SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT

Commentary on the First Book of Kings

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Saint Gregory the Great (540–604)
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CAPUT V.

(I Reg. VII, 1.) Venerunt ergo viri Cariathiarim, et reduxerunt arcam Domini, et intulerunt eam in domum Aminadab in Gabaa. Eleazarum autem filium ejus sanctificaverunt, ut custodiret arcam Domini.

1. Aminadab interpretatur, populus meus spontaneus; Gabaa, sublimis. Et nimirum talibus arca Dei committenda est. Populus namque spontaneus est, quem ad exercenda virtutum opera, sola bona voluntas trahit, quem ad implenda mandata Dei necessitas non compellit. Quos nimirum sub unius descriptione beatus Paulus praedicat, dicens: Hilarem datorem diligit Deus (II Cor. IX, 7). Quae est domus spontanei populi, nisi munimentum sanctae dilectionis? Nam in virtutum ministerio spontaneus esse non posset, si mansionem sibi dilectionis non conderet. Quae profecto domus in Gabaa, id est in sublimi sita cognoscitur: quia charitatis altitudine ad coelestia sublevamur. Vel certe in sublimi est domus, quia charitas omnibus virtutibus antefertur. Nam sublimitatis hujus altitudinem insinuans Paulus, ait: Adhuc excellentiorem viam vobis demonstro. Si linguis hominum loquar et angelorum, charitatem autem non habeam, factus sum velut aes sonans aut cymbalum tinniens (I Cor. XII, 31; XIII, 1). Quid est autem, quod Eleazarum sanctificant ad custodiendum arcam Dei? Sed hoc nimirum ex usu sanctae Ecclesiae novimus, quia electus minister prius benedictionem consecrationis a summis viris accipit quam ministerium impendat oblationis. Quia vero Eleazarus Dei adjutor dicitur, profecto ostenditur quia non solum sanctificari Dei ministri debeant, sed etiam inspici quales sint ad ejusdem consecrationis ordinem promovendi. Qui enim sunt Dei adjutorium, nisi qui cum divina gratia ministrando conveniunt, et quos omnipotentis Dei dignatio intus visitat, quam ipsi per exterius ministerium bene vivendo et docendo confirmant? Unde et cum Paulo non inaniter gloriantes dicunt: Dei etenim sumus adjutores (I Cor. III, 9). Qui nimirum conversatione fortissimi, scientia eruditi, amore fervidi, constantia robusti, non solum alieno non egent auxilio, sed quocunque se conferunt, subvenire aliis possunt. Bene itaque dicitur: Eleazarum sanctificaverunt, ut custodiret arcam. Quia hi, quibus adhuc aliena auxilia necessaria sunt, ad subveniendum aliis promovendi non sunt. Bene item idem Eleazarus filius Aminadab esse dicitur: quia certe, qui ad ministerium praedicationis eligitur, in imitatione sanctorum positus, auxilium omne quod exhibet esse debet ex dilectione.

CHAPTER V.

(1 Sam. 7:1.) And the men of Kiriath-jearim came, and fetched up the Ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in Gibeah: and they sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the Ark of the Lord.

1. Abinadab is interpreted as "my spontaneous people"; Gibeah as "sublime." And indeed the Ark of God is to be committed to such as these. For a "spontaneous people" is one whom good will alone draws to exercise the works of virtues, whom necessity does not compel to fulfill the commands of God. Whom indeed the blessed Paul preaches under the description of one, saying: *God loveth a cheerful giver* (2 Cor. 9:7). What is the house of a spontaneous people, if not the fortification of holy delight? For one could not be spontaneous in the ministry of virtues if he did not build for himself a mansion of delight. Which house indeed is recognized to be situated in Gibeah, that is, in a sublime place: because by the height of charity we are raised up to heavenly things. Or certainly the house is in a sublime place because charity is preferred before all virtues. For Paul, insinuating the height of this sublimity, says: *And yet show I unto you a more excellent way.* *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal* (1 Cor. 12:31; 13:1). But what is it that they sanctify Eleazar to keep the Ark of God? But this indeed we know from the use of the holy Church, that a chosen minister first receives the blessing of consecration from the highest men before he bestows the ministry of offering. But because Eleazar is called "helper of God," it is indeed shown that the ministers of God should not only be sanctified, but also it should be inspected what kind they are who are to be promoted to the order of the same consecration. For who are the "help of God," if not those who meet with divine grace by ministering, and whom the dignation of almighty God visits within, which they themselves confirm through the external ministry by living well and teaching? Whence also they say with Paul, not vainly glorying: *For we are God's helpers* (1 Cor. 3:9). Who indeed, very strong in conversation, erudite in knowledge, fervent in love, robust in constancy, not only do not need the help of another, but wherever they betake themselves, are able to help others. Well therefore is it said: *They sanctified Eleazar to keep the Ark.* Because those for whom the helps of others are still necessary are not to be promoted to helping others. Well also is the same Eleazar said to be the son of Abinadab: because certainly he who is chosen for the ministry of preaching, being placed in the imitation of the saints, all the help which he exhibits ought to be out of delight.

2. Quia vero nos superius plaustrum Scripturam sacram, arcam vero scientiam ejus spiritalem esse diximus, vaccas quoque electas animas, timor Bethsamitarum, quem inesse electis ostendimus in oblatione sacramenti, potest referri etiam ad onus praelationis. Non enim minor sanctitas idonea est animabus instruendis, quam offerendis sacris mysteriis. Et idcirco Bethsamitae perhibentur percussi: quia plerique vivunt subditi, qui moriuntur praelati. Habet enim arca Dei etiam extrinsecus pulchritudinem, quam si minister infirmus non ad spiritalem venerationem, sed ad concupiscentiam saecularem inspexerit, nequaquam vivit. Bene itaque causa percussionis eorum declaratur, cum dicitur: Quia viderunt arcam Dei. Quid est enim, viderunt, nisi quia ejus gloriam videndo concupierunt? Nunc autem, auctore Deo, per orbem universum sanctae Ecclesiae gloria est copiosa. Quae profecto gloria, quia a reprobis sacerdotibus saeculariter appetitur, Bethsamitae viri arcam Dei exterius videndo moriuntur. Non enim spiritalem ejus honorem pro interna virtutum gloria appetunt, sed ut arcae Dei splendorem rapiant, et ecclesiasticae praelationis fulgorem, in flore saeculi suis cultibus ferant. Arca quoque Dei male foris ad percussionem respicitur, quando flagitiosi praepositi subditarum personarum exteriori specie devicti, ad carnalem concupiscentiam pertrahuntur. Viri timore ingentem multitudinem concupiscentiae telo prostratam intuentes, dicunt: Quis poterit stare in conspectu Domini Dei sancti hujus? Stat quippe, in conspectu Dei, qui fortis est in ordine divini ministerii. Stare etenim fortitudinis est, ministrare obsequii. Stare ergo in conspectu Dei dicitur, qui ordinem superni officii in altitudine disponit dignae conversationis; qui in ministerio quo fungitur nullo appetitu ecclesiastici honoris decipitur, nulla carnali concupiscentia superatur. Quia vero tam idonei ministri raro inveniuntur, merito dicunt: Quis poterit stare in conspectu Domini Dei sancti hujus? Et quia tantum onus parvuli Christi viris fortioribus deserunt, subdunt: Et ad quem ascendet a nobis? Quomodo autem ad habitatores Cariathiarim miserint, quomodo arcam Dei in domum Aminadab intulerint, quomodo Eleazarum sanctificaverint, sicut supra expositum est, non mutamus.

(Vers. 2.) Et factum est ex quo arca Dei mansit in Cariathiarim, multiplicati sunt dies. Si ad historiam respicimus, dies mansionis arcae multiplicati sunt, quia illic multo tempore fuit. Unde et subditur: (Vers. 2.) Erat enim annus vicesimus. Et ad quid istam dierum multiplicationem introduxerit, subdens, ait: (Vers. 2.) Et requievit omnis Israel post Dominum. Quae nimirum requies in illo veteri populo non bonorum operum, sed bonae devotionis intelligenda est. Nam sequitur:

2. Because we have said above that the cart is the sacred Scripture, the Ark indeed its spiritual science, the kine also the chosen souls, the fear of the Bethsamites, which we showed to be in the chosen in the offering of the sacrament, can be referred also to the burden of prelacy. For no less holiness is fit for instructing souls than for offering the sacred mysteries. And therefore the Bethsamites are reported to be struck: because many live as subjects who die as prelates. For the Ark of God also has beauty on the outside, which if a weak minister looks upon not for spiritual veneration, but for secular concupiscence, he by no means lives. Well therefore is the cause of their striking declared when it is said: *Because they saw the Ark of God.* For what is "they saw," if not that they lusted after its glory by seeing it? But now, with God as the author, the glory of the holy Church is copious throughout the whole world. Which glory indeed, because it is sought secularly by reprobate priests, the men of Bethsames die by seeing the Ark of God on the outside. For they do not seek its spiritual honor for the internal glory of virtues, but that they may seize the splendor of the Ark of God, and carry the radiance of ecclesiastical prelacy in their own cultivations in the flower of the world. The Ark of God also is badly looked upon from without unto striking when flagitious superiors, overcome by the external appearance of subject persons, are drawn away to carnal concupiscence. The men, beholding with fear the huge multitude prostrated by the weapon of concupiscence, say: *Who shall be able to stand in the sight of the Lord, this holy God?* Indeed he stands in the sight of God who is strong in the order of the divine ministry. For to stand is of fortitude, to minister of obedience. Therefore he is said to stand in the sight of God who disposes the order of the heavenly office in the height of a worthy conversation; who in the ministry which he performs is deceived by no appetite for ecclesiastical honor, overcome by no carnal concupiscence. Because indeed such fit ministers are rarely found, they meritedly say: *Who shall be able to stand in the sight of the Lord, this holy God?* And because the little ones of Christ desert such a great burden to stronger men, they subjoin: *And to whom shall He go up from us?* But how they sent to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, how they brought the Ark of God into the house of Abinadab, how they sanctified Eleazar, as has been explained above, we do not change.

(Vers. 2.) And it came to pass while the Ark of God remained in Kiriath-jearim, the days were multiplied. If we look at history, the days of the Ark's stay were multiplied because it was there for a long time. Whence also it is subjoined: (Vers. 2.) For it was the twentieth year. And to what end it introduced that multiplication of days, subjoining, it says: (Vers. 2.) And all Israel rested after the Lord. Which rest indeed in that old people is to be understood not of good works, but of good devotion. For it follows:

(Vers. 3.) Ait autem Samuel ad universam domum Israel, dicens: Si in toto corde vestro revertimini ad Deum, auferte deos alienos de medio vestrum, Baalim et Astaroth; et praeparate corda vestra Domino, et servite ei soli, et liberabit vos de manu Philisthiim. 3. Qui deos alienos de medio sui non abstulerant, nisi bona voluntate, post Dominum quomodo requiescebant? Quae nimirum omnia si spiritaliter inquirantur, dies mansionis arcae multiplicantur. Sed cum manet in Gabaa; cum manet in custodia Eleazari; quia cum animarum fidelium cura apud religiosos praedicatores reconditur, perfectio religionis, quae sublimi doctrina impenditur, bonorum operum studio adimpletur. Unde et annus vicesimus tunc instare relatus est. Si enim denarius numerus perfectionem antiquae Legis designat, quid vicenarius, nisi splendidiorem novae vitae religionem significat? Vicenarius quippe numerus, denarius est duplicatus. Qui certe numerus in electorum conversatione perficitur, cum per amorem vitant Legis prohibita, et sublimia Evangelii mandata complent.

4. Quia vero nos arcae profectionem ad contemplativae vitae perfectionem retulimus, in Cariathiarim manet arca Dei, cum eruditae mentes contemplantium, ejusdem eruditionis suae donum, in oblectamento perficiunt revelatae sibi supernae claritatis. Viginti quippe annis manet ibi nunc arca Dei, quia electae animae, ad exaltationis intimae culmen evectae, habent denarium numerum in perfectione scientiae, vicenarium vero in superna delectatione. Potest etiam dierum multiplicatio ad virtutum spiritalium incrementa referri. Cum igitur causa, qua dies multiplicentur, expressius dicitur, annus vicesimus esse perhibetur: quia videlicet electae mentes contemplantium, quo uberius superna contemplatione pascuntur, eo plenius virtutum spiritalium fulgoribus illustrantur.

5. Quid vero est, quod anno vicesimo requiescere omnis Israel post Dominum dicitur, nisi quia sublimitas perfectionis electorum non consistit in fortitudine boni operis, sed in virtute contemplationis? Quiescere namque post Dominum, Redemptoris nostri imitationem invincibili charitate retinere est. Et quisquis illa supernae civitatis ineffabilia gaudia contemplando fortiter amare non didicit, quia saepius ad mundi amorem potest dejici, post Dominum nequaquam requiescit. Cum ergo manet arca in Cariathiarim, et dies multiplicantur, universus Israel post Dominum requiescit: quia profecto dum electae mentis scientia in experientiam supernae delectationis erigitur, dum lace refusae gloriae, virtutum spiritalium sibi claritates glomerantur, imitationem Dominicam tenere eo perseverantius potest quo, immensis illustrata claritatibus, eas tenebras quibus a vero dividatur lumine sentire non potest.

(Vers. 3.) But Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying: If you return to the Lord with all your heart, take away the strange gods from the midst of you, Baalim and Ashtaroth; and prepare your hearts for the Lord, and serve Him alone, and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines. 3. How were those who had not taken away the strange gods from their midst resting after the Lord, except by good will? All which things indeed, if they be inquired into spiritually, the days of the Ark's stay are multiplied. But when it remains in Gibeah; when it remains in the custody of Eleazar; because when the care of faithful souls is hidden with religious preachers, the perfection of religion, which is bestowed by sublime doctrine, is fulfilled by the study of good works. Whence also the twentieth year was then reported to be at hand. For if the number ten designates the perfection of the ancient Law, what does twenty signify, if not the more splendid religion of the new life? For the number twenty is the number ten doubled. Which number indeed is perfected in the conversation of the chosen, when through love they avoid the prohibitions of the Law and fulfill the sublime commands of the Gospel.

4. Because we have referred the journey of the Ark to the perfection of the contemplative life, the Ark of God remains in Kiriath-jearim when the erudite minds of contemplatives perfect the gift of their own erudition in the delight of the heavenly clarity revealed to them. Indeed the Ark of God remains there now for twenty years because chosen souls, raised up to the summit of intimate exaltation, have the number ten in the perfection of science, but the number twenty in heavenly delight. The multiplication of days can also be referred to the increments of spiritual virtues. When therefore the cause for which the days are multiplied is more expressly stated, it is reported to be the twentieth year: because evidently the chosen minds of contemplatives, the more abundantly they are fed by heavenly contemplation, the more fully they are illustrated by the splendors of spiritual virtues.

5. But what is it that in the twentieth year all Israel is said to rest after the Lord, if not because the sublimity of the perfection of the chosen consists not in the fortitude of good work, but in the virtue of contemplation? For to rest after the Lord is to retain the imitation of our Redeemer with invincible charity. And whoever has not learned to love strongly by contemplating those ineffable joys of the heavenly city, because he can more often be cast down to the love of the world, by no means rests after the Lord. When therefore the Ark remains in Kiriath-jearim and the days are multiplied, all Israel rests after the Lord: because indeed while the science of the chosen mind is raised up into the experience of heavenly delight, while the clarities of spiritual virtues are gathered to it by the light of the reflected glory, it can hold the Dominican imitation the more perseveringly by as much as, illustrated by immense clarities, it cannot feel those darknesses by which it may be divided from the true light.

Unde et bene qui post Dominum requiescere dicitur, Israel esse perhibetur, videlicet videns Deum: quia quo altius contemplator in divina rapitur, eo ab humanis quae potenter cohibet nequaquam superatur.

6. Verum quia, auctore Deo, arcam ejus proficiscentem usque ad sublimitatis ejus situm deduximus, quo studio praedicator erga subditorum correctionem invigilet, videamus. Nam sequitur: Et ait Samuel ad universam domum Israel: Si in toto corde vestro revertimini ad Dominum, auferte deos alienos de medio vestrum. Quos autem alienos deos Scriptura sacra appellare consuevit, nisi daemonia, quae in manufactis simulacris habitant? In Samuele novos sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatores designari diximus. Recte itaque de medio sui deos alienos in universam Israel domum auferre praecepit: quia in accedentibus ad fidem Gentilibus, non solum rectae profectionis veritatem praedicatorum ordo petiit, sed etiam damnationem antiquae superstitionis. Nil enim eis prodesset veritatem profitendo colere, vel obsequendo, nisi falsa prius detestanda reliquissent. Quisquis etiam nunc intra sanctam Ecclesiam positus est per fidem, sed Deo rebellis per iniquam operationem, admonendus est ut alienos deos de medio sui auferat. Nam, etsi manufacta simulacra detestatur, daemonum tamen imperiis prava actione submittitur. De medio autem sui alienos deos abjicit, qui sic ad Deum convertitur, ut per mala opera immundos spiritus nunquam veneretur.

7. Potest etiam cautioris vitae studium per haec exhortationis verba designari. Nam in medio nostri quid est, nisi cor nostrum? Sunt tamen nonnulli operatione mundi, sed infirmitate cordis, usu foedantur pravae cogitationis. Bona quidem incessanter faciunt, sed cogitare reproba nunquam praetermittunt. Quia vero tot in eorum cordibus daemonia requiescunt quot desideria immunda, auferre de medio sui alienos deos instanter admonentur: quatenus omnipotenti Deo non solum rectitudinem impendat operis, sed et gloriam internae puritatis. Unde et apte subditur: Et praeparate corda vestra Domino. Cor quippe Domino praeparat, qui mentem non solum ab immunda cogitatione separat, sed etiam cogitationum sanctarum ac virtutum fulgoribus illustrat: ut velut abjectis et comminutis idolis, se Dei templum efficiat; dum illic divinae gratiae sedem erigit, ubi reprobos spiritus manere per subjecta eis prava desideria non permisit Bene itaque prius auferre alienos deos de medio su Israelitas admonet, deinde corda Deo praeparare quia rectus ordo inchoatae religionis est, ut prius unusquisque prava reprobet, deinde ad omnipotentem Deum studio bonae intentionis appropinquet.

Whence also he who is said to rest after the Lord is well reported to be Israel, that is to say, "seeing God": because the higher the contemplator is snatched into divine things, the less is he overcome by the human things which he powerfully restrains.

6. But because, with God as the author, we have led His journeying Ark even to the site of its sublimity, let us see with what study the preacher watches over the correction of his subjects. For it follows: *And Samuel said to all the house of Israel: If you return to the Lord with all your heart, take away the strange gods from the midst of you.* But whom has the sacred Scripture been accustomed to call "strange gods," if not the demons who dwell in man-made idols? We have said that in Samuel the new preachers of the holy Church are designated. Rightly therefore did he command them to take away the strange gods from their midst into all the house of Israel: because in the Gentiles coming to the faith, the order of preachers sought not only the truth of right progress, but also the damnation of the ancient superstition. For it would profit them nothing to worship the truth by professing or by obeying it, unless they had first left the false things that were to be detested. Whoever even now is placed within the holy Church through faith, but is rebellious to God through iniquitous operation, is to be admonished to take away the strange gods from his midst. For even if he detests man-made idols, nevertheless he is submitted to the commands of demons by wicked action. But he casts away strange gods from his midst who is so converted to God that he never venerates unclean spirits through evil works.

7. The study of a more cautious life can also be designated through these words of exhortation. For what is in our midst, if not our heart? There are, however, some who are defiled by the use of wicked thought, though clean in the operation of the world, yet through the weakness of the heart. They indeed do good things incessantly, but they never cease to think reprobate things. Because, in truth, as many demons rest in their hearts as there are unclean desires, they are urgently admonished to take away strange gods from their midst: so that they may pay to Almighty God not only the rectitude of work, but also the glory of internal purity. Whence it is aptly added: And prepare your hearts for the Lord. For he prepares his heart for the Lord who not only separates his mind from unclean thought, but also illustrates it with the splendors of holy thoughts and virtues: so that, as if idols were cast away and broken to pieces, he may make himself a temple of God; while he erects there the seat of divine grace, where he did not permit reprobate spirits to remain through the wicked desires subjected to them. Well, therefore, does he first admonish the Israelites to take away strange gods from their midst, then to prepare their hearts for God; because the right order of beginning religion is that each one first reproves wicked things, then approaches Almighty God with the study of good intention.

Ad extremum vero necesse est, ut qui jam Deo bonae voluntatis propositum, et puri cordis munditiam obtulit, id quod intus bene vivendo deliberat, in rectitudine boni operis exponat. Quare et subditur: Et servite soli Deo.

8. Soli quippe Domino servit qui bonis operibus prava non inserit. Nam qui sic bona agit, ut mala non deserat, Deo soli nequaquam servit: quia malo spiritui obsequium exhibet, cujus perficere non metuit voluntatem. Unde agitur, ut etiam bona agens Deo non serviat: quia qui totum hominem condidisse creditur, habere eum communem cum adversario non dignatur. Hinc namque est, quod ipsa Veritas per semetipsam denuntiat, dicens: Nemo potest duobus dominis servire (Matth. VI, 24). Hinc Paulus exquirens, ait: Quae participatio justitiae cum iniquitate, aut quae societas luci ad tenebras? Quae autem conventio Christi ad Beliat? aut quae pars fideli cum infideli, aut quis consensus templo Dei cum idolis (II Cor. VI, 14, 15)? Soli ergo Domino servire praecipimur, ut qui jam aspirante Deo pro obtinenda peccatorum nostrorum remissione agere bona coepimus, eisdem bonis prava nulla misceamus. A peccatorum namque nostrorum obligatione tunc solvimur, cum bona quae pro eorum impendimus absolutione malis admixta non sunt. Devotis namque poenitentibus loquens praedicator, dicit: Si in toto corde vestro revertimini ad Dominum, auferte deos alienos de medio vestri, et servite Deo soli. Quasi dicat: Tunc a peccatis solvi poteritis, cum cordis et operis bona, quae pro vestra absolutione impenditis Deo, supervenientibus criminibus aliis non foedatis. Quare et repromittens; dicit: Et liberabit vos de manu Philisthiim.

9. Qui hoc loco alii Philisthiim quam maligni spiritus designantur? Qui nimirum dum superbiae suae calice in momento debriati sunt, a statu gloriae tumescendo ceciderunt. 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 non habet quidquam (Joan. XIV, 30). Hinc Paulus ait: Omnes peccaverunt, et egent gloria Dei (Rom. III, 23). Hinc iterum dicit: Eramus et nos filii irae, sicut et caeteri (Ephes. II, 3). O quam magni muneris est ista promissio, qua dicitur: Liberabit vos de manu Philisthiim. Nam ille solus liber hujus manus exstitit, qui peccatum non fecit. Ab ea utique omnes contra meritum liberamur. Unde et Paulus dicit: Justificati gratis per gratiam ipsius, per redemptionem justitiae suae, propter redemptionem praecedentium delictorum, in sustentatione Dei ad ostensionem justitiae ejus in hoc tempore, ut sit ipse justus, et justificans eum, qui est ex fide Domini nostri Jesu Christi (Rom. III, 24-26). Hinc item dicit: Gratia liberati estis (Ephes. II, 8).

But finally, it is necessary that he who has already offered to God the purpose of a good will and the cleanliness of a pure heart, should set forth in the rectitude of good work that which he deliberates within by living well. Wherefore it is also added: And serve God alone.

8. For he serves the Lord alone who does not insert wicked things into good works. For he who so acts well as not to desert evil things, by no means serves God alone: because he exhibits obedience to the evil spirit, whose will he does not fear to fulfill. Whence it happens that even while acting well he does not serve God: because He who is believed to have created the whole man, does not deign to have him in common with the adversary. For hence it is that Truth itself denounces through itself, saying: No man can serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). Hence Paul, inquiring, says: What participation has justice with iniquity, or what society has light with darkness? What agreement has Christ with Belial? or what part has the faithful with the unfaithful, or what consensus has the temple of God with idols? (2 Cor. 6:14-15). Therefore we are commanded to serve the Lord alone, so that we who have already begun to do good things by the inspiration of God to obtain the remission of our sins, may mix no wicked things with the same good works. For we are then loosed from the obligation of our sins, when the good things which we pay for their absolution are not mixed with evil things. For the preacher, speaking to devoted penitents, says: If you return to the Lord with all your heart, take away the strange gods from your midst, and serve God alone. As if to say: Then you can be loosed from sins, when you do not defile the good things of heart and work, which you pay to God for your absolution, with other crimes supervening. Wherefore also promising, he says: And he will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.

9. Who in this place are designated by the Philistines other than malignant spirits? Who, indeed, while they were in a moment inebriated by the cup of their own pride, fell by swelling from the state of glory. What, therefore, is the hand of the Philistines, if not 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 comes, and in me he has nothing (John 14:30). Hence Paul says: All have sinned, and need the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Hence again he says: We also were children of wrath, even as the rest (Eph. 2:3). Oh, how great a gift is that promise by which it is said: He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines. For he alone stood forth free of this hand who did no sin. From it, indeed, we are all delivered against merit. Whence also Paul says: Justified freely by His grace, through the redemption of His justice, on account of the redemption of preceding sins, in the sustenance of God for the showing of His justice in this time, that He may be just, and justifying him who is from the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24-26). Hence likewise he says: By grace you have been delivered (Eph. 2:8).

Tale est ac si dicat: Liberabit vos de potestate spirituum malignorum, ut velut fugatis de itinere crudelibus hostibus, dum mors carnis intervenit, ea quae cupitis aeterna gaudia securius adeatis. Magna itaque promisit, qui magna praecipiendo docuit, ut magnitudo muneris ad fortitudinem incitaret laboris. Magnum quippe est soli Domino servire, videlicet instanter bona agere, bonis actibus reproba non miscere. Sed o quam maximum in vitae hujus transitu, potestatem cruentorum spirituum non incurrere, nullas in via horribilitates cernere, contrarietates objectionum nullas invenire, aeternas poenas evadere, liberatoris nostri praesidia sentire, momentaneam saeculi lucem perdere, sed repente ineffabilem claritatem aeternitatis invenire. Audiant ergo, audiant, qui de manu Philisthiim liberari desiderant: Praeparate corda vestra Domino, et servite ei soli.

(Vers. 4.) Abstulerunt ergo filii Israel de medio sui Baalim, et Astaroth, et servierunt Domino soli.

10. Electorum quippe mos est, ut cum divinae praedicationis hortamenta suscipiunt, ad studium auditae bonae operationis accendantur. Nam reprobi e frequenter verba Dei audiunt, et eisdem tamen verbis nulla bona opera proponunt. Pigri, in suis actionibus remanent: quia a divina luce projecti, omnipotentis Dei gloriam, cujus verba audiunt, interna contemplatione non vident. Recte ergo, qui obediunt, Israel filii dicuntur: quia quo majestatem apertiori manifestatione conspiciunt, ejus praeceptis obedire devotius agnoscuntur. Sed quia conversis loquitur, quid eis adhuc deesse conspiciat, audiamus: Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 5, 6.) Dixit autem Samuel: Congregate universum Israel in Masphath, ut orem pro vobis Dominum. Et congregaverunt in Masphath.

11. Masphath dicitur speculatio seu contemplatio. Quam profecto speculationem beatus Paulus exponit dicens: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate (I Cor. XIII, 12). Speculari etenim nobis est, de altitudine Scripturarum aeterna bona contemplari. Quasi enim speculamur, quod jam fidei veritate cognoscimus, et adhuc revelata facie non videmus. Conversis vero peccatoribus in Masphath convenire, est per mentis intentionem de Dei omnipotentis miseratione confidere. Sed sic de Dei misericordia praesumant, ut tamen id, quod se nequiter egisse recolunt, per poenitentiam delere non negligant. Unde et illic repente subjungitur:

(Vers. 6.) Hauseruntque aquam, et effuderunt in conspectu Domini.

It is as if he said: He will deliver you from the power of malignant spirits, so that, as if cruel enemies were put to flight from the journey, while the death of the flesh intervenes, you may more securely approach those eternal joys which you desire. He therefore promised great things who taught by commanding great things, so that the magnitude of the gift might incite to the fortitude of labor. For it is a great thing to serve the Lord alone, namely, to do good things incessantly, not to mix reprobate things with good acts. But oh, how very great it is, in the passage of this life, not to run into the power of bloodthirsty spirits, to see no horrors in the way, to find no contrarieties of objections, to escape eternal punishments, to feel the protections of our Deliverer, to lose the momentary light of the world, but suddenly to find the ineffable clarity of eternity. Let them hear, therefore, let them hear, who desire to be delivered from the hand of the Philistines: Prepare your hearts for the Lord, and serve Him alone.

(Verse 4.) The children of Israel therefore took away Baalim and Ashtaroth from their midst, and served the Lord alone.

10. For it is the custom of the elect that when they receive the exhortations of divine preaching, they are kindled to the study of the good operation they have heard. For the reprobate frequently hear the words of God, and yet they propose no good works with those same words. Sluggish, they remain in their actions: because, cast away from the divine light, they do not see with internal contemplation the glory of Almighty God whose words they hear. Rightly, therefore, those who obey are called the children of Israel: because as they behold the majesty with a more open manifestation, they are recognized to obey His precepts more devotedly. But because he speaks to the converted, let us hear what he sees still lacking in them: for there follows:

(Verse 5, 6.) And Samuel said: Gather all Israel to Mizpah (Masphath), that I may pray for you to the Lord. And they gathered to Mizpah.

11. Mizpah is said to be "observation" or "contemplation." Which indeed observation the blessed Paul explains, saying: We see now through a glass in an enigma (1 Cor. 13:12). For to observe for us is to contemplate eternal goods from the height of the Scriptures. For we observe, as it were, what we already know by the truth of faith, and do not yet see with revealed face. But for converted sinners to assemble in Mizpah is to trust in the mercy of Almighty God through the intention of the mind. But let them so presume on the mercy of God that they do not neglect to delete through penance that which they recall having acted wickedly. Whence also it is suddenly subjoined there:

(Verse 6.) And they drew water, and poured it out in the sight of the Lord.

12. Quid enim est aquam haurire, nisi de profunda animi poenitentis confusione lacrymarum fluenta producere? Velut enim aquam haurimus, dum, quam profunda iniquitate cecidimus considerantes, plangimus. Quam profecto aquam in conspectu Domini effundimus, si cum poenitendo compungimur, de ejusdem compunctionis fletu non quaerimus favorem saeculi, sed solum fructum divinae placationis. Sed et dum mens flendo compungitur, necesse est ut etiam caro quae delectationibus subjacuit affligatur. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 6.) Et jejunaverunt in die illa.

13. Dies peccatricis animae est spes consequendae indulgentiae in divini verbi repromissione. Unde et per prophetam Dominus repromittit, dicens: Nolo mortem peccatoris: magis autem, ut convertatur et vivat (Ezech. XVIII, 32, 33, 11). In die igitur illa jejunant, qui idcirco carnem poenitendo atterunt: quia in luce spei pervenire ad indulgentiam se indubitanter credunt. Quae tamen afflictio poenitentiae ad delenda peccata tunc demum idonea est, cum sacerdotis fuerit judicio imperata, cum ab eo confitentium actibus discussis, pro modo criminis, onus eis decernitur afflictionis Bene itaque sequitur:

(Vers. 6.) Dixeruntque: Tibi peccavimus, Domine. Judicavitque Samuel filios Israel in Masphath.

14. In Masphath quippe sacerdos judicat, cum non humanum arbitrium sequitur, sed divinum; cum in omni quod disponendum est se in alta contemplatione sublevat, et hoc in subditorum judicio disponit: quod aequum esse in superna visione cognoscit. Hinc namque est, quod in omni fere negotio Moyses in tabernaculo foederis Dominum consulit (Exod. XXXIII, 8): quia nimirum praedicator sanctae Ecclesiae in intima debet veritatis contemplatione conspicere, ut subditorum vitam foris irreprehensibiliter valeat ordinare. Tunc enim et tenere peccata, et dimittere verius potest, cum in arcano speculationis, Domino loquente, audit quod loquitur. Unde et resurgens à mortuis Dominus prius in discipulorum faciem insufflavit, et postea dimittendi retinendique peccata auctoritatem tribuit (Joan. XX, 21, 23): ut profecto monstraret, quia qui illam mentis speculationem non habet, judex animarum esse non debet. In electorum quippe praedicatorum faciem Dominum insufflare, est intimas secretasque vias spiritalis examinis eis per Spiritum sanctum revelare. Hinc Paulus ait: Spiritalis judicat omnia (I Cor. II, 15).

12. For what is it to draw water, if not to produce floods of tears from the profound confusion of a penitent soul? For we draw water, as it were, when, considering the profound iniquity into which we have fallen, we weep. Which water indeed we pour out in the sight of the Lord, if when we are pricked by repenting, we do not seek the favor of the world from the weeping of that same compunction, but only the fruit of divine placation. But while the mind is pricked by weeping, it is necessary that the flesh also, which was subject to delights, be afflicted. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Verse 6.) And they fasted on that day.

13. The "day" of the sinful soul is the hope of obtaining indulgence in the promise of the divine word. Whence also the Lord promises through the prophet, saying: I will not the death of the sinner: but rather that he be converted and live (Ezek. 18:32, 33; 33:11). On that day, therefore, they fast who for that reason wear down the flesh by repenting: because in the light of hope they believe indubitably that they will arrive at indulgence. Which affliction of penance, however, is then finally suitable for deleting sins when it has been commanded by the judgment of the priest, when by him, the acts of those confessing having been discussed, according to the measure of the crime, the burden of affliction is decreed for them. Well, therefore, follows:

(Verse 6.) And they said: We have sinned against Thee, O Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpah (Masphath).

For in Mizpah the priest judges when he does not follow human judgment, but divine; when in everything that is to be disposed he raises himself in high contemplation, and disposes this in the judgment of his subjects: what he knows to be equitable in the supernal vision. For hence it is that in almost every business Moses consults the Lord in the tabernacle of the covenant (Exod. 33:8): because, indeed, the preacher of the holy Church ought to behold in the intimate contemplation of truth, so that he may be able to order the life of his subjects without reprehension. For then he can more truly both retain and remit sins, when in the secret of observation, as the Lord speaks, he hears what he says. Whence also, rising from the dead, the Lord first breathed into the face of the disciples, and afterwards gave the authority of remitting and retaining sins (John 20:21, 23): so that he might show, indeed, that he who does not have that observation of the mind ought not to be a judge of souls. To breathe into the face of the elect preachers is for the Lord to reveal to them, through the Holy Spirit, the intimate and secret ways of spiritual examination. Hence Paul says: The spiritual man judges all things (1 Cor. 2:15).

Hinc item divinae gratiae largitatem commendans, ait: Nos spiritum hujus mundi non habemus, sed spiritum qui ex Deo est, ut sciamus quae a Deo donata sunt nobis (Ibid., 12). Qui autem hujus mundi spiritum habet, in Masphath, id est in speculatione subditos judicare non potest: quia dum per spiritum interiora non penetrat, in causis examinis quas exquirit, mundano spiritu foris errat. Bene igitur Samuel filios Israel in Masphath judicasse dicitur: quia nimirum praedicatores sancti, in subditorum judiciis aliud extra nequaquam definiunt, nisi quod intus eis divina inspiratione revelatur. Sed dum boni subditi majorum judicio semetipsos subjiciunt, spiritalium hostium iras contra se validius accendunt. Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 7.) Et ascenderunt satrapae Philisthinorum ad Israel.

15. Ablatis namque diis alienis, peracto jejunio, exhibita a praedicatore censura examinis, ad Israel Philisthinorum principes ascendunt: quia cum altiori vita proficimus, maligni spiritus, qui semper bene agentibus invident, nobis infestiores sunt. Et quia de innocentis vitae sublimitate nos deponere appetunt, ascendere dicuntur. Ascendere quippe malignis spiritibus, est se ad expugnanda alta per coeleste desiderium corda sublevare. Quia etiam contra perfectiores Christi milites non quorumlibet malorum spirituum, sed fortiorum daemonum praelia excitantur; non Philisthiim contra Israel ascendere, sed Philisthinorum satrapae perhibentur. Principes quoque pluribus praesunt. Per hoc ergo, quod contra Israel satrapae ascendere dicuntur, potest rationabiliter colligi quia ad probandam electorum patientiam, nec unus spiritus malus electorum singulis, sed innumeri deputantur; ut de consecuta eorum victoria, tanto sit copiosior fidelium gloria, quanto eis irrogata fuerint praelia graviora. Tamen inter eadem praelia nuper conversi vehementer pavere solent: repente etenim inveniunt se in campo laboris, praeter experimentum consuetudinis. Armata hinc contra se aspiciunt desideria, quae sibi dudum pacata serviebant: illinc supernus amor invitat, ut coepta bona non deserant. Hinc spiritus mentem elevat, illinc caro gravat; ac dum finis sui modum scire non possunt, de electionis suae incertitudine vehementer expavescunt. Unde et hic apte subditur:

(Vers. 7.) Quod audientes filii Israel, timuerunt a facie Philisthinorum.

Hence likewise, commending the largesse of divine grace, he says: We have not the spirit of this world, but the spirit which is from God, that we may know the things that are given to us by God (Ibid., 12). He, however, who has the spirit of this world, cannot judge his subjects in Mizpah, that is, in observation: because while he does not penetrate the interior things through the spirit, in the causes of examination which he seeks, he wanders outside with a mundane spirit. Rightly, therefore, is Samuel said to have judged the children of Israel in Mizpah: because, indeed, the holy preachers define nothing else outside in the judgments of their subjects except what is revealed to them inside by divine inspiration. But while good subjects subject themselves to the judgment of their elders, they kindle more strongly the angers of spiritual enemies against themselves. Whence also it is subjoined:

(Verse 7.) And the satraps of the Philistines went up against Israel.

15. For after the strange gods have been taken away, the fast completed, the censure of the examiner's trial exhibited by the preacher, the princes of the Philistines go up against Israel: because when we profit in a higher life, the malignant spirits, who always envy those who act well, are more hostile to us. And because they desire to depose us from the sublimity of an innocent life, they are said to go up. For to go up, for malignant spirits, is to raise themselves to expugn the hearts high through celestial desire. Because even against the more perfect soldiers of Christ the battles of not just any evil spirits, but of stronger demons are excited; not simply the Philistines, but the "satraps of the Philistines" are said to go up against Israel. Princes also preside over more. Through this, therefore, that the satraps are said to go up against Israel, it can be reasonably gathered that for the proving of the patience of the elect, not one evil spirit is deputed to each of the elect, but innumerable ones; so that from the consequent victory of these, the glory of the faithful may be so much more copious as the battles inflicted on them were more grave. Nevertheless, among these same battles, those recently converted are wont to fear vehemently: for suddenly they find themselves in the field of labor, beyond the experience of custom. On one side they see desires armed against them, which a short while ago served them in peace: on the other side supernal love invites them not to desert the good things they have begun. On this side the spirit raises the mind, on that side the flesh weighs it down; and while they cannot know the measure of their end, they fear vehemently from the uncertainty of their election. Whence also here it is aptly subjoined:

(Verse 7.) Which the children of Israel hearing, they were afraid of the face of the Philistines.

16. A facie enim Philisthinorum timent, ut eorum posteriora non timeant. Quae est enim malorum spirituum facies, nisi concupiscentia saecularis? In hac enim specie quicunque componitur eorum imagini conformatur. Quia vero non Philisthinorum faciem, sed ab eorum facie timuisse Israel dicitur; sic electorum mentes insinuat, ut etiam reproborum stultitiam latenti ratione reprehendat. Non enim faciem, sed a facie timuerunt: quia videlicet sancti viri, aliud est quod foris aspiciunt, aliud quod intus expavescunt. Nam etsi aliquando florentem mundum humana ratione considerant, repente mentis oculos ad ea mala quae mundi gaudia sequuntur retractantes levant, et velut a facie trepidant, qui poenis sequentibus contingere praesentes delectationes vitant. At contra reprobi, qui hanc Philisthinorum faciem nequaquam metuunt, sequentes ferocitatis eorum impetus non evadunt. Dum enim vana mundi gaudia tota virtute suscipiunt, afflictiones perpetuas, daemonum virtute, capiunt. Quibus nimirum Veritas comminatur, dicens: Vae vobis, divites, quia recepistis consolationem in vita vestra (Luc. VI, 24). Hinc item denuntians, ait: Vae vobis qui ridetis, quia flebitis (Ibid., 25). Quasi aliter dicat: Quia a Philisthinorum facie nequaquam pertimescitis, cum sequentes eorum vires irruunt, salutis invenire refugium non potestis. Tunc quidem timor adest, sed qui adjuvet non adest. Vindicta datur flagitii sine spe liberationis; et quam sint Philisthinorum horribilia posteriora sentiunt, qui faciei eorum blandimenta in mundi amore voluerunt. Bene igitur de Israelitis, in electorum typo dicitur: Timuerunt a facie Philisthinorum: quia nimirum dum conversandi modum sibi solerter ordinant, non disponunt metuere aeterna mala, cum veniunt; sed a temporali concupiscentia trepidant, cujus merito irrogantur. Et quia non tam suis meritis quam majorum hoc intercessione posse obtinere credunt, sequitur:

(Vers. 8.) Dixeruntque ad Samuelem: Ne cesses clamare pro nobis ad Dominum Deum Israel, ut salvet vos de manu Philisthiim.

17. Sed et tentatis subditis pastores boni non solum orationum praesidia conferunt, sed etiam sacrificiorum. Unde subditur:

(Vers. 9.) Tulit autem Samuel agnum lactentem unum, et obtulit illum holocaustum integrum Domino, et clamavit Samuel.

16. For they fear of the face of the Philistines, so that they may not fear their hinder parts (posteriora). For what is the face of the evil spirits, if not secular concupiscence? For in this species whoever is composed is conformed to their image. But because it is said that Israel feared not the face of the Philistines, but "of the face" (a facie); he so insinuates the minds of the elect that he also reproves the folly of the reprobate by latent reason. For they feared not the face, but "of the face": because, namely, for holy men, it is one thing which they behold outside, another which they fear inside. For even if they sometimes consider the flourishing world by human reason, suddenly they raise the eyes of the mind back to those evils which follow the joys of the world, and they tremble as if of the face, who by following punishments avoid present delights. But on the contrary, the reprobate, who by no means fear this face of the Philistines, do not escape the following impetus of their ferocity. For while they receive the vain joys of the world with all their strength, they capture perpetual afflictions by the power of demons. Whom indeed Truth threatens, saying: Woe to you, rich, for you have received your consolation in your life (Luke 6:24). Hence likewise denouncing, it says: Woe to you who laugh, for you shall weep (Ibid., 25). As if he said otherwise: Because you by no means tremble of the face of the Philistines, when their following forces rush in, you cannot find a refuge of salvation. Then indeed fear is present, but he who may help is not present. Vengeance is given for the crime without hope of deliverance; and they feel how horrible are the hinder parts of the Philistines, who wanted the blandishments of their face in the love of the world. Well, therefore, of the Israelites, in the type of the elect, it is said: They feared of the face of the Philistines: because, namely, while they skillfully order their way of life, they do not dispose themselves to fear eternal evils when they come; but they tremble of temporal concupiscence, by whose merit they are inflicted. And because they believe they can obtain this not so much by their own merits as by the intercession of their elders, there follows:

(Verse 8.) And they said to Samuel: Cease not to cry for us to the Lord our God of Israel, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

17. But to subjects under trial good pastors confer not only the protections of prayers, but also of sacrifices. Whence is subjoined:

(Verse 9.) And Samuel took a suckling lamb, and offered it a whole burnt offering (holocaustum integrum) to the Lord; and Samuel cried.

Quid est clamor Samuelis, nisi in supplicatione pontificis magna virtus desiderii? Unde ad tacentem labiis Moysen, licet populi subditi salutem ferventi devotione cupientem, a Domino dicitur: Quid clamas ad me (Exod. XIV, 15)? Quis vero est agnus lactens, nisi ille quem praecursor ejus ostendit, dicens: Ecce agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi (Joan. I, 29)? Et lactens dicitur, quia in ejus innocentia vera humanitas praedicatur. Sed unus agnus offertur, quia, praeter ipsum, qui mundi tollat peccata nequaquam reperitur. Quem profecto agnum integrum obtulit. Integritate quippe agni ad soliditatem pertinet catholicae professionis. Velut enim agnum dividit, qui a canone fidei per gladium separatur erroris. Agnus itaque dicitur pro innocentia, lactens pro assumptione naturae, unus pro singularitate potentiae, integer pro fidei nostrae firmissima soliditate.

18. Quod si quis haec non ad ipsum, sed ad ejus imitatorem referre voluerit, potest. Agnum quippe offerimus, cum per bonum castitatis et innocentiae, Redemptori nostro conformamur; et cum doctrina innocentium Patrum nostrorum pascimur, velut ubera sugimus, quibus ad aeternam vitam nutriamur. Unum quoque agnum offerimus, si post initia religiosae conversationis, nulla polluimur inquinatione pravitatis. Unum quippe agnum offert, qui a proposito innocentiae, ad pollutae vitae maculas nequaquam diffluit, a quibus redeat per iterationem bonae operationis. Integrum quoque agnum offerre, est ad aeternam vitam non solum carnis continentiam, sed mentis integritatem praeparare. Integrum quoque agnum Domino nequaquam offert, qui carnem Deo per continentiam consecrat, sed mentis suae secreta ab immundarum cogitationum lascivia non refrenat. Velut enim agni partem sacrificio subripit, qui puritatem cordis, corporis continentiae non conjungit. Unde et ipse agnus integrum offerre discipulis praecipiens, ait: Audistis quia dictum est antiquis: Non maechaberis; ego autem dico vobis, qui viderit mulierem ad concupiscendum, moechatus est in corde suo (Matth. V, 27, 28). Hinc etiam fatuae virgines in Evangelio notantur, quae lampades paraverunt, et oleum non paraverunt (Matth. XXV, 3). Lampades namque paratas habent, qui bonum pudicitiae servant in corpore: oleum quoque habent, qui nitorem puritatis tenent in mentis suae circumspectione. Dicatur ergo de Samuele: Obtulit agnum integrum Domino: quia ut bonum pudicitiae divinae placationi sufficiat, non solum in candore corporis servari debet, sed in splendore internae puritatis. Merito itaque subditur:

(Vers. 9.)---Et exaudivit eam Dominus.

What is the cry of Samuel, if not the great power of desire in the supplication of the pontiff? Whence to Moses, silent with his lips but desiring the salvation of the subject people with fervent devotion, it is said by the Lord: Why do you cry to me? (Exod. 14:15). But who is the suckling lamb, if not He whom his precursor pointed out, saying: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29)? And He is called suckling because in His innocence true humanity is preached. But one lamb is offered because, besides Him, one who may take away the sins of the world is by no means found. Which lamb indeed he offered whole (integrum). For the integrity of the lamb pertains to the solidity of the Catholic profession. For he divides the lamb, as it were, who is separated from the canon of faith by the sword of error. The lamb therefore is named for innocence, suckling for the assumption of nature, one for the singularity of power, whole for the most firm solidity of our faith.

18. Which if anyone should wish to refer not to Him, but to His imitator, he can. For we offer a lamb when through the good of chastity and innocence we are conformed to our Redemptor; and when we are fed by the doctrine of our innocent Fathers, we suck the breasts, as it were, by which we are nourished for eternal life. We also offer one lamb if, after the beginnings of religious conversation, we are polluted by no defilement of depravity. For he offers one lamb who by no means flows down from the purpose of innocence to the stains of a polluted life, from which he might return through the iteration of good operation. To offer a whole lamb, also, is to prepare for eternal life not only the continence of the flesh, but the integrity of the mind. He by no means offers a whole lamb to the Lord who consecrates the flesh to God through continence, but does not restrain the secrets of his mind from the lasciviousness of unclean thoughts. For he steals a part of the lamb from the sacrifice, as it were, who does not join the purity of the heart to the continence of the body. Whence also the Lamb Himself, commanding the disciples to offer a whole lamb, says: You have heard that it was said to the ancients: Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say to you, that whosoever shall see a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery in his heart (Matt. 5:27, 28). Hence also the foolish virgins are noted in the Gospel, who prepared lamps, and did not prepare oil (Matt. 25:3). For those have lamps prepared who keep the good of modesty (pudicitiae) in the body: they also have oil who hold the brightness of purity in the circumspection of their mind. Let it be said therefore of Samuel: He offered a whole lamb to the Lord: because that the good of modesty may suffice for divine placation, it ought to be kept not only in the whiteness of the body, but in the splendor of internal purity. Meritedly therefore is subjoined:

(Verse 9.) ---And the Lord heard him.

19. Ille namque exaudiri a Domino pro aliis orans potest, qui ex parte aliqua ei, cui supplicat, Domino odibilis non est. Nam si adhuc propria infirmitate deprimitur, pro obtinenda proximorum fortitudine nequaquam exauditur: et eo desiderium suum ad divinae celsitudinis arcem non sublevat, quo ipse de imo, quo per lapsum jacet, conatu ferventioris studii ascendere nequaquam curat. Sed et modus exauditionis exponitur, cum subinfertur:

(Vers. 10. 11.) Factum est, dum Samuel offerret holocaustum, Philisthaeos inire praelium contra Israel. Intonuit autem Dominus fragore magno in die illo super Philisthiim, et exterruit eos, et caesi sunt a filiis Israel. Egressique filii Israel de Masphath, persecuti sunt Philisthaeos, et percusserunt eos usque ad locum, qui erat subter Bethchar.

20. Offerente holocaustum Samuele, Philisthiim contra Israel praelium ineunt: quia maligni spiritus tunc adversus fideles subditos graviores tentationes commovent, cum contra se stare instantius Pastores vident. Sed super Philisthaeos Dominus intonat: quia orantibus doctoribus et fidelibus subditis, divina gratia robur administrat. Tonitrua enim fieri per nubila solent. Nubes autem sublimes per coeleste desiderium animae intelliguntur. Unde et propheta mentes electorum in amore coelestium elevatas admirans, dixit: Qui sunt isti, qui ut nubes volant (Isa. LX, 8)? Quae sunt autem tonitrua nubium, nisi illa ferventia et superna electorum desideria: quibus dum per divinam gratiam eorum mens succenditur, omne, quod maligni spiritus decipiendo suggerunt, ab ea penitus expellunt? Bene ergo dicitur: Intonuit Dominus super Philisthaeos, et exterruit eos. Nam dum per gratiam suam electis mentibus superna desideria infundit, quia etiam terrena omnia facit contemnere, eos etiam, qui ea eis appetere suggerunt, nequam spiritus in fugam vertit. Velut enim tonitruo territi fugiunt, dum in electis mentibus, quas tentando pulsaverant, ingentem sonitum divinae virtutis expavescunt. Quia vero fragore magno intonuisse Dominus dicitur, quid est aliud, nisi quia imperfecta Christianorum desideria daemonibus terribilia non sunt? Fragor enim magnus tonitrui, perfectum est uniuscujusque desiderium electi. Cum igitur fragore magno super Philisthaeos Dominus intonat, tunc a filiis Israel caeduntur: quia dum electorum mentem perfecta devotio ad superna gaudia erigit, omne, quod adversae parti militat, a se penitus abscindit.

19. For he can be heard by the Lord praying for others who is not in some part hateful to the Lord to whom he supplicates. For if he is still depressed by his own infirmity, he is by no means heard for obtaining the fortitude of his neighbors: and he does not raise his desire to the citadel of divine height in the degree that he himself by no means cares to ascend from the depth where he lies through lapse, by the effort of more fervent study. But also the manner of the hearing is explained when there is subjoined:

(Verse 10, 11.) And it came to pass, while Samuel was offering the whole burnt offering, the Philistines began the battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a great crash on that day upon the Philistines, and terrified them, and they were smitten by the children of Israel. And the children of Israel went out of Mizpah (Masphath), and pursued the Philistines, and smote them as far as the place which was under Bethcar (Bethchar).

20. While Samuel was offering the burnt offering, the Philistines began the battle against Israel: because the evil spirits then stir up heavier temptations against the faithful subjects, when they see the Pastors standing more urgently against them. But the Lord thunders upon the Philistines: because to the praying teachers and faithful subjects, divine grace administers strength. For thunders are accustomed to happen through clouds. But sublime clouds are understood through the heavenly desire of the soul. Whence also the prophet, admiring the minds of the elect elevated in the love of heavenly things, said: Who are these, who fly as clouds (Isa. 60:8)? But what are the thunders of the clouds, if not those fervent and supernal desires of the elect: by which, while their mind is set on fire through divine grace, they utterly expel from it everything that the evil spirits suggest by deceiving? Well, therefore, is it said: The Lord thundered upon the Philistines, and terrified them. For while through His grace He pours supernal desires into the elect minds, because He also makes them despise all earthly things, the wicked spirit turns into flight even those who suggest to them to desire those things. For they flee terrified as if by thunder, while in the elect minds, which they had beaten by tempting, they dread the enormous sound of divine virtue. But because the Lord is said to have thundered with a great crash, what else is it, except that the imperfect desires of Christians are not terrible to demons? For the great crash of thunder is the perfect desire of each elect one. When, therefore, the Lord thunders upon the Philistines with a great crash, then they are smitten by the children of Israel: because while perfect devotion raises the mind of the elect to supernal joys, it utterly cuts off from itself everything that fights for the adverse part.

Bene quoque prius territi Philisthaei, deinde a filiis Israel 170 caedi memorantur: nam terrentur electorum devotione, caeduntur opere. Et quia opere devotio prior est, terreri prius, postea vero caedi recte perhibentur. Nam prius donum bonae voluntatis a Domino accipimus, ut consilia malorum spirituum postmodum confutare valeamus. Bene etiam Dominus super Philisthaeos intonare, et exterrere eos dicitur, filii autem Israel illos caedere perhibentur: quia bona desideria nobis per divinam gratiam ministrantur, sed nos dona gratiae per conatum liberi arbitrii ad virtutum victorias promovemus. Ordo igitur coelestis militiae est, ut ante tonans fragore magno audiatur Deus, et post miles ad caedenda hostium agmina progrediatur: ut videlicet in se prius dona gratiae videat, deinde ad certaminis campum validius erumpat, et securus victoriae proventum speret, qui eis, quibus coronetur, viribus ante congressionis tempora fultus est.

21. Bene autem, qui Philisthaeos caedunt, de Masphath egressi perhibentur. In Masphath etenim, quae speculatio dicitur, morantur, qui in divinarum rerum contemplatione persistunt. Sed ad caedendos Philisthaeos exeunt, cum ex arcano internae meditationis consulti venientes, comprimunt vires adversae dominationis. Intus enim latenter ordinant, qualiter foris in apparato opere, hostium cuneos irrumpant. Tanto quidem graviores pugnas eis procedentes exhibent, quanto, dum interna cogitant, apud se quietiores latent. Et quia maligni spiritus ab electis Dei semper comprimendi sunt, usque ad locum subter Bethchar Philisthiim percussi fuisse memorantur. Bethchar quippe, domus agni interpretatur. Hunc agnum nobis Isaias insinuans, ait: Tanquam agnus ad occisionem ducetur, et tanquam ovis coram tondente se, sine voce (Isai. LIII, 7). Quae igitur fuit domus agni, nisi illa sublimis, et singulariter munita conversatio Redemptoris, quae dum culpa caruit, cunctis nequam spiritibus inaccessibilis exstitit? Ad Bethchar, id est domum agni pervenire nemo potest: quia quisquis multum proficit, sanctitate Redemptoris inferior est. Unde et praedicator egregius ejusdem Redemptoris laudibus insistens, dicit: Talis decebat, ut nobis esset pontifex sanctus, innocens, impollutus, segregatus a peccatoribus, et excelsior coelis factus, qui non habet necessitatem, sicut sacerdotes, prius pro suis delictis hostias offerre (Hebr. VII, 26, 27). Quis est ergo locus subter Bethchar, ad quem usque Philisthiim caedere, et persequi debemus?

Well also are the Philistines first mentioned as terrified, and then smitten by the children of Israel: for they are terrified by the devotion of the elect, they are smitten by the work. And because devotion is prior to work, they are rightly held to be terrified first, but afterwards smitten. For we first receive the gift of good will from the Lord, so that we may afterwards be able to confute the counsels of the evil spirits. Well also is the Lord said to thunder upon the Philistines and to terrify them, while the children of Israel are held to smite them: because good desires are administered to us through divine grace, but we promote the gifts of grace through the effort of free will to the victories of virtues. The order, therefore, of the heavenly warfare is that God is heard thundering with a great crash first, and afterwards the soldier advances to smite the ranks of the enemies: so that he may indeed see the gifts of grace in himself first, then break out more strongly to the field of battle, and hope secure for the outcome of victory, who is supported by the strengths by which he may be crowned before the times of the engagement.

21. Well also, those who smite the Philistines are held to have gone out from Mizpah (Masphath). For in Mizpah, which is named "watchtower" (speculatio), they tarry who persist in the contemplation of divine things. But they go out to smite the Philistines when, coming as consultants from the secret of internal meditation, they compress the strengths of the adverse domination. For inside they secretly arrange how they may break into the wedges of the enemies outside in the prepared work. They exhibit battles that are much heavier to those proceeding in the degree that, while they think on internal things, they lie more quiet within themselves. And because evil spirits must always be compressed by the elect of God, the Philistines are mentioned as having been smitten as far as the place under Beth-car (Bethchar). For Beth-car is interpreted as "house of the lamb." Isaiah, pointing out this lamb to us, says: He shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearer, he is without voice (Isa. 53:7). What therefore was the house of the lamb, if not that sublime and singularly fortified conversation of the Redemptor, which, while it lacked fault, stood inaccessible to all wicked spirits? No one can arrive at Beth-car, that is, the house of the lamb: because whoever profits much is inferior to the holiness of the Redemptor. Whence also the excellent preacher, insisting on the praises of the same Redemptor, says: For such a high priest became us, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, who hath no necessity, as the priests, first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins (Heb. 7:26, 27). What therefore is the place under Beth-car, to which even we ought to smite and pursue the Philistines?

Sed si Bethchar perfectionem signat Dominicae conversationis, locum subter Bethchar, communem Sanctorum summam exprimit sanctitatis. Qui et eidem Redemptori se obediendo humiliant, et ejus gloriae per studium vitae innocentis appropinquant. Locus enim, qui subter Bethchar situs ostenditur, eidem loco cui subest, et inferior esse cognoscitur, et vicinus: quia sancti viri, quo Deo per vitae altitudinem vicini sunt, eo et humiliori cogitatione subjecti. Dum ergo novitiorum fidelium triumphus sub Israelitarum gestis ostenditur, usque ad locum sub domo agni caesi alienigenae dicuntur: quia profecto per indesinentem conatum certaminis, contendere debemus ad arcem perfectionis: ubi jam tanto simus hostibus nostris terribiliores, quanto Redemptori nostro viciniores. Ibi enim jam quaedam securitas est, quae perturbari hostium pavore non potest. Talibus namque concessae virtutis dona insinuans Dominus, ait: Ecce dedi vobis potestatem calcandi super serpentes, et scorpiones, et omnem virtutem inimici (Luc. X, 19). Unde et is, qui ad locum domui agni 171 vicinum pervenerat, dicit: Quis nos separabit a charitate Christi, tribulatio, an augustia, an fames (Rom. VIII, 35), an caetera talia? Potest etiam domus agni coelestem patriam designare. Unde et Joannes dicit: Vidi supra montem Sion agnum stantem, et cum eo centum quadraginta quatuor millia, habentia nomen ejus, et nomen patris ejus scriptum in frontibus suis (Apoc. XIV, 1). Quis est igitur locus, qui est sub domo agni, nisi terminus temporalis vitae, ex quo ad supernae patriae gaudia assumuntur electi? Qui enim usque ad statutum nobis terminum ducimur, quem praeterire vivendo non possumus, velut ad locum venimus, unde alio transferamur. Sed terminus vitae electi viri sub domo agni situs ostenditur: quia unde per angustias mortalitatis demergitur, inde ad vitae indeficientis gaudia sublevatur. Nam et agnus ipse, qui in citharoedorum citharizantium et cantantium domum suam laetus inhabitat, antequam ad hujus domus laetitiam duceretur, sub domo fuit. Hinc namque est, quod immolationis suae tempore dicit: Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem (Matth. XXVI, 38; Marc. XIV, 34). Electi ergo uniuscujusque finis dum loco ostenditur, subter Bethchar, id est domo agni esse memoratur; quia sancti viri cum per mortis poenam temporalia deserunt, de vicino praeeminentem sibi supernam patriam conscendunt. Nam Paulus, confidenter asserens, dicit: Scimus, quia si terrestris domus nostra dissolvatur, habemus habitaculum ex Deo, non manufactum in coelo (II Cor. V, 1). Igitur usque ad locum, qui est subter domo agni, Philisthaeos caedimus, si quandiu in hac vita sumus, de malignis spiritibus triumphamus.

But if Beth-car signs the perfection of the Lord's conversation, the place under Beth-car expresses the common sum of the holiness of the Saints. Who also humiliate themselves by obeying the same Redemptor, and approach His glory through the study of an innocent life. For the place which is shown situated under Beth-car is known both to be inferior to the same place to which it is subject, and to be near it: because holy men, in the degree that they are near to God through the height of life, in that degree are they subject in humbler thought. While, therefore, the triumph of the novice faithful is shown under the deeds of the Israelites, the foreigners are said to be smitten as far as the place under the house of the lamb: because indeed through the unceasing effort of battle, we ought to contend for the citadel of perfection: where we may now be so much more terrible to our enemies, in the degree that we are nearer to our Redemptor. For there there is now a certain security, which cannot be disturbed by the fear of enemies. For the Lord, pointing out the gifts of granted virtue to such ones, says: Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy (Luke 10:19). Whence also he who had arrived at the place near to the house of the lamb says: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or famine (Rom. 8:35), or other such things? The house of the lamb can also designate the heavenly fatherland. Whence also John says: I saw upon Mount Sion a lamb standing, and with him a hundred forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his father, written on their foreheads (Rev. 14:1). What therefore is the place which is under the house of the lamb, if not the boundary of temporal life, from which the elect are taken up to the joys of the supernal fatherland? For we who are led to the boundary appointed for us, which we cannot pass by living, come as it were to the place from which we may be transferred elsewhere. But the boundary of the life of an elect man is shown situated under the house of the lamb: because from where he is submerged through the straits of mortality, from there he is raised to the joys of unfailing life. For even the lamb himself, who joyfully inhabits his house in the midst of the harpists harping and singing, was under the house before he was led to the joy of this house. For hence it is that at the time of his immolation he says: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (Matt. 26:38; Mark 14:34). Therefore, while the end of each of the elect is shown by the place, it is mentioned to be under Beth-car, that is, the house of the lamb; because holy men, when they leave temporal things through the punishment of death, ascend from the nearby place to the supernal fatherland that stands above them. For Paul, confidently asserting, says: We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1). Therefore, we smite the Philistines as far as the place which is under the house of the lamb, if as long as we are in this life, we triumph over the evil spirits.

(Vers. 12.) Tulit autem Samuel lapidem unum, et posuit eum inter Masphath et Sen; et vocavit nomen ejus Lapis Adjutorii, dixitque; Hucusque auxiliatus est nobis Dominus.

22. Lapis in sacro eloquio Dominum, et Redemptorem nostrum significat. Lapis vero unus a Samuele tollitur, cum a sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatore Redemptoris fortitudo singulariter praedicatur. Qui profecto inter Masphath et Sen praefigitur: quia in vitae exitu electos protegit, reprobos confringit. Sen quippe excussio dicitur. Excussi autem sunt reprobi, id est a fidelium societate separati. Dum ergo usque ad locum subter Bethchar Philisthaei caesi perhibentur, lapis inter Sen et Masphath praefixus asseritur: quia dum electi Dei victoriae suae titulum in fine percipiunt, Redemptoris judicio a malorum societate separantur. Modo vero, velut in area frumentum, et palea simul sumus, sed dum ad vitae terminum ducimur, electi a reprobis Dominica virtute dividuntur, et velut inter se lapidem habent medium, dum illi pondus Redemptoris in damnationis suae judicium sustinent, et isti in ejus fortitudine aeternae gloriae palmas tenent. Possunt per Sen etiam maligni spiritus designari. Excussi quippe sunt, quia a coelesti secreto per superbiam projecti. Et quia nunc in hac vita nobiscum praeliantur, bene cum victoriae nostrae tempus asseritur, lapis inter nos et eos positus perhibetur: quia cum militiae nostrae donativa percipimus, ultra nobis eorum praelia nequaquam renovantur. Samuel autem hunc lapidem in medium ponit: quia nobis Redemptoris nostri bonitatem sanctae Ecclesiae doctor ostendit. Et quia omne, quod a nobis in omni vita nostra prosperum geritur, divinae gratiae adscribitur, apte ab eo lapis ille, qui in medio sistitur, Lapis Adjutorii vocatur. Ipse est namque Lapis Adjutorii, qui si nobis subvenire 172 noluerit, vinci possumus, vincere nequimus. De quo jam in medium posito dicitur: Usque huc auxiliatus est nobis Dominus; quia ejus praesidia electos suos usque ad aeternae retributionis tempora persequuntur. Et quia, ut diximus, jam tunc a nobis in aeterna requie susceptis, a depressis hostibus praelia nulla commoventur, sequitur:

(Vers. 13). Et humiliati sunt Philisthiim, nec apposuerunt, ut venirent ultra in terminos Israel.

23. Haec profecto sic electorum singulorum facta exprimunt, ut sanctae catholicae Ecclesiae et procinctum innuant belli, et gaudia remunerationis. Hanc namque universalis Ecclesiae victoriam jam post resurrectionis nostrae gloriam futuram, beatus Paulus ostendit; qui, quasi futurae incorruptioni praesens, morti insultabat, dicens: Absorpta est mors in victoria? ubi est mors victoria tua? ubi est mors stimulus tuus (I Cor. XV, 54, 55)?

(Verse 12.) But Samuel took a stone, and laid it between Mizpah (Masphath) and Shen (Sen); and he called the name thereof "The Stone of Help" (Lapis Adjutorii), and said: Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.

22. In sacred speech, "Stone" signifies the Lord and our Redemptor. Indeed, one stone is taken by Samuel, since the strength of the Redemptor is singularly preached by the preacher of the holy Church. Which stone is indeed set between Mizpah and Shen: because at the end of life he protects the elect and crushes the reprobate. For Shen is named "shaking off" (excussio). But the reprobate are the shaken off, that is, separated from the society of the faithful. Therefore, while the Philistines are held to be smitten as far as the place under Beth-car, the stone is asserted to be set between Shen and Mizpah: because while the elect of God perceive the title of their victory at the end, they are separated from the society of the evil by the judgment of the Redemptor. Now indeed, we are together like wheat and chaff on the threshing floor, but while we are led to the boundary of life, the elect are divided from the reprobate by the Lord's power, and have the stone as a medium between them, as it were, while those sustain the weight of the Redemptor in the judgment of their damnation, and these hold the palms of eternal glory in his strength. By Shen also the evil spirits can be designated. For they are the shaken off, because they were cast out from the heavenly secret through pride. And because they now battle with us in this life, well is the stone mentioned as set between us and them when the time of our victory is asserted: because when we receive the rewards of our warfare, their battles are by no means renewed for us further. But Samuel places this stone in the middle: because the doctor of the holy Church shows us the goodness of our Redemptor. And because everything prosperous that is done by us in all our life is ascribed to divine grace, that stone which is set in the middle is aptly called "The Stone of Help." For He is the Stone of Help, who, if He should not wish to subvene us, we can be conquered, and we cannot conquer. Of which stone now placed in the middle it is said: Hitherto the Lord hath helped us; because his protections pursue his elect even to the times of eternal retribution. And because, as we have said, no battles are then moved by the depressed enemies when we have been received into eternal rest, there follows:

(Verse 13.) And the Philistines were humbled, and they did not set themselves to come any more into the borders of Israel.

23. These things indeed express the deeds of individual elect ones in such a way that they also intimate the readiness of battle and the joys of remuneration for the holy Catholic Church. For the blessed Paul showed this victory of the universal Church, which is to be after the glory of our resurrection; who, as if present at the future incorruption, insulted death, saying: Death is swallowed up in victory? O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? (1 Cor. 15:54, 55).

Humiliatos etiam Philisthaeos vidit: quia apostatarum angelorum memorans, ad amorem futurae dignitatis electos accendit, dicens: An nescitis, quia angelos judicabimus (I Cor. VI, 3)? Tunc quippe Philisthaei humiliantur, cum in praeparata sibi ab origine mundi aeterni ignis incendia daemones mittuntur. Et in terminos Israel venire ulterius non apponunt: quia ad tentanda electorum corda non exeunt. Qui autem sunt Israelis termini, nisi coeli? Quomodo autem mali spiritus in Israelis terminos venient, qui sic in inferni profundo damnati sunt, ut a summersione poenarum nunquam resurgant? Quia ergo aeterna oppressione dejiciuntur, apte subinfertur: (Vers. 13). Facta est, inquit, manus Domini super Philisthaeos cunctis diebus Samuelis.

24. Qui enim sunt dies boni doctoris, nisi vernantes illi radii fulgentis aeternitatis? Qui apte Samuelis esse referuntur: quia etsi communes sunt electorum omnium, speciali quadam gratia ad gaudia lucent praedicatorum. Vel certe praedicatorum sunt, quia specialius eorum mentibus fulgent, quorum praedicatione nunc sanctae Ecclesiae demonstrantur. Manus autem Domini super Philisthaeos cunctis diebus Samuelis facta perhibetur, quia divina potestas malos spiritus semper opprimit, quae in aeternae claritatis gloria etiam electos exhilarare nunquam desistit. Tunc vero angelorum damna reparantur, cum quidquid de ordine conditorum spirituum, eorum superbia sublatum beatitudini fuerat, de electis hominibus adimpletur. Quare sequitur: (Vers. 14.) Et redditae sunt urbes, quas tulerant Philisthiim Israeli.

25. Urbes sublatae sunt illae perditae multitudines angelorum. Sed tunc redduntur, quando de electa natura humana assumitur, unde quod de angelis periit, suppleatur. Quod etiam in conversione flagitiosorum hominum accipi convenienter potest. Urbes namque Philisthiim tollunt, cum unitas fidelium mentes tentando decipiunt, et sibi eas peccatis immergendo supponunt. Sed ablatae urbes Israeli redduntur: quia sic in hac vita poenitentes satisfaciunt, ut in perenni gloria splendidi ad electorum gaudium exhibeantur. Quia vero non solum, qui agere bona negligunt, sed etiam, qui abundanter iniquitatem faciunt, poenitendo salvantur, subditur: (Vers. 14.) Ab Accaron usque Geth.

26. Accaron dicitur sterilis, Geth torcular. Steriles quidem sunt, qui bona opera non agunt. In torculari autem uva premitur, et vinum promulgatur. 173 Quid est autem concupiscentia saecularis, nisi uva reprobae mentis? Quid vero est fervor peccandi, nisi liquor vini, qui peccatoris mentem aeternorum bonorum immemorem facit? Dum enim ex concupiscentia cordis peccatum generatur, quasi in torculari de uva vinum producitur.

He also saw the Philistines humbled: because, remembering the apostate angels, he enkindled the elect to the love of future dignity, saying: Know you not that we shall judge angels? (1 Cor. 6:3). For then the Philistines are humbled, when the demons are sent into the fires of eternal fire prepared for them from the origin of the world. And they do not set themselves to come any more into the borders of Israel: because they do not go out to tempt the hearts of the elect. But what are the borders of Israel, if not the heavens? But how shall the evil spirits come into the borders of Israel, who are so damned in the depth of hell that they never rise from the submersion of punishments? Because, therefore, they are cast down by eternal oppression, there is aptly subjoined: (Verse 13.) The hand of the Lord, he says, was upon the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

24. For what are the days of a good doctor, if not those vernal rays of shining eternity? Which are aptly referred to as being Samuel's: because although they are common to all the elect, they shine with a certain special grace for the joys of preachers. Or certainly they belong to the preachers because they shine more specially in the minds of those by whose preaching they are now shown to the holy Church. But the hand of the Lord is held to have been upon the Philistines all the days of Samuel, because divine power always oppresses the evil spirits, and it never ceases to exhilarate even the elect in the glory of eternal clarity. Then indeed the losses of the angels are repaired, when whatever had been taken away from beatitude by their pride from the order of created spirits is filled up from the elect humans. Wherefore there follows: (Verse 14.) And the cities which the Philistines had taken were restored to Israel.

25. The cities taken away are those lost multitudes of angels. But they are restored then, when it is assumed from the elect human nature that from which what perished from the angels may be supplied. Which also can be conveniently understood in the conversion of flagitious men. For the Philistines take cities when the unity of the faithful deceive minds by tempting, and subject them to themselves by immersing them in sins. But the taken cities are restored to Israel: because those repenting in this life so satisfy that they are exhibited splendid for the joy of the elect in perennial glory. But because not only those who neglect to do good things, but also those who abundantly do iniquity are saved by repenting, there is subjoined: (Verse 14.) From Ekron (Accaron) even unto Gath (Geth).

26. Ekron is named "sterile," Gath "winepress." Sterile indeed are those who do not do good works. But in the winepress the grape is pressed, and wine is brought forth. But what is secular concupiscence if not the grape of a reprobate mind? But what is the fervor of sinning if not the liquor of wine, which makes the mind of the sinner unmindful of eternal goods? For while sin is generated from the concupiscence of the heart, wine is produced from the grape as if in a winepress.

Ab Accaron ergo usque Geth sublatae urbes Israeli redduntur: quia bona agere negligentium, et mala audacter perpetrantium mentes, quae poenitendo ad Dominum modo redeunt, tunc in communi electorum gloria splendidae demonstrantur. Earum quippe mala in Dei memoria nequaquam veniunt, quae ipsi poenitientiae afflictione delere obliti non sunt. Sequitur: (Vers. 14.) Eratque pax inter Israelem et Amorrhaeum.

27. Quae est ista pax, nisi quam propheta Michaeas asserit, dicens: Et erit iste pax in terra, cum venerit (Mich. V, 5). Hinc Paulus ait: Ipse est pax nostra, qui facit utraque unum (Eph. II, 14). Quid est autem, quod inter Israelem, et Amorrhaeum pax ostenditur? Sed quid per Amorrhaeum, nisi pars hominum reproba designatur? Qui vero per Israelem figurantur, nisi electi? Et quia electi in dextera Dei, reprobi vero in sinistra futuri sunt (Matth. XXV, 33), dum pax esse inter utrosque asseritur, sanctorum beatitudo inclyta demonstratur; qui justitiae Conditoris tanta aequitate conveniunt, ut de conspecta reproborum poena nulla compassione moveantur. Dum ergo inter Israelem, et Amorrhaeum pax esse ostenditur, non demonstratur bonum, quod commune cum sanctis habeant reprobi, sed quo muniantur electi. Unde et sub Israelis specie per prophetam sanctae Ecclesiae repromittitur: Qui posuit fines tuos pacem, et adipe frumenti satiat te (Psal. CXLVII, 14). Pacem quippe Ecclesiae fines ponit: quia dum Redemptoris potentia eam in intimae aequitatis celsitudinem erigit, per dolorem compassionis, perditorum miseria non affligit. Sed ad tantam beatitudinem quo pastorum studio boni subditi promoveantur, exponit, dicens: (Vers. 15.) Judicavit quoque Samuel Israelem omnibus diebus vitae suae.

28. Qui sunt dies vitae uniuscujusque doctoris, nisi virtutum spiritalium claritates? Omnibus namque diebus vitae suae Israelem judicat, qui lucem justitiae, quam loquendo asserit, ad subditorum fidelium exemplum, perfectione repraesentat bonae conversationis. Qui autem virtutum spiritalium lucem non habet, quia ad docendum assumit bona conversationis extraneae, diebus profecto judicat vitae alienae. De quibus profecto per prophetam Dominus dicit: Ecce ego ad prophetas, qui furantur verba mea, unusquisque a proximo suo (Jerem. XXIII, 30). Verba quippe furantur, qui bonum, quod docendo praedicant, operando non sequuntur: quia veluti clam de alieno tollunt, quod dato proprii laboris pretio suum nequaquam faciunt. Post denuntiatam itaque futuram beatitudinem, qualis interim debeat esse fidelium pastor, ostenditur: quia omnibus vitae suae diebus Samuel Israelem judicasse perhibetur. Perfectionis etenim viam male insinuat, si lucis iter quis voce volens pandere, actione tenebrescat.

From Ekron even unto Gath, therefore, the taken cities are restored to Israel: because the minds of those neglecting to do good and of those boldly perpetrating evil, which now return to the Lord by repenting, are then demonstrated splendid in the common glory of the elect. For their evils by no means come into the memory of God, which they themselves have not forgotten to delete by the affliction of penance. There follows: (Verse 14.) And there was peace between Israel and the Amorite (Amorrhaeum).

27. What is this peace, if not that which the prophet Micah asserts, saying: And this man shall be the peace in the land when he shall come (Mic. 5:5). Hence Paul says: He is our peace, who hath made both one (Eph. 2:14). But what is it that peace is shown between Israel and the Amorite? But what is designated by the Amorite, if not the reprobate part of men? But who are figured by Israel, if not the elect? And because the elect shall be on the right hand of God, but the reprobate on the left (Matt. 25:33), while it is asserted that there is peace between both, the illustrious beatitude of the saints is demonstrated; who agree with such equity with the justice of the Creator that they are moved by no compassion for the seen punishment of the reprobate. Therefore, while peace is shown to be between Israel and the Amorite, it is not demonstrated as a good which the reprobate have in common with the saints, but by which the elect are fortified. Whence also under the species of Israel it is promised back to the holy Church through the prophet: Who hath placed peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the fat of corn (Ps. 147:14). For he places peace in the borders of the Church: because while the power of the Redemptor raises her into the height of intimate equity, the misery of the lost does not afflict her through the pain of compassion. But to how great a beatitude the good subjects are promoted by the study of the pastors, he explains, saying: (Verse 15.) Samuel also judged Israel all the days of his life.

28. What are the days of the life of each doctor, if not the clarities of spiritual virtues? For he judges Israel all the days of his life who represents the light of justice, which he asserts by speaking, in the perfection of good conversation as an example to the faithful subjects. But he who does not have the light of spiritual virtues, because he assumes the good things of an extraneous conversation for teaching, truly judges in the days of another's life. Of whom indeed the Lord says through the prophet: Behold, I am against the prophets, who steal my words every one from his neighbor (Jer. 23:30). For they steal words who do not follow by working the good that they preach by teaching: because they take as if secretly from what belongs to another that which they by no means make their own by giving the price of their own labor. After the future beatitude had been announced, therefore, what kind of pastor of the faithful there ought to be in the meantime is shown: because Samuel is held to have judged Israel all the days of his life. For he poorly insinuates the way of perfection if, wishing to open the way of light with his voice, he is darkened in action.

Nam qui cunctos vitae suae dies ad judicandum Israelem contulerat, dicit: Non audeo loqui horum aliquid, quae per me non efficit Deus, in obedientia Gentium verbo et factis (Rom. XV, 18). Judicet igitur doctor, sed qui dies vitae suae inclytos habet: ut videlicet in se prius virtutum spiritualium radios bene vivendo foveat, quos providendis subditorum itineribus loquens administrat: quia et lucerna tunc iis, qui 174 in domo sunt, utiliter ostenditur, si ipsa antea eo, quod sparsura est, bene repleatur lumine.

(Vers. 16.) Et circuibat per singulos annos Bethel, et Galgal, et Masphath, et judicabat Israelem in supradictis locis.

29. Bethel dicitur domus Dei; Galgal, rota; Masphath, ut jam superius replicatum est, speculatio interpretatur. Quid ergo Bethel, nisi viros officio sacri altaris deputatos significat; qui dum spiritalibus studiis inhaerent, velut domestici Dei omnipotentis familiares sunt? Et quid Galgal, quae rota dicitur, nisi conjugatorum ordinem designat? Velut enim in rota circumeunt, dum volubilis mundi curis penitus carere non possunt. Et quid per Masphath, quae speculatio interpretatur, nisi illi exprimuntur, qui divinae contemplationi vacantes, solis supernis gaudiis inardescunt? Quid ergo est, quod Samuel et Bethel, et Galgal, et Masphath circuire dicitur, et in eisdem locis Israelem judicare, nisi quia electus praedicator omnium electorum ordinum exempla sequitur, ut subditorum fidelium esse valeat censor doctus? Non enim esse poterit aequi examinis, si de exemplis praecedentium electorum dedignatur assumere, quod decernit.

Sed et per singulos annos ista circumeat, ut doctor providus ordinum singulorum perfectionem sigillatim respiciat: ut, quo subtilius praecedentium bona viderit, praesentia disponere decentius possit.

Ibi ergo, ibi judicet Israelem, ut subjectos fideles, quos ad Dei visionem erudit, illorum rectitudine corrigat, quos Deo placuisse indubitanter credit. Potest etiam per Bethel, quae domus Dei dicitur, universa electorum Ecclesia designari: per Galgal, quae interpretatur rota, Scriptura sacra. Quidquid vero in subditorum profectu doctor exhibet, aut de exemplo electorum accipit, aut magisterio sacri eloquii, aut revelatione internae ac secretae contemplationis.

For he who had contributed all the days of his life to judging Israel says: I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ worketh not by me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed (Rom. 15:18). Therefore, let the doctor judge, but he who has the illustrious days of his life: so that he may indeed foster the rays of spiritual virtues in himself first by living well, which he administers by speaking for providing the journeys of the subjects: because a lamp also is then usefully shown to those who are in the house if it itself is previously well filled with the light that it is about to spread.

(Verse 16.) And he went every year about to Bethel, and to Gilgal (Galgal), and to Mizpah (Masphath), and he judged Israel in all those places.

29. Bethel is called "house of God"; Gilgal, "wheel"; Mizpah, as has already been replicated above, is interpreted as "watchtower" (speculatio). What therefore does Bethel signify, if not the men deputed to the office of the sacred altar; who, while they inhere in spiritual studies, are as it were the familiar domestics of Almighty God? And what does Gilgal, which is called "wheel," designate, if not the order of the married? For they go about as if in a wheel while they cannot entirely lack the cares of the revolving world. And what are expressed through Mizpah, which is interpreted as "watchtower," if not those who, vacating to divine contemplation, are on fire with supernal joys alone? What is it, therefore, that Samuel is said to go about Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpah, and to judge Israel in the same places, if not because the elect preacher follows the examples of all the orders of the elect, so that he may be a learned censor of the faithful subjects? For he will not be able to be of an equal examination if he disdains to assume from the examples of preceding elect that which he decrees.

But also let him go about these things every year, so that the provident doctor may look at the perfection of each order individually: so that the more subtly he sees the good things of the preceding ones, the more decently he may be able to dispose the present things.

There, therefore, there let him judge Israel, so that he may correct the subject faithful, whom he instructs for the vision of God, by the rectitude of those whom he indubitably believes to have pleased God. The universal Church of the elect can also be designated through Bethel, which is called the house of God: through Gilgal, which is interpreted as "wheel," the sacred Scripture. For whatever the doctor exhibits in the profit of the subjects, he either receives from the example of the elect, or from the magisterium of sacred speech, or from the revelation of internal and secret contemplation.

30. Samuel itaque Bethel circuit, cum praedicator Ecclesiae auctoritatem disponendorum operum, de exemplis majorum quaerit. Galgal, id est, rotam circuit, quando doctrinae suae auctoritatem de magisterio sanctae Scripturae comprehendit. Masphath quoque circuit, cum per secretae contemplationis meditationem, revelationem meretur suscipere veritatis. Ibi enim judicat Israelem: quia quidquid subditis proponit ad normam rectitudinis, aut de exemplis electorum accipit, aut doctrina sacri eloquii, aut ex revelatione internae contemplationis. Quibus profecto verbis ostenditur, non tantum, quae doctor perfectus agat, sed etiam quia perfectus non sit, si agere haec non possit. Nam si solum bonorum exempla noverit, aut si sacrae Scripturae etiam quis eruditus sit, et contemplationis revelatione caruerit, in ordine praedicationis vir perfectus non erit. Contemplatio enim virtus est, per quam non solum ipsa Scriptura condita recognoscitur, sed per quam nondum condita conderetur: et per quam condita ad Dei voluntatem quotidie disponatur. Bene ergo dicitur: Et judicavit Israelem in supradictis locis. Nam non solum in Bethel, et Galgal, sed etiam in Masphath: ut qui ad perfectionem praedicationis innititur [enititur], dum per humilitatem exempla majorum sequitur, dum per studium sacri eloquii eruditione fulcitur, curet omnino necesse est, ut puritate mentis, ea quae disponenda sunt, contemplando cognoscat. Dei namque debet esse docibilis, qui suscepto praedicationis officio, 175 docere homines cupit. Tamen sic praesumat de eo, qui secretae contemplationis eruditione instruitur, ut nec editas per Spiritum sanctum Scripturas fastidiat, nec sequi electorum exempla dedignetur. Samuel enim Bethel, et Galgal, et Masphath circuire describitur; ut alterum ab altero per discordiam nequaquam dividatur: ut videlicet et exempla recipiat quae sacra Scriptura approbat; et illas sacras Scripturas, quas electi homines scripserant, recognoscat: atque eas revelationes contemplationis ad earundem Scripturarum regulam referat.

(Vers. 17.) Revertebatur in Ramatha: ibi enim judicabat Israelem, et ibi erat domus ejus.

30. Samuel therefore goes about Bethel, when the preacher of the Church seeks the authority for disposing works from the examples of the elders. He goes about Gilgal (Galgal), that is, the wheel, when he comprehends the authority of his doctrine from the magisterium of sacred Scripture. He also goes about Mizpah (Masphath), when through the meditation of secret contemplation, he deserves to receive the revelation of truth. For there he judges Israel: because whatever he proposes to the subjects as a norm of rectitude, he either receives from the examples of the elect, or from the doctrine of sacred speech, or from the revelation of internal contemplation. By which words it is indeed shown, not only what the perfect doctor should do, but also that he would not be perfect if he could not do these things. For if he only knew the examples of the good, or if someone were even learned in sacred Scripture and lacked the revelation of contemplation, he would not be a perfect man in the order of preaching. For contemplation is the virtue through which not only is Scripture itself recognized as established, but through which that which was not yet established would be established: and through which that which is established may be daily disposed according to the will of God. Well therefore is it said: And he judged Israel in all those places. For not only in Bethel and Gilgal, but also in Mizpah: so that he who strives for the perfection of preaching, while he follows the examples of the elders through humility, and while he is supported by erudition through the study of sacred speech, must by all means take care that by purity of mind he may know through contemplating those things which are to be disposed. For he ought to be teachable by God who, having undertaken the office of preaching, desires to teach men. Yet let him so presume of him who is instructed by the erudition of secret contemplation, that he neither loathes the Scriptures published through the Holy Spirit, nor disdains to follow the examples of the elect. For Samuel is described as going about Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpah; so that one may by no means be divided from the other through discord: so that he may indeed receive the examples which sacred Scripture approves; and recognize those sacred Scriptures which elect men had written: and also that he may refer those revelations of contemplation to the rule of the same Scriptures.

(Verse 17.) And he returned to Ramah (Ramatha): for there was his house, and there he judged Israel.

31. Ut longe supra jam diximus, Ramatha interpretatur visio consummata: et supernorum civium illam beatam et perfectam societatem significat: ad quam Samuel revertitur, ne laboris sui onere deprimatur. In Ramatha quippe Samuel revertitur, cum mens praedicatoris per amorem coelestium relevatur. Nam inter officii sui onera tam immensa corrueret, si ad amorem coelestium per spei suae desiderium non rediret. Reverti etenim praedicatoribus, est intentionem mentis suae ad gaudia patriae coelestis reducere. Et ibi Israelem judicant: quia supernae patriae pulchritudini, quam in mente retinent, fideles subditos facere conformes praedicando, student. Ibi judicant Israelem: quia ex illa jam perfecta civitate formam videntes trahunt, quam filiorum mentibus loquentes imprimunt: et quidquid illa pulchritudine indignum conspiciunt, ab eorum mentibus abscindere conantur. Et quia in illius beatae patriae gloria tota dilectione requiescunt, ibi ejus domus esse perhibetur. Ejus namque 176 domus esse cognoscitur, in qua amando conversatur. Unde et ille egregius praedicator gloriatur, dicens: Nostra conversatio in coelis est. Bethel namque circuit, Galgal, et Masphath, et in earum aliqua non habet domum, in Ramatha autem domum habet: quia doctores sanctae Ecclesiae quidquid nunc accipiunt de exemplis electorum, quidquid de eruditione sacrorum voluminum, quidquid de altitudine supernae revelationis transitorie rimantur, ad adjutorium habent itineris, non ad amorem remunerationis. Illud vero, quod in superna civitate diligunt, non ad profectum itineris, sed ad sufficientem, imo ad abundantem largitatem mercedis. Et quia illuc cuncta bona congregantur, sequitur:

(Vers. 17). Aedificavit ibi etiam altare Domino.

32. Quid est enim altare Domini, nisi cor justi? Veritatis autem judicio dicitur: Ubi est thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum (Matth. VI, 21). Qui autem pro amore supernae patriae bona agit, dum ardenter ad ea, quae sursum congregat, pervenire desiderat, profecto altare aedificat, super quod quotidiani desiderii hostias incendat. Bene autem dicitur: Aedificavit ibi altare Domino: quia ex incremento studii coelestis, sicut flamma crescit in corde boni desiderii, ita et velut additis lapidibus, altare sursum construitur, ubi Deo holocausta offerantur amoris. Quod etiam ad lucrum animarum referri convenienter potest. Doctor namque in Ramatha altare Domino aedificat, cum subditorum merita in coelo locat, et dum quotidiano ejus studio electae animae ad coelestia regna conscendunt, velut ad structuram superni altaris lapides mittuntur. Dicatur ergo de Samuele, dicatur: Aedificavit ibi altare Domino: quia nimirum valde otiosum est doctoris studium, si per hoc, quod ab illo in terris agitur, coeleste aedificium non augetur.

31. As we have already said long above, Ramah (Ramatha) is interpreted as consummate vision: and it signifies that blessed and perfect society of the supernal citizens: to which Samuel returns, lest he be weighed down by the burden of his labor. For Samuel returns to Ramah when the mind of the preacher is relieved through the love of celestial things. For he would collapse among such immense burdens of his office if he did not return to the love of celestial things through the desire of his hope. For to return, for preachers, is to reduce the intention of their mind to the joys of the celestial fatherland. And there they judge Israel: because they study to make the faithful subjects conformable by preaching to the beauty of the supernal fatherland, which they retain in the mind. There they judge Israel: because from that already perfect city they draw the form which they see, which they impress by speaking upon the minds of the sons: and whatever they behold unworthy of that beauty, they strive to cut off from their minds. And because they rest with whole affection in the glory of that blessed fatherland, there his house is held to be. For his house is known to be that in which he converses by loving. Whence also that eminent preacher glories, saying: Our conversation is in heaven. For he goes about Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and in any of them he does not have a house, but in Ramah (Ramatha) he has a house: because the doctors of holy Church, whatever they now receive from the examples of the elect, whatever from the erudition of the sacred volumes, whatever they transitory examine from the height of supernal revelation, they have for the help of the journey, not for the love of remuneration. But that which they love in the supernal city is not for the profit of the journey, but for the sufficient, even for the abundant bounty of the reward. And because all good things are gathered there, it follows:

(Verse 17). He built there also an altar to the Lord.

32. For what is the altar of the Lord, if not the heart of the just? Moreover, by the judgment of Truth it is said: Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also (Matt. 6:21). But he who does good things for the love of the supernal fatherland, while he ardently desires to arrive at those things which he gathers above, indeed builds an altar, upon which he may burn the victims of daily desire. Well, however, is it said: He built there an altar to the Lord: because from the increase of celestial study, just as the flame grows in the heart of good desire, so also as if by added stones, the altar is constructed upward, where holocausts of love may be offered to God. Which also can conveniently be referred to the gain of souls. For the doctor builds an altar to the Lord in Ramah (Ramatha), when he places the merits of the subjects in heaven, and while through his daily study elect souls ascend to the celestial kingdoms, as if stones are sent to the structure of the supernal altar. Let it be said of Samuel, let it be said: He built there an altar to the Lord: because undoubtedly the study of the doctor is very idle if by this, which is done by him on earth, the celestial building is not increased.

LIBER QUARTUS.

CAPUT PRIMUM.

1. Sanctorum virorum facta praecedentium saepe electorum sequentium solatia sunt. Mira etenim dispensatione divini consilii, et altissimae conversationis arce sic sublimati sunt, ut fortia agerent sibi, recta subditis providerent; sic sibi quandoque derelicti, ut ea quae recta intentione disponerent, secundum Dei providentiam recta non essent; quatenus illorum infirmitas, electorum sequentium firmitas fieret: quia etsi ut homines in disponendis sanctae Ecclesiae negotiis falli possunt, ipsae tamen ecclesiasticae dispositiones deserendae non sunt. Ecce etenim dicitur:

(I Reg. VIII, 1-3.) Factum est autem cum senuisset Samuel, posuit filios suos judices Israel, fuitque nomen filii sui primogeniti, Johel, et nomen secundi, Abia, judicum in Bersabee. Et non ambulaverunt filii sui in viis ejus.

2. Ecce qui prophetiae spiritu plenus fuerat, ii, quos judices Israeli ponebat, quia post avaritiam postmodum declinare debebant, et munera accipere, et pervertere judicium, non cognovit. Quid ergo mirum, si falli in disponendis ordinibus possunt, qui prophetiae gratiam non accipiunt: si ii qui prophetiae spiritum habent, eumdem spiritum ad disponenda cuncta non habent? Quis autem de tanto viro dubitet, quia si futuram perversitatem filiorum praenosceret, eos utique forensibus honoribus non praeferret? Qui ergo reprobos scienter provehunt, hoc prophetae exemplo sibi blandiri nequaquam possunt: quia tunc solum innoxie agitur, cum in eis, tempore quo promoti sunt, subsecutae iniquitatis signa nulla patuerunt. Quare et apte ii, qui judices Israeli a Samuele positi sunt, cum ponerentur, ejus filii dicebantur: ut ex eo non solum per carnem credantur geniti, sed etiam conversationis ejus splendoribus adornati. Quare et eorum nomina caute assignantur: ut ex titulo nominis, illa, quae tunc eis inerat, cognoscatur forma virtutis. Nomen, inquit, uni Johel, alterius Abia, judicum in Bersabee. Sed et de illis, qui post acceptam dignitatem declinasse ad avaritiam dicuntur, aperte ostenditur: quia antequam ejusdem dignitatis culmen attingerent, in eis futurae pravitatis signa nulla videbantur. Sed ecce, dum pastorum solatia attendimus, gregis Dominici non parva pericula iutuemur. Nam steterunt subditi, sed in culmine praelationis positi prophetae filii ceciderunt: ut si nobis sub cura majorum positis indesinens sanctae vitae studium, aut securitas magnae conversationis arrideat, praeesse tamen aliis non habeamus in appetitu desiderii, sed in magnitudine timoris.

BOOK FOUR.

CHAPTER ONE.

1. The deeds of the holy men who have gone before are often the consolations of the chosen who follow. For by a wonderful dispensation of the divine counsel, they were so uplifted to the citadel of the highest life that they might perform strong deeds for themselves and provide right things for their subjects; yet they were sometimes so left to themselves that the things they disposed with a right intention were not right according to the providence of God, so that their weakness might become the strength of the chosen who follow. For although as men they can be deceived in disposing the affairs of the holy Church, the ecclesiastical dispositions themselves are not to be abandoned. For behold, it is said:

(I Sam. 8:1-3) And it came to pass when Samuel was old, that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah, judges in Beersheba. And his sons did not walk in his ways.

2. Behold, he who had been full of the spirit of prophecy did not know that those whom he was appointing as judges over Israel would afterwards turn aside after avarice, and take bribes, and pervert judgment. What wonder then if those who do not receive the grace of prophecy can be deceived in disposing orders, if those who have the spirit of prophecy do not have that same spirit for disposing all things? But who would doubt of so great a man that if he had foreknown the future perversity of his sons, he would certainly not have preferred them to public honors? Those, therefore, who knowingly promote the reprobate can by no means flatter themselves with this example of the prophet; for then alone is one's action blameless when in those who are promoted, at the time of their promotion, no signs of the following iniquity were apparent. Wherefore also they who were appointed judges over Israel by Samuel are aptly called his sons when they were appointed, so that they may be believed to be generated not only by the flesh, but also adorned with the splendors of his life. Wherefore their names are also carefully assigned, so that from the title of the name, the form of virtue that was in them at that time may be known. The name of one, he says, was Joel, of the other Abijah, judges in Beersheba. But of those who are said to have turned aside to avarice after receiving the dignity, it is clearly shown that before they reached the height of the same dignity, no signs of future depravity were seen in them. But behold, while we attend to the consolations of the shepherds, we behold no small dangers of the Lord's flock. For the subjects stood firm, but the sons of the prophet, placed at the height of prelature (praelatio), fell; so that if for us, placed under the care of our elders, an unceasing study of a holy life or the security of a great life should smile upon us, we should not have the desire to preside over others in the appetite of longing, but in the magnitude of fear.

Sed carnales quique, dum sola visibilia attendunt, spiritalem sanctorum conversationem cognoscere non merentur. Pastorum quidem sanctae Ecclesiae culmen aspiciunt, sed cogitare nesciunt, quam inviti illi intus decorem tollerent, quem in splendore culminis foris tenent, quod sublimitatem honoris in oppressionem magni sustinent oneris, quod magno desiderio fugiunt, quod exteriori ministerio prosequuntur. Testante etenim egregio doctore didicimus, quod animalis homo non percipit ea quae sunt spiritus Dei (I Cor. II, 14). Unde et tanto dementius carnalia sequens errat, quanto per discretionis virtutem spiritalia nulla jam penetrat. Et nonnulli tales in tantum dementiae malum proficiunt, ut commovere ipsum etiam statum ecclesiastici culminis non vereantur. Unde et sequitur:

(Vers. 4, 5.) Congregati ergo universi majores natu ex Israel venerunt in Ramatha, dixeruntque ei: Ecce tu senuisti, et filii tui non ambulant in viis tuis. Constitue super nos regem, ut judicet nos sicut universae habent nationes.

(Vers. 4, 5.) Congregati ergo universi majores natu ex Israel venerunt in Ramatha, dixeruntque ei: Ecce tu senuisti, et filii tui non ambulant in viis tuis. Constitue super nos regem, ut judicet nos sicut universae habent nationes.

3. His autem, qui vivebant sub spiritali regimine, regem petere, quid aliud est quam eamdem spiritalem praelationem in saecularem dominationem transferre gestire? Sed sancti viri cum se a subditis contemni conspiciunt, non tam eis displicet, quod contemnuntur, quam quod contemptores sui Deo non placent. Eorum quippe contemptu, suae internae gloriae dari incrementa conspiciunt, sed augeri merita sua subditorum defectibus ingemiscunt, quos sic meritis vellent proficere, ut in aeterna meritorum retributione, secum eos, quibus praesunt, habere potuissent. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 6.) Displicuit sermo in oculis Samuelis, eo quod dixissent: Da nobis regem, ut judicet nos.

4. Hoc namque ei displicuit, per quod displicere Deo, qui loquebantur, existimavit. Quia vero non simpliciter dicitur: displicuit sermo Samueli, sed in oculis Samuelis, et statim subditur:

(Vers. 6.) Et oravit Samuel pro populo Dominum.

Paulo subtilius ea nos considerare oportet. Sancti viri, qui omnipotenti Deo valde displicere metuunt, in suis judiciis faciles non sunt, sed cuncta prius rationabiliter intus ordinant, ut ea foris in opere irreprehensibiliter disponant. Nam electionem accipiunt nullam judicii, si non probatur contemplatione rationis. Hos profecto oculos prophetae Dominus aperire volebat, cum dicebat: Vide oculis tuis, et auribus tuis audi (Ezec. XL, 4). Hinc in Evangelio discipulis dixit: Beati oculi, qui vident quae vos videtis (Luc. X, 23).

But carnal men, while they attend only to visible things, do not deserve to know the spiritual life of the saints. They look upon the height of the shepherds of the holy Church, but they know not how unwillingly those within bear the beauty which they hold outwardly in the splendor of the height, how they sustain the sublimity of honor as the oppression of a great burden, which they flee with great desire, but pursue by outward ministry. For as we have learned from the testimony of the excellent teacher, the animal man does not perceive the things that are of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:14). Whence also he errs more insanely following carnal things, the more he no longer penetrates any spiritual things through the virtue of discretion. And some such persons advance into such an evil of madness that they do not fear to disturb even the state of the ecclesiastical height itself. Whence also follows:

(Verses 4, 5) Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Ramah, and they said to him: Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways. Appoint for us a king to judge us, as all nations have.

(Verses 4, 5.) Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah (Ramatha), and said unto him: Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

3. But to seek a king, for these who were living under spiritual rule, what else is it than to manage to transfer the same spiritual prelacy into secular domination? But when holy men behold themselves despised by the subjects, they are not so much displeased that they are despised, as that their contemners do not please God. For by their contempt, they behold increments being given to their internal glory, but they groan that their merits are increased by the defects of the subjects, whom they would wish so to profit in merits that in the eternal retribution of merits, they might have been able to have with them those over whom they preside. Wherefore also it is added:

(Verse 6.) But the word displeased Samuel, when they said: Give us a king to judge us.

4. For this displeased him, through which he thought that those who were speaking displeased God. Because it is not simply said: 'the word displeased Samuel,' but 'in the eyes of Samuel,' and immediately it is added:

(Verse 6.) And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.

We ought to consider these things a little more subtly. Holy men, who greatly fear to displease Almighty God, are not easy in their judgments, but first reasonably order all things within, so that they may irreproachably dispose them without in work. For they receive no election of judgment if it is not proved by the contemplation of reason. The Lord wished indeed to open these eyes of the prophet when He said: See with thy eyes, and hear with thy ears (Ezek. 40:4). Hence in the Gospel He said to the disciples: Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see (Luke 10:23).

Oculi quippe sanctorum, sunt intellectus rationis, reserati per gratiam Spiritus sancti. Et idcirco Samuelis esse dicuntur: quia carnales quique, etsi per humanam sapientiam rationales esse videntur, ab hujus lumine rationis eo caeciores sunt, quo illis solis oculis vident, quos serpens aperuit. Nam si spiritualium virtutum fulgorem aspicerent, eum profecto in ornatu suae mentis habere desiderarent. Tan tus siquidem decor earum est, ut visus nunquam non possit videntis desiderio concupisci. Sapientes ergo saeculi cum se oculos rationis habere arbitrantur, ex hoc cognoscere possunt, quam dementer in saniant: quia virtutum sanctarum pulchritudine non illici, earum profecto gloriam non solum non cernere, sed nec somniari est. Sancti ergo viri, qui jam illuminatione sancti Spiritus 178 in internorum amore obligati sunt, mentis suae oculos ad videndam intimae claritatis gloriam tanto clariores habent, quanto de mundi caligine in desiderio nihil habent; et discernere carnalia tanto rectius possunt, quanto longe a carnalibus assumpti, in Spiritus sancti gratia altius profecerunt. Unde et apostolus Paulus de experientia tantae visionis sententiam protulit, dicens: Spiritalis judicat omnia (I Cor. II, 15). Bene ergo dicitur: Displicuit sermo in oculis Samuelis. Quia a viris spiritualibus nil ante despicitur, quam despiciendum esse per spiritalem mentis intuitum judicetur. Et quia quo abundantiori gratia Spiritus sancti pleni sunt, de virtutis suae ce...

(Vers. 7, 8.) Dixit autem Dominus ad Samuelem: Audi vocem populi in omnibus quae loquuntur tibi. Non enim abjecerunt te, sed me, ne regnem super eos, juxta omnia opera sua, quae fecerunt a die, quia eduxi eos de Aegypto usque ad diem hanc.

5. Quia oranti prophetae dicitur: Constitue super eos regem; plane ostenditur, quia an hoc faciendum esset, sibi revelari postulavit. Et quia subdens, ait: Non te abjecerunt, sed me, ne regnem super eos, apte ostenditur, quantum sibi sermo displiceat, quem in oculis Samuelis displicuisse perhibetur. Quae convenientia judicii in sanctis oritur ex virtute charitatis: quia dum ex tota mente Conditorem diligunt, et ejus voluntati obedire devote conantur, ex praemio supernae retributionis accipiunt, ut ab eadem Dei omnipotentis voluntate aliter sentiendo non discrepent, quam in bonis operibus semper tenent. Scriptum quippe est: Qui adhaeret Deo, unus spiri us est (I Cor. VI, 17). Domino quippe adhaeret, qui praecepta voluntatis ejus facere semper studet.

For the eyes of the saints are the understandings of reason, unlocked through the grace of the Holy Spirit. And therefore they are said to be Samuel's: because all carnal men, even if they seem to be rational through human wisdom, are so much the blinder from this light of reason as they see with those eyes alone which the serpent opened. For if they beheld the radiance of spiritual virtues, they would indeed desire to have it in the ornament of their mind. For so great is their beauty that the sight can never not be coveted by the desire of the beholder. Wise men of the world, therefore, when they think they have the eyes of reason, can know from this how dementedly they are insane: because not to be enticed by the beauty of holy virtues is indeed not only not to perceive their glory, but not even to dream of it. Holy men, therefore, who are already bound in the love of internal things by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, have the eyes of their mind so much clearer for seeing the glory of internal clarity, as they have nothing of desire for the darkness of the world; and they can discern carnal things so much more rightly as, assumed far from carnal things, they have profited more deeply in the grace of the Holy Spirit. Whence also the apostle Paul brought forth a sentence from the experience of so great a vision, saying: 'The spiritual man judgeth all things' (1 Cor. 2:15). Well therefore is it said: 'The word displeased in the eyes of Samuel.' Because nothing is first despised by spiritual men before it is judged that it is to be despised through the spiritual intuition of the mind. And because as they are full of the more abundant grace of the Holy Spirit, from the...

(Verses 7, 8.) And the Lord said unto Samuel: Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day.

5. Because it is said to the praying prophet: Appoint for them a king; it is clearly shown that he asked that it be revealed to him whether this should be done. And because adding, he says: They have not rejected thee, but me, that I should not reign over them, it is aptly shown how much the speech displeases him, which is said to have displeased in the eyes of Samuel. This agreement of judgment in the saints arises from the virtue of charity: because while they love the Creator with their whole mind, and devotedly strive to obey his will, they receive as a reward of heavenly retribution that they do not differ by feeling otherwise from the same will of Almighty God, which they always hold in good works. For it is written: He who adheres to God, is one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). For he adheres to the Lord who always strives to do the precepts of his will.

Sed unus spiritus cum eo fit: quia ex diuturna devotione pii operis in tantam gratiam divinae cognitionis assumitur, ut ab interni ejus aequitate judicii per errorem mundani spiritus dissentire ultra non possit. Sed valde difficile respondetur, si quaeritur, cur omnipotens Deus et abjectum se in regis petitione conqueratur, et tamen id quod petebatur fieri decernat: rursumque si dignitas regia ordinanda fuerat, cur velut indignata Dei majestate fuerit permissa; et cum provisus rex eligi decernatur, cur reprobandus eligitur? Quid ad haec aliud respondere possumus, nisi id quod apostolus Paulus ineffabilem abyssum judiciorum Dei perscrutari audentibus respondebad: Homo, inquit, tu quis es, qui respondeas Deo (Rom. IX, 20)? Sed si hoc efficaciter definire non possumus, tangere inquirendo possumus. An fortasse abjectum se in regis petitione conqueritur? Pro reproba voluntate male petentis populi, petitus rex conceditur pro vindicta. Quod si rationabiliter dicitur, dum utrumque posuit, et culpam et ultionem pariter ostendit. Ex reproba quippe voluntate injusta postulasse convincitur, qui abjecisse Conditorem petendo monstratur. Culpam ergo malae petitionis insecuta est poena districtae aequitatis. Magna etenim vindicta est, quae ex districtione procedit interni examinis, quando reproba mens sic projicitur, ut quod male deliberat, agere permittatur. Qui ergo in petendo rege Dominum abjecisse convicti sunt, dum id eis permitteretur agere, per quod a se Dominum abjecerunt, gravior poena non erat, qua hic plecti debuissent.

179 6. Quo in loco notandum est, quia abjectionem prophetae Dominus suam facit. Non enim simpliciter dicit: Abjecerunt me, ne regnem super eos; sed non te abjecerunt, sed me, ne regnem super eos. Ut profecto ostendat, quia in persona electi praesulis ipse suis subjectis praeemineat; et cum ad spiritale culmen electorum carnalis rector assumitur, ipse abjici videtur, cujus praecepta dissipantur. Ergo quam reverendi sint optimi pastores sanctae ecclesiae liquet. Ecce enim dum fideliter Deo serviunt, tanto ei amoris vinculo conjunguntur, ut quidquid eis ingeritur, divinae injuriae adscribatur, Unde et in Evangelio primis Ecclesiae pastoribus dicit: Qui vos spernit, me spernit (Luc. X, 16). Ubi etiam aliquid gravius cernitur: quia cum abjectum pastorem conqueritur, abjicientium peccata omnia, et parentum etiam mala memorantur. Juxta omnia, inquit, opera sua, quae fecerunt a die, qua eduxi eos de terra Aegypti. Summum namque crimen agnoscitur, ad cujus discussionem in Dei memoria praeterita cuncta peccata reducuntur.

But he becomes one spirit with him: because from the long devotion of a pious work he is assumed into such grace of divine knowledge that he can no longer dissent from the equity of his internal judgment through the error of a worldly spirit. But it is very difficult to answer if it is asked why Almighty God both complains that he is rejected in the petition for a king, and yet decrees that that which was asked be done: and again, if the royal dignity was to be ordained, why it was permitted as if the majesty of God were indignant; and when the provided king is decreed to be chosen, why he who is to be reprobated is chosen? What else can we answer to these things but that which the Apostle Paul answered to those daring to search into the ineffable abyss of the judgments of God: O man, he says, who art thou that repliest against God? (Rom. 9:20). But if we cannot define this effectively, we can touch it by inquiring. Does he perhaps complain that he is rejected in the petition for a king? For the reprobate will of the people asking wrongly, the asked king is granted for vengeance. Which if it is said reasonably, while he put both, he showed both the fault and the vengeance alike. For from a reprobate will he is convinced to have asked unjust things, who is shown to have rejected the Creator by asking. Therefore the punishment of strict equity followed the fault of a bad petition. For it is a great vengeance which proceeds from the strictness of the internal examination, when a reprobate mind is so cast away that it is permitted to do what it badly deliberates. They therefore who were convicted of having rejected the Lord in asking for a king, while it was permitted to them to do that by which they might reject the Lord from themselves, there was no heavier punishment by which they ought to have been struck here.

179 6. In this place it should be noted that the Lord makes the rejection of the prophet His own. For He does not simply say: They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them; but they have not rejected thee, but me, that I should not reign over them. So that He may indeed show that in the person of the chosen prelate He Himself is pre-eminent over His subjects; and when a carnal ruler is assumed to the spiritual height of the chosen, He Himself seems to be rejected, whose precepts are dissipated. Therefore it is clear how to be revered are the best pastors of the holy church. For behold, while they serve God faithfully, they are joined to Him by such a bond of love that whatever is inflicted upon them is ascribed to divine injury. Whence also in the Gospel He says to the first pastors of the Church: He who despises you, despises me (Luke 10:16). Where also something more serious is discerned: because when He complains of the rejected pastor, all the sins of those rejecting him, and even the evils of their parents are remembered. According to all, He says, their works, which they did from the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt. For the highest crime is recognized, for the discussion of which all past sins are brought back into the memory of God.

Et abjectum ergo se Dominus conqueritur, et tamen ordinare, in quo abjicitur, concedit: quia cum districtae aequitatis suae virtutem exequitur, ab eo carnalium desideria impleri per ejus misericordiam nequaquam prohibentur. Sed et quae concedi dignitas pro vindicta potuit, non tranquilla majestate divinitatis concedi debuit, sed velut indignata. Indignatam vero majestatem Dei non in seipsam asserimus, quae passioni non subjacet: sed quia dum culpas discutit, indignationis verba per Scripturas dicit. Item quia in typum carnalium praelatorum assumitur, reprobandus rex eligitur, non electus. Vel fortasse idcirco reprobus rex eligitur, ut electus successor ejus rex David in eo cognosceret, quid cavere debuisset. Sic nimirum et de illa angelorum curia legimus, quia de apostata primo angelo scribitur: Ipse est principium viarum Dei (Job. XL, 14): sed qui ante omnia conditus est, per superbiam cecidit, et in ejus ruina sancti angeli didicerunt, qua virtute stare potuissent. Quod nimirum, qui apertis rectae fidei oculis, intueri poterit, pariter attendit: quia omnipotens Deus etiam tunc magnae misericordiae dona tribuit, cum vindictam irrogat; quia dum reprobos punit, sanctos erudit: ut unde illi deficiunt, isti in suis profectibus adjuventur.

7. Districto siquidem judicio permittit mala fieri, sed misericorditer providet de his malis, quae per judicium irrogat, quae bona facere disponat. Nam quae major culpa, quam illa, qua omnes morimur? Et quae major bonitas, quam illa, per quam a morte liberamur? Et quidem, nisi Adam peccaret, Redemptorem nostrum carnem suscipere nostram non oporteret. Non enim venit vocare justos, sed peccatores ad poenitentiam (Marc. II, 17). Si ergo pro peccatoribus venit, si peccata deessent, eum venire non oporteret. Si peccata, ad quae delenda venisse creditur, per justitiam Dei permissa esse sentiuntur: dum pro peccatoribus Deus homo nasciturus erat, ex illo malo, quo morituri erant, bonum, quod malum illud vinceret, omnipotens Deus sese facturum providerat. Cujus profecto boni magnitudo, quis fidelis non videat quam mirabiliter excellat? Magna quippe sunt mala, quae per primae culpae meritum patimur, sed quis electus nollet pejora perpeti, quam tantum Redemptorem non habere?

And so the Lord complains that He is rejected, and yet He grants to ordain that in which He is rejected: because when He executes the virtue of His strict equity, the desires of the carnal are by no means prohibited by His mercy from being fulfilled by Him. But also the dignity which could be granted for vengeance ought not to have been granted with the tranquil majesty of divinity, but as if indignant. Indeed, we do not assert that the majesty of God is indignant in itself, which is not subject to passion: but because while He discusses faults, He speaks words of indignation through the Scriptures. Likewise, because he is assumed as a type of carnal prelates, a king to be reproved is chosen, not a chosen one. Or perhaps a reprobate king is chosen for this reason, that his chosen successor, King David, might recognize in him what he ought to have avoided. So indeed we read of that court of angels, because it is written of the first apostate angel: He is the beginning of the ways of God (Job 40:14): but he who was created before all things, fell through pride, and in his ruin the holy angels learned by what virtue they could have stood. Which indeed, he who can gaze upon with the open eyes of right faith, equally attends: because Almighty God even then bestows gifts of great mercy when He inflicts vengeance; because while He punishes the reprobate, He instructs the saints: so that from whence those fail, these may be helped in their progress.

7. Indeed, by a strict judgment He permits evils to be done, but mercifully He provides from these evils, which He inflicts through judgment, what good things He may dispose to do. For what greater fault than that by which we all die? And what greater goodness than that through which we are liberated from death? And indeed, unless Adam had sinned, it would not have been necessary for our Redeemer to take our flesh. For He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Mark 2:17). If therefore He came for sinners, if sins were lacking, it would not have been necessary for Him to come. If sins, for the destruction of which He is believed to have come, are felt to have been permitted through the justice of God: while for sinners God was to be born as man, from that evil by which they were to die, Almighty God had provided that He would make a good that should overcome that evil. The magnitude of which good, indeed, what faithful person does not see how wonderfully it excels? For great are the evils which we suffer through the merit of the first fault, but what chosen person would not wish to suffer worse things than not to have so great a Redeemer?

Eligatur ergo rex; sed reprobandus: eligatur 180 velut indignatione, non voluntate Dei: subsequatur ergo rex juxta cor Dei; ut ex judicii ejus districtione vindictae malum procedat in reprobos; et bonum, quod ex malo facturus erat, per largitatem divinae gratiae redundet in pios, dum illi in malo, quod cupiunt, cadere permittuntur. Sed unde se illi praecipitant, agitur, ut alii nequaquam cadant. Sed quia his verbis judicium divinae districtionis asseritur, videamus jam, quanta dispensatione utitur, ne id male deliberantes agant, unde puniatur. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 9.) Nunc ergo audi vocem eorum; verumtamen contestare eos, et praedic eis jus regis, qui regna turus est super eos.

8. Quasi aperta ostensione clementiae dicat: Sic audi voces eorum, ut tamen ipsi prius de jure regis, quem petunt, audiant quod expavescant; et velut tunc male coepta deserant, cum, quam sit res onerosa, cognoscitur, quam petebant. Sequitur:

(Vers. 10-17.) Dixit itaque omnia verba Domini ad populum, qui petierat a se regem, et ait: Hoc erit jus regis, qui imperaturus est vobis. Filios vestros tollet et ponet in curribus suis, facietque sibi equites, et praecursores quadrigarum suarum: et constituet sibi tribunos, et centuriones, et aratores agrorum suorum, et messores segetum, et fabros armorum, et curruum suorum: filias quoque vestras faciet sibi unguentarias, et focarias, et panificas. Agros quoque vestros, et vineas, et oliveta optima tollet, et dabit servis suis. Sed et segetes vestras, et vinearum reditus addecimabit, ut det eunuchis et famulis suis. Servos etiam vestros, et ancillas, juvenes optimos, et asinos auferet, et ponet in opere suo. Greges quoque vestros addecimabit, vosque eritis ei servi.

9. Cum a carnalibus subjectio quaeritur, profecto quidquid praecipitur eis, grave est, etsi non sit difficile: quia cum ex superbiae tumore habeant, ut propriae voluntatis arbitrium sequantur, quidquid eorum deliberationi obviat, gravissimum pensant. Jam vero cum dura et contraria jubentur, quae ei est moles oneris? qui tumor cordis? Cum ferre etiam blanda et levia vix nolentes possent, quae si vellent, facillime pertulissent. Videamus ergo stultae audaciae hominis, quam digne respondeat pia dispensatio Conditoris. Jura hominum proponuntur contemnentibus jura Dei;

Let a king therefore be chosen; but one to be reproved: let him be chosen 180 as if with indignation, not by the will of God: let a king according to the heart of God follow; so that from the strictness of His judgment the evil of vengeance may proceed upon the reprobate; and the good, which He was to make out of evil, may redound into the pious through the bounty of divine grace, while those are permitted to fall into the evil which they desire. But from whence those precipitate themselves, it is brought about that others by no means fall. But because by these words the judgment of divine strictness is asserted, let us see now what dispensation He uses, lest those deliberating ill should do that from which they may be punished. For there follows:

(Verse 9.) Now therefore hearken to their voice: but yet testify to them, and foretell them the right of the king that shall reign over them.

8. As if by an open showing of clemency He should say: So hear their voices, that yet they themselves first hear concerning the right of the king whom they seek what they may dread; and as if then they might desert their evil undertakings when it is known how burdensome a thing it is which they were seeking. There follows:

(Vers. 10-17.) Samuel therefore told all the words of the Lord to the people who had sought a king from him, and said: This will be the right of the king who is to command over you. He will take your sons and place them in his chariots, and he will make for himself horsemen and forerunners of his four-horse chariots: and he will appoint for himself tribunes, and centurions, and plowers of his fields, and reapers of his harvests, and smiths of his weapons and of his chariots: your daughters also he will make for himself unguent-makers, and cooks, and bakers. Your fields also, and your vineyards, and your best olive groves he will take and give to his servants. Moreover, he will tithe your harvests and the revenues of your vineyards, to give to his eunuchs and his attendants. Your servants also, and handmaids, your best young men, and your asses he will take away and place in his work. He will also tithe your flocks, and you yourselves shall be his servants.

9. When subjection is sought from the carnal, indeed whatever is commanded of them is heavy, even if it is not difficult: because since from the swelling of pride they have it that they follow the judgment of their own will, whatever meets their deliberation they weigh as most heavy. But now when hard and contrary things are ordered, what mass of burden is it to them? what swelling of the heart? Since they could scarcely bear even mild and light things being unwilling, which if they willed, they would have borne most easily. Let us see therefore how worthily the pious dispensation of the Creator responds to the foolish audacity of man. The rights of men are proposed to those contemning the rights of God;

et his, qui mitia et salubria divinitatis consilia spreverant, dura et importabilia humanae servitutis onera praedicuntur: ut ex his secum rationem facerent, quam intolerabilia essent imperia hominis eis, qui non tam imperantis, quam monentis Dei, ne id peterent, consiliis obedire noluissent. Sed habent corda carnalium temeritatem ex incremento audaciae, habent duritiam ex simulationis ratione. Ex temeritate quidem facile agenda deliberant; sed quia, quod male proponunt, non intelligunt, meliorum consiliis adjuvari non possunt. Quare et hic quoque subditur:

(Vers. 19.) Noluit populus audire vocem Samuelis. Et dixerunt: Nequaquam: rex enim erit super nos, et erimus nos quoque, sicut omnes gentes, et judicabit nos rex noster, et egredietur ante nos, et pugnabit bella nostra pro nobis.

10. Magnae quidem temeritatis exstitit, contra Dei voluntatem regem petere; magnae duritiae, consiliis prophetae vinci non posse. Magnae temeritatis 181 fuit, ei rationes proponere, quem sciebant cuncta, quae acturus erat, revelante Domino, prius scire. Magnae duritiae, illi non acquiescere, quem noverant ea tantum, quae Domino revelante didicerat, imperare. Nam quid est, quod respondentes, dicunt: Nequaquam, sed rex erit super nos? Sed qui, Nequaquam, dicunt, profecto id negant quod audiunt. Aperte ergo in hoc verbo ostenditur, quia ad hoc propheta grave jus regis exposuit, ut nequaquam peteretur. Jus vero regis audiunt, et id propter quod exponitur, detestantur; ut reproborum cordium profectus exprimatur, in quibus mali propositi consummatio est, et inconvertibilitas voluntatis.

Sed nos antiqua tempora reprehendimus, qui nostra videre non curamus. Quae nimirum tempora, quo senescente mundo, vetustiora sunt, eo et in pluribus per temporis ac negligentiae vitium remissiora. Tanto etenim audacius nunc mala proponimus, quanto jam cum robusta juventute saeculi, robur exaruit humanae conditionis: tanto difficilius quod male est propositum revocamus, quanto ex laxato vigore spiritus, mens nostra carnalis efficitur. Ita enim sunt humani lapsus, ut quod in spirituali virtute deficit, in carnali vita roboretur.

and to those who had despised the mild and salutary counsels of divinity, hard and unbearable burdens of human servitude are foretold: so that from these they might make a reckoning with themselves how intolerable the commands of man would be to those who had been unwilling to obey the counsels of God, not so much commanding as warning them lest they should seek it. But the hearts of the carnal have temerity from the increase of audacity; they have hardness from the reason of simulation. Indeed, from temerity they easily deliberate things to be done; but because they do not understand what they ill propose, they cannot be helped by the counsels of better men. Wherefore here also it is added:

(Vers. 19.) But the people would not hear the voice of Samuel. And they said: Nay: for there shall be a king over us, and we also shall be like all the nations, and our king shall judge us, and he shall go out before us, and he shall fight our battles for us.

10. It stood as a matter of great temerity to seek a king against the will of God; of great hardness, to not be able to be overcome by the counsels of the prophet. It was a matter of great temerity 181 to propose reasons to him whom they knew, by the Lord revealing it, to know beforehand all things that were to be done. Of great hardness, to not acquiesce to him whom they knew to command only those things which he had learned by the Lord revealing them. For what is it that, answering, they say: Nay, but there shall be a king over us? But those who say, Nay, indeed deny that which they hear. Clearly therefore in this word it is shown that for this purpose the prophet set forth the heavy right of the king, that he might by no means be sought. Indeed they hear the right of the king, and they detest that for the sake of which it is set forth; so that the progress of reprobate hearts may be expressed, in which there is the consummation of an evil purpose and the unchangeableness of the will.

But we reprehend ancient times, we who do not care to see our own. Which times indeed, by how much they are older as the world grows old, by so much they are more remiss in many things through the vice of time and negligence. For so much more audaciously do we now propose evils, by how much now, with the robust youth of the age, the strength of the human condition has withered: so much more difficultly do we revoke that which is ill proposed, by how much from the relaxed vigor of the spirit, our mind is made carnal. For such are human lapses, that what fails in spiritual virtue is strengthened in carnal life.

Omnia quidem haec juxta egregii doctoris vocem: In figura contingebant illis: scripta sunt autem propter nos (I Cor. X, 11). Jam quidem aperte cognoscimus horum Israelitarum audaciam, quae divinae indignationis judicia secuta sunt: et tamen contra voluntatem Dei, contra praelatorum sanctae Ecclesiae consilium agenda proponere non timemus. In malo quoque proposito reprehensi resistimus, et salubria majorum consilia insuperabili malo pervicaciae vincere conamur. Videmus quanti mali incrementum sit, pereuntes aspicere, et sequi ad perditionem eorum vestigia non timere: poenales laqueos mortis incurrentes cernere, et eisdem laqueis irretiri nequaquam metuere. Et illi quidem contra Domini voluntatem regem peterunt; sed a regia dignitate postea actum est, ut populus, qui Deum abjecerat, idola coleret, simulacra adoraret.

Quam reverenda ergo sint majorum consilia cernimus, si hoc sollicite consideramus: quia qui ea despicere ausi sunt, hoc se non providerunt agere, unde tam profundo erroris pelago demergi potuissent. Merito igitur se abjectum Dominus in regis petitione conqueritur, merito regiam dignitatem concedit indignatus. Tanta quidem erat iniquitas postulantium, ut cum illud peterent, per quod a Deo recederent, ex Dei judicio permitti posset, prohiberi non posset. Quia vero haec juxta litteram diximus, quid etiam spiritualiter designent ea, quae continentur in jure regio, videamus.

CAPUT II.

1. Abjecto etenim Samuele, rex petitur: quando reproba multitudo populi spiritualem pastorem despicit, et praeesse sibi carnalem quaerit. Cum quibus saepe divinae aequitatis districtione agitur, ut eo ipso, quod electum praedicatorem despiciunt, subesse reprobo permittantur: ex cujus imitatione tanto deterius pereant, quanto majori superbia id ex quo vivere in aeternum poterant, audacius contemnebant. Cum ergo jus regis praedicitur, nimirum in unius carnalis praepositi conversatione ostenditur, quod carnales caeteri ex tyrannide acturi sunt, non quod electi debeant imitari.

All these things indeed according to the voice of the eminent teacher: Now all these things happened to them in figure: but they are written for us (1 Cor. 10:11). Now indeed we clearly recognize the audacity of these Israelites, which the judgments of divine indignation followed: and yet we do not fear to propose things to be done against the will of God, against the counsel of the prelates of the holy Church. Being reprehended in an evil purpose we resist, and we strive to overcome the salutary counsels of the elders by the insuperable evil of obstinate perversity. We see how great an increase of evil it is to behold those perishing, and not to fear to follow their footsteps to perdition: to discern those running into the penal snares of death, and by no means to fear to be entangled in the same snares. And those indeed sought a king against the will of the Lord; but from the royal dignity it was afterwards brought about that the people, who had rejected God, should worship idols and adore images.

How revered therefore the counsels of the elders are we discern, if we solicitously consider this: because those who dared to despise them did not foresee that they were doing that from which they could have been submerged in so deep an abyss of error. Deservedly therefore the Lord complains that He is rejected in the petition for a king, deservedly being indignant He grants the royal dignity. So great indeed was the iniquity of those asking, that since they sought that through which they might recede from God, it could be permitted by the judgment of God, it could not be prohibited. But because we have said these things according to the letter, let us see also what those things which are contained in the royal right designate spiritually.

CHAPTER II.

1. For with Samuel being rejected, a king is sought: when the reprobate multitude of the people despises the spiritual pastor, and seeks a carnal one to be over them. With whom it is often dealt by the strictness of divine equity, that by the very fact that they despise the chosen preacher, they are permitted to be under a reprobate: from whose imitation they perish so much the worse, by how much with greater pride they more audaciously contemned that from which they could have lived forever. Therefore when the right of the king is foretold, indeed in the conversation of one carnal superior it is shown what the other carnal ones are to do out of tyranny, not what the chosen ought to imitate.

Nam in eadem Regum historia legitur: quia cum rex Achab Naboth vineam abstulit, iram Dei omnipotentis 182 incurrit. Hic vero cum jus regis praedicitur, agri, vineae, et optima oliveta tollenda esse memorantur. Cum ergo hic praedicitur quod commissum illic punitum est: ostendit, quod divino judicio non jubetur. Quare et electus rex David cum ad aedificandum altare Domino Ornam Jebusaei aream peteret, regio illo tyrannorum jure non uti voluit (I Par. XXI, 24): cum eam accipere nullatenus acquiesceret, nisi ante pro ea dignum pretium dedisset.

2. Quia igitur ea, quae in jure regio continentur, vitanda potius, quam imitanda praedicuntur, eo subtilius consideranda sunt, quo vitari nequeunt, si nesciantur. Ait ergo: Filios vestros tollet, et ponet in curribus suis. Filii electorum ii sunt, qui eorum virtutes imitantur. Currus etiam, carnalium praelatorum sunt fastus mundanae elationis. Nam dum caeteris se sublimiores esse gloriantur, quasi curribus vecti, per alta gradiuntur. In curribus ergo fidelium filii ponuntur, quando pastores reprobos per appetitum mundanae gloriae sequuntur: cum relictis spiritualibus studiis, carnalis vitae commoda expetunt: et deposita illa sublimi intentione coelestium, alta saeculi assequi conantur. Bene itaque non in curru, sed in curribus ponendi Israelitarum filii dicuntur: quia ex omni, quod praecellit in carnalium praelatorum culmine, proficiunt in elatione: et quasi tot sublimibus curribus in alta se elevant, quot alta conspiciunt, quibus aliis se superiores putant. Bonorum ergo filios rex in curribus ponit, quando carnalis rector electorum imitatores exemplo suae pravitatis ad elationis vitia pertrahit; ut coelestia postponant, terrena appetant, et in hoc solo gaudeant, si ex eo quod temporaliter altum volvitur, caeteris praeferantur.

31. Et quia contra minores non solum erecti, sed etiam fortes sunt, sequitur: Et faciet sibi equites. Velut enim in equis saeviunt, qui et sublimes sunt dignitate, et potentia truces. Equites quoque sunt, quia dum feroces cordis sui motus contra impotentes dirigunt, ad omne, quod per tyrannidem exercere appetunt, veloces sunt. Anhelant quippe impetu, spumant rabie, et quos cursu tyrannidis impetunt, elidunt. Sed dum in pastoribus reprobis alii mundanae elationis fastus aemulantur, alii eorum exemplo, quos valent, opprimunt: nonnulli etiam sunt, qui ad exercenda mala, quae per seipsos bonis inferre nequeunt, nequiores se alios introducunt. Unde et sequitur: Et praecursores quadrigarum suarum.

For in the same history of the Kings it is read: that when King Ahab took away the vineyard of Naboth, he incurred the wrath of Almighty God 182 (3 Kings 21:2 seq.). But here when the right of the king is foretold, it is mentioned that fields, vineyards, and the best olive groves are to be taken. Since therefore it is here foretold what was there punished when committed: it shows that it is not commanded by divine judgment. Wherefore also the chosen King David, when he sought the floor of Ornan the Jebusite for building an altar to the Lord, would not use that royal right of tyrants (1 Chron. 21:24): since he by no means acquiesced to receive it, unless he had first given a worthy price for it.

Since therefore those things which are contained in the royal right are preached to be avoided rather than imitated, they are to be considered so much the more subtly, as they cannot be avoided if they are unknown. He says therefore: He will take your sons, and place them in his chariots. The sons of the chosen are those who imitate their virtues. Chariots also are the pride of worldly elation of carnal prelates. For while they glory that they are more sublime than others, as if carried in chariots, they walk through high places. In the chariots therefore the sons of the faithful are placed, when they follow reprobate pastors through the appetite for worldly glory: when with spiritual studies left behind, they seek the comforts of carnal life: and with that sublime intention of heavenly things laid aside, they strive to attain the high things of the age. Well therefore are the sons of the Israelites said to be placed not in a chariot, but in chariots: because from everything that is prominent in the height of carnal prelates, they profit in elation: and as if in so many sublime chariots they elevate themselves into high things, as many high things as they behold, by which they think themselves superior to others. The sons of the good therefore the king places in chariots, when a carnal ruler draws the imitators of the chosen by the example of his own depravity to the vices of elation; so that they postpone heavenly things, seek earthly things, and rejoice in this alone, if from that which is turned high temporally, they are preferred to others.

31. And because against lesser ones they are not only upright, but also strong, there follows: And he will make for himself horsemen. For as if on horses they rage, who are both sublime in dignity and fierce in power. They are also horsemen, because while they direct the fierce movements of their heart against the powerless, they are swift to everything which they desire to exercise through tyranny. Indeed they pant with impetus, foam with rage, and those whom they attack in the course of tyranny, they crush. But while in reprobate pastors some emulate the pride of worldly elation, others by their example oppress those whom they can: there are also some who, for exercising the evils which they cannot bring upon the good through themselves, introduce others more wicked than themselves. Whence also follows: And the forerunners of his four-horse chariots.

4. Quae sunt enim quadrigae regis, nisi perversae mentes malorum subditorum, in quorum consiliis praelatus reprobus requiescit? Quadrigae etenim sunt, quae reges portant: dum per iniqua consilia pravorum acta rectorum adjuvantur. In eis quippe, quasi per sublime rex ducitur, dum per eos, qui ad temporales honores eis favent, quidquid carnales praepositi de altitudine saeculi in desiderio volunt exsequuntur. Qui recte quadrigarum nomine designantur. Quadriga enim inde stat, unde volvitur: quia reproba mens finem suae intentionis habet saeculi volubilitatem. Inde quidem requiescit, quo per innumeras curas mentis rotantis mundi negotia ventilare non desinit. Regum ergo quadrigae sunt, dum per omne, quod altum volvendo cogitant, in se carnalium praepositorum jussa portant. Sed qui locum familiaritatis juxta carnales praelatos habent, habent minores, quibus imperent. Ipsi ergo, velut quadrigae regis sunt, illi 183 praecursores quadrigarum; quia eo modo, quo carnalem praepositum ad opprimendos humiles invehunt, ipsi quoque ad nocendum quibus possunt, per aliorum ministerium deducuntur. Quasi enim quadrigarum praecursor est, qui iniqua mentis suae versutia artem cogitat, per quam illum ad inferenda mala mitibus introducat. Si vero, ut plerique codices habent, non praecursores, sed persecutores quadrigarum legimus, profecto ii sunt, qui reprobos ad malum currentes imitantur. Quadriga etiam honoris causa portari regibus solet. Quasi ergo in quadriga rex sistitur, quando carnalis rector de magnorum, qui videntur juxta se, adulationibus gloriatur. Qui vero istos in eorum laudibus praecedit, aut sequitur, praecursor seu persecutor est quadrigarum, quia adulationes isti vel post vel antea proferunt, quas illi in auribus populi praeeundo aut subsequendo sparsere.

5. Sequitur: Et constituet sibi tribunos, et centuriones. Tribuni et centuriones fiunt, cum in tantum mali profectum veniunt, ut ad exsequenda tyranni imperia, impiis satellitibus principantur, cum mundanarum virium acies ordinant, quas ad innocentium bella producant. Tribuni quidem sunt, qui per plures sibi fautores recte viventibus insidiantur. Centuriones vero sunt, qui nulla nocendi genera praetermittunt. Ex eo enim perfectionem iniquitatis obtinent, quo multa, et ingentia mala, quae possunt, inferre semper student. A centenario quippe numero centurio dicitur. Et quia centenarius numerus perfectionem significat, in mala parte perficitur, quando ad summam nequitiae ab impiis pervenitur. Qui nimirum calliditate suaves sunt terrore violenti. Suaviter quidem blandiuntur aliis, ut eorum auxilio terrere alios ferociter possint. Bene itaque subditur; Et aratores agrorum suorum, et messores segetum.

4. For what are the king's four-horse chariots, except the perverse minds of evil subjects, in whose counsels the reprobate prelate rests? For they are chariots which carry kings: while through the iniquitous counsels of the wicked the acts of the rulers are aided. Indeed in them, as if through a sublime place, the king is led, while through those who favor them for temporal honors, carnal superiors execute whatever they want from the height of the age in desire. Who are rightly designated by the name of chariots. For a chariot stands from whence it is turned: because the reprobate mind has the changeability of the age as the end of its intention. Indeed it rests there, where through innumerable cares of the mind it does not cease to ventilate the business of the rotating world. Therefore they are the chariots of kings, while through everything that they think by turning high things, they carry in themselves the commands of carnal superiors. But those who have a place of familiarity near carnal prelates, have lesser ones whom they command. They therefore are as if the chariots of the king, those others 183 the forerunners of the chariots; because in that manner in which they carry the carnal superior to oppress the humble, they themselves also are led to harming those whom they can, through the ministry of others. For he is as it were a forerunner of the chariots, who by the iniquitous craftiness of his mind thinks of an art through which he may introduce that one to bringing evils upon the mild. If indeed, as many codices have, we read not forerunners, but persecutors of the chariots, indeed they are those who imitate the reprobate running to evil. A chariot is also accustomed to be carried for kings for the sake of honor. As if therefore in a chariot the king is placed, when a carnal ruler glories in the adulations of the great who are seen near him. Indeed he who precedes or follows those in their praises, is a forerunner or persecutor of the chariots, because these proffer adulations either after or before, which those scattered in the ears of the people by going before or following after.

5. There follows: And he will appoint for himself tribunes and centurions. They become tribunes and centurions when they come to such a progress of evil that for executing the commands of the tyrant, they rule over impious attendants, when they order the lines of worldly forces, which they may bring forth to the battles of the innocent. Indeed they are tribunes who through many favorers lie in wait for those living rightly. Truly they are centurions who omit no kinds of harming. For from this they obtain the perfection of iniquity, that they always study to bring many and huge evils which they can. Indeed from the number of a hundred a centurion is named. And because the number of a hundred signifies perfection, it is perfected in the evil part when the summit of wickedness is reached by the impious. Who indeed are mild in cunning, violent in terror. Indeed they blandly flatter others, that by their help they may fiercely be able to terrify others. Well therefore is it added: And the plowers of his fields, and the reapers of his harvests.

6. Carnalis praepositi agri, mentes sunt subditorum: aratores vero horum agrorum sunt, qui arte saecularis ingenii eis suadent acta pravitatis. Velut enim agrorum soliditatem loquendo aperiunt, qui per reproba consilia simplicium corda corrumpunt. Et segetes metunt, quando semine pravi consilii decepta corda minorum fructum reddunt malae operationis. Quae profecto opera segetum appellatione designantur: quia perversitas reprobi subditi, dum a carnalibus rectoribus gaudenter excipitur, eorum quasi electus est cibus mentis. In qua certe perversitate, quia paulatim proficiunt, sequitur: Et fabros armorum, et curruum suorum. Quae sunt arma et currus tyrannorum, nisi illa omnia nocendi instrumenta, quae ad evertenda corda minorum praeparantur? Sed quia curru pervenitur, quo armis feriatur, armorum et curruum regis fabri fiunt, quando nequissima cordium suorum machinatione inveniunt, et mala, quae agant, et eadem mala inventa qualiter inferant. Arma quippe fabricare; est nocendi genera reproba mente colligere. Et currus fabricare est ad eadem mala inferenda artem, qua accedere possint, invenire.

7. Sequitur: Filias quoque vestras faciet unguentarias, et focarias, et panificas. Filiarum nomine infirmorum mentes intra sanctam Ecclesiam positae designantur. Quae regis unguentariae fiunt: quia dum carnales praepositos in celsitudine gloriae transeuntis aspiciunt, eos delinire adulationibus conantur. Horum profecto unguentorum usum Psalmista reprobans, ait: Oleum peccatoris non impinguet caput meum (Psalm. CXIII, 5). Filiae ergo unguentariae fiunt: quia dum carnalibus praepositis infirmi displicere metuunt, eorum feritatem, cui timendo subjacent, blandimento demulcent. Et notandum, quia filii prius dicuntur a rege tolli, et sic equites, et centuriones, sive armorum fabri fieri: filiae vero, non tolli, sed simpliciter unguentariae et panificae fieri. Tolli etenim violentiae est. Filii ergo tolluntur, quia robusti difficile evertuntur. Dum igitur filiae non tolli, sed unguentariae fieri perhibentur, quid est aliud, nisi quia qui infirmi in bono sunt, per exempla pravorum facile dissipantur? Quae etiam focariae, et panificae regis fiunt: quia qui tyrannis adulando serviunt, dum favendo placent, velut cibos exhibent. Focariae etenim sunt, quae focis coquunt quae reges comedunt. Focariae ergo sunt, quae per obsequia favoris carnali praeposito accendunt tumorem cordis: ut eo audacius favores excipiant, quo velut delicatiores sibi cibos ignis excitatae devotionis parant. Quae etiam panificae fiunt: quia dum reprobam vitam laudant, carnalem mentem tyranni ad exercendam pravitatem roborant.

6. The fields of the carnal superior are the minds of the subjects: indeed the plowers of these fields are those who by the art of secular genius persuade them to acts of depravity. For as if they open the solidity of the fields by speaking, who corrupt the hearts of the simple through reprobate counsels. And they reap the harvests when the hearts of the lesser ones, deceived by the seed of evil counsel, return the fruit of evil operation. Which works indeed are designated by the appellation of harvests: because the perversity of the reprobate subject, while it is joyfully received by carnal rulers, is as it were their chosen food of the mind. In which perversity certainly, because they profit by degrees, there follows: And the smiths of his weapons and of his chariots. What are the weapons and chariots of tyrants, except all those instruments of harming which are prepared for overturning the hearts of the lesser ones? But because by a chariot one arrives where one may strike with weapons, they become smiths of the weapons and chariots of the king when by the most wicked machination of their hearts they find both the evils which they may do, and in what way they may inflict those same found evils. Indeed to fabricate weapons is to collect kinds of harming with a reprobate mind. And to fabricate chariots is to find the art by which they may approach to inflicting those same evils.

7. There follows: He will also make your daughters unguent-makers, and cooks, and bread-makers. By the name of daughters, the minds of the weak placed within the holy Church are designated. They become the king's unguent-makers because while they behold carnal superiors in the loftiness of passing glory, they strive to soothe them with flattery. The Psalmist, reproving the use of these ointments, says: Let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head (Psalm 140:5). Therefore, the daughters become unguent-makers because while the weak fear to displease carnal superiors, they soften with blandishment their ferocity, to which they are subject through fear. And it should be noted that the sons are said to be taken first by the king, and thus to become horsemen, and centurions, or smiths of weapons: but the daughters are said not to be taken, but simply to become unguent-makers and bread-makers. For to be taken is an act of violence. Therefore, the sons are taken because the robust are overturned with difficulty. While therefore the daughters are presented not as being taken, but as becoming unguent-makers, what is this other than that those who are weak in good are easily dissipated through the examples of the wicked? They also become the king's cooks and bread-makers because those who serve tyrants by flattering, while they please by favoring, provide as it were foods. For cooks are those who cook at the hearths what kings eat. Therefore, they are cooks who through the services of favor kindle the swelling of the heart in a carnal superior: so that they may receive favors the more audaciously, as they prepare for themselves as it were more delicate foods by the fire of excited devotion. They also become bread-makers because while they praise a reprobate life, they strengthen the carnal mind of the tyrant for exercising depravity.

8. Sequitur: Agros quoque vestros tollet, et vineas, et oliveta, et dabit servis suis. Qui sunt agri bonorum, nisi devotae mentes subditorum? quae dum eorum verba libenter audiunt, bonorum operum uberem fructum reddunt. Quae autem vineae eorum, nisi mentes eorum ita imitatione proficientium, ut etiam aliis verbum vitae praebeant, et quos loquendo in amorem Conditoris accendunt, velut potando ebrios faciant? Quae vero oliveta sunt, nisi corda auditorum, qui bonorum exemplo, et exhortatione proficiunt in opus misericordiae? Sed dum rex constituitur, agri tolluntur: quia dum carnales perveniunt ad culmen regiminis, nonnulli bonorum auditores exempla suscipiunt pravitatis. Tolluntur ergo agri, cum nuper devota corda seducuntur, quando ex nequitiae semine fructum reddunt in maligna conversatione. Oliveta et vineae tolluntur, cum exemplo mali praepositi misericordiae opera, et sanctae praedicationis verba exhibenda et loquenda deseruntur. Bene autem servis regis dari ablati agri, et vineae, et oliveta memorantur. Servi quippe sunt, qui dominorum juri semper subditi, evadere nequeunt juga dominationis. Servi itaque sunt regis, qui per abundantem iniquitatem sic se tyrannorum voluntatibus obligant, ut ab eis ulterior non recedant. Ablatos ergo agros, et vineas, et oliveta servi suscipiunt: quia reprobi fautores praelatorum carnalium, dum decepta corda in propositum transferunt pravi operis, velut electorum agris, vineis, et olivetis titulum imponunt tyrannicae potestatis. Sequitur: Sed et segetes vestras, et vinearum reditus addecimabit, ut det eunuchis et famulis suis. Cum mali praesunt, difficile valde est, ut qui eis subjicitur, nulla religionis damna patiatur. Aliorum namque mentes omnino pereunt: sed ii quos pervertere penitus nequeunt, dum incessanter et verba et opera eorum prava conspiciunt, qualicunque sorde maculantur. Bene ergo dicitur: Segetes vestras, et vinearum reditus addecimabit. Quasi dicat: Sub pastore reprobo electorum etiam bona integra non sunt.

9. Sequitur: Greges quoque vestros addecimabit, vosque eritis ei servi. Quasi dicat: Dum pastor vobis carnalis praeponitur, non solum vestris, sed etiam vobismetipsis virtutum praedae inferuntur. Greges enim electorum, sunt turbae virtutum spiritualium. Qui vero et ipsae spirituales virtutes exemplo pravorum dissipantur, rex decimas tollit gregis, quando is qui carnaliter praeeminet, in sanctorum cordibus aliquas virtutes perimit. Decimas tollit: quia dum mentis integritatem dissipat, virtutum numerum imperfectum derelinquit. Denario quippe numero perfectio designatur.

8. There follows: He will also take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. What are the fields of the good, except the devoted minds of subjects? which while they listen willingly to their words, return a fertile fruit of good works. And what are their vineyards, except the minds of those who so profit by imitation that they also provide the word of life to others, and whom by speaking they kindle in the love of the Creator, as it were making them drunk by drinking? And what indeed are the olive groves, except the hearts of the listeners, who by the example and exhortation of the good profit in the work of mercy? But while a king is appointed, the fields are taken: because while carnal men arrive at the summit of governance, many listeners of the good receive examples of depravity. Therefore, the fields are taken when recently devoted hearts are seduced, when from the seed of wickedness they return fruit in a malignant conversation. The olive groves and vineyards are taken when by the example of an evil superior the works of mercy and the words of holy preaching to be shown and spoken are deserted. Moreover, the taken fields, and vineyards, and olive groves are well remembered to be given to the servants of the king. For servants are those who, always subject to the right of masters, are unable to escape the yokes of domination. Thus they are the servants of the king, who through abundant iniquity so bind themselves to the wills of tyrants that they do not further recede from them. Therefore, the servants receive the taken fields, and vineyards, and olive groves: because the reprobate favorers of carnal prelates, while they transfer the deceived hearts into the purpose of a depraved work, as it were impose the title of tyrannical power upon the fields, vineyards, and olive groves of the chosen. There follows: But also he will tithe your harvests, and the returns of your vineyards, to give to his eunuchs and servants. When evil men are in charge, it is very difficult that he who is subjected to them suffers no damages of religion. For the minds of some altogether perish: but those whom they are unable to pervert entirely, while they incessantly behold both their words and their depraved works, are stained by some sort of filth. Well therefore is it said: He will tithe your harvests, and the returns of your vineyards. As if he were to say: Under a reprobate pastor even the good things of the chosen are not whole.

9. There follows: He will also tithe your flocks, and you shall be his servants. As if he were to say: While a carnal superior is placed over you, the spoils of virtues are brought not only upon your things, but even upon your very selves. For the flocks of the chosen are the crowds of spiritual virtues. Because truly these spiritual virtues themselves are dissipated by the example of the wicked, the king takes the tithes of the flock when he who carnaly pre-eminently destroys some virtues in the hearts of the saints. He takes the tithes because while he dissipates the integrity of the mind, he leaves the number of virtues imperfect. For the number of ten designates perfection.

Unde et cum lapsae humanitatis nostrae damna Dominus aperta comparatione ostenderet, mulierem, quae de decem drachmis unam perdiderat, in medium ducit (Luc. XV, 4 seq.); ut per hoc, quod denarius numerus periisse ostenditur, superna illa societas, quae novenario numero remansit in angelis, sine reparatione conditionis nostrae imperfecta esse doceatur. Et quia decimae per annos singulos exiguntur, apte qui decimas offerre non desinunt, servi esse regis perhibentur. Eis quippe per annos singulos serviunt, quorum exemplo saepe pejores fiunt. Possunt et per hoc, quod post datas decimas servitus ista asseritur, mali profectus ostendi. Nam qui paulatim deficiunt, quotidie agunt, unde ad iniquitatis profunda deducantur. Dicit ergo: Greges vestros addecimabit, vosque eritis ei servi. Quasi dicat: Malorum exemplo paulatim decidetis, sed cadendo agitis, ut ab eorum imitatione nunquam recedatis. Scriptum quippe est: A quo quis vincitur, ejus servus efficitur (II Petr. II, 19). Quia enim per imitationem pastoris reprobi in peccati servitutem incidunt, etiam ab ejus jugo, quando volunt, solvi non possunt. Unde et subditur: (Vers. 18.) Et clamabitis in die illa a facie regis vestri, quem elegistis vobis, et non exaudiet vos Dominus in die illa: quia petistis vobis regem. 10. Quasi dicat, 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, XXXIV). 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 possint experta. Quare et causam insinuans, qua exaudiri prohibeantur, ait: Quia petistis vobis regem. Quasi aperte dicat: Quia illud vobis dari postulastis, in quo haec omnia futura, me praedicente, cognovistis. Haec, ut superius dixi, in typo praelatorum carnalium de futura regis conversatione praedicuntur: ut ab ejus petitione quiescerent, in quo tanta mala cognovissent. Sed habent corda reproborum, ut malum cito proponant, et a malo proposito non celerius resipiscant. Quare et subditur: (Vers. 19, 20.) Noluit autem populus audire vocem Samuelis, sed dixerunt: Nequaquam. Rex enim erit super nos, et erimus nos quoque, sicut omnes gentes, et judicabit nos rex noster, et egredietur ante nos, et pugnabit bella nostra pro nobis.

Whence also when the Lord showed the damages of our fallen humanity by an open comparison, he brings into the midst the woman who had lost one of the ten drachmas (Luke 15:4 seq.); so that through this, that the number of ten is shown to have perished, that celestial society, which remained in the number of nine among the angels, may be taught to be imperfect without the reparation of our condition. And because tithes are exacted through each single year, those who do not cease to offer tithes are aptly presented as being servants of the king. Indeed they serve them through each single year, by whose example they often become worse. By this also, that after the tithes have been given this servitude is asserted, the evil progresses can be shown. For those who fail by degrees act daily whence they may be led to the depths of iniquity. He says therefore: He will tithe your flocks, and you shall be his servants. As if he were to say: By the example of the wicked you shall fall away by degrees, but by falling you act so that you may never recede from their imitation. For it is written: By whom anyone is conquered, of him he is made a servant (2 Pet. 2:19). Because indeed through the imitation of a reprobate pastor they fall into the servitude of sin, they also cannot be loosed from his yoke when they want. Whence also is it added: (Verse 18.) And you shall cry out in that day from the face of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day: because you have asked for yourselves a king. 10. As if he were to say, you flow away by degrees into the knowledge of his depraved imitation: but you can by no means spontaneously leave the examples of his depravity to which you spontaneously submit yourselves. For everyone who commits sin is a servant of sin (John 8:34). Therefore, those whom sins dominate cannot be liberated from their yoke by themselves. For often they come to the Lord with prayers, they ask to be liberated, but they cannot be heard. Indeed it is dealt with them by divine judgment so that those who did not want to avoid evils when they could, may not be able to avoid them when they want: and those who spontaneously run into pre-cognized evils, may not be able to flee them when experienced. Wherefore also insinuating the cause by which they are prohibited from being heard, he says: Because you have asked for yourselves a king. As if he were to say openly: Because you requested that that be given to you in which you recognized all these future things, with me preaching them. These things, as I said above, are preached in the type of carnal prelates concerning the future conversation of the king: so that they might rest from his petition, in whom they had recognized such great evils. But the hearts of the reprobate have it such that they quickly propose evil, and do not more quickly repent from an evil proposal. Wherefore also is it added: (Verses 19, 20.) But the people would not hear the voice of Samuel, but they said: By no means. For a king shall be over us, and we also shall be like all the nations, and our king shall judge us, and he shall go out before us, and he shall fight our battles for us.

11. Quibus profecto verbis mores subditorum carnalium aperte describuntur: quia dum exteriora appetunt, interiora damna etiam exposita non attendunt. Sed qui carnaliter praesunt, ipsa ostensione temporalis potentiae subditis sibi minoribus magnam spem dant tutelae. Dum ergo dicunt: Rex erit super nos, et pugnabit bella nostra pro nobis, quid aliud, quam reproborum subitorum mores insinuant, qui humiles et spirituales praedicatores despiciunt, ut temporaliter a carnalibus adjuventur? Quod certe nullatenus agerent, nisi prius lumen cordis amisissent. Nam si spiritualium virorum humilitatem foris despiciunt, sed qua potestatis sublimitate intus emineant, cernere non merentur; in illis quoque externam potestatis tyrannidem vident, sed qua infirmitate intus deprimatur, non vident. Isti, quia Deo adhaerent, cum volunt, etiam in exterioribus potentes sunt: illi, qui a Domino recedunt, spem, quam promittunt de potentia saeculari, exhibere non possunt fortitudine operationis. Nam, ut de vicino exempla capiamus, Saul ad pugnanda bella regem postulantium, fortis et potens eligitur: ita ut, sacra hac historia teste (I Reg. IX, 2), ab humero, et sursum populo universo emineret. A Deo igitur ad regni gubernacula electus, cum bonus existeret, et de filiis Israel aliquis melior illo non esset, tamen, cum tantus ac talis vir carnali fortitudini relinquitur, bella perdidit, quae pugnaturus acceperat, et vitam pariter amisit (I Reg. XXXI, 1). Samuel autem, qui saeculi potentia sublimis non exstitit, qui humiliter non solum Deo, sed etiam hominibus ministravit, de exterioribus quoque bellis trophaea potenter exhibuit. Nam non valde supra de eo dictum est: Tulit Samuel agnum lactentem unum, et obtulit illum holocaustum integrum Domino, et clamavit Samuel ad Dominum pro Israel, et exaudivit eum Dominus. Factum est autem, cum Samuel offerret holocaustum Domino, Philisthiim iniere praelium contra Israel. Intonuit autem Dominus fragore magno in die illa super Philisthiim, et exterruit eos (I Reg. VII, 9, 10). (Vers. 21.) Et audivit Samuel omnia verba populi.

12. Hoc profecto Samuel audivit, quod populus locutus est, sed ipsum populus non audivit. Populo enim reprobo loqui et non audire, fuit verba contra Dei voluntatem promere, sed poenam pravae locutionis minime praevidere. Samuel autem populi verba audivit: quia spirituales viri, dum superbae locutionis voces audiunt, futurum in eis divinae ultionis meritum recognoscunt. Dicat ergo: Audivit Samuel omnia verba populi, quia sancti, ac spirituales viri, quidquid carnales superbe foris insonant, quale sit in divino judicio intus pensant. Sed quia, dum carnalium subditorum damnabilem vitam reperiunt, pro delendis eorum criminibus intercedunt: Sequitur: (Vers. 21.) Et locutus est ea in auribus Domini.

11. By which words truly the morals of carnal subjects are openly described: because while they desire exterior things, they do not attend to interior damages even when exposed. But those who are carnaly in charge, by the very show of temporal power give great hope of protection to the lesser ones subjected to them. While therefore they say: A king shall be over us, and he shall fight our battles for us, what else do they insinuate than the morals of reprobate subjects, who despise humble and spiritual preachers, so that they may be temporally aided by carnal men? Which certainly they would by no means do, unless they had first lost the light of the heart. For if they despise the humility of spiritual men from without, but what sublimity of power they eminence within, they do not deserve to discern; in those others also they see the external tyranny of power, but by what infirmity it is depressed within, they do not see. These, because they adhere to God, when they want, are powerful even in exterior things: those, who recede from the Lord, cannot exhibit the hope which they promise concerning secular power with the fortitude of operation. For, to take examples from near at hand, Saul is chosen to fight the battles of those asking for a king, strong and powerful: so that, this sacred history being witness (1 Sam. 9:2), he should eminence above all the people from the shoulder and upward. Chosen therefore by God for the governance of the kingdom, when he was good, and there was no one better than him from the sons of Israel, yet, when such and so great a man is left to carnal fortitude, he lost the battles which he had received to be fought, and likewise lost his life (1 Sam. 31:1). Samuel, however, who did not exist as sublime in the power of the age, who humbly served not only God but also men, powerfully exhibited trophies even from exterior battles. For not much above it was said of him: Samuel took one sucking lamb, and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord, and Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him. And it happened, while Samuel was offering the burnt offering to the Lord, the Philistines entered into battle against Israel. But the Lord thundered with a great crash in that day over the Philistines, and terrified them (1 Sam. 7:9, 10). (Verse 21.) And Samuel heard all the words of the people.

12. This Samuel truly heard, which the people spoke, but the people did not hear him. For to the reprobate people to speak and not to hear, was to proffer words against the will of God, but by no means to foresee the punishment of the depraved speech. Samuel, however, heard the words of the people: because spiritual men, while they hear the voices of proud speech, recognize the future merit of divine vengeance in them. Let him say therefore: Samuel heard all the words of the people, because holy and spiritual men, whatever the carnal sound forth proudly without, they weigh within what sort it is in the divine judgment. But because, while they find the damnable life of carnal subjects, they intercede for the deletion of their crimes: There follows: (Verse 21.) And he spoke them in the ears of the Lord.

In eorum auribus loquimur, apud quos magnae familiaritatis gratiam habemus. Sancti autem viri, quia omnipotenti Deo in magni amoris vinculo conjuncti sunt, ei in auribus loquuntur: quia divinae propitiationis ejus auditum tanto fiducialius exposcunt, quanto apud ejus misericordiam, impetrandi locum sublimius acceperunt. Peccata vero populi loquuntur pro humilitate confessionis, sed in auribus loquuntur Domini: quia cum magno affectu precis januam pulsant Dominicae propitiationis. Sed fortasse in auribus Domini loqui dicitur: quia dum sancti viri pro peccatoribus obsecrant, preces quas pro eis Deo offerunt, hominibus non revelant. Unde et in Evangelio Dominus prohibet discipulos, dicens: Cum oratis, nolite fieri sicut hypocritae tristes, qui amant in synagogis, et in angulis platearum stantes orare, ut videantur ab hominibus (Matth. VI, 5). Verba ergo, sive opera populi loquuntur, cum delicta locutionis et operis orationibus delenda Domino exponunt. Ea vero in auribus Domini loquuntur, ut dum hominum testimonia orantes fugiunt, ab eo, qui occulta respicit, celerius audiantur. Dum ergo in auribus Domini Samuel loqui perhibetur, modum profecto insinuat, quo quis auditum mereatur divinae dignationis. Nam pervenire ad Deum oratio nequaquam potest, quae ex intentione promitur, ut ab hominibus agnoscatur. Unde et qui in auribus Domini locutus asseritur, responsa ejus etiam percepisse perhibetur. Nam sequitur: (Vers. 22.) Dixit autem Dominus ad Samuelem: Audi vocem populi, et constitue super eum regem.

13. Qua in re notandum, quia Samuel verba populi, quibus regem petierat, in auribus Domini locutus est: et Dominus se abjectum asserit in eo, quod populus regem petit. Dum igitur oranti respondet, et regem facere orantem jubet, quid aliud insinuat, nisi quia devota electi viri oratio nunquam est infructuosa? Nam si populi correctionem non obtinuit, eruditionis suae bonum obtinuit, cum abjectum populum pro mala petitione cognosceret, 188 sed et nihilominus sciret, quid facere projectis ipse debuisset. Audiri ergo propheta potuit, et non audiri: quia orando qualis esse deberet, novit, sed a populo reproba postulanti, duritiam cordis non abstulit. Sed hoc obtinere ille potuit, qui in auribus Domini locutus est: quia sancti viri eo ipso, quo devote pro peccatoribus Dominum obsecrant, divinae propitiationis auxilio muniuntur, ut eorum criminibus nequaquam polluantur, quorum sordes delere precibus nequeunt. Quid vero est, quod Dominus ait: Audi voces eorum, cum superius dictum sit: Audivit Samuel omnia verba populi.

We speak in their ears, with whom we have the grace of great familiarity. Holy men, however, because they are joined to almighty God in the bond of great love, speak to him in the ears: because they demand the hearing of his divine propitiation the more faithfully, as they have received a more sublime place of obtaining it before his mercy. They speak of the sins of the people for the humility of confession, but they speak in the ears of the Lord: because with great affection of prayer they knock at the door of the Lord's propitiation. But perhaps he is said to speak in the ears of the Lord because while holy men beseech for sinners, they do not reveal to men the prayers which they offer to God for them. Whence also in the Gospel the Lord prohibits the disciples, saying: When you pray, do not be like the sad hypocrites, who love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men (Matt. 6:5). They speak the words or works of the people, therefore, when they expose to the Lord the delicts of speech and work to be deleted by prayers. They speak them indeed in the ears of the Lord, so that while praying they flee the testimonies of men, they may be heard more quickly by him who regards hidden things. While therefore Samuel is presented as speaking in the ears of the Lord, he truly insinuates the manner by which anyone may deserve the hearing of divine dignation. For a prayer can by no means arrive at God which is proffered from the intention that it may be recognized by men. Whence also he who is asserted to have spoken in the ears of the Lord, is presented as having also perceived his responses. For there follows: (Verse 22.) And the Lord said to Samuel: Hear the voice of the people, and appoint a king over them.

13. In which matter it should be noted that Samuel spoke the words of the people, by which they had asked for a king, in the ears of the Lord: and the Lord asserts himself to be rejected in that which the people ask for a king. While therefore he responds to the one praying, and commands the one praying to make a king, what else does he insinuate than that the devoted prayer of an elect man is never fruitless? For if he did not obtain the correction of the people, he obtained the good of his own instruction, when he recognized the rejected people for their evil petition, 188 but also nevertheless knew what he himself ought to have done for those cast away. The prophet therefore could be heard, and not heard: because by praying he knew of what sort he ought to be, but he did not take away the hardness of heart from the people requesting reprobate things. But he who spoke in the ears of the Lord was able to obtain this: because holy men by that very thing, that they devotedly beseech the Lord for sinners, are fortified by the help of divine propitiation, so that they may by no means be polluted by the crimes of those whose filth they cannot delete by prayers. What indeed is it that the Lord says: Hear their voices, when it was said above: Samuel heard all the words of the people.

Sed verba populi audierat, ut sciret quae dicebantur, non ut quae petebantur, concederet. Dum ergo ei a Domino dicitur: Audi vocem populi, et constitue super eum regem, favere voluntati populi prophetam jussit. Et ecce, ut palam cernitur, propheta orans non auditur: populus Deum abjiciens, regemque petens, auditus est. Quid hoc esse dixerimus, nisi quia miro et tremendo divinae incomprehensibilitatis judicio sancti viri pro reprobis orantes exaudiri nequeunt: in adimplendis vero suis pravitatibus, audiri ipsi reprobi delinquentes possunt: ut illis libera iniquitas aeternae vindictae meritum augeat, et istis ex affectu compassionis merces perpetuae retributionis accrescat? Et statim eum ordinem, quo ad ejusdem regis constitutionem ventum sit, ostendere incipiens, ait: (Vers. 22.) Et ait Samuel ad universos filios Israel: Vadat unusquisque in civitatem suam.

14. Cum spiritualia discutere volumus, necesse est ut ab intentione nostra carnalia removeamus: quia mens interna non penetrat, quam exteriorum actuum pulvis caecat. Dum igitur propheta Domini omnem populum abire ad propria loca praecipit, a se utique tumultum carnalium repellit: ut eo spiritualia, quae disponenda sunt, clarius videat, quo mentis ejus aciem terrenorum actuum intentio non obscurat. Sed qualis sit, qui divino judicio praevidetur, insinuans, ait:

CAPUT III.

(I Reg. IX, 1, 2.) Erat vir de Benjamin, nomine Cis, filius Abiel, filii Seor, filii Bechorath, filii viri Gemini, fortis robore. Et erat ei filius nomine Saül, electus et bonus, et non erat vir de filiis Israel melior illo: ab humero et sursum eminebat super omnem populum.

1. Cum ordinandi regis persona exponitur, cur patrum ejus nomina describuntur, nisi ut regnum ejus durabile non sentiatur? Nam de regno, quod futurum praeviderat Moyses, ait: Non deficiet sceptrum de Juda, et dux de femore ejus, donec veniat, qui mittendus est: et ipse erit exspectatio gentium (Gen. XLIX, 10). Quia ergo tribus Juda ad regni diuturnitatem praevisa exstiterat, Cis generatio memoratur; ut regia dignitas, quae condebatur in filio, aperte sciretur esse dispensatoria, non mansura.

But he had heard the words of the people so that he might know what things were being said, not so that he might concede what things were being asked. While therefore it is said to him by the Lord: Hear the voice of the people, and appoint a king over them, he commanded the prophet to favor the will of the people. And behold, as is openly discerned, the prophet praying is not heard: the people rejecting God, and asking for a king, is heard. What shall we say this is, except that by a wondrous and tremendous judgment of divine incomprehensibility holy men praying for the reprobate cannot be heard: but in fulfilling their own depravities, those same reprobate delinquents can themselves be heard: so that for those ones free iniquity may increase the merit of eternal vengeance, and for these ones from the affection of compassion the reward of perpetual retribution may increase? And immediately beginning to show that order by which it came to the constitution of that same king, he says: (Verse 22.) And Samuel said to all the sons of Israel: Let each one go into his own city.

14. When we wish to discuss spiritual things, it is necessary that we remove carnal things from our intention: because the internal mind does not penetrate what the dust of exterior acts blinds. While therefore the prophet of the Lord commands all the people to go away to their own places, he repels from himself the tumult of carnal things: so that he may see the spiritual things which are to be disposed the more clearly, as the intention of earthly acts does not obscure the sharpness of his mind. But insinuating what sort he is who is foreseen by divine judgment, he says:

CHAPTER III.

(1 Sam. 9:1, 2.) There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of a man of Benjamin, a man of great strength. And he had a son whose name was Saul, choice and goodly, and there was not a man among the children of Israel better than he: from his shoulder upward he was taller than any of the people.

1. When the person of the king to be ordained is set forth, why are the names of his fathers described, unless that his kingdom might not be felt to be durable? For concerning the kingdom which Moses had foreseen would be in the future, he says: The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a ruler from his thigh, until he comes who is to be sent: and he shall be the expectation of the nations (Gen. 49:10). Since therefore the tribe of Judah had been foreseen for the longevity of the kingdom, the generation of Kish is mentioned; so that the royal dignity, which was being established in the son, might be openly known to be dispensational, not permanent.

Sed qui carnalem regem generat, Cis, idest durus nostro eloquio dicitur, et is fortis robore praedicatur. Nunc quoque plerique carnales intra sanctam Ecclesiam sunt, qui magna agere videntur: carnales vero sunt, quia sancti Spiritus gratiam non habent. Fortes ergo sunt robore, quia omne, quod magnum videntur agere, corporale est. Nam et Cis pater Saül ideo fortis robore dicitur, ut vires corporis magnas habuisse sentiatur. Fortis ergo robore, durus est: quia qui magna carnaliter exhibet, cor molle per compassionem, in fraterna charitate non habet. Valenter agit, quae non imitari homines foris possint, sed intus conjungi fraternis mentibus nescit per affectum dilectionis. Fortia agit, quae Deus reprobat; et affectum charitatis, quem approbat, exhibere non curat. Durus ergo est, quia dum superbo corde corporalia agit, ejus mentem gratia sancti Spiritus non emollit. Quo contra sanctus vir gloriatur, dicens: Deus mollivit cor meum, et omnipotens turbavit me (Job. XXIII, 16). Et saepe, qui talium mores imitantur, Dei judicio rectores fiunt. Unde et apte Saul filius Cis fuisse memoratur.

2. Sed quaerendum est, cur idem Saul electus et bonus esse dicitur, qui duri filius esse perhibetur? Sed electus dicitur non secundum gratiam, sed secundum judicium. Bonus etiam dicitur, ut divinae aequitatis dispositio commendetur. Nam et mala, quae pro peccatis nostris saepe patimur, quia per divinam justitiam nobis irrogantur, bona sunt. Bonum profecto est quidquid est justum. Per justitiam quippe Dei pastores reprobi ad regimen sanctae Ecclesiae ascendere permittuntur; sed qui mali sunt per iniquitatem, boni sunt divina dispositione; et occulta nunc ordinatione Dei electi sunt, qui ultimo erunt universali judicio reprobandi. Pastor ergo reprobus, quia ut sit, Dei indignatione decernitur, dicatur electus: et quia juste permittitur, dicatur bonus. Item quia ad exsequenda divina judicia caeteris utilior providetur, melior illo esse de filiis Israel nemo dicitur. Qui etiam ab humero, et sursum eminere super omnem populum memoratur: quia qui carnalium mores vivendo sequitur, valde nititur, ut ea agat, quae agere alter non valeat. Carnalis etenim rector ab humero, et sursum universo populo eminet; cum in exterioribus fortis est sine comparatione.

But he who begets a carnal king, Kish, is called hard in our language, and he is proclaimed as strong in might. Even now there are many carnal men within the holy Church who seem to do great things: but they are carnal because they do not have the grace of the Holy Spirit. They are strong in might, therefore, because everything they seem to do that is great is corporal. For also Kish, the father of Saul, is said to be strong in might for this reason, that he might be felt to have had great physical strength. Strong in might, therefore, is hard: because he who exhibits great things carnally does not have a heart softened through compassion in fraternal charity. He acts powerfully in things which men outside cannot imitate, but he does not know how to be joined within to fraternal minds through the affection of love. He does strong things which God reproves; and he does not care to exhibit the affection of charity which He approves. He is hard, therefore, because while he performs corporal things with a proud heart, the grace of the Holy Spirit does not soften his mind. On the contrary, the holy man glories, saying: God has softened my heart, and the Almighty has troubled me (Job 23:16). And often, those who imitate the manners of such men become rulers by the judgment of God. Whence also Saul is aptly remembered to have been the son of Kish.

2. But it must be asked why this same Saul is said to be choice and good, who is presented as the son of a hard man? But he is called choice not according to grace, but according to judgment. He is also called good, so that the disposition of divine equity may be commended. For even the evils which we often suffer for our sins, because they are imposed on us through divine justice, are good. Truly whatever is just is good. For through the justice of God reprobate pastors are permitted to ascend to the government of the holy Church; but those who are evil through iniquity are good by divine disposition; and those who are to be reproved in the final universal judgment are now chosen by the hidden ordination of God. Let the reprobate pastor, therefore, because his existence is decreed by the indignation of God, be called choice: and because he is justly permitted, let him be called good. Likewise, because he is provided as more useful than others for executing divine judgments, no one is said to be better than he among the children of Israel. He is also remembered to tower from his shoulder upward above all the people: because he who follows the manners of carnal men in living strives greatly to do those things which another may not be able to do. For the carnal rector towers above the whole people from the shoulder upward, since in exterior things he is strong beyond comparison.

3. Possunt et haec omnia verba laudis intelligi, quibus dum ordinandi regis persona praedicatur, regem petentium intentio confundatur. Nam dicunt: Rex erit super nos, et judicabit nos, et pugnavit bella nostra pro nobis (I Reg. VIII). Dicitur electus et bonus, et quia non sit de filiis Israel melior illo, ut bona omnia in petiti regis persona excellant: sed dum ad ea non sufficit, quae populus proposuerat, praesumptio humana confundatur, ut victa tabescat. Et quidem, ut supra dixi, rex, qui populum praeiturus eligitur eorum bella pugnaturus, cum a divino auxilio deseritur, bello depressus obiit, et populo, quem ad eadem bella praeivit, tunc non salutis causa, sed mortis fuit. Quod denique Deo populus ascriberet, si is qui Dei judicio electus rex fuerat, ad agenda quae volebat populus, non tam idoneus exstitisset. Potest etiam electus et bonus intelligi, dum asseritur, non qualis in futuro praevidebatur. Dicitur ergo electus et bonus, ut talis a Domino sentiatur electus, qui per inobedientiam postea fuit reprobatus. Quare et ipsa ratio exigit, ut quae de electo et bono usque ad reprobationis tempora dicuntur, et in bona parte sentiamus.

CAPUT IV.

1. Summatim ergo cuncta repetentes, quid aedificationis in se contineant, secundum aliam significationem videamus. Quia in Samuele novum sacerdotium diximus designari, quid est quod senuit, nisi, quia dum per decurrentium spatia temporum sancta Ecclesia ducitur, in nonnullis sacerdotibus conversationis pulchritudo veteratur? Senuit autem Samuel, quia vigor auctoritatis emarcuit. Quasi enim juvenis erat Samuel, quando sacerdotum ordo solis coelestibus desideriis inhians, dum nulla terrena quaereret, quo efficacius superna praedicare poterat, eo ad ea nihilominus verbis, et exemplis subditorum animos accendebat. Valebat enim robore, et juvenili pulchritudine radiabat, dum vim coelestis verbi in splendore ostenderet sanctae conversationis: quia quidquid validum loquendo poterat praedicare, nitebatur etiam sublimiter vivendo ostendere. Nam et mortuas animas vivificabat verbo; sed miro flore juventutis emicans, mortua corpora resuscitabat imperio.

3. All these words of praise can also be understood as words by which, while the person of the king to be ordained is being proclaimed, the intention of those asking for a king may be confounded. For they say: There shall be a king over us, and he shall judge us, and he shall fight our battles for us (1 Sam. 8). He is called choice and good, and because there is no one better than he among the children of Israel, so that all good things may excel in the person of the requested king: but while he is not sufficient for those things which the people had proposed, human presumption may be confounded, so that, being conquered, it may waste away. And indeed, as I said above, the king who is chosen to go before the people to fight their battles, when he is deserted by divine help, died overwhelmed in war, and was then the cause of death, not of safety, for the people whom he preceded to those same battles. Finally, the people would ascribe it to God if he who had been chosen king by the judgment of God had not been so suitable for doing the things which the people wanted. He can also be understood as choice and good while it is asserted, not as he was foreseen to be in the future. He is called choice and good, therefore, so that he may be felt to be such a one chosen by the Lord who was afterwards reproved through disobedience. Wherefore reason itself also requires that we should feel in a good sense those things which are said concerning him as choice and good up until the times of his reproof.

CHAPTER IV.

1. Summarizing everything briefly, let us see what edification they contain within themselves, according to another significance. Since we said that in Samuel the new priesthood is designated, what is meant by his becoming old, except that while the holy Church is led through the spaces of running times, the beauty of life in some priests grows old? But Samuel grew old because the vigor of authority withered. For Samuel was as it were a youth when the order of priests, gasping only for heavenly desires, while it sought no earthly things, could the more effectively preach heavenly things, and thereby inflamed the minds of subjects no less by words than by examples. For he prevailed in strength and radiated with youthful beauty, while he showed the power of the heavenly word in the splendor of a holy life: because whatever he could preach as valid by speaking, he also strove to show by living sublimely. For he also vivified dead souls by the word; but shining with the wonderful flower of youth, he raised dead bodies by command.

Cum et caecis visum, claudis gressum, et omnibus aegritudinibus medelam tribueret, et adeo sanctissimae conversationis pulchritudine radiabat; ut majoris virtutis esset, hoc modo posse vivere, quam illo aliis subvenire. Velut ergo in juventute vigebat Samuel, quando in ordine sacerdotum pariter refulgebat et mira virtus operis, et tam immensa pulchritudo sanctae conversationis. Sed jam diu est, quod Samuel senuit. Multa enim tempora elapsa sunt, ex quibus multi eorum amorem saeculi sequuntur, quorum virtute depelli gaudia mundi ab aliorum cordibus debuerunt. Quod tamen non idcirco dicimus, ut sancta Ecclesia nullos viros religiosos habeat: sed quod pauci sunt, qui in praedicationis culmine perfecte noverint mundum contemnere, et summis desideriis inhaerere. Quare apte Samuel et senex dicitur, et prophetare. Senex quidem est, quia rigorem asperae conversationis in pluribus perdidit: prophetare tamen non desinit, quia dum aliquantas vires spiritales habet, virtutem providi spiritus valenter exhibet. Quod in uno eodemque praedicatore intelligi convenienter potest. Senes quidem sunt, et prophetant, qui sic per negligentiam resolvuntur, ut bene doceant, sed male vivant. Qui filios suos judices ponunt, quando illos in sacerdotii dignitate constituunt, qui remissioris vitae eorum tempora contemplantur. A senibus tamen juvenes ordinantur: quia, qui promovendi veniunt, fortia promittunt. Sacerdotalis quippe vitae fortissimam professionem spondent, cujus virtutem in futura conversatione non habent. Juvenes igitur promoventur: quia, qui eos ordinant, prius quam ab eis professionem virtutis accipiant, eos ad tanti ordinis celsitudinem non assumunt. Prius namque eis insinuant, et quam sublimiter vivant, et quam subtiliter doceant: quod idcirco debent sublimiter vivere, ut utiliter valeant praedicare, ut vitae propositum semper ad superna dirigant, ut de labore praedicationis temporalia praemia non requirant, ut personas in judicio non accipiant, sed justa aequitatis lance cuncta disponant: quatenus viarum Dei difficultates audiant, et an velint subire earum labores, dicant.

2. Has profecto difficiles vias plerique dum sacros ordines ambiunt, se ambulare profitentur: sed dum ad id quod ambiunt, perveniunt, sponsionis suae tenere fortitudinem praetermittunt. Unde et Samuelis filii non ambulasse in viis ejus, sed accepisse munera, et pervertisse judicium apte relati sunt. Samuelis enim viae sunt, quia praedicatoris officio exponuntur. Filii ergo in viis patris sui non ambulant, quando ii qui ad sacros ordines ambitiose perveniunt, ardua religionis itinera a majoribus sibi ostensa deserunt, et perversa intentione in appetitu terrenarum rerum altius immerguntur.

When he also granted sight to the blind, walking to the lame, and a remedy to all sicknesses, and so radiated with the beauty of a most holy life that it was of greater virtue to be able to live in this way than to help others in that way. Samuel, therefore, as it were flourished in youth when in the order of priests there shone forth together both a wonderful virtue of work and such an immense beauty of holy life. But it is already a long time since Samuel grew old. For many times have slipped away in which many of them follow the love of the world, whose virtue ought to have driven away the joys of the world from the hearts of others. Which, however, we do not say for this reason, that the holy Church has no religious men: but that they are few who in the height of preaching have perfectly known how to despise the world and to adhere to the highest desires. Wherefore Samuel is aptly said both to be old and to prophesy. He is indeed old because he has lost the rigor of harsh life in many: yet he does not cease to prophesy, because while he has some spiritual strength, he valiantly exhibits the virtue of a provident spirit. Which can be conveniently understood in one and the same preacher. They are indeed old and prophesy who are so loosened through negligence that they teach well but live badly. Who appoint their sons judges when they constitute those in the dignity of the priesthood who contemplate the times of their more remiss life. From the old, however, the young are ordained: because those who come to be promoted promise strong things. For they promise a most strong profession of priestly life, whose virtue they do not have in their future conduct. Therefore the young are promoted: because those who ordain them, before they receive from them the profession of virtue, do not assume them to the height of so great an order. For first they insinuate to them both how sublimely they should live and how subtly they should teach: that they ought therefore to live sublimely that they may be able to preach usefully, that they may always direct the purpose of their life to heavenly things, that they may not seek temporal rewards for the labor of preaching, that they may not accept persons in judgment, but dispose all things by the just scale of equity: that they may hear the difficulties of the ways of God, and say whether they wish to undergo their labors.

2. Many, while they seek sacred orders, profess that they are walking these difficult ways: but when they arrive at that which they seek, they omit to hold the fortitude of their promise. Whence also the sons of Samuel are aptly reported not to have walked in his ways, but to have received bribes and perverted judgment. For they are the ways of Samuel, because they are set forth by the office of a preacher. The sons, therefore, do not walk in the ways of their father when those who reach sacred orders ambitiously desert the arduous paths of religion shown to them by their elders, and are more deeply immersed in the appetite for earthly things by a perverted intention.

Unde et post avaritiam declinare, munera accipere, et judicium pervertere, aperte perhibentur. Qui enim laborare pro coelestibus negligunt, necesse est, ut in appetitu terrenorum arctius inserantur. Declinare quidem post avaritiam, est ambitione rerum terrenarum tota intentione defluere. Nam nonnulli sunt, qui terrena lucra per avaritiam expetunt, sed tamen post avaritiam non declinant: quia et temporalia appetunt, sed in appetitu eorum incurrere crimen vitant. Declinant ergo post avaritiam, qui pro terrenis, quae ardenter ambiunt, incurrere crimen nequaquam pertimescunt. Animam quippe suam aestimant inferiorem omni re quam possunt concupiscere. Hinc namque est rapina violenta, hinc fiunt furta latentia: quia eos quibus avari praevalent, violenter opprimunt, et quorum rebus inferre violentiam nequeunt, furta inferre moliuntur. Saepe et quibus non praevalent furto manuum, insidiantur falsitate verborum. Unde et filii Samuelis, ordinato processu, in inordinata avaritiae confusione denotantur, cum dicitur: (I Reg. VIII, 3.) Declinaverunt post avaritiam, accepere munera, perverterunt judicium.

3. Qui enim ut munera acciperent, judicium perverterunt, ad inferendum furtum concupitae rei, non quaesierunt obscuritatem noctis, sed tenebras rationis. Et notandum, quia ardor avaritiae causa est accipiendorum munerum, et acceptio munerum causa est pervertendi judicii: ut prophetae narratione hujus vitii pravitas ostendatur, non solum qualiter in reproborum cordibus proficit, sed a sanctorum mentibus qualiter exstirpari funditus possit. Nam si perversitas ista judicii ex acceptione munerum nascitur, qui munera non accipit, judicium non pervertit, et oblata munera leviter respuit, qui avaritiae radicem a corde suo penitus extirpavit. Sed istam culpam filiorum Samuelis, plenius videndo, quam loquendo, colligimus. Nam si ad destituta Ecclesiarum loca respicimus, ubi pater senescit, notam avaritiae, suscepti muneris, et perversi judicii filii incurrunt: quia ubi per lucra turpia rectoris persona dissolvitur, subjecti gregis corda facile dissipantur, ut in se nequiter vivant, et aliis exempla pravitatis praebeant. Sed libet in iis valde admirari judicia omnipotentis Dei. Nam filii Samuelis, dum post avaritiam declinant, dum causa pervertendi judicii munera suscipiunt, populo, cui praesunt, exempla pravitatis impendunt. Ipse autem populus, dum regem petit, de culmine potestatis prophetae filios abjicit. Deus vero omnipotens et regem petentium preces suscipit, et irascitur, quod petatur. Quibus profecto rebus turbari possumus, si eorum rationem non subtiliter videamus. Quid enim justius est, quam, ut populi judicio corruat, qui reprobo mentis suae judicio sic studuit, ut se sequens populus periret?

Whence they are openly presented as declining after avarice, receiving bribes, and perverting judgment. For those who neglect to labor for heavenly things must of necessity be more tightly inserted into the appetite for earthly ones. To decline after avarice is indeed to flow away with the whole intention in the ambition for earthly things. For there are some who seek earthly gains through avarice, but yet do not decline after avarice: because they seek temporal things, but avoid incurring a crime in the appetite for them. They decline after avarice, therefore, who by no means fear to incur a crime for the sake of earthly things which they ardently seek. For they estimate their own soul to be inferior to everything which they can covet. For hence is violent rapine, hence latent thefts occur: because they violently oppress those over whom they prevail by avarice, and against those whose things they cannot bring violence, they strive to bring thefts. Often also against those whom they do not prevail by theft of hands, they lie in wait by the falsehood of words. Whence also the sons of Samuel, by an ordained process, are denoted in the inordinate confusion of avarice when it is said: (1 Sam. 8:3.) They declined after avarice, they took bribes, they perverted judgment.

3. For those who perverted judgment in order to receive bribes, for the purpose of bringing about the theft of the coveted thing, did not seek the obscurity of night, but the darkness of reason. And it should be noted that the ardor of avarice is the cause of receiving bribes, and the receiving of bribes is the cause of perverting judgment: so that by the prophet's narration the depravity of this vice may be shown, not only how it profits in the hearts of the reprobate, but how it can be fundamentally extirpated from the minds of the holy. For if this perversity of judgment is born from the receiving of bribes, he who does not receive bribes does not pervert judgment; and he lightly rejects offered bribes who has thoroughly extirpated the root of avarice from his heart. But we gather this fault of the sons of Samuel more fully by seeing than by speaking. For if we look at the destitute places of the Churches, where the father grows old, the sons incur the mark of avarice, of receiving a bribe, and of perverted judgment: because where the person of the rector is dissolved through shameful gains, the hearts of the subject flock are easily dissipated, so that they live wickedly in themselves and provide examples of depravity to others. But in these things it is pleasing to admire greatly the judgments of almighty God. For the sons of Samuel, while they decline after avarice, while for the sake of perverting judgment they receive bribes, expend examples of depravity upon the people over whom they preside. The people themselves, however, while they ask for a king, cast down the sons of the prophet from the height of power. Almighty God indeed both receives the prayers of those asking for a king, and is angry that he is asked. By which things indeed we can be troubled, if we do not subtly see the reason for them. For what is more just than that he should fall by the judgment of the people who so studied by the reprobate judgment of his own mind that the people following him should perish?

Sed tamen cum sacerdotes male vivunt, a laicis judicandi non sunt. Digne ergo indigniorem recipiunt, qui indignum indigne ejicere praesumpserunt. Nam de filiis Samuelis dicitur: Acceperunt munera, et perverterunt judicia. De eo autem rege, quem filii Israel petunt, terribiles valde minae proferuntur, quia dicitur: Agros vestros tollet et oliveta, et dabit servis suis (I Reg... [truncated]

(I Reg. X, 15.) Locutus est Samuel ad populum legem regni, et scripsit in libro et reposuit coram Domino.

4. Quid est, quod Israelitarum filii ponendi in regis curribus dicuntur? Sed praelatorum sanctae Ecclesiae currus eorum devota sunt desideria. Nam dum superna gaudia ferventer appetunt, velut in curribus per alta feruntur. Hinc est quod Elias in curru igneo in coelum sublevatus asseritur (IV Reg. II, 1): quia profecto ad superna gaudia sustolli non poterit, qui ea per alta et ferventia desideria non inquirit. Cum ergo boni auditores per exempla praedicatorum terrena contemnere, et amare aeterna incipiunt, Israelitarum profecto filii in regum curribus ponuntur. Et notandum, quia et tolli dicuntur, et in curribus poni: quia prius debent a carnalibus desideriis abstrahi, ut bene valeant superni amoris ignibus inflammari. Quae nimirum terrena desideria, quia non facile deseruntur, tolli filii perhibentur. Nam per magnam violentiam fieri oportet, ut terrena desideria electus auditor penitus deserat, et in coelestibus sublimiter se sustollat. De hac quippe violentia Dominus ait: Regnum coelorum vim patitur, et violenti diripiunt illud (Matth. XI, 12). De hac Paulus ait: Nemo coronabitur, nisi qui legitime certaverit (II Tim. II, 5). Quod etiam his verbis latenter ostenditur, quia filii qui tolluntur, non in sedibus, sed in curribus poni perhibentur. Curru quidem antiqui pugnare consueverunt. Sed et qui curru ducitur, sublimis ac terribilis contra hostem fertur. Electi etenim viri tanto sublimiores atque terribiliores sunt occultis hostibus, quanto interni amoris celsitudine altius profecerunt. Sublimes quippe sunt, quia usque ad eorum intentionem malignorum spirituum suggestio non pertingit. Terribiles etiam sunt, quia reprobare eorum consilia tanto facilius possunt, quanto per intimi affectus vigorem in superni gaudii contemplatione consistunt. Hoc quidem quoties his dicitur, qui adhuc carnales sunt, piarum minarum illis bonitas exhibetur. Quod tale est, ac si dicat: Quia virtutis personam petitis, sub ejus disciplina vacare vitae otio non potestis. Quare et equites r... [truncated]

(I Reg. VIII, 12.) Et constituet sibi tribunos, et centuriones.

But yet when priests live badly, they are not to be judged by the laity. Worthily, therefore, they receive a more unworthy one, who presumed unworthily to cast out an unworthy one. For concerning the sons of Samuel it is said: They received bribes, and they perverted judgments. But concerning that king whom the children of Israel ask for, very terrible threats are brought forth, because it is said: He will take your fields and oliveyards, and give them to his servants (1 Sam... [truncated]

(1 Sam. 10:25.) Samuel spoke to the people the law of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the Lord.

4. What is it that the sons of the Israelites are said to be placed in the king's chariots? But the chariots of the prelates of the holy Church are their devoted desires. For while they fervently seek heavenly joys, they are carried, as it were, in chariots through the heights. Hence it is that Elijah is asserted to have been lifted up into heaven in a fiery chariot (4 Kings 2:1): because surely he who does not seek them through high and fervent desires will not be able to be lifted up to heavenly joys. When therefore good hearers begin through the examples of preachers to despise earthly things and to love eternal ones, truly the sons of the Israelites are placed in the chariots of kings. And it should be noted that they are said both to be taken and to be placed in chariots: because they ought first to be abstracted from carnal desires, so that they may well be able to be inflamed by the fires of heavenly love. Which earthly desires indeed, because they are not easily deserted, the sons are presented as being taken. For it must be done through great violence that the elect hearer thoroughly deserts earthly desires and lifts himself up sublimely in heavenly things. Concerning this violence indeed the Lord says: The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force (Matt. 11:12). Concerning this Paul says: No one shall be crowned except he who has striven lawfully (2 Tim. 2:5). Which also is latently shown by these words, because the sons who are taken are presented as being placed not in seats, but in chariots. In a chariot indeed the ancients were accustomed to fight. But also he who is led by a chariot is carried sublime and terrible against the enemy. For elect men are the more sublime and terrible to hidden enemies as they have profited more deeply in the loftiness of internal love. They are sublime indeed because the suggestion of malignant spirits does not reach as far as their intention. They are also terrible because they can reprobate their counsels the more easily as they consist in the contemplation of heavenly joy through the vigor of internal affection. This indeed as often as it is said to those who are still carnal, the goodness of pious threats is exhibited to them. Which is such as if he were to say: Because you ask for a person of virtue, under his discipline you cannot be free for the leisure of life. Wherefore also knights r... [truncated]

(1 Sam. 8:12.) And he will appoint for himself tribunes and centurions.

5. Tribuni sunt, cum incipiunt: centuriones, cum in spiritali magisterio perficiuntur. Etenim, ut superius diximus, a centenario numero dicitur centurio. Tribuni etiam intelligi possunt spirituales viri, scientia simplices, sed amore Dei et proximi inflammati. Qui licet alta et spiritualia loqui nesciant, tamen per exempla electorum, quae norunt, ad amorem Conditoris, quos praevalent, accendere conantur. Tribus quidem cognatio, sive curia dicitur. Si ergo tribuni dicuntur a tribu, qui ad profectum proximorum sanctorum exempla proferunt, tribuni nominantur. Ad rusticitatem quidem nostram destruendam, velut curia veniunt, quando nobis illa proponunt, per quae sancti viri omnipotenti Deo placuere. Et cum plurimorum sanctorum proprias virtutes exponunt, quasi spiritualium cognationum nobilitatem nobis aperiunt. Centuriones ergo intelligi viri perfectiores possunt, qui praedicatorum magisterio dum bene proficiunt, eorum auditores atque cooperatores fiunt. De quibus profecto in Evangelio Dominus ait: Omnis scriba doctus in regno coelorum, similis est homini patrifamilias, qui profert de thesauro suo nova et vetera (Matth. XIII, 52). Tales quippe non solum operatione praecipui sunt, sed etiam verbi Dei scientia eruditi. Unde et ad spiritalis militiae conflictum cohortari proximos tanto utilius possunt, quanto et alta, quae praedicare sciunt, in opere virtutis ostendunt. Habent in eruditione verba, habent ad exempla simplicium opera: ut alta quae loquuntur sapientes, intelligant; et qui verborum secreta non vident in intimis, imitentur opera, quae vident foris. Centuriones ergo constituuntur, quando perfectione virtutis, culmen obtinent dignitatis: ut sublimiter vivant, et quo altius vivunt, utilius doceant.

6. Sed qui centuriones sunt, cum belli tempora ordinent, proficere debent: ut pacis etiam fructus ferre cognoscantur. Post tribunos ergo, et centuriones, agrorum fiunt aratores, et messores segetum; ut victorum jam corda vomere adhortationis aperiant, ex quibus uberius bonorum operum triticum metant. Velut in pace jam quidem arant, qui ea corda, quae spiritalia impugnamenta devicerant, ad exercenda opera pietatis excitant. Et segetes metunt, quando de divini verbi semine, quod in auditorum cordibus sparserant, electa opera prorupisse gratulantur. Velut enim de agro triticum falcibus metunt, quando amplexu charitatis, id de superna conversatione accipiunt, quo interna devotione satientur.

5. They are tribunes when they begin: centurions when they are perfected in spiritual magistery. For, as we said above, a centurion is named from the number hundred. Tribunes can also be understood as spiritual men, simple in knowledge, but inflamed by the love of God and neighbor. Who, although they know not how to speak deep and spiritual things, nevertheless through the examples of the elect, which they know, strive to kindle whom they can to the love of the Creator. A tribe indeed is called a kindred or a court. If therefore they are called tribunes from a tribe, those who bring forth examples of the saints for the profit of neighbors are named tribunes. To destroy our rusticity indeed, they come as it were a court, when they propose to us those things by which holy men pleased almighty God. And when they set forth the proper virtues of many saints, they open to us as it were the nobility of spiritual kindreds. Centurions therefore can be understood as more perfect men, who while they profit well by the magistery of preachers, become their hearers and cooperators. Concerning whom indeed the Lord says in the Gospel: Every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old (Matt. 13:52). For such are not only principal in operation, but also learned in the knowledge of the word of God. Whence also they can the more usefully exhort neighbors to the conflict of spiritual warfare, as they show also the deep things, which they know how to preach, in the work of virtue. They have words in instruction, they have works for the examples of the simple: so that the wise may understand the deep things they speak; and those who do not see the secrets of words in internal things, may imitate the works which they see outside. Centurions therefore are appointed when, by the perfection of virtue, they obtain the height of dignity: so that they may live sublimely, and the more loftily they live, the more usefully they may teach.

6. But those who are centurions, while they ordain times of war, ought to profit: so that they may be known to bear also the fruits of peace. After tribunes, therefore, and centurions, they become plowers of fields and reapers of harvests; so that they may open the hearts of the conquered now with the plowshare of exhortation, from which they may more abundantly reap the wheat of good works. They plow as it were in peace now indeed, who excite those hearts, which had conquered spiritual assaults, to exercising works of piety. And they reap harvests when they congratulate that elect works have burst forth from the seed of the divine word which they had scattered in the hearts of hearers. For they reap wheat from the field with sickles as it were, when by the embrace of charity they receive that from heavenly conversation by which they may be satiated with internal devotion.

7. Sed quandiu in hac vita vivimus, in pace nulla possidemus. Antiquus etenim hostis, quia semper bene agentibus adversatur, necesse est semper nos ea quae bene agimus, defendamus. Quare et bene post aratores agrorum, et segetum messores, armorum fabri, et curruum regis fieri perhibentur. Arma et currus fabricant, ut ipsos agros quos excolunt, easque segetes quas metunt, defendant. Currum quippe fabricant, ut ad occursum adversariorum veloces sint: arma vero, ut sint potentes. Currum quidem conscendunt, ut magno impetu castra daemonum atterant; et, ut exstinguant quos impetunt, arma portant. In hac quippe currus sublimitate stabat, qui dicebat: Nostra conversatio in coelis est (Philip. III, 20). Unde et securus jam, qui superior cunctis suis hostibus apparebat, affirmans, ait: Nulla creatura poterit nos separare a charitate Christi (Rom. VIII, 39). Sed qui currum conscenderat, arma tenebat; unde et exponit, dicens: Ego autem sic curro, non quasi in incertum: sic pugno, non quasi aerem verberans, sed castigo corpus meum, et in servitutem redigo (I Cor. IX, 26, 27).

Quid ergo in hoc curru rectius exprimitur, quam rectae intentionis sublimitas? Currum ergo fabricare, est in mentibus auditorum altitudinem rectae intentionis erigere. Qui enim per exempla meliorum praedicationis ministerium sortiuntur, currus post aratri et messionis studium fabricant, quando bene agentes subditos docent, ut ex omnibus operibus bonis, quae agunt, sola aeterna retributionis praemia praestolentur. Terrena quidem despicere, nulla transitoria desiderare, aeterna diligere, atque ad illa magnis desideriis festinare, jam quidem sublimi currui praesidere est. De quibus nimirum curribus per Psalmistam dicitur: Currus Dei decem millibus multiplex, millia laetantium, Dominus in illis ascendit (Psal. LXVII, 18). Arma vero eorum, sunt acuta consilia, quibus tanto validius hostes feriunt, quanto celerius eorum astutias deprehendunt. Unde et quasi armatus ille potens loquebatur: Non ignoramus ejus astutias (II Cor. II, 11). Arma etiam fabricabat, cum dicebat: Et scutum fidei, in quo possitis omnia tela nequissimi ignea exstinguere, et galeam salutis assumite, et gladium spiritus, quod est verbum Dei (Ephes. VI, 16, 17).

7. But as long as we live in this life, we possess nothing in peace. For since the ancient enemy always opposes those who act well, it is necessary that we always defend those things which we do well. Wherefore also rightly after the plowers of the fields and the reapers of the harvests, the makers of arms and of the king's chariots are said to be made. They fashion arms and chariots so that they may defend the very fields which they cultivate and those harvests which they reap. They fashion a chariot indeed so that they may be swift in meeting adversaries; but arms, so that they may be powerful. They mount the chariot indeed so that they may wear down the camps of demons with great impetus; and they carry arms so that they may extinguish those whom they attack. It was in this sublimity of the chariot indeed that he stood who said: Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Whence also now secure, he who appeared superior to all his enemies, affirming said: No creature shall be able to separate us from the charity of Christ (Rom. 8:39). But he who had mounted the chariot held arms; whence also he explains, saying: But I so run, not as at an uncertainty: so I fight, not as one beating the air, but I chastise my body and bring it into servitude (1 Cor. 9:26, 27).

What therefore is more rightly expressed in this chariot than the sublimity of right intention? To fashion a chariot, therefore, is to raise the height of right intention in the minds of hearers. For those who through the examples of the better sort obtain the ministry of preaching, fashion chariots after the study of plowing and reaping, when they teach well-acting subjects to await only the eternal rewards of retribution from all the good works which they do. Indeed, to despise earthly things, to desire nothing transitory, to love eternal things, and to hasten to them with great desires, is now indeed to preside over a sublime chariot. Concerning which chariots indeed it is said through the Psalmist: The chariot of God is attended by ten thousands; thousands of them that rejoice: the Lord is among them (Ps. 67:18). Their arms indeed are sharp counsels, by which they strike enemies the more strongly as they the more quickly detect their astuteness. Whence also that powerful one spoke as it were armed: We are not ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). He also fashioned arms when he said: And take the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one, and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:16, 17).

In illis quidem curribus, et armis positi electi, veloces atque potentes sunt. Veloces quidem: quia dum spiritualia cupiunt, nequitias spirituales in momento deprehendunt. Potentes vero sunt: quia dum ardentius summa desiderant, quidquid eis de imo saeculi amore suggeritur, pro nullo pensant: et quasi currus vecti pondere, in hostes magnum impetum habent, qui sanctis virtutibus, et acutis consiliis pleni, tentamenta omnia, quae ingeruntur, in momento destruunt. Nec vacat ab isto sensu, quod currus, dum per terram volvitur, et inferiorem partem levat sursum, et superiorem deprimit deorsum. Sic nimirum et sanctorum virorum recta intentio, dum de terrenis, quae agit, coelestia exspectat, velut partem, quam per terram trahit, ad summa dirigit. Et quia se tam de bono opere, quam de exspectatione aeternae retributionis in conspectu Conditoris humiliat, velut ad terram mergit partem, quam sursum levat. In rotis quippe suis currus noster incessanter volvitur, si de bono opere semper aeterna intendimus, et de omni profectus nostri altitudine humiles esse curamus.

Quae profecto arma, et currus tunc sunt regis, cum a praedicatorum sanctae Ecclesiae forma et doctrina discrepare minime videntur. Currus ergo et arma electi praedicatores fabricant, quando auditores suos ad supernam patriam festinare docent, et intentionis rectitudine et munitione virtutis.

Sed haec omnia, quae in profectu unius ostendimus, nihil obstat, si per se in pluribus distributa sentiamus. Electos quidem per virtutum gradus proficiscentes, ostendimus prius in curribus poni; deinde equites, et regalium quadrigarum praecursores ordinari; tribunos, centuriones, aratores, et messores constitui; ad extremum vero fabros armorum fieri. Sed quia sancta Ecclesia diversis electorum ministeriis utitur, qui vult, potest gratiarum dona singula ordinibus attribuere singulis, ut eorum quaeque sint propria illis, qui eorum affectibus strictius inseruntur.

8. Quid ergo est quod subdit: Filias Israelitarum unguentarias, et focarias, et panificas esse futuras?

Sed filiarum appellatione aliquando infirmitas, aliquando fecunditas designatur.

Placed in those chariots and arms indeed, the elect are swift and powerful. Swift indeed: because while they desire spiritual things, they detect spiritual wickednesses in a moment. But they are powerful: because while they more ardently desire the highest things, whatever is suggested to them from the lowest love of the world they weigh as nothing: and as if carried by the weight of a chariot, they have a great impetus against enemies, who, full of holy virtues and sharp counsels, destroy in a moment all the temptations which are brought in. Nor is it devoid of this sense that a chariot, while it is rolled through the earth, both lifts the lower part upward and depresses the upper part downward. Thus indeed the right intention of holy men, while from the earthly things which it does it expects heavenly things, directs as it were the part which it draws through the earth toward the highest things. And because it humbles itself in the sight of the Creator as much for the good work as for the expectation of eternal retribution, it sinks as it were toward the earth the part which it lifts upward. In its wheels indeed our chariot is incessantly rolled, if from a good work we always intend eternal things, and from all the height of our progress we take care to be humble.

Which arms and chariots are indeed then the king's, when they are seen to differ not at all from the form and doctrine of the preachers of Holy Church. Elect preachers therefore fashion chariots and arms when they teach their hearers to hasten to the heavenly country, both by rectitude of intention and by the fortification of virtue.

But all these things which we have shown in the progress of one person, nothing prevents us from perceiving as distributed by themselves in many. We have shown that the elect, proceeding through the degrees of virtues, are first placed in chariots; then ordered as horsemen and precursors of the royal four-horse chariots; appointed as tribunes, centurions, plowers, and reapers; and finally made makers of arms. But because Holy Church employs various ministries of the elect, whoever wishes can attribute individual gifts of graces to individual orders, so that each of them may be proper to those who are more strictly inserted into their affections.

8. What then is it that he adds: that he will take the daughters of the Israelites to be perfumers, and cooks, and bakers?

But by the name of daughters, sometimes infirmity, sometimes fecundity is designated.

Quae ergo Israelitarum filiae, nisi mentes electae sunt, ad divini verbi conceptum praeparatae? Quae regis unguentariae fiunt: quia dum praedicatoris sui institutione proficiunt, in se abundantem gratiam Spiritus sancti percipiunt, per quam mederi contritis cordibus salubriter possunt. Focariae etiam fiunt: quia dum fervore sancti Spiritus plenae sunt, exemplo suo proximorum corda in amorem Conditoris accendunt. Panificae fiunt, quando electas mentes verbi Dei alimento reficiunt. Unguentariae ergo fiunt filiae, quando vulnera peccatorum curant. Focariae, quando purgata a sordibus peccatorum corda, ad studium boni operis exemplo suae virtutis inflammant. Panificae vero sunt, quando proficientibus per exempla, non jam exempla proponunt, sed altae scientiae verba proferunt; ut velut solido cibo pasti, tanto fortius agant, quanto jam spiritaliter instructi, ferventius aeterna desiderant.

Sequitur: (Vers. 14.) Agros quoque vestros, vineas, et oliveta optima tollet, et dabit servis suis. 9. Quinam sunt agri, quae vineae, quae oliveta, quae jure praelatorum nobis auferuntur? Sed praedicatores sancti, quando ad correptionem peccatorum loquuntur, delectationes carnis, concupiscentias mentis, simulationes bonorum operum reprehendunt. Nam si carnis delectationes iniquae possessionis agri non essent, Apostolus nequaquam diceret: Qui seminat in carne, de carne metet corruptionem (Gal. VI, 8). In carne quippe seminare, est propositum mentis obruere in delectationes corporis. Qui profecto corruptionem de carne metunt: quia in electorum resurrectione renovationem aeternae incorruptionis nequaquam recipiunt. Vinearum quoque appellatione mentis concupiscentiae recte figurantur: quia reproborum corda inebriant, et a cognitione veritatis alienant. Hujus vineae fructus vituperans Moyses, ait: Ex vinea Sodomorum, vinea eorum, et de suburbanis Gomorrhae: uva eorum, uva fellis, et botrus amarissimus (Deut. XXXII, 32). Ex Sodomorum quippe vinea vitem, ex Gomorrha ducit propaginem, qui nefandissimis concupiscentiis mentem replet. Quasi enim vineam facit, qui inde aeterna obliviscitur, unde et per concupiscentias debriatur; et qui se quasi sub umbra vineae, et amoenitate pravae delectationis refrigerat, aeterni sibi incendii retributionem parat. Unde apte nimis ejusdem vineae fructus exponens, uvam fellis, et botrum amaritudinis dixit. Uva quippe in visu est, fel in sapore: visum oblectans, gustum amaricans; quia nimirum reprobae menti valde placet, quod concupiscit, sed in aeterna poena, quod sibi modo est dulce, amarescit.

Who therefore are the daughters of the Israelites, but elect minds prepared for the conception of the divine word? Who become perfumers of the king, because while they profit by the instruction of their preacher, they perceive in themselves the abundant grace of the Holy Spirit, through which they can wholesomely heal contrite hearts. They also become cooks, because while they are full of the fervor of the Holy Spirit, they kindle by their example the hearts of neighbors to the love of the Creator. They become bakers when they refresh elect minds with the nourishment of the word of God. The daughters, therefore, become perfumers when they cure the wounds of sins. Cooks, when by the example of their virtue they inflame hearts, purged from the filth of sins, to the study of a good work. But they are bakers when they no longer propose examples to those profiting through examples, but bring forth words of deep knowledge; so that, fed as it were with solid food, they may act the more strongly as they, now spiritually instructed, the more fervently desire eternal things.

It follows: (Verse 14.) He will take also your fields, and vineyards, and the best olive groves, and will give them to his servants. Who are the fields, what are the vineyards, what are the olive groves, which are taken from us by the right of prelates? But holy preachers, when they speak for the correction of sins, rebuke the delights of the flesh, the concupiscences of the mind, and the simulations of good works. For if the delights of the flesh were not fields of iniquitous possession, the Apostle would by no means say: He that soweth in the flesh, of the flesh shall reap corruption (Gal. 6:8). To sow in the flesh indeed is to bury the purpose of the mind in the delights of the body. Who indeed reap corruption from the flesh, because in the resurrection of the elect they by no means receive the renovation of eternal incorruption. By the name of vineyards also, the concupiscences of the mind are rightly figured, because they inebriate the hearts of the reprobate and alienate them from the knowledge of the truth. Moses, censuring the fruit of this vineyard, says: Their vineyard is of the vineyard of the Sodomites, and of the suburbs of Gomorrah: their grape is a grape of gall, and the cluster most bitter (Deut. 32:32). Indeed, he leads a vine from the vineyard of the Sodomites, a branch from Gomorrah, who fills his mind with most wicked concupiscences. For he makes as it were a vineyard who forgets eternal things from that whence he is also inebriated through concupiscences; and he who refreshes himself as if under the shadow of a vineyard and the amenity of a depraved delight, prepares for himself the retribution of eternal fire. Whence too aptly explaining the fruit of the same vineyard, he said it was a grape of gall and a cluster of bitterness. For the grape is in the sight, the gall in the taste: delighting the sight, embittering the taste; because indeed it greatly pleases a reprobate mind what it covets, but in eternal punishment what is now sweet to it becomes bitter.

Rex ergo nobis agros tollit, cum electus praedicator laetos in delectatione motus carnis nostrae loquendo subtrahit. Vineas tollit, cum debriantes concupiscentias a corde nostro penitus abscindit. Oliveta etiam tollit, cum falsae misericordiae opera reprehendit, cum recte exhortando suggerit, nullum esse meritum operis, nisi prodeat de proposito bonae intentionis.

10. Sed valde quaerendum est, cur dari servis regis asseruntur. Nam si haec nobis jure auferuntur, quinam erunt, quibus non indigne tribuantur? Quod tamen si subtiliter quaerimus, magnos in imperiis suis sanctos praedicatores nostros invenimus. Qui sunt ergo ii servi, nisi illi, de quorum capite ad beatum Job Dominus dicit: Nunquid accipies eum servum sempiternum (Job XL, 23)? Maligni namque spiritus servi sunt sanctorum hominum; sed in hac vita servi perpetui, in illa vero servi sempiterni. Quotidie namque hoc ingerunt, unde sancti viri coronentur. Nam cum ex praelio hujus vitae, aeternae gloriae victoria nobis praebeatur, qui contra nos ea bella innovant, quibus ad aeternam requiem ducimur, profecto nobis magna servitia impendunt. Servi quoque victorum sunt, testante veritate: A quo quis vincitur, ejus servus efficitur (II Petr. II, 19). Nam dum praelia contra eos, qui victuri sunt, excitant, serviunt eis, qui inde coronantur, unde ad tempus eorum praelia potenter excipiunt. Sed quia quod ad sanctorum gloriam proficit, malignis spiritibus crescit in damnationis augmentum, ablati agri, et vineae, et oliveta servis tribuuntur. De omni quidem malitia sua daemones in aeterna poena punientur. In congressione quidem occulti certaminis, quando electi vincunt, mala quae repellunt, suis hostibus tribuunt: quia isti, tanquam aurum in fornace (Sap. III, 6), probantur, illi pro reproba suggestione puniuntur. Agros ergo, vineas, et oliveta servi suscipiunt: quia cum peccatores ad vitam, praedicantibus doctoribus, redeunt, hoc etiam ad damnationis cumulum daemonibus proficit, quod poenitentes in culpa praeterita tandiu eorum fraude retenti sunt. Dantur etiam haec servis, quando officio praedicatoris conversi peccatores ad Dominum, agnoscunt quod in amore praeteritorum criminum fraude daemonum tenebantur.

11. Quid vero est, quod segetes, et vinearum reditus addecimari, et eunuchis famulis regis dari ea perhibentur? Sed segetes electorum addecimantur, quando excellentiora eorum opera colligimus, ut ea, ad exemplum fidelium producamus. Unus denique solus fuit, qui in se omnium virtutum plenitudinem habuit, cui se omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter infudit (Coloss. I, 19). Nos autem, quia de plenitudine ejus omnes accepimus, dona gratiarum per partes divisas possidemus.

The king therefore takes fields from us when an elect preacher, by speaking, withdraws the movements of our flesh which were joyful in delight. He takes away vineyards when he thoroughly cuts off inebriating concupiscences from our heart. He also takes away olive groves when he rebukes works of false mercy, when by rightly exhorting he suggests that there is no merit in a work unless it proceeds from the purpose of a good intention.

10. But it must be greatly asked why they are asserted to be given to the servants of the king. For if these things are taken from us by right, who will they be to whom they are not unworthily bestowed? But if we seek this subtly, we find our holy preachers great in their commands. Who then are these servants, but those concerning whose head the Lord says to blessed Job: Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever (Job 40:23)? For the malignant spirits are servants of holy men; but in this life they are perpetual servants, and in that life indeed they are servants for ever. For they daily bring in that from which holy men may be crowned. For since from the battle of this life the victory of eternal glory is offered to us, they who renew against us those wars by which we are led to eternal rest, indeed perform great services for us. They are also servants of the conquered, truth testifying: By whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave (2 Pet. 2:19). For while they stir up battles against those who are about to conquer, they serve those who are crowned from that source whence they powerfully receive their battles for a time. But because that which profits for the glory of the saints increases for the malignant spirits in the augmentation of damnation, the removed fields, and vineyards, and olive groves are bestowed upon the servants. Indeed, for all their malice the demons shall be punished in eternal pain. Indeed, in the meeting of the occult contest, when the elect conquer, the evils which they repel they bestow upon their enemies; because the former, like gold in the furnace (Wis. 3:6), are proved, while the latter are punished for the reprobate suggestion. The servants therefore receive the fields, vineyards, and olive groves: because when sinners return to life, the doctors preaching, this also profits for the heap of damnation for the demons, that the penitents in past guilt were held for so long by their fraud. These are also given to the servants when sinners converted to the Lord by the office of the preacher recognize that in the love of past crimes they were held by the fraud of the demons.

11. But what is it that the harvests and the returns of the vineyards are asserted to be tithed, and given to the eunuchs and servants of the king? But the harvests of the elect are tithed when we collect their more excellent works, so that we may produce them for the example of the faithful. Finally, there was only one who had in himself the fullness of all virtues, into whom all the fullness of the divinity infused itself corporally (Col. 1:19). But we, because we have all received of his fullness, possess the gifts of graces divided by parts.

Hinc Paulus ait: Alii quidem per spiritum datur sermo sapientiae, alii sermo scientiae, alii genera linguarum, alii interpretatio sermonum, alteri fides in eodem spiritu, alii operatio virtutum, alii prophetia, alii discretio spirituum (I Cor. XII, 8). Denario vero numero, quia perfectus est, virtutes addecimamus, cum singulorum dona electorum colligimus, quae minores imitentur. Nam de Moyse scriptum est: Quia erat mitissimus super omnes homines terrae (Num. XII, 3). De Abraham quoque dicitur: Credidit Abraham Deo, et reputatum est ei ad justitiam (Gen. XV, 6). Cum ergo mansuetudinem cum fide imitari volumus, necesse est ut de exemplo Moysi et Abrahae ad refectionem mentis nostrae, velut electarum segetum, cibi decimentur. Sic sic nimirum castitatem Joseph (Gen XXXIX, 8), sic Job patientiam (Job I, 21), sic zelum Phinees (Num XXV, 7) ad exemplum nostrum praedicatores proferunt: quia dum perfectorum virtutes ostendunt, velut electarum messium decimas congregant, quas bene proficientibus apponant. Unde et bene eunuchis et famulis eaedem frugum decimae dari praedicuntur. Eunuchi quippe sunt, qui animi virtute, omnia in se libidinis fomenta contriverunt. De quibus nimirum in Evangelio Dominus dicit: Sunt eunuchi, qui castraverunt se propter regnum coelorum (Matth. XIX, 12). Famuli sunt, qui adhuc studiis vitae activae sub aliena cura inserviunt, et ad altitudinem charitatis liberi adhuc exire non possunt. Qui et apud Moysen sex annis servire dominis suis debere inveniuntur (Exod. XXI, 2), ut septimo liberi egrediantur: quia nimirum prius debent perfecti esse in opere, ut ordinate in summa contemplatione exire valeant. Eunuchis ergo famulis doctor messium decimas tribuit, quando ii, qui in candore castitatis obediunt sibi, opera majorum electa sequuntur. Vinearum etiam decimas tribuit, cum eis, quam mira charitate Patres nostri Deum et proximum dilexerunt, ostendit; ut et ipsi etiam ejusdem charitatis abundantia repleri studeant, ac velut ebrii, praeteritorumque obliti, sola futura diligant, atque ad illa ferventer currere non omittant.

12. Post ista vero omnia servi Israelitarum, et ancillae, juvenes optimi tollendi praedicuntur, atque in regis opere ponendi. Qui sunt servi carnalium, nisi qui, malorum exemplo, diuturna consuetudine sic depravati sunt, ut colla mentis sub jugo nequissimae imitationis perpetuo subdidisse videantur? Servi ergo illorum tolluntur, quando electorum praedicatorum studio illi etiam peccata deserunt, qui reprobae imitationi carnalium vehementer subdi videbantur. Qui etiam juvenes optimi dicuntur.

Hence Paul says: To one indeed, by the spirit, is given the word of wisdom: and to another, the word of knowledge... to another, kinds of tongues: to another, interpretation of speeches... to another, faith in the same spirit: to another, the working of miracles: to another, prophecy: to another, the discerning of spirits (1 Cor. 12:8). But by the denary number, because it is perfect, we tithe the virtues when we collect the gifts of individual elect, which the lesser may imitate. For of Moses it is written: That he was the meekest above all men that dwelt upon earth (Num. 12:3). Of Abraham also it is said: Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice (Gen. 15:6). When therefore we wish to imitate meekness with faith, it is necessary that from the example of Moses and Abraham foods be tithed for the refreshment of our mind, as if of elect harvests. Thus indeed the chastity of Joseph (Gen 39:8), thus the patience of Job (Job 1:21), thus the zeal of Phinehas (Num 25:7), preachers bring forth for our example: because while they show the virtues of the perfect, they gather as it were the tithes of elect harvests, which they may set before those profiting well. Whence also rightly the same tithes of fruits are foretold to be given to eunuchs and servants. For they are eunuchs who, by the virtue of the mind, have crushed in themselves all the kindlings of lust. Concerning whom indeed the Lord says in the Gospel: There are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:12). They are servants who still serve under another's care in the studies of the active life, and cannot yet go out free to the height of charity. Who also are found in Moses to owe service to their masters for six years (Exod. 21:2), so that in the seventh they may go out free: because indeed they ought first to be perfect in work, so that they may be able to go out orderly into the height of contemplation. To the eunuchs and servants, therefore, the doctor bestows the tithes of harvests when those who obey him in the brightness of chastity follow the elect works of their elders. He also bestows the tithes of vineyards when he shows to them with what wonderful charity our Fathers loved God and neighbor; so that they also may study to be filled with the abundance of the same charity, and as it were inebriated and forgetting past things, may love only future things and not omit to run fervently toward them.

12. But after all these things, the servants of the Israelites and handmaids and the best young men are foretold to be taken and placed in the king's work. Who are the servants of the carnal but those who, by the example of the wicked, have been so depraved by long custom that they seem to have perpetually submitted the necks of their minds under the yoke of most wicked imitation? Their servants therefore are taken when, by the study of elect preachers, those also desert sins who seemed vehemently subjected to the reprobate imitation of the carnal. Who also are called the best young men.

Juvenes quidem sunt, quia in malo fortes; optimi etiam dicuntur, quia caeteris peccatoribus nequiores sunt. Quibus nimirum per prophetam dicitur: Vae qui potentes estis ad bibendum vinum, et viri fortes ad miscendam ebrietatem (Isai. V, 22). Vinum denique bibunt, qui deliberatione mentis, fervorem concupiscentiae praecipitanter excipiunt, et ebrietatem miscent; quia dum inflammantur concupiscentiarum ardoribus, ad vias rectitudinis, perdita ratione, redire nesciunt. Potentes vero et fortes tam ad bibendum, quam ad miscendam ebrietatem sunt, ut pro ferventi proposito mali velut optimi servi esse doceantur. Hos optimos juvenes item divinitus sermo demonstrat, cum diaboli aviditatem exponit, dicens: Esca ejus electa (Habac. I, 16). Nam antiquus hostis in eorum nequitia valde reficitur, qui nequissimis nequiores sunt.

13. Ancillarum vero nomine illa nequissima peccatorum conditio designatur, qui per iniquitatem valde sunt pessimi, et aliis praebent exempla pravitatis. Velut enim ancillae servos pariunt, dum magnae iniquitatis non sunt solum operariae, sed etiam matres. Quia vero sanctorum praedicatione tales etiam convertuntur, qui magna postmodum omnipotenti Deo servitia impendunt, apte servi et ancillae dicuntur auferri, et in opere regis poni. Annon tunc ancillam rex regum tulit, quando de illa magna peccatrice dixit: Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum (Luc. VII, 47)? Et hanc in opere suo posuit, quando in castellum intravit, et eum illa in domo sua recepit (Luc. X, 38). Hanc etiam in opere suo posuit; quia resurgens a mortuis, ei praedicationem suae resurrectionis injunxit (Marc. XVI, 7). Servum quoque tulit, quando a telonei lucro Matthaeum ad se sequendum vocavit. In opere suo hunc etiam posuit, quia ei in domo sua convivium praebuit, et Aethiopiae praedicatorem, conversi orbis Evangelistam fecit (Matth IX, 9; Marc I, 14; Luc V, 27). Quia ergo praedicatorum ministerio hi etiam ad Dominum redeunt, de quorum salute humana cogitatio desperare poterat, bene servi et ancillae et optimi juvenes in regis opere ponendi describuntur.

14. Possunt servorum et ancillarum nomine, motus cordis et affectiones intelligi. Nam quando nobis reproba suggerunt, servi sunt: quando affectiones mentis pravorum motuum suggestionibus substerni appetunt, ancillae. Tunc quidem necesse est, ut per rigorem propositi utrisque dominemur. Servos nostros et ancillas praedicatores tollunt, cum motus cordium nostrorum, et affectiones instruunt, qualiter ad Dei servitium dirigantur. In opere regis ponunt, quando jam idem Dei omnipotentis servitium, quod eorum magisterio didicimus, exercemus.

They are young men indeed because they are strong in evil; they are also called best because they are more wicked than other sinners. To whom indeed it is said by the prophet: Woe to you that are mighty to drink wine, and stout men at drunkenness (Isai. 5:22). Finally, they drink wine who, by the deliberation of the mind, precipitately receive the fervor of concupiscence and mix drunkenness; because while they are inflamed with the ardors of concupiscences, having lost reason, they know not how to return to the ways of rectitude. But they are mighty and strong both to drink and to mix drunkenness, so that for the fervent purpose of evil they are taught to be as it were the best servants. This divine word likewise demonstrates these best young men when it explains the greed of the devil, saying: His meat is elect (Habac. 1:16). For the ancient enemy is greatly refreshed in the wickedness of those who are more wicked than the most wicked.

13. But by the name of handmaids is designated that most wicked condition of sinners who are very bad through iniquity and provide examples of depravity to others. For as handmaids they bring forth servants, while they are not only workers of great iniquity but also mothers. But because by the preaching of the saints such as these are also converted, who afterward bestow great services upon almighty God, rightly servants and handmaids are said to be taken away and placed in the work of the king. Did not the King of kings then take a handmaid when he said of that great sinner: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much (Luke 7:47)? And he placed her in his work when he entered into a castle and she received him into her house (Luke 10:38). He also placed her in his work because, rising from the dead, he enjoined upon her the preaching of his resurrection (Mark 16:7). He also took a servant when he called Matthew from the profit of the tax office to follow him. In his work he also placed him, because he provided him a feast in his house and made him a preacher of Ethiopia, an Evangelist of the converted world (Matt 9:9; Mark 1:14; Luke 5:27). Because therefore by the ministry of preachers these also return to the Lord, concerning whose salvation human thought could have despaired, rightly servants and handmaids and the best young men are described as to be placed in the king's work.

14. By the name of servants and handmaids, the movements of the heart and the affections can be understood. For when they suggest to us reprobate things, they are servants; when the affections of the mind desire to be subjected to the suggestions of depraved movements, they are handmaids. Then indeed it is necessary that we dominate both by the rigor of our purpose. Preachers take away our servants and handmaids when they instruct the movements of our hearts and our affections how they may be directed to the service of God. They place them in the king's work when we now exercise the same service of almighty God which we have learned by their magistery.

Quare et in asinis quid aptius, quam lascivi motus animae figurantur? In opere autem regis ponuntur, quando illa mens, quae pravis cogitationibus moveri ad lasciviam solebat, praedicatione doctoris proficit, et affectus suos in appetitu imitandae castitatis ponit. Possunt servorum et ancillarum et asinorum nomine designari, qui saecularibus hominibus corporalia obsequia fortiter impendunt. Sed in opere regis ponuntur; quia conversi ad Dei omnipotentis servitium, spiritualia tanto devotius pro aeterna retributione tolerant, quanto clarius agnoscunt, quia magna sine fructu tolerabant. Greges etiam rex addecimare dicitur: quia quisquis omnipotenti Deo placere appetit, oportet, ut mundus sit per innocentiam, et studio boni operis intentus. Per illud quidem arbor est bona, per istud etiam fructus facit. Quia vero multis utimur, ut servare innocentiam, et bona opera exhibere valeamus, ipsae cogitationum innocentium turbae greges nostri sunt. Quid ergo est, quod addecimantur, nisi quia cogitationum subtilitas facile non videtur? Nam saepe bona nos cogitare putamus, quae subtiliter discussa, bona non sunt. Addecimari ergo greges debent, ut illud solum regii juris sit, quod denario numero continetur. Quod in nobis tunc bene agitur, cum praedicatorum nostrorum magisterio discimus, perfecti esse non solum exhibitione operis, sed etiam in exquisitione cogitationis. Ad extremum vero dicitur: (Vers. 17.) Vosque eritis ei servi.

15. Ut videlicet sic ejus juri se subditos sciant, ut ejus mandata praeterire non audeant. Hanc profecto regiam dominationem volebat Dominus statuere, cum dicebat: Quodcunque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum in caelis; et quodcunque solveris super terram, erit solutum in caelis (Matth. XVI, 19). Hanc etiam potestatem exigebat a subditis, qui dicebat: Si quis evangelizaverit vobis aliud, quam ego evangelizavi vobis, anathema sit (Gal. I, 8). Hinc item Dominus discipulos mittens in praedicationem, dicit: Qui vos audit, me audit; et qui vos spernit, me spernit (Luc. X, 16). Hinc de Judaeae praedicatoribus eisdem discipulis Dominus dicit: Quaecunque dixerint vobis, facite (Matth. XXIII, 3). Servi ergo regum nostrorum sumus, quando sic praelatorum nostrorum imperio subdimur, ut praeter eorum auctoritatem agere nulla praesumamus. Quia ergo eis praesunt, qui in virtute obedientiae suas virtutes roborant, in fine regii juris dicitur: Vosque eritis ei servi: ut fideles subditi, tunc etiam se subditos praedicatorum praecepto debere esse cognoscant, quando per virtutum profectum, ad perfectionis culmina perducuntur. Quod etiam eisdem verbis ipsa Veritas discipulos edocens, ait: Cum feceritis haec omnia, dicite: Servi inutiles sumus (Luc. XVII, 10).

Wherefore also in donkeys what is more aptly figured than the lascivious movements of the soul? But they are placed in the king's work when that mind, which used to be moved to lasciviousness by depraved thoughts, profits by the preaching of the doctor and places its affections in the desire of imitating chastity. They can be designated by the name of servants and handmaids and donkeys who strongly bestow corporal obsequies upon secular men. But they are placed in the king's work because, converted to the service of almighty God, they tolerate spiritual things the more devoutly for the sake of eternal retribution as they more clearly recognize that they were tolerating great things without fruit. The king is also said to tithe the flocks: because whoever desires to please almighty God must be clean through innocence and intent upon the study of a good work. Through the former indeed the tree is good, and through the latter it also bears fruit. But because we employ many things so that we may be able to keep innocence and exhibit good works, the very crowds of innocent thoughts are our flocks. What then is it that they are tithed, but because the subtlety of thoughts is not easily seen? For often we think we think good things which, subtly discussed, are not good. The flocks therefore ought to be tithed, so that only that may be of the king's right which is contained in the denary number. Which is then well done in us when by the magistery of our preachers we learn to be perfect not only in the exhibition of work but also in the searching out of thought. But at the last it is said: (Verse 17.) And you shall be his servants.

15. That they may know themselves subject to his right in such a way, namely, that they may not dare to pass over his mandates. The Lord indeed wished to establish this royal domination when he said: 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 (Matt. 16:19). He also required this power from subjects who said: If any one preach to you a gospel, besides that which I have preached to you, let him be anathema (Gal. 1:8). Hence likewise the Lord, sending the disciples into preaching, says: He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me (Luke 10:16). Hence concerning the preachers of Judea the Lord says to the same disciples: Whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do (Matt. 23:3). We are therefore servants of our kings when we are so subjected to the command of our prelates that we presume to do nothing besides their authority. Because therefore they preside over those who strengthen their virtues in the virtue of obedience, at the end of the royal right it is said: And you shall be his servants: so that faithful subjects may then also recognize that they ought to be subject to the precept of preachers when, through the progress of virtues, they are led to the summits of perfection. Which also the Truth itself, teaching the disciples in the same words, says: When you shall have done all these things... say: We are unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10).

Verumtamen, quia carnalibus ista loquebatur, adjunxit, dicens (Vers. 18.) Et clamabitis in die illa a facie regis, et non exaudiet vos Dominus in die illa, quia petistis vobis regem.

16. Qui regem petierant, a facie regis clamant, quando ii, qui agere spiritualem vitam sub bono rectore voverant, ejusdem vitae relinquere labores tentant. Facie quidem omnes agnoscuntur. Facies ergo regis est cognita conversatio, et eruditio boni praedicatoris. Qui nimirum, quia dura et aspera pro aeterna vita agunt, et dura praecipiunt, eorum vitam atque doctrinam carnales subditi non imitari, sed fugere conantur. Faciem quippe regis tunc vident qui regem petierant, cujus aspectum ignorabant; quia in praelato suo coelestis itineris districtio, quam sit laboriosa, considerant, quam velut rem facilem, ante quam cognoscerent, appetebant. Tunc a facie regis clamant, qui regem petierunt; quia dum carnalis vitae deserere morem nolunt, ejus quem sibi praeesse voluerunt, optimi pastoris sui laudabilem imitationem effugere nituntur. Et quia caeco corde lucem videre non possunt, ad Dominum clamant, id est, ut evadere spirituale jugum Dei possint, Dominum obsecrant. Sed non exaudit eos Dominus in die illa. Quae est dies illa, qua reprobi subjecti Dominum obsecrant, nisi intentio vanae prosperitatis? Non exaudiuntur; quia profecto per divinam gratiam nunquam fit, ut bonis rectoribus semel promissa subjectio, libera egredi ad mundi delectationes possit. Quare et causam subjunxit, dicens: (Vers. 18.) Quia petistis vobis regem.

17. Quasi dicat: Pastoribus spiritalibus promissa subjectio indissolubilis est. Facile quidem vobis regem petitis: sed quia dignitas regia gravis est, eorum potestatem effugere facile non potestis. Hoc quia ad historiam dicimus, notandum esse censemus, quia omnipotens Deus, dum jus regis praedicit, religiosis praepositis formam institutionis impendit. Quare? Ut qui arctissimam conversationis viam imperant, noviter accedentibus facile aditum non impendant. Quare et ejusdem arctissimae vitae magister optimus, summae veritatis discipulus eruditus praecipit, dicens: Probate spiritus, si ex Deo sint (I Joan. IV, 1). Et item: Nuntientur ei dura et aspera, per quae itur ad Deum, ut sciat ad quod intrat. Praedicat ergo Dominus jus regis, dicat, sciat omnia, quales carnales futuri sunt in ejus observatione: et ut ad vitam virtutis debiles facile non accedant, fortes praepositi facile debiles nequaquam accipiant. Celeritas quidem conversionis plerumque oritur ex praecipitatione consilii, non ex incremento devotionis.

Nevertheless, because he was speaking these things to carnal people, he added, saying: (Verse 18.) And you shall cry out in that day from the face of your king... and the Lord will not hear you in that day, because you have desired unto yourselves a king.

16. Those who had asked for a king cry out from the face of the king when those who had vowed to lead a spiritual life under a good ruler attempt to leave the labors of the same life. By the face indeed all are recognized. The face of the king, therefore, is the known conversation and erudition of a good preacher. Who indeed, because they lead a hard and rough life for eternal life and command hard things, carnal subjects endeavor not to imitate their life and doctrine, but to flee. Indeed, those who had asked for a king then see the face of the king whose appearance they were ignorant of; because they consider in their prelate how laborious is the restriction of the heavenly journey, which they were desiring as if an easy thing before they knew it. Then those who asked for a king cry out from the face of the king; because while they do not wish to desert the custom of a carnal life, they strive to escape the laudable imitation of their best pastor whom they wished to preside over them. And because with a blind heart they cannot see the light, they cry to the Lord, that is, they beseech the Lord that they may be able to escape the spiritual yoke of God. But the Lord does not hear them in that day. What is that day in which reprobate subjects beseech the Lord, but the intention of vain prosperity? They are not heard because indeed, by divine grace, it never happens that a subjection once promised to good rulers can go out free to the delights of the world. Wherefore also he added the cause, saying: (Verse 18.) Because you have desired unto yourselves a king.

17. As if he were to say: The subjection promised to spiritual pastors is indissoluble. You ask for a king for yourselves easily indeed; but because the royal dignity is heavy, you cannot easily escape their power. Because we say this regarding the history, we think it must be noted that almighty God, while he foretells the right of the king, bestows a form of institution upon religious superiors. Why? So that they who command the narrowest way of conversation may not easily grant entrance to those newly approaching. Wherefore also the best master of the same narrowest life, the learned disciple of the supreme truth, commands, saying: Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits if they be of God (1 John 4:1). And likewise: Let the hard and rough things be announced to him, through which one goes to God, so that he may know to what he enters. The Lord therefore preaches the right of the king, let him say, let him know all things, what kind the carnal are to be in his observation; and so that the weak may not easily approach the life of virtue, let strong superiors by no means easily receive the weak. Indeed, the speed of conversion mostly arises from the precipitation of counsel, not from the increase of devotion.

Nam cum infirmi fortia promittunt, non est expertum robur animi, sed confusio discretionis. Quos omnes sub unius denotatione sapiens admonet, qui dicit: Super te onus ne levaveris. Qui ergo in regularis vitae forti proposito aliis praesunt, tanto discretius debent ad eamdem vitam conversos recipere, quanto et utilius praenoscendum est, accedentium petitio ex virtute sit animi, an ex praecipitatione voluntatis. Nam qui in suis actibus faciles sunt, solent instanter vitae spiritalis asperitatem appetere, ut videantur magna animi virtute, quod expetunt, desiderare.

(Vers. 19, 20.) Noluit autem populus audire vocem Samuelis, et dixerunt: Nequaquam, sed rex erit super nos, et erimus nos quoque sicut omnes gentes, et judicabit nos rex noster, et egredietur ante nos, et pugnabit bella nostra pro nobis. Hoc quia superius late expositum est, in eorum exquisitione otiose retinemur. Sequitur: (Vers. 21.) Et audivit Samuel omnia verba populi, et locutus est ea in auribus Domini.

18. Audire vocem populi, est quae sanctae conversationis habitum petentes, exterius dicant agnoscere. Nam velut solam accedentium vocem audimus, cum scimus quae exterius asserunt: sed quales inter sponsionis assertiones futuri sint, non videmus. Loqui ergo ea in auribus Domini debemus, ut ipse sponsionis verba suscipiat: qui dum verba audit, corda discutit, et ex textu profectionis, usuras exquirit robusti operis. Hoc namque novitiorum nostrorum mentes audiant, et expavescant: quia videlicet quod nobis dicunt, in auribus Domini loquimur. Nam quod coram nobis promittunt, Deo offerimus, ut ipse jam de manibus nostris teneat, quod exquirat. Quae profecto libertas rectoris, est obligatio subditi: quia tanto districtiori sententiae subditur, quanto apertius scire potest: quia de eo, quod respondet, omnipotenti Deo reddere rationem debet. Cum ergo ea quae novitii promittunt, Deo offerimus, quasi chirographum, quod nobis faciunt, illi damus. Et quia latenter hoc agitur, in auribus Domini Samuel ea, quae populus dixerat, locutus fuisse perhibetur. In auribus quippe amicorum loquimur, quando ea quae dicimus, extraneis celamus. Sequitur: (Vers. 21.) Dixit autem Dominus ad Samuelem: Audi vocem eorum, et constitue super eos regem.

19. Superius propheta futura prospiciens, ait: Clamabitis ad Dominum, et non exaudiet, quia petistis vobis regem. Nunc vero Dominus dicit: Audi vocem eorum, et constitue super eos regem (I Reg. VIII, 18). Quid per hoc nobis ostenditur, nisi quod saepe bonis rectoribus sanctae Ecclesiae divinitus inspiratur, ut coelestis vitae studiis eos subdant, qui sub disciplina ejusdem professionis postea devoti non sunt?

For when the infirm promise strong things, it is not an experienced strength of mind, but a confusion of discretion. All of whom the wise man admonishes under one denotation, who says: Lift not up a burden above thee. They therefore who preside over others in the strong purpose of a regular life ought to receive those converted to the same life the more discreetly, as it is also the more useful to foreknow whether the petition of those approaching be from the virtue of the mind or from the precipitation of the will. For they who are easy in their acts are wont instantly to desire the asperity of the spiritual life, so that they may seem to desire with great virtue of mind what they seek.

(Verses 19, 20.) But the people would not hear the voice of Samuel, and they said: Nay: but there shall be a king over us, and we also will be like all nations: and our king shall judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles for us. Because this has been widely explained above, we are idly detained in its searching. It follows: (Verse 21.) And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and spoke them in the ears of the Lord.

To hear the voice of the people is to recognize what those seeking the habit of holy conversation say outwardly. For we hear as it were only the voice of those approaching when we know what they assert outwardly; but what they are to be among the assertions of their promise, we do not see. We ought therefore to speak them in the ears of the Lord, so that he himself may receive the words of the promise; who, while he hears the words, discusses the hearts, and from the context of progress, searches out the usuries of a robust work. For let the minds of our novices hear this and be terrified: because namely what they say to us, we speak in the ears of the Lord. For what they promise before us, we offer to God, so that he may now hold from our hands what he may search out. Which liberty of the ruler is indeed the obligation of the subject; because he is subjected to the more rigorous sentence the more clearly he can know that concerning that which he answers, he must render an account to almighty God. When therefore we offer to God those things which novices promise, we give him as it were the chirograph which they make to us. And because this is done secretly, Samuel is said to have spoken in the ears of the Lord those things which the people had said. Indeed we speak in the ears of friends when we conceal what we say from strangers. It follows: (Verse 21.) And the Lord said to Samuel: Hearken to their voice, and make them a king.

19. Above, the prophet, looking forward to future things, says: You shall cry out to the Lord, and he will not hear you, because you have desired unto yourselves a king. But now the Lord says: Hearken to their voice, and make them a king (1 Sam. 8:18, 22). What is shown to us by this, but that it is often divinely inspired to good rulers of Holy Church that they should subject those to the studies of the heavenly life who afterward are not devoted under the discipline of the same profession?

Qui profecto postea a facie regis clamaturi sunt, et tamen divino praecepto regem recipiunt: quia divinitus inspirantur ad servitutem Dei devote accedere, quos in augmento mercedis aeternae pastorum sollicitudo magni laboris, sub ejusdem servitutis vinculo debeat cohibere. Ad Dominum nempe clamare dicuntur, a facie regis sui: sed quid a Domino missus propheta respondeat, ipsi reges audiant, ut quid agere debeant, inter ipsos clamores sciant. Non, inquit, exaudiet vos. Ergo nec ipsi exaudire debent. Qui enim in sanctis monasteriis sunt tepidi, medendi sunt, quasi aegri; non sunt ejiciendi, ut mortui. Nam si a Domino missi sunt, inter spiritualium unguentorum fomenta resipiscent. Dicat ergo Dominus: Constitue super eos regem: quia profecto nonnulli ad servitutem Dei veniunt devoti, qui et refrigescere permittuntur, sed pastorum studio, quorum se praecepto subdiderant divina inspiratione, ad amorem coelestis patriae recalescunt.

Sed jam qualis pastor ad haec sit idoneus, exponit, dicens: (I Reg. IX, 1, 2.) Erat vir de Benjamin, nomine Cis, filius Abiel, filii Seror, filii Bechorath, filii Aphia, filii viri Jemini fortis robore. Et erat illi filius vocabulo Saul, electus et bonus, et non erat vir de Israel melior illo, ab humero et sursum eminebat super omnem populum.

20. Quid est, quod cum rex constituendus ostenditur, patrum nomina praedicantur: nisi quia indigne assumitur ad principatum sanctae Ecclesiae, qui sanctorum Patrum in moribus nobilitatem non tenet? Sex autem patrum nomina assignantur, ut sanctae conversationis eorum in bona actione perfectio designetur. Sex enim diebus mundus conditus est, sex aetatibus consummatur. Sex ergo sunt patres, qui in genealogiae ordine electorum pastorum sanctae Ecclesiae nominantur: quia nimirum illorum sunt per imitationem filii, qui in forma sequentium culmen obtinent perfectionis. Pater vero regis, Cis, id est durus dicitur: quia profecto ii, quorum sancti praedicatores imitatores sunt, vita et zelo remissi non sunt. Duri namque sunt, quia peccatoribus mollia non loquuntur: duri etiam sunt, quia ut alios bene corrigant, dura quae illis praecipiunt, in sua conversatione demonstrant. Durus namque videbatur, qui Judaeos arguebat, dicens: Genimina viperarum, quis ostendit vobis effugere a ventura ira? Facite dignos fructus poenitentiae (Matth. III, 7). Sed qui aliis durus erat, sibi remissus non erat.

Who indeed are afterward to cry out from the face of the king, and yet by divine precept they receive a king: because they are divinely inspired to approach the service of God devotedly, whom the solicitude of pastors, with great labor, ought to restrain under the bond of the same service for the increase of the eternal reward. They are said to cry out to the Lord from the face of their king: but let the kings themselves hear what the prophet sent from the Lord answers, so that they may know what they ought to do among those cries. He will not, he says, hear you. Therefore neither ought they themselves to hear. For those who are lukewarm in holy monasteries are to be healed as if sick; they are not to be cast out as if dead. For if they are sent from the Lord, they will recover among the kindlings of spiritual ointments. Let the Lord therefore say: Make them a king: because indeed some come devotedly to the service of God who are also permitted to grow cold, but by the study of the pastors, to whose precept they had subjected themselves by divine inspiration, they grow warm again to the love of the heavenly country.

But now he explains what kind of pastor is suitable for these things, saying: (1 Sam. 9:1, 2.) There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of a man of Jemini, valiant in strength. And he had a son whose name was Saul, a chosen and as yet goodly man: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he appeared above all the people.

20. Why is it that when the king to be appointed is shown, the names of the fathers are proclaimed: unless because he is unworthily assumed to the primacy of Holy Church who does not hold the nobility of the holy Fathers in his morals? But six names of fathers are assigned, so that the perfection of their holy conversation in good action may be designated. For in six days the world was founded, and in six ages it is consumed. There are therefore six fathers who are named in the genealogical order of the elect pastors of Holy Church: because indeed they are sons by imitation of those who obtain the summit of perfection in the form of those following. But the father of the king, Kish, is called hard: because indeed those whose imitators holy preachers are, are not remiss in life and zeal. For they are hard, because they do not speak soft things to sinners: they are also hard, because so that they may correctly amend others, they demonstrate in their own conversation the hard things which they command to them. For he appeared hard who rebuked the Jews, saying: Ye offspring of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of penance (Matt. 3:7). But he who was hard to others was not remiss to himself.

Nam ut poenitentiae duritiam, quam praedicabat, Evangelista eum tenere ostenderet, ait: Habebat vestimentum de pilis camelorum, et zona pellicea cinctus lumbis: esca autem ejus locustae et mel sylvestre (Marc. I, 6). Ad Ezechiel quoque dicitur: Ecce dedi frontem tuam duriorem frontibus eorum, ut adamantem et silicem dedi faciem tuam (Ezec. III, 8). Sed qui tam durus contra duros in malo veniebat, ut dura, quae ventura erant, locuturus ostenderet, diebus septem in medio eorum, antequam loqueretur, flebat. Sic enim dicit: Et sedi ubi illi sedebant, et mansi septem dies moerens in medio eorum. Quia ergo sancti praedicatores, obstinatis peccatoribus, lenes et mansueti non sunt, et quod asperum praedicant operantur, duri filius Saul recte perhibetur. Illos enim imitari electus praedicator debet, qui et acuta praedicant, et quae loquuntur, observant. Unde et de eodem regis patre subjungitur: Fortis robore. Sunt nonnulli intra sanctam Ecclesiam, qui elatione sunt, et arrogantia fortes. Nam magna agunt; sed cum laudare homines ea quae agunt, desinunt, eadem magna ipsi agere praetermittunt. Fortis ergo robore est, qui virtutem, quam monstrat in opere bono, habet a Spiritu sancto. De quo nimirum robore superius Anna in cantico vaticinata est, dicens: Infirmi accincti sunt robore. De hoc Dominus discipulis repromittit, dicens: Sedete in civitate, donec induamini virtute ex alto (Luc. XXIV, 49). In hoc robore fortiter gradiebatur ille de quo scriptum est: Regressus est Jesus in virtute spiritus in Galilaeam (Luc. IV, 14). Qui ergo durus dicitur, fortis robore perhibetur: quia electi viri, dum summa praedicant, ingentia demonstrant: et omne quod altum praecipiunt, omneque quod magnum agunt, in virtute sancti Spiritus operantur. De quo digne subjungitur: Et erat ei filius Saul nomine, electus et bonus. Nam qui talium imitator est, utilis non solum est ad laborem ministerii, sed aptus ad fructum haereditatis. Electus quippe etiam Judas ad ministerium fuit: sed quia bonus non fuit, jus amisit successionis. Qui ergo in Saul adhuc electo et bono significantur, nisi sanctorum Patrum electi imitatores, qui per doctrinam aliis utiles sunt, et per conversationem sibi: qui sic alios possunt regere, ut sibimetipsis nequaquam desinant providere?

For so that the Evangelist might show him to hold the hardness of penance which he preached, he says: He had his garment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and his meat was locusts and wild honey (Mark 1:6). To Ezekiel also it is said: Behold I have made thy face harder than their faces, and thy forehead harder than their foreheads: I have made thy face like an adamant and like flint (Ezek. 3:8). But he who came so hard against those hard in evil, so that he might show by speaking the hard things which were to come, for seven days in the midst of them, before he spoke, he wept. For thus he says: And I sat where they sat, and remained there seven days mourning in the midst of them. Because therefore holy preachers are not gentle and meek to obstinate sinners, and they perform what they preach as rough, Saul is rightly said to be the son of a hard man. For an elect preacher ought to imitate those who both preach sharp things and observe what they speak. Whence also concerning the same father of the king it is added: Valiant in strength. There are some within Holy Church who are strong by elation and arrogance. For they do great things; but when men cease to praise the things which they do, they themselves omit to do those same great things. He therefore is valiant in strength who has from the Holy Spirit the virtue which he shows in a good work. Concerning which strength indeed Anna vaticinated above in her song, saying: The weak are girt with strength. Concerning this the Lord promises again to the disciples, saying: Stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). In this strength he walked strongly of whom it is written: And Jesus returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee (Luke 4:14). He therefore who is called hard is asserted to be valiant in strength: because elect men, while they preach the highest things, demonstrate immense things: and everything high that they command, and everything great that they do, they work in the power of the Holy Spirit. Concerning whom it is worthily added: And he had a son whose name was Saul, chosen and good. For he who is an imitator of such is not only useful for the labor of ministry, but apt for the fruit of the inheritance. For indeed even Judas was chosen for ministry: but because he was not good, he lost the right of succession. Who therefore are signified in Saul as yet chosen and good, but the elect imitators of the holy Fathers, who are useful to others through doctrine and to themselves through conversation: who can so rule others that they by no means cease to provide for themselves?

Electi namque et boni sunt, quia sic lucra aliorum expetunt, ut sui nulla damna patiantur. Pleni quippe in seipsis sunt, effluentes aliis, et de abundantia sui sic aliis tribuunt, ut suae plenitudinis aliquid non amittant. Habent quae aliis praebeant, sed habentes quae sibi possint sufficere, nulli praebent. Sic aliis praebere oleum nituntur, ut a se fomenta luminis non tollantur: ut dum illuminant alios, se non extinguant. Bene ergo electus et bonus dicitur: quia certe, qui sanctae Ecclesiae regimen suscipit, dives esse debet, et ornatus donorum spiritalium et plenitudine meritorum. Et quia de communi ordine, qui praecellant, eligendi sunt, sequitur: Et non erat de filiis Israel melior illo. Cujus profecto excellentia commendatur, cum subditur: Ab humero, et sursum eminebat super omnem populum. Hac quippe specie corporis in persona ordinandi antistitis, praesignantur acta virtutis. Quid enim in humero nisi fortitudo designatur? Sed qui ab humero, et sursum super omnem populum eminebat, tam sublimis staturae erat, ut qui altior esset in populo, capite usque ad humerum regis pertingeret: futurus vero rex collo et capite altitudinem omnium superaret. Capita vero quae sunt, nisi subjectae plebis mentes? Quae cum valde tenduntur, usque ad humerum ordinandi regis pertingunt: quia is qui ad regendum culmen sanctae Ecclesiae quaeritur, tantae debet esse perfectionis, ut quidquid populus de bono opere sibi vult proponere, in sua conversatione debeat demonstrare. Quasi enim regis humerum capita plebis tangunt, quando eorum corda, quidquid virtutis in suo pastore quaerunt, inveniunt. Sed rex praecellit collo, praecellit et capite. Quid enim in collo, nisi locutio: quid in capite, nisi mentis contemplatio designatur? Capite ergo et collo subditorum omnium capita excellit, si contemplationis altitudine mirabilis est, et sublimitate doctrinae. Quasi enim capite sublimis est, cum illa de secretis coelestibus contemplatur, quae alii contemplari non possunt. Collum quoque super alios habet, qui altitudine locutionis suae mirabilis, aequandus ab aliis non est. Quasi enim caput in sublime extulerat, qui dicebat: Veniam ad visiones et revelationes Domini. Scio hujusmodi hominem sive in corpore, sive extra corpus, nescio, Deus scit (II Cor. XII, 1, 2).

For they are elect and good because they so seek the gains of others that they suffer no losses of their own. For they are full in themselves, flowing out to others, and from their abundance they so bestow upon others that they do not lose anything of their own fullness. They have what they may offer to others, but having what may suffice for themselves, they offer to no one. They so strive to offer oil to others that the kindlings of light are not taken from themselves: so that while they illuminate others, they do not extinguish themselves. Rightly therefore is he called chosen and good: because certainly he who undertakes the government of Holy Church ought to be rich, both adorned with spiritual gifts and with the fullness of merits. And because from the common order those who excel are to be chosen, it follows: And there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he. Whose excellence is indeed commended when it is added: From his shoulders and upward he appeared above all the people. By this species of the body indeed, in the person of the prelate to be ordained, the acts of virtue are pre-signified. For what is designated in the shoulder but fortitude? But he who appeared above all the people from the shoulder and upward was of such sublime stature that he who was taller among the people would reach with his head only to the shoulder of the king: but the future king would surpass the height of all by his neck and head. But what are the heads but the minds of the subject people? Which when they are greatly stretched out, reach up to the shoulder of the king to be ordained: because he who is sought for the summit of ruling Holy Church ought to be of such perfection that whatever the people wish to propose to themselves of a good work, he ought to demonstrate in his conversation. For the heads of the people touch the king's shoulder as it were when their hearts find whatever of virtue they seek in their pastor. But the king excels by the neck, he excels also by the head. For what is designated in the neck but speech: what in the head but the contemplation of the mind? By head and neck therefore he exceeds the heads of all subjects, if he is wonderful by the height of contemplation and by the sublimity of doctrine. For he is as it were sublime in head when he contemplates those things of heavenly secrets which others cannot contemplate. He also has a neck above others who, wonderful by the height of his speech, is not to be equaled by others. For he had as it were lifted up his head on high who said: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth) (2 Cor. 12:1, 2).

Sed velut electus et bonus rex, ut collum etiam super capita omnia se tenere ostenderet, ait: Audivit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui (Ibid., 4). Quid vero quasi eminens collum ejus miramur in iis, quae tacuit? Adaequemus eum, si possumus, in iis quae dixit. De collo apostoli Pauli processerunt epistolae ejus, et cum ab illo tempore coeperint eas viri sapientes exponere, adhuc conantur ea quae dixit melius scire. Cumque quotidie in ejus eruditione proficiunt, quasi ad summitatem colli innitentes, pertingere nequaquam possunt. Emineat ergo rex collo, emineat capite, sit humero sublimis; ut conversatione perfectus sit, eloquio mirabilis, prae caeteris arduus in arce contemplationis. Sed, qui conversatione magnus est, eloquio praecipuus, prae omnibus contemplatione suspensus, priusquam perveniat ad culmen regiminis, signa exterius habere debet fraternae charitatis: ut videlicet sic proximorum sollicitudinem habeat, ut ad aeternam vitam lucra animarum quaerat. Bene ergo in eorum typo subjungitur:

(Vers. 3, 4.) Perierant autem asinae Cis, patris Saul: et dixit Cis ad Saul filium suum: Tolle tecum unum de pueris, et surgens vade, et quaere asinas. Qui cum transissent per montem Ephraim, et per terram Salisa, et non invenissent, transierunt etiam per terram Salim, et non erant, et per terram Jemini, et minime reperere.

21. Cis, qui durus dicitur, non solum electos ejus, sed ipsum etiam Redemptorem significat. Nemo enim sibi eo durior exstitit. Hujus namque duritiae asperitatem propheta insinuans, ait: Vere languores nostros ipse tulit, et dolores nostros ipse portavit (Isa. LIII, 4). Mori enim mortalibus non est pati, passibiles damnatae naturae. Ille ergo sibi durus vehementer exstitit, qui in se unde pateretur, non habuit: sed ut nos patiendo liberaret, in quo sibi durus esset, et pati posset dignanter assumpsit. Asinae Cis sunt animae peccatrices (I Reg. X). Quia etiam in fide Redemptoris regeneratae sunt, durae esse dicuntur: perditae autem asinae, quia per immunditiam ab ejus sunt servitio separatae. Hinc est enim, quod ad passionem tendens, absolutae asinae, et pullo insedit (Matth. XXI, 7); ut patenter ostenderet, quia ad hoc pati venerat, ut peccatoribus subveniret. Pereuntes namque asinas se quaerere fatebatur, cum dicebat: Venit filius hominis quaerere, et salvum facere quod perierat (Luc. XIX, 10). Has asinas et per semetipsum quaesivit, et adhuc praedicatores ad quaerendum mittit.

But as a chosen and good king, so that he might show himself also to hold a neck above all heads, he said: He heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter (Ibid., 4). But why do we wonder as it were at his eminent neck in those things which he kept silent? Let us equal him, if we can, in those things which he said. From the neck of the apostle Paul proceeded his epistles, and although from that time wise men have begun to explain them, they still strive to know better the things which he said. And while they daily profit in his erudition, leaning as it were toward the summit of the neck, they can by no means reach it. Let the king therefore excel in neck, excel in head, let him be sublime in shoulder; so that he may be perfect in conversation, wonderful in eloquence, arduously above others in the citadel of contemplation. But he who is great in conversation, principal in eloquence, suspended in contemplation above all, before he arrives at the summit of government, ought to have signs of fraternal charity outwardly: so that namely he may have such solicitude for neighbors that he may seek the gains of souls for eternal life. Rightly therefore in their type it is added:

(Verses 3, 4.) Now the she-asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost: and Kish said to Saul his son: Take one of the servants with thee, and arise, go, and seek the she-asses. And when they had passed through mount Ephraim, and through the land of Shalisha, and had not found them, they passed also through the land of Shaalim, and they were not there: and through the land of Jemini, and found them not.

21. Kish, who is called hard, signifies not only his elect, but also the Redeemer himself. For no one stood more hard to himself than he. For the prophet, insinuating the asperity of this hardness, says: Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows (Isa. 53:4). For to die is not to suffer for mortals, who are passible of a damned nature. He therefore stood vehemently hard to himself, who had not in himself that from which he might suffer; but that he might deliver us by suffering, he worthily assumed that in which he might be hard to himself and be able to suffer. The she-asses of Kish are sinful souls (1 Sam. 10). Because they have also been regenerated in the faith of the Redeemer, they are called hard; but lost she-asses, because through uncleanness they have been separated from his service. For hence it is that, tending to his passion, he sat upon a freed she-ass and a colt (Matt. 21:7), so that he might patently show that he had come to suffer for this, that he might succor sinners. For he was confessing that he sought the perishing she-asses when he said: The son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). These she-asses he both sought through himself, and still sends preachers to seek.

Dicit ergo Cis filio suo, ut asinas quaerat, quando electorum cordibus spirituali inspiratione Redemptor imperat, ut in praedicationis ministerium pergant. In praedicationis autem officio pergentes, quia solum spiritalem sensum secum debent ducere, unum de pueris tollere jubentur. Unum namque puerum tollit, qui dum ad praebendum aliis formam vivendi pergit, in omne quod agit spiritualis est. Unum namque de pueris tulit, de quo praedictum est: Ipse praecedet ante illum in spiritu et virtute Eliae (Luc. I, 17). Unum puerum secum tulerat, qui ait: Non habemus spiritum hujus mundi, sed spiritum qui ex Deo est (I Cor. II, 12). Hinc iterum dicit: Nos sensum Christi habemus (Ibid., 16). Hinc per Ezechielem de sanctis animalibus dicitur: Ubi erat impetus spiritus, illuc gradiebantur (Ezec. I, 12). Quaerens ergo asinas, unum de pueris tollit: quando is, qui noviter animarum lucra quaerere incipit, quae agere putat, omnia spiritaliter agere disponit. Invenire autem asinas, est peccatores in luce sanctitatis conversos aspicere. Nam velut perditae asinae non inveniuntur, quando in peccatorum tenebris, reproba corda se obruunt.

22. Et quia per quinque sensus corporis ad easdem peccatorum tenebras decidunt, quinque regionibus non inveniendae perquiruntur, videlicet monte Ephraim, terra Salisa, et Salim, et viri Gemini, et Zuph. Unusquisque etenim ubi per peccatum projicitur, ibi occultatur; et quasi perditus, ubi sit nescitur, quando justitiae lucem, in qua eum Deus posuit, derelinquit. Hinc est, quod in paradiso post peccatum, primum hominem quaerit, dicens: Adam, ubi es (Gen. III, 9)? Quasi dicat: Quia te in luce qua posui non invenio, demonstra te ubi posuisti. Hinc de mortuo Lazaro exquirit, dicens: Ubi posuistis eum (Joan. XI, 34)? Sed quem quasi perditum quaerebat, ut inveniret progredi imperabat, dicens: Lazare, veni foras. Perditur ergo homo, cum peccat: invenitur, cum peccatum adversum se, jam poenitendo pronuntiat. Quia enim per sacra eloquia peccatori praecipitur: Dic tu prior iniquitates tuas, ut justificeris (Isa. XLIII, 26, sec. LXX): dum ille, qui peccavit, confitendo justificari incipit, in luce jam cernitur, ubi jam positus invenitur.

Saul autem, qui asinas quaerens, non invenit, eruditi quidem praedicatoris personam designat, sed noviter incipientis. Quem profecto omnipotens Deus praedicationis fructum afferre non patitur, ne vilem peccatorum conversionem aestimet, dum leviter convertere eos ad Dominum potest. Differtur ergo conversio, ut conversi diligantur: et eos praedicator tanto amplius amet, quanto clarius videt, quia eos lucrari cito non praevalet.

Kish therefore says to his son that he should seek the she-asses when by spiritual inspiration the Redeemer commands the hearts of the elect that they should go forth into the ministry of preaching. But going forth into the office of preaching, because they ought to lead only the spiritual sense with them, they are commanded to take one of the servants. For he takes one servant who, while he goes forth to provide a form of living to others, is spiritual in all that he does. For he took one of the servants of whom it was foretold: He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias (Luke 1:17). He had taken one servant with him who says: We have received not the spirit of this world, but the spirit that is of God (1 Cor. 2:12). Hence again he says: We have the mind of Christ (Ibid., 16). Hence through Ezekiel it is said of the holy animals: Whither the impulse of the spirit was to go, thither they went (Ezek. 1:12). Seeking therefore the she-asses, he takes one of the servants: when he who newly begins to seek the gains of souls disposes to do all things spiritually which he thinks to do. But to find the she-asses is to behold sinners converted in the light of holiness. For as the lost she-asses they are not found when reprobate hearts bury themselves in the darkness of sins.

22. And because they fall into those same darknesses of sins through the five senses of the body, they are sought through five regions without being found, namely, mount Ephraim, the land of Shalisha, and Shaalim, and of the man of Jemini, and Zuph. For everyone is hidden there where he is cast forth through sin; and as one lost, it is not known where he is, when he leaves the light of justice in which God placed him. Hence it is that in paradise, after sin, He seeks the first man, saying: Adam, where art thou? (Gen. 3:9). As if He should say: Because I find thee not in the light in which I placed thee, show where thou hast placed thyself. Hence He inquires concerning the dead Lazarus, saying: Where have you laid him? (John 11:34). But him whom He was seeking as one lost, He was commanding to go forth that He might find him, saying: Lazarus, come forth. Man therefore is lost when he sins; he is found when he now pronounces the sin against himself by repenting. For because it is commanded to the sinner through the sacred oracles: Tell thou first thy iniquities, that thou mayest be justified (Isa. 43:26, according to the LXX): while he who has sinned begins to be justified by confessing, he is already discerned in the light, where he is already found placed.

But Saul, who seeking the she-asses found them not, designates the person of a learned preacher indeed, but one newly beginning. Whom indeed Almighty God does not allow to bring forth the fruit of preaching, lest he should esteem the conversion of sinners as a vile thing while he can lightly convert them to the Lord. Conversion is therefore deferred so that the converted may be loved; and the preacher may love them so much the more, the more clearly he sees that he does not prevail to gain them quickly.

Sed dum sancti viri de praedicatione sua alios convertere non possunt, de se vehementer timere incipiunt: ne inde omnipotenti Deo displiceant, unde se ei vehementer placere cogitabant: et plerumque agitur, ut sic novorum praedicatorum corda terreantur, ut jam proponant ejusdem praedicationis officium deserere, et Deo per silentium vacare. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 5.) Cum autem venisset in terram Zuph, et non invenisset, dixit Saul ad puerum suum: Veni, revertamur, ne forte dimiserit pater meus asinas, et sollicitus sit pro nobis.

23. Ad patrem reverti deliberat, qui postposita intentione praedicationis, Deo vacare appetit in secreto silentii. Reverti quidem dicitur, qui missus ante perhibetur. Quasi enim coram patre sunt filii, quando electi viri immorantur in secreta contemplatione Redemptoris. Revertuntur itaque, quando a publico sanctae praedicationis veniunt ad rimanda gaudia aeternae claritatis. Sed quia sancti viri nihil agunt inconsulti, Saul de reversione ad patrem puerum consuluit. Tunc namque puerum consulimus, quando intenta mente providemus, ut quod tentamus disponere, a spirituali sensu non debeat differre. Ad patrem quippe reverti disposuerat, qui dicebat: Dixi, custodiam vias meas, ut non delinquam in lingua mea: Posui ori meo custodiam, cum consisteret peccator contra me (Psal. XXXVIII, 1, 2). Adversus praedicatores peccator consistit, quando ad praedicationem eorum, statum suae iniquitatis non deserit. Et quia tunc praedicator ei silere, et Deo vacare proponit, ut ad patrem redeat, obmutescit. Sed quia per silentium voluntatem Dei melius didicit, cor ejus concaluit, et exardescente igne internae meditationis, locutus est. Quod in hoc etiam loco ostenditur, quia consultus puer, consulenti se consilium impendit, dicens: (Vers. 6.) Ecce est vir Dei in civitate hac, vir nobilis, omne quod loquitur absque ambiguitate venit: nunc ergo eamus illuc, si forte indicet nobis de via nostra propter quam venimus.

24. Virum Dei Samuelem dicit, in quo praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae designari jam diximus. Qui vir quidem dicitur, pro reverentia sanctae conversationis, et omne quod loquitur, absque ambiguitate venire perhibetur: quia quidquid minatur de aeternis suppliciis, quidquid de aeterna laetitia promittit justis, ita ut denuntiat, et impii abibunt ad poenam, et electi ad gloriam. Qui etiam in civitate esse perhibetur: quia electus pastor in communi subjectae plebis custodia, semper vigilare cognoscitur. In civitate est pastor, quia cum custodit alios, in se munitus est.

But while holy men are not able to convert others by their preaching, they begin to fear vehemently concerning themselves, lest they should displease Almighty God therein, whence they were thinking they would vehemently please Him; and it is often so done that the hearts of new preachers are so terrified that they already propose to desert the office of that same preaching, and to be at leisure for God through silence. Wherefore also it is added:

(Verse 5.) But when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant: Come, let us return, lest my father forget the she-asses, and be solicitous for us.

23. He deliberates to return to his father, who, having postponed the intention of preaching, desires to be at leisure for God in the secret of silence. He indeed is said to return who is shown to have been sent before. For the sons are as it were in the presence of the father when the elect men dwell in the secret contemplation of the Redeemer. They return therefore when they come from the public of holy preaching to search out the joys of eternal brightness. But because holy men do nothing unadvised, Saul consulted the servant concerning the return to his father. For then we consult the servant when with an intent mind we provide that what we dispose to attempt ought not to differ from the spiritual sense. He had indeed disposed to return to his father who was saying: I said: I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I have set a guard to my mouth, when the sinner stood against me (Psalm 38:1, 2). The sinner stands against preachers when, at their preaching, he does not desert the state of his iniquity. And because the preacher then proposes to be silent to him and to be at leisure for God, so that he may return to his father, he becomes mute. But because through silence he learned the will of God better, his heart grew hot, and while the fire of internal meditation was burning, he spoke. Which is also shown in this place, because the servant being consulted bestowed counsel upon him consulting him, saying: (Verse 6.) Behold there is a man of God in this city, a noble man: all that he saith cometh to pass without doubt: now therefore let us go thither, if perhaps he may tell us of our way, for which we are come.

24. He calls the man of God Samuel, in whom we have already said the preachers of the holy Church are designated. Who indeed is called a man for the reverence of holy conversation, and all that he speaks is shown to come to pass without ambiguity: because whatever he threatens concerning eternal punishments, whatever he promises concerning eternal joy to the just, it is so as he denounces, both the impious shall go to punishment, and the elect to glory. Who also is shown to be in the city: because the elect pastor is known to be always vigilant in the common custody of the subject people. The pastor is in the city, because while he guards others, he is fortified in himself.

Unde et per prophetam in omnium virorum Dei laudibus, sub unius descriptione dicitur: In excelsis habitat, munimenta saxorum sublimitas ejus (Isa. XXXIII, 16). Nam quo altius in aeternorum civium visione suspenditur, eo et sibi fortior, et proximis utilior invenitur.

25. Nobilis etiam dicitur: quia superna conversatione conspicuus est, et de mundanae vitae rusticitate nihil habet. Inde enim nobilis cernitur, unde civis. Saecularium quippe hominum, quia nulla est morum compositio, quasi in exterioribus locis nutriti, rustici sunt. Ex consueta namque animi inhonestate, turpes proferunt motus corporis; et velut valde degeneres, urbanae consuetudinis gestum nesciunt, dum per omne quod agunt, vitae suae speciem vilitate terrenae obscuritatis operiunt. Quo contra viri Dei nobiles sunt, qui dum fortiter ea, quae divina sunt, agunt, in omni suo opere, superna luce resplendent: et nihil degenerositatis habent, qui in magna luce omnis suae conversationis radios proferunt coelestis originis.

Ad hoc ergo a puero Saul ducitur, ut instruatur: quia qui in arce praelationis ponendi sunt, spirituali sensui perfectorum praedicatorum magisterio subjici monentur. Ab hoc puero nos duci admonet, qui dicit: Si spiritu ducimini, non estis sub lege (Gal. V, 18). Quaerendum vero est, cur dubitative dicatur: Si forte indicet nobis de via nostra, propter quam venimus. Sed quia spiritualia discere appetit, quia ingentia dona gestit accipere: utrum eisdem donis sit dignus, scire non potest. Dubitare ergo incipit, qui tam magna promereri se suis meritis non praesumit. Quae nimirum dubitatio electis oritur ex virtute humilitatis. Quare et comitantis pueri voce Sauli dicitur: Si forte indicet nobis de via nostra. Quia nimirum spiritualis sensus non alta nobis sapere suggerit, non audacter de omnipotenti Deo praesumere, sed ejus dona cum summa sancti timoris reverentia postulare. Merito ergo puer dicitur, qui humilia semper docere praedicatur. Dum ergo dicit: Eamus illuc, et repente subjungit: Si forte indicet de via nostra, aperte indicat, quia in sensu electorum Dei spiritus operetur, dum ad spiritualia dona expetenda, et devote eos facit accedere, et de largitoris omnipotentia magna cum reverentia formidare.

(Vers. 7.) Dixitque Saul ad puerum suum: Ecce ibimus, quid feremus ad virum? Panis defecit in sitarciis nostris, et sportulam non habemus, ut demus homini Dei, nec quidquam aliud.

Whence also through the prophet, in the praises of all the men of God, it is said under the description of one: He shall dwell on high, the fortifications of rocks shall be his highness (Isa. 33:16). For by how much more highly he is suspended in the vision of the eternal citizens, by so much more strong for himself, and more useful for his neighbors is he found to be.

25. He is also called noble: because he is conspicuous by heavenly conversation, and has nothing of the rusticity of worldly life. For he is seen to be noble from whence he is a citizen. For of secular men, because there is no composition of manners, as if nourished in exterior places, they are rustic. For from the accustomed dishonor of the mind, they bring forth base motions of the body; and as if very degenerate, they know not the gesture of urban custom, while through all that they do, they cover the beauty of their life with the vileness of earthly obscurity. On the contrary, the men of God are noble, who while they strongly do those things which are divine, in all their work they resplend with heavenly light: and they have nothing of degeneracy, who in the great light of all their conversation bring forth the rays of celestial origin.

To this man therefore is Saul led by the servant, that he may be instructed: because they who are to be placed in the height of prelacy are admonished to be subjected to the spiritual sense by the mastership of perfect preachers. He admonishes us to be led by this servant who says: If you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law (Gal. 5:18). Truly it is to be asked why it is said doubtfully: If perhaps he may tell us of our way, for which we are come. But because he desires to learn spiritual things, because he longs to receive huge gifts: whether he be worthy of the same gifts, he cannot know. He begins therefore to doubt, who does not presume himself to merit such great things by his own merits. Which doubt indeed arises to the elect from the virtue of humility. Wherefore also it is said to Saul by the voice of the accompanying servant: If perhaps he may tell us of our way. Because indeed the spiritual sense suggests to us not to savor high things, not boldly to presume concerning Almighty God, but to ask His gifts with the highest reverence of holy fear. Meritoriously therefore is he called a servant (or child), who is preached to always teach humble things. While therefore he says: Let us go thither, and suddenly subjoins: If perhaps he may tell us of our way, he clearly indicates that the spirit works in the sense of the elect of God, while it makes them both to approach devotedly to seeking spiritual gifts, and to fear with great reverence concerning the omnipotence of the giver.

(Verse 7.) And Saul said to his servant: Behold we will go: what shall we carry to the man? The bread is spent in our bags: and we have no present to give to the man of God, nor any thing else.

26. Habent proprium mentes humilium, ut spiritualia dona habeant, sed in iis quae habent, se non attendant. Quia enim a Spiritu sancto virtutum dona percipiunt, ideo sanctus spiritus, qui dona tribuit, ea eis ab aestimatione tollit, ut in virtute conversationis haec habeant, in tumore elationis non habeant. Bene ergo de Saule dicitur: Ab humero et sursum eminebat super omnem populum. Et dixit ad puerum suum: Panis defecit in sitarciis nostris, et sportulam non habemus: quia electi viri, et ad disponendum sanctae Ecclesiae culmen idonei, in eo etiam se per humilitatem parvos aspiciunt, in quo per virtutem magni sunt.

Et panem quidem ad refectionem fidelium animarum habent in sapientia verbi, sportulam vero in memoria internae meditationis. Cum enim ea quae in secreta meditatione colligunt, servant in memoria ad eruditionem fidelium, velut panem in sportula reponunt. De his enim sportis in Evangelio dicitur: Impleverunt septem sportas de fragmentis (Matth. XV, 37; Marc. VIII, 8). Cum in mensa Domini panes abundant, sportae impleri praecipiuntur: quia cum electi anima in superna Redemptoris contemplatione reficitur, in eadem contemplatione veritatis eruditur, ut verbi alimonia, quae in se excrescere cernitur, in memoria ad eruditionem fidelium reponatur. Aliud etiam praeter panem et sportulam abundanter habent, qui cum virtute contemplationis, et doctrina verbi, abundant copia sanctae operationis.

Ut ergo humilitas sanctorum in ordinandi regis locutione resonet, dicit: Panis defecit in sitarciis nostris, et sportulam non habemus, ut demus homini Dei, nec quidquam aliud: quia sanctus spiritus eos, qui ad ecclesiastici culminis regimen praeparantur, magnos facit in virtute interni muneris, sed omnino parvos in respectu propriae aestimationis. Dicat ergo puer: Eamus illuc, si forte indicet nobis de via nostra. Saul autem vacuum se inspiciat: quia Spiritus sanctus dum sensus honeste viventium instruit, audaces modo, modo timidos reddit. Audaces quidem, ut praesumant... (Vers. 8.) Ecce inventa est in manu mea quarta pars stateris argenti, demus homini Dei, et indicet nobis de via nostra.

26. The minds of the humble have this as their own: that they have spiritual gifts, but in those things which they have, they do not attend to themselves. For because they perceive the gifts of virtues from the Holy Spirit, therefore the Holy Spirit, who bestows the gifts, takes them away from their estimation, so that they may have these in the virtue of conversation, but may not have them in the tumor of elation. Well therefore is it said of Saul: From the shoulder and upward he appeared above all the people. And he said to his servant: The bread is spent in our bags, and we have no present: because the elect men, and those fit to dispose the height of the holy Church, look upon themselves as small through humility in that very thing in which they are great through virtue.

And they have bread indeed for the refreshment of the souls of the faithful in the wisdom of the word, but a basket indeed in the memory of internal meditation. For when they preserve in memory for the instruction of the faithful those things which they gather in secret meditation, they replace them as it were as bread in a basket. For concerning these baskets it is said in the Gospel: They filled seven baskets with the fragments (Matt. 15:37; Mark 8:8). When the loaves abound on the table of the Lord, the baskets are commanded to be filled: because when the soul of the elect is refreshed in the heavenly contemplation of the Redeemer, it is instructed in the same contemplation of truth, so that the nourishment of the word, which is seen to increase in itself, may be replaced in memory for the instruction of the faithful. They have also something else abundantly besides bread and the basket, who together with the virtue of contemplation and the doctrine of the word, abound in the copy of holy operation.

Therefore, so that the humility of the saints may resound in the speech of the king to be ordained, he says: The bread is spent in our bags, and we have no present to give to the man of God, nor any thing else: because the Holy Spirit makes those who are prepared for the government of the ecclesiastical height great in the virtue of the internal gift, but altogether small in the respect of their own estimation. Let the servant therefore say: Let us go thither, if perhaps he may tell us of our way. But let Saul inspect himself as empty: because the Holy Spirit, while He instructs the senses of those living honestly, makes them sometimes bold, sometimes timid. Bold indeed, so that they may presume... (Verse 8.) Behold, there is found in my hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: let us give it to the man of God, and let him tell us of our way.

27. Quasi puer bona loquitur sensus electi hominis, quando ad loquendum impellitur, nutu Spiritus sancti. Quid est ergo, quod dicit: Inventa est in manu mea quarta pars stateris argenti? Quae est ista pars stateris argenti? Sed quia argenti nomine divina eloquia designantur, argentum in manu pueri, est sermo divinus in virtute sciendi. Sermonem quidem aliud est posse dicere, aliud est posse sentire. Nam divina eloquia etiam reprobi eloquuntur, sentire autem nisi electi non possunt. Sentitur etenim ea res, cujus virtus agnoscitur. Nam et aegri pisces comedunt, sed vis aegritudinis tollit eis experimentum saporis: ut quod videntur comedere, prohibeantur et sentire. Sic sic nimirum carnales quique dum coelestia loquuntur, quae non diligunt, velut aegri rebus utuntur, quas sentire prohibentur. In manu ergo pueri argentum invenitur, quando per humilitatis meritum sancti viri, coelestia quae loquuntur, in magno affectu charitatis excipiunt: ut valde dulce sit eis superna dicere, eo quod dulciter, ac valde dulcius per amorem saturantur. Unde etiam scriptum est: Edent pauperes, et saturabuntur (Psal. XXI, 27). Quia enim cibus animae est sermo Dei: pauperes edunt et saturantur, divites saturari non possunt: quia nimirum electi viri, qui superna diligunt, quoties haec audiunt, ad haec ferventius incalescunt; reprobi superna loquuntur, et audiunt, quae in nulla dulcedine, ad mentis suae refectionem suscipiunt. Quarta vero pars stateris argenti dicitur, pro qualitate temporis. Nam ut alias partes hujus stateris videamus, prophetae, apostoli, martyres intuendi sunt. Quia enim pro qualitate temporis, singulis ordinibus distributa est sonoritas praedicationis, velut singuli quartam partem stateris habuere. Quartam ergo partem stateris illi exhibuerunt, cum Synagogae adventum Redemptoris promitterent. Apostoli partem suam dederunt, cum Judaeis eum, qui promissus fuerat, jam venisse praedicarent. Martyres etiam partem suam tribuerunt, cum infideles ad fidem Redemptoris adducerent.

(Vers. 9.) Vocabatur enim Videns.

28. Vocari etenim, est publica relatione dici. Videns autem est qui interna etiam respicit, quae mens carnalium non attendit. Unde et de sanctis animalibus dicitur: In circuitu et intus plena erant oculis. Qui in exterioribus circumspecti, et intrinsecus providi sunt. Quo contra carnalium doctorum praesumptionem in Evangelio Dominus arguens, ait: Si caecus caeco ducatum praestat, ambo in foveam cadunt (Matth. XV, 14). Videns etiam dicitur, cui remota et absentia, praesentia sunt.

27. As a servant (or child) the sense of the elect man speaks good things when he is impelled to speak by the nod of the Holy Spirit. What is it, therefore, that he says: There is found in my hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver? What is this part of a shekel of silver? But because by the name of silver divine oracles are designated, silver in the hand of the servant is the divine word in the virtue of knowing. For it is one thing to be able to say a word, another to be able to feel it. For even the reprobate speak the divine oracles, but none but the elect can feel them. For that thing is felt whose virtue is recognized. For even sick fish eat, but the force of the sickness takes from them the experiment of taste: so that what they are seen to eat, they are prohibited also to feel. So indeed, surely, all carnal men, while they speak heavenly things which they do not love, use things as if sick, which they are prohibited to feel. Silver, therefore, is found in the hand of the servant when, through the merit of humility, holy men receive with a great affect of charity the heavenly things which they speak: so that it is very sweet to them to say heavenly things, because they are sweetly, and much more sweetly, saturated through love. Whence also it is written: The poor shall eat and shall be filled (Psalm 21:27). For because the food of the soul is the word of God, the poor eat and are filled, the rich cannot be filled: because indeed the elect men, who love heavenly things, as often as they hear these, they grow hot more fervently toward them; the reprobate speak and hear heavenly things, which they receive into no sweetness for the refreshment of their mind. But it is called the fourth part of a shekel of silver for the quality of time. For that we may see the other parts of this shekel, the prophets, apostles, and martyrs are to be considered. For because according to the quality of time the sonority of preaching was distributed to individual orders, they as it were individually had a fourth part of the shekel. They therefore exhibited the fourth part of the shekel when they promised the arrival of the Redeemer to the Synagogue. The Apostles gave their part when they preached to the Jews that He who had been promised had already come. The Martyrs also bestowed their part when they were leading infidels to the faith of the Redeemer.

(Verse 9.) For he was called a Seer.

28. For to be called is to be said by public relation. But a Seer is he who also looks back upon internal things, which the mind of the carnal does not attend to. Whence also it is said of the holy animals: Round about and within they were full of eyes. Who are circumspect in exterior things, and provident in intrinsic things. On the contrary, the Lord, rebuking the presumption of carnal teachers in the Gospel, says: If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch (Matt. 15:14). He is also called a Seer to whom remote and absent things are present.

Quod sanctis praedicatoribus bene convenit, qui per cognitionem tanto sunt praesentes spiritalibus, quanto in exterioribus intentionem figere dedignantur. Tal namque esse pastor sanctae Ecclesiae debet: quia in via coelestis patriae ad praebendum lumen subditis constitutus est. Semper ergo spargat radios lucis, ut fideles subjecti ex illuminationis suae experientia, alios ad illuminationem trahant. Sequitur, et dicit:

(Vers. 9.) Olim sic loquebatur in Israel unusquisque vadens consulere Deum: Venite, eamus ad Videntem. 29. Dominum imus consulere, quando ad eruditos praedicatores pergimus, ut salutis nostrae consilium inveniamus. Sed quia modo tam perfectorum virorum raritas est, dum antiquorum temporum florem religionis attendimus, defectum ejus in praesenti tempore defleamus. De miseria praesentis temporis et calamitate compuncti, florem elapsi temporis cum pulchritudine sanctitatis emarcuisse suspiremus. Dum ergo pastores Ecclesiarum cernimus terrenis inhaerere, labentia quaerere, nulla spiritalis vitae insignia proferre, dum nulla nobis praelