ (Rom. VI, 19). Et quasi ad anorum similitudines eos respicere compellens, intulit, dicens:Â Quem ergo fructum habuistis in illis, in quibus nunc erubescitis? Nam finis illorum mors. Anorum ergo similitudines ad ruborem fiunt: quia profecto foeditatis nostrae maculas ad memoriam ducimus, ut de eisdem maculis confundamur. But they are gilded for security: because surely while we cover our deformity with the clarity of supernal life, we await the discussion of the divine examination with a certain security.

Thus he does not fabricate the anus, but a likeness of the anus, who both washes his members from the stenches of sin, and does not neglect to recollect those same members which he had subjected to sins. And indeed, the likeness of the anus is seen to be made from gold, because the foulnesses of sins are worn away unto the price of eternal salvation. Or perhaps by remembering the likenesses of anuses are made, and by weeping they are gilded: because both by recollecting what we have done, we fashion them; and while we more attentively mourn the things committed, we gild the members into the splendor of justice. Therefore, a likeness of anuses, not the truth, is seen, because then the sinner looks back upon the ignominy of his deformity when he not only does not exercise depraved works by committing them, but also vehemently grieves that he committed them in the past. Moreover, five anuses are commanded to be made, because the universal satisfaction of all Gentiles is commanded. Whence also it is carefully noted:Â *According to the number of the provinces of the Philistines.* For why are there five provinces of the Philistines, if not because the carnal life of the Gentiles is designated? For because he contributed the five senses of the body not to the praise of the Creator, but to the carnal life, the provinces of the Philistines are expressed by the number five. Five golden anuses are commanded that they should make, so that they may be struck with compunction concerning all the senses: and because all have sinned, therefore they may reduce all the members to the clarity of supernal life, which they polluted with every kind of filth of disgrace through the delights of the flesh. Indeed, in gold is shown the brightness of supernal conversation, because it is said by John concerning the supernal city:Â *The city itself was pure gold, like unto clear glass*Â (Apoc. XXI, 18). Therefore, the members are gilded when the body, deformed by the earthly and muddy foulness of concupiscences, is changed into the splendor of eternal life: when, namely, through the beauty of holy conversation, that which was filthy with the stench of sins in the appetite for worldly delight radiates. For unto that gilding the blessed Paul was admonishing his hearers, saying:Â *AsÂ Â you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness, and iniquity unto iniquity, so yield your members to serve justice unto sanctification*Â (Rom. VI, 19). And as if compelling them to look back at the likenesses of anuses, he brought in, saying:Â *What fruit, therefore, had you then in those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of them is death.* Therefore, likenesses of anuses are made for blushing: because surely we bring to memory the stains of our foulness, so that we may be confounded by those same stains. But they are gilded for security: because surely while we cover our deformity with the clarity of supernal life, we await the discussion of the divine examination with a certain security.

6. Mures etiam, qui terram demoliti sunt, de auroÂ Â fieri jubentur: quia et immundi spiritus, qui carni nostrae corruptionis oblectamenta suggerunt, ad justificationem nostram memorantur. Quid est enim similitudines murium facere, nisi eas quas de nobis maligni spiritus habuerunt victorias, memorari? Sed murium quoque similitudines deaurantur, cum nos eorum elisos viribus suspiramus. Nam dum ipsorum nos fraudibus victos plangimus,Â 148Â similitudines profecto murium aureas tenemus, dum praeterita consilia daemonum non habemus in blandimento operis, sed in contemptu reprobationis. Ex auro itaque similitudines murium fiunt, quia praeteritae fraudes daemonum ad fulgorem nobis bonae vitae proficiunt. Tanto enim humiliores jam sumus, quanto membra nostra perÂ Â supernae conversationis fulgorem radiant; et ipsi qui jam Dei omnipotentis auxilio fortia agimus, immundorum spirituum prostratos fuisse fraudibus nosmetipsos videmus. Quod profecto consilium, quia pluribus tribuunt, ejusdem quoque rationem ostendunt, quia dicunt:Â Quia plaga una fuit vobis et satrapis vestris. Quasi aperte dicant: Quia omnes peccato subditi fuistis, necesse est ut ad melioris vitae studium corda pariter praeparetis.

Unde et Paulus dicit:Â Omnes peccaverunt, et egent gloria Dei, justificati gratis per gratiam ipsiusÂ (Rom. III, 23).

7. Et ut attentius meliorandae vitae propositum commendent, inculcando repetunt, dicentes:Â Facietis similitudines anorum vestrorum, et murium, qui demoliti sunt terram, et dabitis Deo Israel gloriam, si forteÂ Â relevet manum suam a vobis, a diis vestris, et a terra vestra. Eis, quae praedictae sunt, similitudinibus factis, Deo gloriam dare, est de studio boni operis, et de aestimatione humilitatis, in semetipso inaniter non gloriari; sed Dei omnipotentis laudibus omne quod agitur impendere. Et quia dicunt:Â Si forte relevet manum suam a vobisÂ (I Reg. VI, 5): quid aliud in hoc verbo dubitationis accipitur, nisi quia difficilis ostenditur reconciliatio criminosorum? Unde et per Jonam dicitur:Â Quis scit, si convertatur, et ignoscat DeusÂ (Jonae III, 2)? Quia ergo, si forte relevet manum, dicitur, commoveri ad poenitentiae lacrymas cum magna fortitudine debemus: quia etsi hi qui poenitentiam austeram faciunt, vix fiduciam salutis inveniunt, negligentes salvi fieri quando possunt?

6. Mice also, which have destroyed the land, are commanded to be made of gold: because also the unclean spirits, which suggest to our flesh the delights of corruption, are remembered unto our justification. For what is it to make likenesses of mice, if not to remember those victories which the malignant spirits have had over us? But the likenesses of mice are also gilded, when we sigh that we have been crushed by their strengths. For while we mourn that we have been conquered by their frauds,Â 148Â we indeed hold golden likenesses of mice, while we do not have the past counsels of the demons in the enticement of the work, but in the contempt of reprobation. Therefore, the likenesses of mice are made of gold, because the past frauds of the demons profit us unto the brightness of a good life. For we are so much the humbler, the more our members radiate through the brightness of supernal conversation; and we ourselves, who now by the help of Almighty God act strongly, see that we have been prostrated by the frauds of the unclean spirits. Which counsel, indeed, because they attribute it to many, they also show the reason for the same, because they say:Â *Because there was one plague on you and your lords.* As if they were to say openly: Because you have all been subject to sin, it is necessary that you equally prepare your hearts for the study of a better life.

Whence also Paul says:Â *All have sinned, and do need the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace*Â (Rom. III, 23).

7. And that they may more attentively commend the purpose of an improved life, they repeat by inculcating, saying:Â *You shall make likenesses of your anuses, and of the mice, which have destroyed the land, and you shall give glory to the God of Israel, if perhaps He may lighten His hand from you, from your gods, and from your land.* To give glory to God, the aforementioned likenesses having been made, is to not glory in vain in oneself concerning the study of good work and concerning the estimation of humility; but to spend all that is done in the praises of Almighty God. And because they say:Â *If perhaps He may lighten His hand from you*Â (I Kings VI, 5): what else is understood in this word of doubt, if not that the reconciliation of criminals is shown to be difficult? Whence also it is said through Jonah:Â *Who knows if God will turn and forgive*Â (Jonah III, 2)? Because, therefore, it is said "if perhaps He may lighten His hand," we ought to be moved to the tears of penance with great fortitude: because if even those who perform austere penance scarcely find the confidence of salvation, what of the negligent who fail to be saved when they can?

QuaeÂ Â profecto reconciliationis difficultas si in poenitentium aestimatione tenetur, apud omnipotentem Deum nequaquam invenitur: quia et dum Ninivitae velut pro difficili reconciliatione gravi poenitentia se dejiciunt, omnipotentis Dei misericordiam facile meruerunt. Et cum prophetae Joelis voce acri se Deo populus lamento prostraret, egit profecto, ut qui videbatur ad placandum difficilis, ejus iram levigaret. Nam statim in eo scriptum est:Â Zelatus est Dominus terram suam, et pepercit populo suoÂ (Joel II, 18). Manus itaque relevatur, cum mens in poenitentia valide compuncta ad consecutae misericordiae donum, divina aspiratione sustollitur. Et quia, ut dixi, in initio nascentis Ecclesiae, sicut generalis peccatorum conversio, ita et generalis erat reconciliatio conversorum: manus Dei,Â Â quae relevanda asseritur, et ab auditoribus, et a diis eorum, et a terra relevanda perhibetur. Per deos namque sublimes et sapientes viri designantur. Nam et ad Moysen Dominus dicit:Â Posui te in deum PharaonisÂ (Exod. VII, 1). Et in Legis etiam mandato praecipitur:Â Diis non detrahesÂ (Exod. XXII, 28). Per terram vero, simplicium vita exprimitur: quia dum praedicationem superiorum, velut coeli pluviam in se cadentem, recipiunt, de irrigatione verbi fructum proferunt bonae operationis. A diis ergo, et a terra manus Domini relevatur, cum tam sapientes, quam simplices ad certitudinem divinae indulgentiae aut occulto et spiritali solatio, aut praedicatorum judicio reducuntur, Unde et is, qui paulo superius deaurari membra monuerat,Â Â dicens:Â Exhibete membra vestra servire justitiae in sanctificationem.Â (Rom. VI, 19), quasi relevatae manusÂ 149Â Domini judicium proferens, ait:Â Nunc autem liberati a peccato, servi autem facti Deo, habetis fructum vestrum in sanctificationem, finem vero vitam aeternamÂ (Ibid., 22). Hinc iterum conversis a nequioris vitae deformitate, integrum auri fulgorem mirabatur, dicens:Â Fuistis aliquando tenebrae, nunc autem lux in DominoÂ (Eph. V, 8). Hinc idem suos collaudans, ait:Â In medio nationis pravae et perversae, in quibus lucetis, quasi luminaria in mundoÂ (Phil. II, 15). Factis igitur ex auro similitudinibus anorum et murium, et data Deo gloria, manus Domini relevatur: quia post poenitentiae luctum, post meliorationem vitae, et aestimationis humilitatem, ad plenamÂ Â omnipotentis Deo misericordiam peccatores reducuntur.

Which difficulty of reconciliation indeed, if it is held in the estimation of the penitent, is by no means found with Almighty God: because even while the Ninevites cast themselves down in grave penance as if for a difficult reconciliation, they easily merited the mercy of Almighty God. And when by the voice of the prophet Joel the people prostrated themselves to God with sharp lamentation, they indeed acted so that He who seemed difficult to appease might lighten His wrath. For immediately it is written in that place:Â *The Lord was jealous for His land, and spared His people*Â (Joel II, 18). Thus the hand is lightened when the mind, strongly struck in penance, is raised up by divine inspiration to the gift of obtained mercy. And because, as I said, in the beginning of the nascent Church, as there was a general conversion of sinners, so also there was a general reconciliation of converts: the hand of God,Â Â which is asserted to be lightened, is said to be lightened both from the hearers, and from their gods, and from the land. For by "gods" sublime and wise men are designated. For also to Moses the Lord says:Â *I have set thee as the god of Pharaoh*Â (Exod. VII, 1). And in the mandate of the Law it is also commanded:Â *Thou shalt not speak evil of the gods*Â (Exod. XXII, 28). But by "the land," the life of the simple is expressed: because while they receive the preaching of their superiors, like the rain of heaven falling upon them, they bring forth the fruit of good operation from the irrigation of the word. Therefore, the hand of the Lord is lightened from the gods and from the land when both the wise and the simple are reduced to the certainty of divine indulgence either by secret and spiritual solace, or by the judgment of the preachers. Whence also he who a little above had advised that the members be gilded,Â Â saying:Â *Yield your members to serve justice unto sanctification*Â(Rom. VI, 19), as if bringing forth the judgment of the lightened handÂ 149Â of the Lord, says:Â *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting*Â (Ibid., 22). Hence again he marveled at the complete brightness of gold in those converted from the deformity of a more wicked life, saying:Â *You were once darkness, but now light in the Lord*Â (Eph. V, 8). Hence the same one, praising his own, says:Â *In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world*Â (Phil. II, 15). Therefore, the likenesses of anuses and mice having been made of gold, and glory given to God, the hand of the Lord is lightened: because after the mourning of penance, after the improvement of life, and the humility of estimation, sinners are reduced to the full mercy of Almighty God.

Et quia ista omnia adhuc per consilium praecipiuntur; praedicatorum vero consilium alii devote perficiunt, alii vero contemnunt, qui de bonae vitae splendore bonos laudibus efferunt, contra superbos per invectionem increpationis accenduntur. Nam sequitur: (Vers. 6.)Â Quare aggravatis corda vestra, sicut Aegyptus, et Pharao?

8. Cor namque, ut Aegyptus et Pharao, aggravat, qui jam cognitione sacri eloquii, vulnera peccatorum suorum intelligit, et tamen per meliorationem vitae, per amaritudinem poenitentiae, ad vera futurae vitae gaudia animum non intendit. Bene ergo Aegyptiis in gravitate cordis similatur. Aegyptus quippe tenebrae dicitur. Quid ergo Aegypti nomine accipitur, nisi a coelorum sedibus angelorum lapsa multitudo? Et quid in Pharaone Aegypti rege, nisi ipse tenebrarum auctor diabolus designatur? Bene ergo dissimulatores poenitentiae, Aegypto et Pharaoni in cordis aggravatione similantur. Reprobi quippe angeli semel a coelestibus lapsi, sicut amorem amissae beatitudinis non recipiunt, ita et poenitentiam agere de perpetrata superbia nunquam possunt. Dum ergo sancti praedicatores contra impudentes peccatores per acutam increpationem se invehunt, Aegypti et Pharaonis similitudinem ad medium ducunt; ut auditores eorum tanto facilius ad satisfactionem proruant, quanto per id, quod poenitentiam nolunt agere, damnatis angelis se esse similes non ignorant. Unde et instanter ad studium adimplendi consilii eos cogunt, dum subinferentes dicunt:

(Vers. 7-9.) Accipite ergo, et facite plaustrum novum unum, et duas vaccas fetas, quibus non est impositum jugum, jungite ad plaustrum, et claudite vitulos earum domi: tolletisque arcam Domini, et ponetis eam in plaustrum, et vasa aurea, quae exsolvistis ei pro delicto, ponetis in capsella ad latus ejus, et dimittite eam, ut vadat. Et aspicietis: et si quidem per viam confinium suorum ascenderit contra Bethsames, ipse fecit vobis grande malum hoc. Si autem minime, scietis quia nequaquam manus ejus tetigit nos, sed casu accidit.

9. Quid enim plaustri nomine, nisi aut universa simul sancta Ecclesia, aut unaquaeque cujusque fidelis anima designatur? Cujus profecto plaustri rotae sunt utrumque Testamentum. Nam dum sancta Ecclesia, vel electa quaelibet mens per vetus et novum Testamentum instructa, ad aeternam vitam innititur, quasi sublimibus praelatis rotis, ad propositum locum per altum fertur. Sed plaustrum fieri novum praecipitur, ut videlicet, qui ad aeterna gaudia pervenire desiderat, per praeceptum dilectionis novi hominis splendore vestiatur.

And because all those things are still commanded by counsel; but some devoutly fulfill the counsel of the preachers, while others indeed despise it, they who extol the good with praises for the splendor of a good life are kindled against the proud by the in-throwing of rebuke. For there follows: (Vers. 6.)Â Why do you harden your hearts, as Egypt and Pharaoh?

8. For he hardens his heart like Egypt and Pharaoh, who, already through the knowledge of the sacred word, understands the wounds of his sins, and yet through the improvement of life, through the bitterness of penance, does not direct his mind to the true joys of the future life. Well, therefore, is he likened to the Egyptians in the weight of the heart. For Egypt is said to be "darkness." What, then, is understood by the name of Egypt, if not the multitude of angels fallen from the heavenly seats? And what in Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, if not the very author of darkness, the devil, is designated? Well, therefore, are the dissemblers of penance likened to Egypt and Pharaoh in the hardening of the heart. For the reprobate angels, having once fallen from the heavenly realms, just as they do not receive the love of lost beatitude, so also they can never perform penance for the pride they committed. While, therefore, the holy preachers attack impudent sinners with sharp rebuke, they bring forward the likeness of Egypt and Pharaoh; so that their hearers may rush all the more easily to satisfaction, the more they are not ignorant that by the fact that they are unwilling to perform penance, they are similar to the damned angels. Whence also they instantly urge them to the study of fulfilling the counsel, while adding:

(Vers. 7-9.) Therefore take and make a new cart, and two kine that have calved, on which there hath come no yoke, tie them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: and you shall take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart, and the vessels of gold, which you have paid him for sin, you shall put into a little box by the side thereof, and send it away that it may go. And you shall look: and if indeed it go up by the way of his own coasts towards Bethsames, he hath done us this great evil. But if not, we shall know that it was not his hand that touched us, but it hath happened by chance.

9. For what is designated by the name of the cart, if not either the universal holy Church all together, or the individual soul of each of the faithful? The wheels of this cart are indeed both Testaments. For while the holy Church, or any chosen mind instructed by the Old and New Testaments, leans toward eternal life, it is carried to the proposed place through the heights, as if by sublime wheels set before it. But it is commanded that the cart be made new, so that, evidently, he who desires to reach eternal joys may be clothed with the splendor of the new man through the precept of love.

Hoc quippe plaustrum innovari praecipiebat Dominus, 150 dicens: Hoc est praeceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos (Joan. XV, 12). Hinc Paulus praecipit, dicens: Renovamini spiritu mentis vestrae, et induimini novum hominem, qui secundum Deum creatus est (Ephes. IV, 23). Hinc Romanos alloquens, ait: Non in comessationibus et ebrietatibus, non in contentione et aemulatione, non in cubilibus et impudicitiis, sed induimini Dominum Jesum Christum (Rom. XIII, 13). Plaustrum igitur novum facit, qui et utrumque Testamentum recte intelligit, et splendore sanctae conversationis indutus, ad superna sese desideria extendit.

10. Possunt quoque rotae, quibus hoc plaustrum graditur, electi cujusque geminum desiderium designare: quia quisquis jam, opitulante Deo, praesentem vitam in aerumnam peregrinationis tenet, ad futuram beatitudinem idcirco pervenire desiderat; ut impassibilis et immortalis fiat: ut videlicet per unum, eam quam horret, miseriam deserat; per aliud, eam, quam promeretur, beatitudinem nunquam perdat. Vaccae autem sunt sancti praedicatores. Qui quia et gemino praecepto charitatis insignes sunt, et in nova conversatione conversorum animas gignunt, recte tam binario numero, quam feminino genere designantur. Vituli autem sunt desideria terrena. Cum ergo vaccae plaustrum trahunt, domi vitulos claudunt: quia dum electis fidelibus ad supernam patriam ducatum praebent, ea desideria quae eis reprobam vitam suggerunt, prodire ad effectum prohibent. Claudunt quippe vitulos, cum jam superba desideria in ipso suggestionis initio, intra conscientiam conterunt, et proficere ea ad effectum operis non permittunt. Unde et vaccae, quibus non est jugum impositum, ad trahendum plaustrum exquiri perhibentur: quia praedicatores electis fidelibus providendi sunt, qui per nulla onera criminis subjecti sint imperio diabolicae potestatis. De quo profecto jugo per prophetam dicitur: Computrescet jugum a facie olei (Isa. X, 27). Bene autem processus sensuum ordini concordat verborum: quia etsi adversa dominatione sunt liberi, necesse est ut semper sint de futura conversatione suspecti. Vaccae ergo et sine jugo sunt, et tamen earum vituli domi clauduntur: quia sancti praedicatores adversariis spiritibus ex virtute dominantur: sed ab edomandis pravis desideriis, eo intentionem non auferunt, quo de sanctitate, qua se ornatos aspiciunt, securitatem in hac vita perpetuam habere non possunt. Et quia talibus divinae cognitionis gratia latius aperitur, apte arca Domini tolli, et super plaustrum poni praecipitur.

The Lord commanded that this cart be renewed, saying: *This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you* (John 15:12). Hence Paul commands, saying: *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, who according to God is created* (Ephes. 4:23). Hence addressing the Romans, he says: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in contention and envying, not in chambering and impurities, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ* (Rom. 13:13). He, therefore, makes a new cart who both rightly understands both Testaments, and clothed in the splendor of holy conversation, extends himself to supernal desires.

10. The wheels, by which this cart goes, can also designate the double desire of each of the elect: because whoever already, with God helping, holds the present life as the misery of pilgrimage, therefore desires to reach future beatitude; that he may become impassible and immortal: so that, evidently, through one, he may leave the misery which he dreads; through the other, he may never lose the beatitude which he merits. But the kine are the holy preachers. Who, because they are distinguished by the double precept of charity, and bring forth the souls of converts in a new conversation, are rightly designated both by the number two and by the feminine gender. But the calves are earthly desires. Therefore, when the kine draw the cart, they shut up the calves at home: because while they provide guidance to the elect faithful to the supernal fatherland, they prohibit those desires which suggest a reprobate life to them from going forth into effect. For they shut up the calves when they crush proud desires in the very beginning of their suggestion, within the conscience, and do not permit them to advance to the effect of the work. Whence also the kine, upon which no yoke has been laid, are said to be sought out to draw the cart: because preachers are to be provided for the elect faithful, who are subject to the empire of diabolical power by no burdens of crime. Of which yoke indeed it is said through the prophet: *The yoke shall putrefy at the presence of the oil* (Isa. 10:27). But well does the process of the senses agree with the order of the words: because although they are free from adverse domination, it is necessary that they be always suspicious of their future conversation. Therefore the kine are both without a yoke, and yet their calves are shut up at home: because the holy preachers dominate the adverse spirits by virtue: but they do not take their intention away from taming wicked desires, for they cannot have perpetual security in this life concerning the holiness with which they see themselves adorned. And because to such the grace of divine knowledge is opened more widely, the Ark of the Lord is aptly commanded to be taken and placed upon the cart.

Quod autem imponi arca auditoribus super plaustrum jubetur, hoc profecto insinuat, videlicet, quod in sancta Ecclesia plures ordines praesulum invenimus: quia dum praerogativa alii aliis digniores sunt, etiam auctoritatem praecipiendi sortiuntur in culmine ordinis altioris. Cum ergo arca Domini reduci praecipitur, super plaustrum novum poni perhibetur: quia profecto ad aeternam patriam cum cognitione sacramentorum spiritualium recte graditur, qui hoc quod de sancta Scriptura didicit, per novae conversationis pulchritudinem non relinquit.

11. Ad latus autem ejusdem arcae vasa aurea, quae ei pro delicto sunt reddita, poni praecipiuntur. Vasa quippe aurea vocat, quae superius memorat, dicens: Facietis similitudines anorum vestrorum et murium. In quibus profecto vasis peccatorum atque tentationum memoria designari dixeramus. Quid est ergo, quod superius anorum, et 151 murium similitudines esse perhibuit, nunc vasa aurea appellavit? Sed ibi de eo, quod arcae pro peccato exsolvi debebat, tractabatur, hic autem de arcae remissione. Quid ergo est, quod res istae eaedem honestiori nomine exprimuntur, nisi quia peccata, quae poenitentiae fletibus tersa non sunt, in deformitate sua attentius videnda atque lugenda sunt: ea vero, quae jam sunt diluta magnis fletibus, non attentius, neque in deformitate sua respicienda, sed aestimatione humilitatis aliquando cogitanda? Quasi enim in mente poenitentis, et acriter dolentis ani similitudo, et murium est: quando ut attentius lugeat eam, quam ante mentis suae oculos congerit, peccati massam coadunatam videt. Sed cum jam magnis et diuturnis fletibus quodammodo de peccatorum suorum remissione securus ad supernam patriam festinare cursu magnae conversationis coeperit, quasi aurea jam vasa conspicit: quia peccata videt, non quibus se obligatum viderat, sed quae omnipotentis Dei laudibus impendat. Bene autem in capsella ad latus arcae eadem vasa reponuntur. Nam si arca divinae cognitionis secretum insinuat, ad latus vasa dependuntur: quia dum altitudo divinae cognitionis mentem elevat, ad virtutem humilitatis infirma nostra praeterita ad memoriam reducenda sunt. Non igitur ponenda sunt ante arcam; ne, dum immoderatius infirma respicimus, attolli ad superna nequeamus. Constat itaque, quia ex latere dependantur: ut et superna videamus libere, et, cum expedit, ad nostra infirma mentis oculos revocemus.

But that the Ark is commanded to be laid upon the cart by the hearers, this indeed insinuates, evidently, that in the holy Church we find many orders of prelates: because while some are more worthy than others by prerogative, they also obtain the authority of commanding in the height of a higher order. When, therefore, the Ark of the Lord is commanded to be brought back, it is said to be placed upon a new cart: because indeed he rightly goes toward the eternal fatherland with the knowledge of spiritual sacraments, who does not leave behind that which he learned from holy Scripture through the beauty of a new conversation.

11. But by the side of the same Ark the golden vessels, which were restored to Him for sin, are commanded to be placed. For he calls "golden vessels" those which he mentioned above, saying: *You shall make likenesses of your anuses and mice.* In which vessels indeed we had said that the memory of sins and temptations is designated. Why is it, then, that above he asserted they were likenesses of anuses and mice, and now he has called them golden vessels? But there the treatment was concerning that which ought to be paid to the Ark for sin, but here concerning the remission of the Ark. What is it, then, that these same things are expressed by a more honorable name, if not because sins, which have not been wiped away by the weepings of penance, are to be more attentively seen and mourned in their deformity: but those which have already been washed by great weepings, are not to be looked at more attentively, nor in their deformity, but are sometimes to be thought of with the estimation of humility? For as if in the mind of the penitent, and one bitterly grieving, there is the likeness of an anus and of mice: when, in order that he may more attentively mourn it, he sees the mass of sin gathered together before the eyes of his mind. But when, already by great and long-lasting weepings, as if secure concerning the remission of his sins, he has begun to hasten with the course of a great conversation toward the supernal fatherland, he beholds them as if already golden vessels: because he sees the sins, not those to which he had seen himself bound, but those which he may expend for the praises of Almighty God. But well are those same vessels stored in a little box by the side of the Ark. For if the Ark insinuates the secret of divine knowledge, the vessels hang at the side: because while the height of divine knowledge elevates the mind, our past infirmities are to be brought back to memory for the virtue of humility. Therefore they are not to be placed before the Ark; lest, while we behold our infirmities too immoderately, we be unable to be raised to supernal things. It stands, therefore, that they hang from the side: that we may both behold supernal things freely, and, when it is expedient, recall the eyes of the mind to our infirmities.

12. Quid est autem, quod praecipiuntur: Et dimittite eam, ut vadat? Sed arca dimittitur, quando eruditae mentes subditorum a suis rectoribus libere vivere permittuntur: ut videlicet ad aeternam patriam properent, non jam majoris imperio, sed propriae arbitrio rationis. Tenenda est igitur, ut plaustro imponatur; imposita quoque dimittitur: quia nimirum electis subditis disponendae vitae suae licentia a praelatis ante danda non est, quam doctrinae spiritualis eruditionem percipiant, et firmam consuetudinem bonae operationis. Nam nec simplicibus subjectis et bene viventibus, nec eruditis et infirmis vivendi libertas recte conceditur. Illi quippe a callido adversario decipi tanto facilius poterunt, quando et deprehendere ejus insidias per spiritalem eruditionem nequaquam didicerunt: isti vero eo difficilius servant bonum eruditionis, quo tentatoris laqueos eruditi conspiciunt, et eorum vincula devitare eruditi non possunt. Tunc ergo competenter arca dimittitur, cum id, cui imponi debeat, plaustrum ante fabricatur, cum ei vasa aurea, quae debentur pro peccato, ex latere dependuntur: quia profecto tunc secura esse poterit vita libere viventis subditi, cum renovationem interioris hominis custodire longo usu didicerit; cum ex vitae puritate celsitudinem divinae eruditionis apprehendit, atque inter dona sublimia, ea quae aliquando prave egisse memorat, recolere ad humilitatem non negligit. Quae profecto vivendi libertas, quia ad solum studium superni amoris bonis subjectis impenditur, apte et causam, qua eadem arca dimittatur, adjungit: ut vadat, inquit. Quasi enim et aliis verbis dicat: Ad hoc solum liberius vivere permittendi sunt, ut ad coelestem patriam celerius proficiscantur. Sed quia nonnulli subditi tam conversatione quam scientia humano judicio perfecti sunt, 152 non divino; providendum bonorum rectorum studio est, ut eorum curam tunc nec omnino praetereant, cum iidem subditi se de eorum cura dimissos putant, sed pia calliditate explorent jam liberi qualiter vivant, quorum subditionis bona plenius noverant. Quare et subjungitur: Et aspicietis, et si quidem per viam finium suorum ascenderit contra Bethsames, ipse fecit nobis hoc malum grande. Sin autem minime, sciemus quia nequaquam manus ejus tetigit nos, sed casu accidit.

12. But what is it that they are commanded: *And send it away, that it may go*? But the Ark is sent away when the learned minds of subjects are permitted by their rectors to live freely: so that, evidently, they may hasten to the eternal fatherland, no longer by the command of a superior, but by the choice of their own reason. It is therefore to be held, that it may be placed upon the cart; once placed, it is also sent away: because surely the license of disposing their own life is not to be given by prelates to the elect subjects before they receive the instruction of spiritual doctrine and a firm custom of good operation. For neither to simple subjects living well, nor to the learned and weak, is the liberty of living rightly granted. For those indeed can be deceived all the more easily by the crafty adversary, when they have by no means learned to detect his snares through spiritual erudition: but these indeed preserve the good of erudition all the more difficultly, in that being learned they behold the snares of the tempter, and being learned they cannot avoid their bonds. Then, therefore, is the Ark competently sent away, when the cart upon which it ought to be placed is first constructed, and when the golden vessels, which are owed for sin, hang from its side: because surely then the life of a subject living freely will be able to be secure, when he has learned by long use to guard the renovation of the interior man; when from the purity of life he apprehends the loftiness of divine erudition, and among the sublime gifts, he does not neglect to recall those things which he remembers to have sometimes done wickedly, for the sake of humility. Which liberty of living indeed, because it is expended upon good subjects for the sole study of supernal love, aptly also adds the cause for which the same Ark is sent away: *that it may go*, he says. For as if he were saying in other words: For this alone are they to be permitted to live more freely, that they may proceed more swiftly to the heavenly fatherland. But because some subjects are perfect in human judgment, both in conversation and in knowledge, not in divine; provision is to be made by the study of good rectors, that they neither entirely pass over their care then, when those same subjects think themselves dismissed from their care, but by a pious craftiness they explore how those already free may live, the goodness of whose subjection they had more fully known. Wherefore also is subjoined: *And you shall look, and if indeed it go up by the way of his own coasts towards Bethsames, he hath done us this great evil.* But if not, we shall know that it was not his hand that touched us, but it hath happened by chance.

13. Bethsames, ut jam diximus, interpretatur domus solis. Dimissam autem arcam praedicatores aspiciunt, utrum recto itinere contra Bethsames gradiatur: quia et cum proprio arbitrio dimittuntur subditi, explorare praelati debent, an bonum libertatis ad profectum convertant coelestis itineris. Sed et caute notandum est: quia tunc recte contra Bethsames arca ascendit, cum confinium viam gradiendo non deserit. For our borders are the prior elect: for they are "neighbors" (borders) who have their possessions disposed next to each other. Therefore the borders of the elect are the perpetual co-heirs of the eternal kingdom. Nam velut juxta se dispositis possessionibus habitant, qui in eamdem aeternae patriae societatem vocati, de una et eadem Conditoris majestate sortiti sunt jura aeternae haereditatis. Vel idcirco dicuntur confines: quia cum de bona conversatione ad perennis vitae gaudia electi perveniant, qui recte vivunt in hoc mundo, coelestibus civibus vicini sunt. Quae est ergo via confinium, nisi afflictio temporalis? Hanc viam Bethsamis per semetipsum Dominus demonstrat, dicens: Arcta est via, quae ducit ad vitam (Matth. VII, 14). Hanc item commendat, cum discipulos increpans, ait: O stulti, et tardi corde ad credendum, nonne oportuit pati Christum, et ita intrare in gloriam suam? (Luc. XXIV, 25.) Hinc Paulus ait: Per multas tribulationes oportet nos intrare in regnum Dei (Act. XIV, 21). Contra Bethsames ergo tunc arca dirigitur, cum per viam confinium ascendere videtur: quia in superna conversatione ille verius proficit, qui ad aeterna gaudia pervenire non per mundanas delectationes, sed per carnis afflictiones et mundi adversitates quaerit. But because the Ark that has been sent away is said not to go, but to go up, a higher way is indicated to the subjects dismissed in liberty: because they do not rightly walk through the way of Bethsames, if they do not daily profit from good things to better. Ascendere enim meritis virtutum, quotidie ad meliora proficere est. But when the Ark is rightly led toward Bethsames, they ascribe the great evil which they had endured to the works of Almighty God. Malum namque grande eam percussionem vocant, de qua superius legitur: Fiebat manus Domini super singulas civitates interfectionis magnae nimis. Et quia eamdem interfectionem tam ad conversionem Gentilium, quam ad fidelium delinquentium salubrem compunctionem retulimus, cum arca recte contra Bethsames graditur, malum illud grande quod acciderat, a Deo esse indicatur: quia profecto electorum singulorum finis indicat, qualiter praedicatoris animus eorum prima opera recognoscat.

13. Bethsames, as we have already said, is interpreted as the "house of the sun." But the preachers watch the Ark that has been sent away, whether it goes by the straight journey toward Bethsames: because also when subjects are dismissed by their own judgment, the prelates ought to explore whether they convert the good of liberty to the progress of the heavenly journey. But it is also to be cautiously noted: because then the Ark rightly goes up toward Bethsames, when it does not desert the way of the borders in its journeying. For our borders are the prior elect: for they are "neighbors" (borders) who have their possessions disposed next to each other. Therefore the borders of the elect are the perpetual co-heirs of the eternal kingdom. For they dwell as if with possessions disposed next to each other, who, called into the same society of the eternal fatherland, have obtained by lot the rights of eternal inheritance from one and the same majesty of the Creator. Or for this reason are they called borders: because since the elect reach the joys of perennial life through a good conversation, they who live rightly in this world are neighbors to the heavenly citizens. What, then, is the way of the borders, if not temporal affliction? The Lord Himself demonstrates this way to Bethsames through Himself, saying: *Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life* (Matth. 7:14). This same one He commends, when rebuking the disciples, he says: *O foolish, and slow of heart to believe, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?* (Luke 24:25.) Hence Paul says: *Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God* (Acts 14:21). Toward Bethsames, therefore, is the Ark then directed, when it is seen to go up by the way of the borders: because in the supernal conversation he more truly profits, who seeks to reach eternal joys not through mundane delights, but through the afflictions of the flesh and the adversities of the world. But because the Ark that has been sent away is said not to go, but to go up, a higher way is indicated to the subjects dismissed in liberty: because they do not rightly walk through the way of Bethsames, if they do not daily profit from good things to better. For to go up by the merits of virtues is to daily profit to better things. But when the Ark is rightly led toward Bethsames, they ascribe the great evil which they had endured to the works of Almighty God. For they call a "great evil" that percussion of which is read above: *The hand of the Lord was made upon each of the cities with a very great slaughter.* And because we have referred the same slaughter both to the conversion of the Gentiles, and to the salutary compunction of delinquent faithful, when the Ark rightly goes toward Bethsames, that great evil which had happened is indicated to be from God: because surely the end of each of the elect indicates how the mind of the preacher recognizes their first works.

14. Nam si in fine deficiunt, aperte cognoscitur, quia bona eorum principia a Domino non fuerunt. Unde et subditur: Sin autem minime, scimus quia nequaquam manus ejus tetigit nos, sed casu accidit. Manus Domini quid est, nisi unigenitus Patris aeterni? Manu namque Domini non tanguntur, qui 153 non inspiratione divini verbi, sed subita deliberatione cordis sui a pristina conversatione separantur. Qui certe tanto celerius ab incoepta bonitate deficiunt, quanto quod per arctam viam ingredi ad aeternam patriam proposuerant, qua fortitudine exsequendum esset, praecogitare nescierunt. Quare apte dictum est: Casu accidit. Quod enim casu accidit, subito et sine consilio et provisione contingit. Cum ergo hi qui a mundi amore, sive qui ab infidelitate discessisse videbantur conversi, ad prioris vitae nequitiam reviviscunt, aperte cognoscitur, quia non manu Domini, ut videbantur interfecti, sed accidente casu a pristina sint conversatione separati. Sequitur:

(Vers. 10, 11.) Fecerunt illi hoc modo, et tollentes duas vaccas junxerunt ad plaustrum, vitulosque earum clauserunt domi, et posuerunt arcam Dei super plaustrum, et capsellam quae habebat mures aureos et similitudines anorum.

Quia haec supra latius exposita sunt, quid jam in se de spiritali eruditione contineat ipsa profectio arcae, videamus. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 12.) Ibant autem in directum vaccae per viam quae ducit Bethsames, et itinere uno gradiebantur, pergentes et mugientes: et non declinabant neque ad dexteram, neque ad sinistram.

15. In directum per viam quae ducit Bethsames ire, est in studio coelestis perfectionis, afflictionem carnis tenere per virtutem discretionis. Nam in directum vaccae nequaquam gradiuntur, si in afflictione carnis discretio non servatur. Denique dum ultra modum caro affligitur, conferre opem spiritui eadem caro omnino defecta non sufficit. Et si digne non affligitur, dum superbit, velut libera servire menti indomita dedignatur. Bene igitur, dum per viam Bethsamis in directum vaccae ire referuntur, subjunctum est: Quia non declinabant neque ad dexteram, neque ad sinistram. Ad dexteram quippe declinare, est virtuti abstinentiae immoderate insistere: quia per bonum, quod videtur, viam deserimus, dum sic necessariam abstinentiae virtutem sequimur, ut alia nobis auxilia de carne subtrahamus. Ad sinistram quoque declinare, est carni abundantius indulgere. Nam per apertae remissionis vitium a Bethsamis via deflectimur, dum carnem per delicias deducimus, qui paradisi viam in afflictione dispositam noveramus.

14. For if they fail in the end, it is openly known that their good beginnings were not from the Lord. Whence also is subjoined: *But if not, we shall know that it was not his hand that touched us, but it hath happened by chance.* What is the "hand of the Lord," if not the Only-begotten of the eternal Father? By the "hand of the Lord" those are not touched who are separated from their former conversation not by the inspiration of the divine word, but by a sudden deliberation of their own heart. Who certainly fail from their begun goodness all the more swiftly, the more they did not know how to pre-meditate with what fortitude that which they had proposed to enter through the narrow way to the eternal fatherland was to be followed out. Wherefore it was aptly said: *It happened by chance.* For that which happens by chance, occurs suddenly and without counsel and provision. When, therefore, these who seemed to have departed from the love of the world, or who from infidelity seemed to have been converted, return to the wickedness of their former life, it is openly known that they were not, as they seemed, struck by the hand of the Lord, but were separated from their former conversation by a happening chance. There follows:

(Vers. 10, 11.) *They did in that manner: and taking two kine, that had calves, they yoked them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home, and they laid the ark of God upon the cart, and the little box that had in it the golden mice and the likenesses of the anuses.*

Since these things have been set forth more widely above, let us see what the departure itself of the Ark already contains in itself concerning spiritual erudition. For there follows:

(Vers. 12.) *And the kine took the straight way that leadeth to Bethsames, and they went along the way, lowing as they went: and they turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.*

15. To go straight along the way that leads to Bethshemesh is, in the pursuit of heavenly perfection, to maintain the affliction of the flesh through the virtue of discretion. For the kine by no means walk straight if discretion is not observed in the affliction of the flesh. Finally, while the flesh is afflicted beyond measure, that same flesh, being entirely exhausted, does not suffice to bring aid to the spirit. And if it is not worthily afflicted, while it grows proud, like one untamed, it disdains to serve the mind as if it were free. Therefore, while the kine are reported to go straight through the way of Bethshemesh, it is well added: *For they turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.* Indeed, to turn to the right is to persist immoderately in the virtue of abstinence: because through a good that is seen, we desert the way, while we so follow the necessary virtue of abstinence that we withdraw other aids from the flesh. To turn to the left also is to indulge the flesh more abundantly. For through the vice of open remission, we are deflected from the way of Bethshemesh, while we lead the flesh through delights, we who had known the way of paradise disposed in affliction.

16. Et quia nulla est vitae parcioris sinceritas, si munditiae boni operis simplicitas non concordat intentionis, caute expressum est: Et itinere uno gradiebantur. Uno quippe itinere graditur, qui virtutem quam praetendit in bono opere, in recta servat intentione. Quo contra de unoquoque reprobo dicitur: Vae peccatori ingredienti terram duabus viis (Eccli. II, 14). Duabus quippe viis peccator terram ingreditur, cum Dei videtur esse quod agit, sed ex omni quod religiosum foris exhibet, intus saeculi intentionem tenet. Uno autem itinere gradi electos suos Dominus insinuat, dicens: Si oculus tuus fuerit simplex, totum corpus tuum lucidum erit (Matth. VI, 22). Hinc Paulus ait: Gloria nostra haec est, testimonium conscientiae nostrae (II Cor. I, 12). Hinc David: Omnis gloria ejus filiae regis ab intus (Psal. XLIV, 14). Uno igitur itinere contra Bethsames vaccae gradiuntur, quia electi ad aeternam patriam festinantes, bona foris agunt, sed ex eisdem bonis operibus saeculi praemia non requirunt.

17. Quid est autem quod de eisdem vaccis dicitur, quia gradiebantur pergentes et mugientes. Sed pergere dicuntur, quia sancti viri bona incessanter faciunt: mugiunt vero, quia carnalia desideria in semetipsis exstinguere sine magna quotidie tribulatione non possunt. Mugire namque, ad laborem edomandae carnis pertinet; pergere autem, ad perseverantiam bonae voluntatis. Nam dum contra naturam caro carnales motus comprimere cogitur, velut mugit dum graditur, quia propria desideria adimplere prohibetur. Bene quippe duo haec in sanctorum profectione describuntur, videlicet pergere et mugire. Quia etsi eis ad supernam patriam festinantibus, magna est instantia desiderii, est nihilominus invincibilis patientia laboris. Nam de his vaccis pergentibus per Ezechielem dicitur: Non revertebantur, cum incederent (Ezech. I, 12). Vaccarum quoque mugitum, et causam exprimit Paulus, dicens: Video aliam legem contradicentem legi mentis meae, et captivum me ducentem in lege peccati. Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus? (Rom. VII, 23, 24.) Mugiunt ergo vaccae, sed pergunt: quia sancti viri, etsi magna sunt tentamenta quae perferunt, viam tamen supernae patriae non relinquunt. Pergunt item, sed mugiunt: quia etsi magnis desideriis ad superna properant, profectum tamen superni itineris non de quiete pacis obtinent, sed ex triumpho tentationis. Sequitur:

16. And because there is no sincerity in a more sparing life if the simplicity of intention does not agree with the purity of a good work, it is cautiously expressed: *And they went along by one way.* For he walks by one way who preserves the virtue which he puts forward in a good work in a right intention. On the contrary, it is said of every reprobate: *Woe to the sinner that goeth upon the earth by two ways* (Ecclus. 2:14). Indeed, a sinner enters the earth by two ways when what he does seems to be of God, but from everything religious that he exhibits outwardly, he holds within a worldly intention. But the Lord suggests that His elect walk by one way, saying: *If thy eye be simple, thy whole body shall be lightsome* (Matt. 6:22). Hence Paul says: *Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience* (2 Cor. 1:12). Hence David: *All the glory of that daughter of the king is from within* (Ps. 44:14). Therefore, the kine walk by one way against Bethshemesh, because the elect, hastening to the eternal fatherland, do good things outwardly, but from those same good works they do not seek the rewards of the world.

17. But what is it that is said of the same kine, that *they went along, lowing as they went*? They are said to go along because holy men do good things incessantly: but they low because they cannot extinguish carnal desires in themselves without great daily tribulation. For to low pertains to the labor of taming the flesh; but to go along pertains to the perseverance of a good will. For while the flesh is compelled against nature to compress carnal movements, it lows, as it were, while it walks, because it is prohibited from fulfilling its own desires. Well indeed are these two described in the departure of the saints, namely, to go along and to low. Because even if there is great persistence of desire in them as they hasten to the heavenly fatherland, there is nonetheless invincible patience of labor. For concerning these kine going along, it is said through Ezekiel: *They turned not back when they went* (Ezek. 1:12). Paul also expresses the lowing of the kine and its cause, saying: *I see another law fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* (Rom. 7:23, 24.) Therefore the kine low, but they go along: because holy men, even if the temptations they endure are great, nevertheless do not leave the way of the heavenly fatherland. They go along likewise, but they low: because even if they hasten to heavenly things with great desires, nevertheless they do not obtain the progress of the heavenly journey from the quiet of peace, but from the triumph of temptation. There follows:

(Vers. 12.) Sed et satrapae Philisthinorum sequebantur usque ad terminos Bethsamis. 18. Quinam sunt termini ad quos sequi proficiscentem arcam Dei praelatis necessarium est, et quos in arcae Dei comitatu progredi congruum non est? Quos nimirum terminos si accipiamus in eruditione sacri eloquii, et bona operatione, contrarium non videtur. Sed hi profecto termini Bethsamis, sequentium principum termini sunt, cum pro modo suo quisque super subditis perfectus est doctrina sacri eloquii, et usu bonae operationis. Eo enim jam de isto securus pastor efficitur, quo et caute jam spiritalia conspicit, et ea quae ratione comperit fortitudine boni operis apprehendit. Qui profecto termini, Bethsamis esse termini dicuntur: quia nimirum, dum eruditos Dei operarios dignanter excipiunt, ad contemplationem supernae patriae introducunt. Termini namque sunt: quia et dignos ad contemplationem suscipiunt, indignos expellunt. Indocti quippe si ad contemplanda subtilius superna se sustollere praesumunt, potius errando deviant, quam lumen veritatis apprehendant. Et nisi quis bona opera praemittat, hoc profecto agit, ut illam quam appetit claritatem internae visionis, nunquam inveniat. Unde et Dominus in Evangelio, quasi ad terminos Bethsamis contemplativae vitae amatores transmittens, ait: Qui habet verba mea, et facit ea, hic est qui me diligit: qui autem diligit me, diligetur a Patre meo, et ego diligam eum, et manifestabo ei meipsum (Joan. XIV, 21). Qui enim se manifestaturum non nisi diligentibus dicit, se autem diligere eos qui servant mandata ejus, aperte docet quia lucem suae occultae visionis non tribuit, nisi pro retributione bonae operationis. Sequitur:

(Vers. 13.) Porro Bethsamitae metebant triticum in valle.

Qui enim Bethsamitae rectius possunt intelligi quam hi qui perfecti jam viri sunt in sublimitate contemplationis? Nam velut de domo solis sunt, qui, contemptis terrenis omnibus, veri luminis splendoribus illustrantur. De domo quidem solis sunt, qui, jam omni mundo sepulti, ad videndam Conditoris sui claritatem flamma mirae dilectionis inardescunt. Qui ad civitatem suam duobus modis ascendunt: qui ad supernae patriae claritatem, et nunc per contemplationem, et in fine per veritatem gloriae perducuntur, nunc ad domum solis contemplando evolant;

(Vers. 12.) *And the lords of the Philistines followed them as far as the borders of Bethsames.* 18. What are the borders as far as which it is necessary for those in charge to follow the departing Ark of God, and beyond which it is not fitting to proceed in the company of the Ark of God? Indeed, if we take these borders to be in the instruction of sacred eloquence and in good work, it does not seem contrary. But these borders of Bethshemesh are surely the borders of the following princes, when each one is perfect over his subjects according to his measure in the doctrine of sacred eloquence and in the practice of good work. For by this the pastor is already made secure concerning that person, in that he already cautiously perceives spiritual things and apprehends those things which he has discovered by reason with the strength of good work. Which borders, indeed, are said to be the borders of Bethshemesh: because surely, while they worthily receive the learned workers of God, they introduce them to the contemplation of the heavenly fatherland. For they are borders: because they both receive the worthy to contemplation and expel the unworthy. For the unlearned, if they presume to lift themselves up to contemplate heavenly things too subtly, rather deviate by erring than apprehend the light of truth. And unless one sends good works before, he surely does this: that he never finds that clarity of internal vision which he seeks. Whence also the Lord in the Gospel, as if sending the lovers of the contemplative life to the borders of Bethshemesh, says: *He that hath my words and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved by my Father: and I will love him and will manifest myself to him* (John 14:21). For He who says that He will not manifest Himself except to those who love Him, but openly teaches that they love Him who keep His commandments, shows that He does not grant the light of His hidden vision except as a reward for good work. There follows:

(Vers. 13.) *Moreover the Bethsamites were reaping wheat in the valley.*

For who can be more rightly understood as Bethsamites than those who are already perfect men in the loftiness of contemplation? For they are as it were of the house of the sun, who, having despised all earthly things, are illustrated by the splendors of the true light. They are indeed of the house of the sun, who, already buried to all the world, burn with a wondrous flame of love to see the clarity of their Creator. Who ascend to their city in two ways: those who are led to the clarity of the heavenly fatherland, both now through contemplation and at the end through the truth of glory, now fly out to the house of the sun by contemplating;

sed quod nunc mentis puritate aspiciunt, tunc per praesentem laetitiam aeternae retributionis veritatem apprehendunt. Bethsames ergo arca Dei perducitur, cum mens electa, aut per contemplationis altitudinem, aut per assumptionem retributionis, ad aeterna gaudia sublimatur. Qui ergo aeternum illum, et ineffabilem arcae situm scire non possumus, ea, quae de isto, quem novimus, dicuntur, audiamus. Quid est ergo, quod Bethsamitae metunt triticum in valle, nisi quia contemplativae vitae dediti, delicias internae refectionis colligunt in virtute humilitatis? Vallis quippe in sacro eloquio aestimationem designat humilium, Psalmista testante, qui de Domino loquens, ait: Qui emittis fontes in convallibus (Psal. CIII, 10). Nam infusionem supernae gratiae mentibus infundit dispositis per humilitatem. Bethsamitae ergo in valle triticum metunt: quia contemplationi vacantes, dum pro humilitatis merito clarius superna conspiciunt, ad suaviorem refectionem mentium ligant manipulos gaudiorum. Nam triticeus panis, sicut aspectu candidior, ita et sapore delectabilior est.

20. Sed fortasse in ista vita adhuc positi non sumimus panem, sed spicas metimus; in illa autem superna vita beatitudinis, non spicas, sed panem manducamus. In ista etenim vita, cum ad contemplanda aeterna sustollimur, supernarum rerum similitudines capere de rebus istis infimis et visibilibus nitimur: ut juxta egregii doctoris vocem, Invisibilia a creatura mundi, per ea quae visibilia facta sunt, cognoscamus (Rom. I, 20). Quare et ille verus Bethsamita, et domesticus solis justitiae exsultans, ait: Delectasti me, Domine, in factura tua, et in operibus manuum tuarum exsultabo. Quam magnificata sunt opera tua, Domine, nimis profundae factae sunt cogitationes tuae (Psal. XCI, 5, 6). Sed dum in rebus visibilibus invisibilium rerum gaudia excipimus, velut intra paleas adhuc triticum tenemus. Tunc autem nobis purum triticum, sive de tritico panis erit. Nam cum absorpta jam morte, in aeterna vita, revelata facie, clarius Redemptorem cernemus, ad ejus cognitionem thecis similitudinum non egemus. Bene ergo de Bethsamitis dicitur, quod metebant triticum in valle: quia perfecti viri, etsi pro humilitatis merito sublimitatem supernae contemplationis accipiunt, ad illam omnipotentis Dei puram substantiam contemplandam eo pertingere nequeunt, quo refectionem suae mentis adhuc velut inter paleas metunt. Cujus profecto humilitatis bonum designatur, cum subditur:

(Vers. 13.) Et elevantes oculos viderunt arcam Dei.

but what they now behold by the purity of the mind, they then apprehend the truth of eternal retribution through present joy. Therefore the Ark of God is brought to Bethshemesh when the elect mind is sublimated to eternal joys, either through the height of contemplation or through the assumption of retribution. We, therefore, who cannot know that eternal and ineffable location of the Ark, let us hear those things which are said concerning this one which we know. What is it, then, that the Bethsamites reap wheat in the valley, except that those devoted to the contemplative life collect the delights of internal refreshment in the virtue of humility? For a valley in sacred eloquence designates the estimation of the humble, as the Psalmist testifies, who, speaking of the Lord, says: *Who sendest forth springs in the valleys* (Ps. 103:10). For He pours the infusion of heavenly grace into minds disposed through humility. Therefore the Bethsamites reap wheat in the valley: because while they are vacant for contemplation, through the merit of humility they behold heavenly things more clearly, they bind the sheaves of joys for the sweeter refreshment of their minds. For wheaten bread, as it is whiter in appearance, so also it is more delightful in taste.

20. But perhaps being yet placed in this life we do not take the bread, but we reap the ears; in that heavenly life of beatitude, however, we do not eat the ears, but the bread. For in this life, when we are lifted up to contemplate eternal things, we strive to take the likenesses of heavenly things from these lowest and visible things: so that according to the voice of the eminent teacher, *we may know the invisible things of the world from the creature, through those things which have been made visible* (Rom. 1:20). Wherefore also that true Bethsamite, and domestic of the sun of justice exulting, says: *Thou hast delighted me, O Lord, in thy creation: and I will exult in the works of thy hands. How magnified are thy works, O Lord! thy thoughts are made exceeding deep* (Ps. 91:5, 6). But while we receive the joys of invisible things in visible things, we as it were still hold the wheat within the chaff. Then, however, there will be for us pure wheat, or bread from the wheat. For when, death having been swallowed up, in eternal life, with revealed face, we shall more clearly see the Redeemer, we shall not need the cases of likenesses for His cognition. Well therefore is it said of the Bethsamites that they reaped wheat in the valley: because perfect men, although they receive the loftiness of heavenly contemplation through the merit of humility, nevertheless cannot reach that pure substance of Almighty God to contemplate it in such a way that they still reap the refreshment of their mind as if among the chaff. The good of which humility is indeed designated when it is added:

(Vers. 13.) *And lifting up their eyes, they saw the Ark of God.*

Oculos quippe elevant: quia dum de se alta non sentiunt, aestimatione sua velut in plano sunt. Oculos elevant: quia eos, quos divina gratia dignos aspiciunt, in alto positos meritorum culmine contemplantur. Sed elevantes oculos arcam vident: quia quo se humilius per aestimationem dejiciunt, proximorum bona cognoscere melius possunt. Ea etenim veritas, quae superborum corda per semetipsam deserit, illa eis etiam dona, quae confert humilibus, abscondit; ut velut obcaecati penitus, nec in terra diffusum jam solem videant, qui ejus claritatis radios videre in coelo desierunt. Sed quia regressionem arcae Dei ad propositum contemplativae vitae retulimus, elevatio etiam oculorum ad studium discernendorum spirituum non inconvenienter referri potest. Bethsamitae quippe oculos levant, cum vitae secretioris proposito confluentium ad se dona, subtili inspectione considerant; cum intenta mente discutiunt, an vitae altioris propositum, quod accedendo expetunt, recta validaque intentione prosequantur. Levare igitur oculos eis est novitiorum spiritum altius considerare. Sed levantes oculos arcam Dei respiciunt: quia dum subtilius ejus conversions discutiunt, quia virtutum spiritualium gratia fulgeant, deprehendunt. Et quia per affectum dilectionis, de cognitis eorum bonis hilarescunt, apte subjungitur: (Vers. 13.) Et gavisi sunt, cum venissent. Sequitur:

(Vers. 14.) Et venit plaustrum in agrum Josue Bethsamite, et stetit ibi. Si Bethsames interpretatur domus solis, domus solis civitas est coelestis. Hic Josue Bethsamita non tam typo, quam ipso nomine et dignitate humani generis Redemptorem significat. Josue quippe, salvator nostro eloquio dicitur. Et de semetipso Dominus dicit: Venit filius hominis quaerere, et salvum facere quod perierat (Luc. XIX, 10). Hinc est etiam, quod Joseph in somnis per angelum repromittitur: Ipse salvum faciet populum suum a peccatis eorum (Matth. I, 21). Bethsamitam quoque se esse per semetipsum manifestat, dicens: Ego sum panis vivus, qui de coelo descendi (Joan. VI, 41). Hinc Joannes Baptista ait: Qui de coelo venit, super omnes est (Joan. III, 31). Quis est ergo ager Josue Bethsamitae, nisi amoenitas vitae contemplativae? Ibi enim et herbarum virores, et odores aromatum, et florum diversa pulchritudo cernitur; quia nimirum quo superna illa societas clarius aspicitur, quod incorruptibile floret angelis, quod immarcescibile viret sanctis, quod inviolabile in virginibus redolet, contemplantium oculis gratius exhibetur.

Indeed they lift up their eyes: because while they do not think high things of themselves, they are as it were on a level in their own estimation. They lift up their eyes: because they contemplate those whom they behold worthy of divine grace, placed on the high summit of merits. But lifting up their eyes they see the Ark: because the more humbly they cast themselves down by estimation, the better they can know the goods of their neighbors. For that truth, which by itself deserts the hearts of the proud, also hides from them those gifts which it confers on the humble; so that as if entirely blinded, they see neither the sun already diffused on the earth, they who have ceased to see the rays of its clarity in heaven. But because we have referred the return of the Ark of God to the purpose of the contemplative life, the lifting up also of the eyes can be referred not inconveniently to the study of discerning spirits. For the Bethsamites lift their eyes when, with the purpose of a more secret life, they consider with subtle inspection the gifts of those flocking to them; when with intent mind they discuss whether they follow the purpose of a higher life, which they seek by approaching, with a right and valid intention. To lift the eyes, therefore, is for them to consider more deeply the spirit of the novices. But lifting up their eyes they look back at the Ark of God: because while they discuss its conversions more subtly, they catch that they shine with the grace of spiritual virtues. And because through the affect of love, they grow cheerful concerning their known goods, it is aptly subjoined: (Vers. 13.) *And they rejoiced when they had come.* There follows:

(Vers. 14.) *And the cart came into the field of Josue the Bethsamite, and stood there.* If Bethshemesh is interpreted as the house of the sun, the house of the sun is the heavenly city. Here Joshua the Bethsamite signifies the Redeemer of the human race not so much by type as by the name itself and dignity. For Joshua, in our eloquence, is called savior. And of Himself the Lord says: *The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost* (Luke 19:10). Hence it is also that in sleep it is promised to Joseph through the angel: *He shall save his people from their sins* (Matt. 1:21). He also manifests Himself to be a Bethsamite through Himself, saying: *I am the living bread which came down from heaven* (John 6:41). Hence John the Baptist says: *He that cometh from heaven is above all* (John 3:31). What is, therefore, the field of Joshua the Bethsamite, except the pleasantness of the contemplative life? For there both the greenness of herbs, and the odors of spices, and the diverse beauty of flowers are discerned; because surely the more clearly that heavenly society is beheld, what blooms incorruptibly for the angels, what is green unfadingly for the saints, what smells inviolably in the virgins, is exhibited more gratefully to the eyes of the contemplatives.

Bene autem idem ager Salvatoris esse perhibetur; quia contemplativae vitae amatores, quo secretius conversantur, Redemptori nostro gratiores et familiariores sunt. In agrum quoque Josue Bethsamitae plaustrum venit, cum mens electa a saeculi intentione divisa, solis coelestibus intendit, cum coelestis jam amoenitate visionis fruitur; quia terrena respicere per amorem dedignatur. Et notandum quia hoc plaustrum novum fuisse, non valde supra relatum est; quia profecto mens criminum vetustate resoluta, ad tantam gloriam recipi non meretur.

23. Sed habet vita secretior delicias in amoenitate visionis, habet ingentem laborem in strenuitate certaminis; quia nimirum divina praemia sicut ex triumpho consequimur, ita et strenue dimicando custodimus. Bene ergo de veniente in agrum Jesu plaustro subjungitur: Et stetit ibi. Stare quippe ad praelii custodiam pertinet, non ad pacis quietem. Stetit quippe plaustrum in agro; quia etsi mens, amoena jam illius supernae, et semper virentis patriae videndo atque amando inhabitat; tamen quod amorem visionis delectabiliter possidet, sine incessantis curae sollicitudine nequaquam servat. Sed nimirum in tanto agone posita mens humana deficeret, si ille, qui humanam infirmitatem in sua divinitate roboravit, ei praesentiae suae auxilium non praeberet. Quare et causam exponens, qua stare in agro plaustrum potuerit, addidit, dicens:

(Vers. 14.) Erat enim ibi lapis magnus. Lapis quippe magnus Redemptor intelligitur generis humani. De quo lapide per Psalmistam dicitur: Lapidem hic quem reprobaverunt aedificantes, factus est in caput anguli (Psal. CXVII, 22). Hinc doctor egregius collaudans, ait: Superaedificati supra fundamentum apostolorum et prophetarum, ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Jesu (Eph. II, 20), in quo et vos tanquam lapides vivi superaedificamini (I Petr. II, 5). Et magnus quidem lapis dicitur: quia incomparabili fortitudine praedicatur. Cum ergo venisse et stetisse in agro plaustrum dicitur, additum est: Erat ibi lapis magnus: ut latentibus mysteriis designaret: quia contemplativae vitae dediti, servare dona tam ingentia ideo possunt, quia juxta eum per gratiam sunt, a quo eadem dona perceperunt. Sequitur:

(Vers. 14.) Et conciderunt ligna plaustri, vaccasque imposuerunt super ea in holocaustum Domino. 25. Quae sunt ligna plaustri arcae Dei, nisi sanctae Scripturae sententiae, et exempla justorum? Bethsamitae quippe ligna concidunt, cum secretioris vitae praepositi subjectorum suorum mentibus Scripturarum sensus subtilius aperiunt, cum excellentiora exempla Patrum ad eorum imitationem proferunt; ut in eorum cordibus superni amoris flamma tanto ferventius ardeat, quanto fomentum incendii, velut concisa ligna, citius subministrant.

But well is the same field asserted to be the Savior's; because the lovers of the contemplative life, the more secretly they converse, the more grateful and familiar they are to our Redeemer. The cart also comes into the field of Joshua the Bethsamite when the elect mind, divided from the intention of the world, intends only for heavenly things, when it already enjoys the pleasantness of the heavenly vision; because it disdains through love to look back at earthly things. And it is to be noted that this cart was new, as was not much above related; because surely a mind dissolved by the oldness of crimes does not deserve to be received to such great glory.

23. But the more secret life has delights in the pleasantness of vision, it has huge labor in the vigor of the struggle; because surely as we follow after divine rewards as from a triumph, so also we keep them by fighting vigorously. Well therefore is it subjoined concerning the cart coming into the field of Jesus: *And it stood there.* For to stand pertains to the guard of battle, not to the quiet of peace. The cart indeed stood in the field; because even if the mind inhabits by seeing and loving that pleasant, and always green heavenly fatherland; nevertheless what it delectably possesses of the love of the vision, it by no means keeps without the solicitude of incessant care. But surely the human mind placed in so great an agony would fail, if He who strengthened human infirmity in His divinity did not provide for it the aid of His presence. Wherefore also, exposing the cause by which the cart could stand in the field, he added, saying:

(Vers. 14.) *For there was a great stone there.* Indeed the great stone is understood as the Redeemer of the human race. Concerning which stone it is said through the Psalmist: *The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner* (Ps. 117:22). Hence the eminent teacher commending, says: *Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone* (Eph. 2:20), *in whom you also as living stones are built up* (1 Pet. 2:5). And indeed it is called a great stone: because it is preached with incomparable strength. When therefore the cart is said to have come and to have stood in the field, it is added: *For there was a great stone there:* so that he might designate by latent mysteries: because those devoted to the contemplative life are able to keep so great gifts for this reason, because through grace they are near to Him from whom they received the same gifts. There follows:

(Vers. 14.) *And they cut the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a holocaust to the Lord.* 25. What are the woods of the cart of the Ark of God, except the sentences of holy Scripture, and the examples of the just? Indeed the Bethsamites cut the wood, when those set over the more secret life open more subtly to the minds of their subjects the senses of the Scriptures, when they bring forward the more excellent examples of the Fathers for their imitation; so that the flame of heavenly love may burn the more fervently in their hearts, by as much as they more quickly minister the fuel of the fire, like cut wood.

Plaustri quippe ligna sunt, quia mens per Dei gratiam renovata, ea per memoriam retinet. De quibus profecto lignis sanctus legislator decernit, dicens: Ignis in altari meo semper debet esse: quem nutriat sacerdos, suggerens mane ligna per singulos dies (Levit. VI, 12). Quia vero concidi ligna memorantur, apertius indicant, quia contemplativae vitae puritatem quaerentibus, non communia de sacro eloquio, sed altiora et excellentia quaeque pandenda sunt; ut eo fortius se in alta videndo sublevent, quo eis nobiliora bona quae audiunt magis placent. Unde et bene subjungitur: Quia vaccas imposuere super ea in holocaustum Domino. Holocaustum namque combustum dicitur. Cum ergo ligna conciduntur, holocausta desuper impositis vaccis fiunt: quia qui eximia de Scripturis devota mente suscipiunt, quo in superna se desideria altius extendunt, eo nil in eis deseritur, quod non divini amoris flamma comburatur. Et tunc quidem curare doctorem necesse est, ut religiosi subjecti alta considerent, et tamen per aestimationem de se alta non teneant; ne, quo celsius summa videndo proficiunt, per elationem corruentes, periculosius elidantur. Unde et hic quoque subditur:

(Vers. 15.) Levitae autem deposuerunt arcam Dei, et capsellam quae erat juxta eam, in qua erant vasa aurea, et posuerunt super lapidem grandem. Levitae interpretantur assumpti. Qui ergo sunt Levitae, nisi qui sic sunt divina gratia confirmati, ut a sancto Spiritu deseri nunquam possint? Arcam quippe Levitae deponunt, cum perfecti praedicatores suos subjectos admonent, ut eos spiritalis scientia nequaquam inflet. Capsellam quoque cum vasis aureis deponunt, cum eos etiam de vitae splendore conveniunt, ut eo de se humilius sentiant, quo etiam Redemptorem nostrum ad exaltationis suae praemium, eorum quisque jam pervenisse didicit, quia de se inaniter alta non sensit. Bene itaque deposita arca, et vasa aurea super grandem lapidem posita memorantur: quia inter dona sublimia de se humilmente sapere illi verius possunt, qui Redemptoris magnitudinem et humilitatem recolere saepius didicerunt.

Indeed they are the woods of the cart, because the mind renewed through the grace of God retains them through memory. Concerning which woods, indeed, the holy legislator decrees, saying: *The fire upon my altar ought always to be: which the priest shall nourish, suggesting wood in the morning for each day* (Lev. 6:12). But because the woods are mentioned to be cut, they indicate more openly that for those seeking the purity of the contemplative life, not common things from sacred eloquence, but all the higher and excellent things are to be opened; so that they may lift themselves up in seeing high things the more strongly, by as much as the nobler goods which they hear please them more. Whence also it is well subjoined: *Because they offered the kine upon them as a holocaust to the Lord.* For a holocaust is said to be something burnt. When therefore the woods are cut, holocausts are made from the kine placed upon them: because they who receive eminent things from the Scriptures with a devoted mind, the more they extend themselves into heavenly desires, the more nothing is left in them which the flame of divine love does not consume. And then indeed it is necessary for the teacher to take care that the religious subjects consider high things, and nevertheless do not hold high things of themselves through estimation; lest, by as much as they profit by seeing the highest things more loftily, falling through elation, they be dashed down more dangerously. Whence also here too it is subjoined:

(Vers. 15.) *But the Levites took down the Ark of God, and the little box that was at its side, in which were the golden vessels, and laid them upon a great stone.* Levites are interpreted as "assumed." Who then are the Levites, except those who are so confirmed by divine grace that they can never be deserted by the holy Spirit? Indeed the Levites take down the Ark when perfect preachers admonish their subjects that spiritual science should by no means puff them up. They also take down the little box with the golden vessels when they also convene them concerning the splendor of life, so that they may feel the more humbly of themselves, by as much as each of them has already learned that our Redeemer has reached the reward of His exaltation, because He did not vainly feel high things of Himself. Well therefore are the Ark having been taken down, and the golden vessels placed upon the great stone, mentioned: because those who have more truly learned to recollect the magnitude and humility of the Redeemer can taste of themselves humbly among sublime gifts.

Nam deponere arcam Dei, et super lapidem grandem volebat ponere, qui dicebat: Hoc sentite in vobis, quod in Christo Jesu. Qui cum in forma Dei esset, non rapinam arbitratus est se esse aequalem Deo; sed semetipsum exinanivit, formam servi accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus, et habitu inventus ut homo; humiliavit se factus obediens usque ad mortem crucis (Philip. II, 5). Sed qui de subditorum cordibus amoris hostiam ministerio praedicationis Deo immolant, de suis etiam mentibus excellentiora valde oblationum dona repraesentant. Unde et subditur: Viri autem Bethsamitae obtulerunt holocausta, et immolaverunt victimas in die illa Domino.

27. In qua die, nisi in illa in qua holocaustum Domino vaccas super plaustri ligna posuere? Quae est igitur dies illa, nisi illuminatio divinae praedicationis? Ea namque die Bethsamitae holocausta Domino offerunt, ea die victimas immolant qua ligna concidunt, qua super ea holocaustum Domino vaccas imponunt; quia sancti praedicatores ea luce verbi, qua subjectis emicant, sibi quoque ad rectitudinem superni itineris officium visionis administrant, et contemptis rebus infimis, per vim dilectionis omnipotenti Deo tanto se liberius exhibent, quanto etiam auditores suos ei jam magna familiaritate conjunctos vident. Quia vero non solum holocausta obtulisse, sed immolasse victimas viri Bethsamitae relati sunt, perfectorum virorum spiritalis oblation designatur. Nam holocausta offerunt, cum per contemplationis ascensum se Deo omnipotenti ineffabili affectione conjungunt. Sed holocaustis victimas sociant: quia nimirum tantae jucunditatis bonum non suis meritis, sed divinae referunt bonitati. Sine victimis quidem holocaustum offert, qui jam supernis in magna delectatione conjungitur; et insurgentibus elationis occultae motibus, per humilitatis virtutem nequaquam dominatur. In oblationibus ergo perfectorum simul holocausta et victimae convenisse describuntur: quia et divina frui dulcedine digni sunt, et in omni quod totos se jam coelites faciunt, elationis ignari.

(Vers. 16.) Et quinque satrapae Philisthinorum viderunt, et reversi sunt in Accaron in die illa. 28. Satrapae Philisthinorum, ut jam superius dixi, electi sunt praedicatores Gentilium. Qui nimirum quinario numero continentur; quia ad refrenandos quinque sensus corporis, aut rudibus adhuc fidelibus, aut carnalibus praesunt. Hi profecto plaustrum cum Dei arca comitantur; quia ad studium spiritalis vitae transeuntes jam eruditos discipulos, sollicitudinis suae cura prosequuntur.

For he wished to take down the Ark of God and place it upon a great stone, who said: *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. 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, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man; he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross* (Philip. 2:5). But those who immolate to God from the hearts of their subjects the host of love by the ministry of preaching, represent from their own minds also very excellent gifts of offerings. Whence also it is subjoined: *But the men of Bethsames offered holocausts and immolated victims that day to the Lord.*

27. On what day, except on that in which they placed the kine upon the wood of the cart as a holocaust to the Lord? What then is that day, if not the illumination of divine preaching? For on that day the Bethsamites offer holocausts to the Lord, on that day they immolate victims, on which they cut the wood, on which they place the kine upon them as a holocaust to the Lord; because holy preachers, by that light of the word with which they shine upon their subjects, also administer to themselves the office of vision for the rectitude of the heavenly journey, and having despised the lowest things, through the power of love they exhibit themselves the more freely to almighty God, by as much as they also see their hearers already joined to Him with great familiarity. But because the men of Bethsames are reported not only to have offered holocausts, but to have immolated victims, the spiritual offering of perfect men is designated. For they offer holocausts when through the ascent of contemplation they join themselves to almighty God with ineffable affection. But they associate victims with the holocausts: because surely they refer the good of such great delight not to their own merits, but to divine goodness. He indeed offers a holocaust without victims who is already joined to heavenly things in great delight; and as the motions of hidden elation arise, he by no means masters them through the virtue of humility. Therefore in the offerings of the perfect, holocausts and victims are described as having met together: because they are both worthy to enjoy divine sweetness, and in everything that they now make themselves entirely heavenly, they are ignorant of elation.

(Vers. 16.) And the five lords of the Philistines saw, and they returned to Ekron that day. 28. The lords of the Philistines, as I have already said above, are the chosen preachers of the Gentiles. Who indeed are contained in the number of five; because they preside either over the still rude faithful or over the carnal for the refraining of the five senses of the body. These indeed accompany the cart with the Ark of God; because they follow with the care of their solicitude the already learned disciples passing over to the study of the spiritual life.

Sed applicante in agrum Josue plaustro, et vaccis immolatis, in Accaron redeunt: quia cum eorum perfectionem jam consideraverint, conversationis eorum itinera ulterius non explorant. In Accaron autem redeunt, quia ad convertendos alios se convertunt. Accaron quippe nostro eloquio sterilis dicitur. Steriles quoque sunt, qui aut fide carent, aut bona conversatione. Bene autem cum reversi principes dicuntur, additum est: In die illa: quia nisi in eis claritatem tantae perfectionis agnoscerent, ab eorum sollicitudine securitatis certitudine non redirent. Sequitur:

(Vers. 17, 18.) Hi sunt ani aurei, quos reddiderunt Philisthiim pro delicto, Azotus unum, Gaza unum, Ascalon unum, Geth unum, et Accaron unum. Et mures aureos, secundum numerum urbium Philisthiim, quinque provinciarum, ab urbe murata usque ad villam, quae erat absque muro, et usque ad Abelmagnum, super quem posuerunt arcam Domini, qui erat usque in die illa in agro Josue Bethsamitae.

29. Quid haec omnia designent, late supra expositum est. Quid est autem, quod cum reddi pro peccato debitum arcae praecipitur, quinque ani aurei et quinque mures simul nominantur; cum vero jam redditum quod debebatur asseritur, urbes singulae separatim unum reddidisse referuntur? Sed simul supra nominantur: quia simul omnium membrorum demonstrabatur ornatus, in commutatione bonorum operum; hic autem cum redditum debitum arcae describitur, caute ostenditur: quia urbes singulae anos aureos singulos et mures obtulerunt: ut profecto peccatori converso insinuetur, ut semel peccata deserat, quae per solitam pravitatem ulterius non requirat. Urbes quippe singulae anos et mures singulos reddunt, cum conversi peccatores semel tersa lacrymis poenitentiae peccata non repetunt. Unde et sacra Scriptura admonet, dicens: Non iteres verbum in oratione (Eccli. VII, 15). Verbum quippe in oratione iterat, qui precibus purgare peccata conatus est; sed tamen committere non omittit alia, pro quibus oret. Qui profecto anum unum et murem Deo pro delicto non offert: quia etsi poenitendo compungitur, foeditates multiplicat, quas Deo confitens ei repraesentat. Cum ergo anum unum et murem unum urbes Philisthiim sive provinciae singulae reddidisse describuntur, quid aliud designat, nisi perfectionem verae conversionis? Perfecte enim convertitur, qui cum semel quod prave egerat plangit, quod rursum plangat ultra non repetit.

But when the cart arrives in the field of Joshua, and the kine are immolated, they return to Ekron: because when they have already considered their perfection, they do not further explore the paths of their conversation. But they return to Ekron, because they turn themselves to converting others. For Ekron is said to be "sterile" in our speech. They also are sterile who either lack faith or a good conversation. But when the princes are said to have returned, it is well added: On that day: because unless they recognized in them the clarity of such great perfection, they would not return from their solicitude with the certainty of security. It follows:

(Vers. 17, 18.) These are the golden emerods which the Philistines rendered for sin: for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Ashkelon one, for Gath one, and for Ekron one. And the golden mice according to the number of the cities of the Philistines, of the five provinces, from the walled city to the village which was without a wall, and even to the great Abel, upon which they set the Ark of the Lord, which was until that day in the field of Joshua of Bethsames.

29. What all these things designate has been extensively explained above. But what is it that when the debt is commanded to be rendered to the Ark for sin, five golden emerods and five mice are named together; but when what was owed is asserted to have been rendered, each city is reported to have rendered one separately? But they are named together above because the ornament of all the members was being shown together in the exchange of good works; but here, when the debt rendered to the Ark is described, it is cautiously shown that each city offered single golden emerods and mice: so that indeed it may be insinuated to the converted sinner that he should once and for all desert his sins, which he should not further seek through habitual depravity. For each city renders single emerods and single mice when converted sinners do not repeat sins once wiped away by the tears of penance. Whence also the sacred Scripture admonishes, saying: *Do not repeat a word in prayer* (Ecclus. 7:15). For he repeats a word in prayer who has endeavored to purge sins with prayers; but nevertheless does not omit to commit others for which he may pray. Such a one indeed does not offer to God one emerod and one mouse for his offense: because even if he is pricked by repenting, he multiplies foulnesses, which he represents to God while confessing to Him. When therefore single cities or provinces of the Philistines are described to have rendered one emerod and one mouse, what else does it designate if not the perfection of true conversion? For he is perfectly converted who, when he once bewails what he had done wickedly, does not further repeat what he should bewail again.

Igitur anum unum et murem unum pro peccato offert, qui sic commissa luget praeterita, ut perfecte caveat futura. Et quia ista forma conversionis tam sapientibus quam indoctis, tam fortibus quam debilibus in sancta Ecclesia observanda est, bene ab urbe murata, usque ad villam sine muro haec solutio debiti extensa perhibetur. Nulli enim intra sanctam Ecclesiam constituto liberum est pecare, nulli innoxium prava committere. Quare per prophetam Dominus comminatur, dicens: Anima quae peccaverit ipsa morietur (Ezech. XVIII, 4). Muratae quippe urbes sunt mentes sanctarum Scripturarum eruditione circumdatae. Villae autem absque muro sunt mentes simplices. Unum ergo anum aureum non solum singulae urbes reddunt, sed etiam villae; ut quicunque ad religiosam vitam, Deo auctore, convertitur, ablutis jam fetoribus, ulterius non foedetur. Et quia nemo tam sanctus est, qui in se non habeat aliquid foeditatis quod plangat, solutio hujus debiti usque ad Abelmagnum, super quem posuerunt arcam Dei, pertenditur. Abel quippe interpretatur luctus. Quo nimirum nomine lapis in quo arcam Dei posuerant vocabatur. Sed hoc profecto Redemptori nostro nomen congruit: quia, etsi propria quae fleret non habuit, nostra tamen quotidianis precibus et fletibus peccata purgavit. Sunt quoque in sancta Ecclesia viri perfecti, et illi summo lapidi charitatis consummatione conjuncti. Huic namque unitus erat lapidi, qui dicebat: Nemo me separat a charitate Christi (Rom. VIII, 35); qui an arcae debitum solvat, audiamus: Primum, inquit, fui blasphemus, et persecutor (I Tim. I, 13). Hinc iterum confitens, ait: Non sum dignus vocari apostolus: quia persecutus sum Ecclesiam Dei (I Cor. XV, 9). Notandum etiam quod usque ad lapidem excurrisse arcae debitum legitur, qui usque in die illo in agro Josue manere, et in quo posita arca Dei memoratur. Qua in re quid aliud tenemus, nisi quod in sancta Ecclesia cernimus: quia illi etiam Deo pro culpa satisfaciunt, qui non solum a peccatis per Dei gratiam erepti, sed etiam per magna sanctarum virtutum culmina, in ejus tabernaculum sunt assumpti? Sequitur:

(Vers. 19.) Percussit autem Dominus de viris Bethsamitibus, eo quod vidissent arcam Domini, et percussit de populo septuaginta viros, et quinquaginta millia plebis.

30. Qui sunt Bethsamitae percussi, nisi falsa contemplatione decepti haeretici? Bethsamitae enim non veritate fuerunt, sed praesumptione. Dum igitur arcam videre in lapide praesumerent, percussi sunt: quia cum Domini ac Redemptoris nostri sacramenta indigni discuterent, aeternae damnationis laqueis, per fallaciam proprii sunt depressi erroris. Quid est autem, quod de populo septuaginta viri, de plebe autem quinquaginta millia percussa sunt?

Therefore he offers one emerod and one mouse for sin who so mourns past things committed as to perfectly beware of future ones. And because this form of conversion is to be observed in the holy Church by both the wise and the unlearned, the strong and the weak, this payment of the debt is well said to have been extended from the walled city even to the village without a wall. For it is free to no one established within the holy Church to sin, to no one harmless to commit wicked things. Wherefore the Lord threatens through the prophet, saying: *The soul that sinneth, the same shall die* (Ezek. 18:4). Walled cities indeed are minds surrounded by the erudition of the holy Scriptures. But villages without a wall are simple minds. Therefore not only single cities render one golden emerod, but also villages; so that whoever is converted to the religious life, with God as the author, should not be further defiled after the foulnesses have already been washed away. And because no one is so holy that he does not have in himself something of foulness which he may mourn, the payment of this debt is extended even to the Great Abel, upon which they had placed the Ark of God. For Abel is interpreted as "mourning." By which name indeed the stone on which they had placed the Ark of God was called. But this name indeed fits our Redeemer: because, although He had no things of His own for which He should weep, nevertheless He purged our sins with daily prayers and weepings. There are also in the holy Church perfect men, and those joined to that highest Stone by the consummation of charity. For to this Stone was he united who said: *Who shall separate me from the charity of Christ?* (Rom. 8:35); let us hear whether he pays the debt of the Ark: *I was first*, he says, *a blasphemer, and a persecutor* (1 Tim. 1:13). Hence again confessing, he says: *I am not worthy to be called an apostle: because I persecuted the Church of God* (1 Cor. 15:9). It is also to be noted that the debt of the Ark is read to have run out even to the stone which is mentioned to remain even unto that day in the field of Joshua, and on which the Ark of God was placed. In which matter what else do we hold, except what we see in the holy Church: because those also satisfy God for fault who were not only snatched from sins through the grace of God, but also were assumed into His tabernacle through the great heights of holy virtues? It follows:

(Vers. 19.) But the Lord struck of the men of Bethsames, because they had seen the Ark of the Lord, and He struck of the people seventy men, and fifty thousand of the common people.

30. Who are the stricken Bethsamites, if not heretics deceived by false contemplation? For they were Bethsamites not in truth, but in presumption. While therefore they presumed to see the Ark on the stone, they were struck: because while they, being unworthy, discussed the sacraments of our Lord and Redeemer, they were cast down by the snares of eternal damnation through the fallacy of their own error. But what is it that of the people seventy men were struck, and of the common people fifty thousand?

Sed quia appellatione populi etiam urbium nobiles continentur, plebs autem vulgus est reliquum sine nobilibus, potest hoc colligi: quia haereticorum alii inter alios, quasi nobiles exstiterunt, qui in munditia operum, solo errore perierunt; caeteri vero quasi plebis rusticitatem secuti, cum errore fidei obscurati sunt sorde pravae operationis. Unde et alii quinquagenario, alii septuagenario numero exprimuntur: quia et illi per quinque sensus corporis concepta flagitia perfecerunt; illi dum falso sibi dona ascriberent spiritus septiformis, aeterna obruti sunt caligine caecitatis. Et quia de eorum percussione veri fideles contristati sunt, sequitur:

(Vers. 20.) Dixeruntque Bethsamitae: Quis poterit stare in conspectu Domini Dei sancti hujus? Quasi etenim veri fideles, sed simplices, dicant: Si tam sapientes et philosophi in summae veritatis cognitione falluntur, indocti et simplices quando venire ad ejus notitiam possunt? Sed etsi de sua mensura diffidunt, donum tamen divinae cognitionis adesse Ecclesiae non diffidunt. Quare et subditur: (Vers. 20.) Et ad quem ascendet a nobis?

31. A nobis quippe Dominus ascendit, quando id quod de ejus cognitione nobis absconditur, per electorum fidelium vocem praedicatur. Velut ascendere namque ejus a nobis est, quod simplicioribus, sive infirmioribus, de aeterna contemplatione celaverit, sublimibus per humilitatem cordibus revelare. Quid est ergo dicere: Ad quem ascendet a nobis: nisi dignum doctorem quaerere, qui sic divina praedicet, ut a via veritatis non erret? In quibus etiam verbis, si historicum sensum requirimus, aperte cognoscimus: quia qui ideo mortui sunt quia arcam Domini viderunt, intelligimus nempe quod eadem visione digni non fuerunt. Merito igitur, qui percussos aspiciunt, dicunt: Quis poterit stare in conspectu Domini Dei sancti hujus? Nam si hi qui indigni sunt videndo moriuntur, contrectantes, quomodo vivunt? Bethsamitae quidem in sancta Ecclesia sunt mortui sacerdotes, et ministri sacri altaris reprobi; quia de domo quidem solis justitiae sunt dignitate ministerii, non virtute et gratia sanctitatis. Bethsamitae quidem sunt: quia per sacrae oblationis officium conversantur in domo Dei; sed tanto sunt acriori damnatione percutiendi, quanto non solum videre audent sacra mysteria, sed contrectare, quanto non jam veteris Testamenti arcam respiciunt, sed, quod omnia superat, indigne se corpori et sanguini ingerunt Redemptoris: quos percussos insinuat Paulus, dicens: Qui manducat et bibit indigne, judicium sibi manducat et bibit (I Cor. XI, 29). Veri etenim fideles dicunt: Quis poterit stare in conspectu Domini Dei sancti hujus?

But because by the name of "people" the nobles of the cities are also contained, while the "common people" is the remaining multitude without the nobles, this can be gathered: that some among the heretics stood out as nobles, as it were, among others, who perished in the cleanness of works by error alone; but the others, following the rusticity of the common people, as it were, were obscured with the filth of wicked operation along with the error of faith. Whence also some are expressed by the number fifty, others by seventy: because those indeed perfected the crimes conceived through the five senses of the body; while those, while they falsely ascribed to themselves the gifts of the sevenfold Spirit, were overwhelmed by the eternal darkness of blindness. And because the true faithful were saddened by their striking, it follows:

(Vers. 20.) And the men of Bethsames said: Who shall be able to stand in the sight of the Lord, this holy God? For as it were the true faithful, but simple, say: If those so wise and philosophers are deceived in the cognition of the highest truth, when can the unlearned and simple come to the knowledge of Him? But even if they distrust their own measure, nevertheless they do not distrust that the gift of divine cognition is present to the Church. Wherefore it is also subjoined: (Vers. 20.) And to whom shall He go up from us?

31. Indeed the Lord goes up from us when that which is hidden from us concerning His cognition is preached through the voice of the chosen faithful. For as it were His "going up from us" is to reveal to hearts sublime through humility what He had concealed from the simpler or weaker ones concerning eternal contemplation. What then is it to say: To whom shall He go up from us, if not to seek a worthy teacher who may so preach divine things as not to err from the way of truth? In which words also, if we require the historical sense, we openly recognize: because those who died for this reason, that they saw the Ark of the Lord, we understand indeed that they were not worthy of the same vision. Meritedly therefore, those who behold the stricken ones say: Who shall be able to stand in the sight of the Lord, this holy God? For if these who are unworthy die by seeing, those handling it, how do they live? The Bethsamites indeed are the dead priests in the holy Church, and the reprobate ministers of the sacred altar; because they are of the house of the Sun of justice indeed by the dignity of the ministry, not by the virtue and grace of holiness. They are indeed Bethsamites: because they converse in the house of God through the office of the sacred offering; but they are to be struck with a so much sharper damnation, as they not only dare to see the sacred mysteries, but to handle them, as they no longer look back at the Ark of the Old Testament, but, what surpasses all things, they unworthily obtrude themselves into the body and blood of the Redeemer: whom Paul insinuates to be struck, saying: *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself* (1 Cor. 11:29). For the true faithful say: Who shall be able to stand in the sight of the Lord, this holy God?

Altitudinem quippe tantae administrationis considerant, et tanti sacramenti dignitatem formidant. Sed dum tantae rei subire officium metuunt, qui id exhibere valeant, digniores quaerunt. Unde et sequitur: Et ad quem ascendet a nobis. Quasi ergo sacra mysteria humiliter fugientes, dicant: Quia nos infirma conversatione percutimur ministri ex altiori vita quaerendi sunt, quos dum in altissimam virtutum sanctificationem conversatio sublimis erigit, assistere Deo per officium tantae oblationis possint. Sequitur:

(Vers. 21.) Miserunt ergo nuntios ad habitatores Cariathiarim, dicentes: Remiserunt Philisthiim arcam Domini, descendite et reducite eam ad vos.

32. Cariathiarim dicitur, civitas eorum. Quae est sanctorum civitas, nisi illa Jerusalem quae sursum est? Qui sunt ergo habitatores ejus, nisi perfecti viri ab amore mundi alta conversatione separati? Quorum profecto unus caeteris efficacior ait: Nostra conversatio in coelis est (Philip. III, 20). Ad hos quippe nuntii mittendi sunt, ut Dei arcam suscipiant: quia ad electionem sacerdotum viri sancti non solum recipiendi sunt, sed etiam invitandi. Et notandum, quia viris sublimioribus per nuntios dicitur: Descendite et reducite eam. Descendunt quippe, quia obediunt: nequaquam enim descenderent, si id, quod ab eis fraternus amor expetit, impendere superba mente refutarent. Tunc quidem vere sublimes sunt, cum se Christo non auferunt; cum id, quod ex fraterno judicio eis imponitur, non repellunt. Unde apte subinfertur:

Indeed they consider the height of such great administration, and dread the dignity of so great a sacrament. But while they fear to undergo the office of so great a thing, they seek worthier ones who may be able to exhibit it. Whence it also follows: And to whom shall He go up from us. As if therefore humbly fleeing the sacred mysteries, they say: Because we are struck by a weak conversation, ministers are to be sought from a higher life, whom while a sublime conversation raises into the highest sanctification of virtues, they may be able to assist God through the office of so great an offering. It follows:

(Vers. 21.) They sent therefore messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying: The Philistines have sent back the Ark of the Lord, come down and fetch it back to you.

32. Kiriath-jearim is called their city. What is the city of the saints, if not that Jerusalem which is above? Who then are its inhabitants, if not perfect men separated from the love of the world by a high conversation? Of whom indeed one more efficacious than the rest says: *Our conversation is in heaven* (Philip. 3:20). To these indeed messengers are to be sent, that they may receive the Ark of God: because for the election of priests, holy men are not only to be received, but also to be invited. And it is to be noted that it is said to the more sublime men through messengers: *Come down and fetch it back.* They come down indeed, because they obey: for they would by no means come down if they refused with a proud mind to bestow that which brotherly love expects from them. Then indeed they are truly sublime when they do not take themselves away from Christ; when they do not repel that which is imposed on them by brotherly judgment. Whence it is aptly subjoined: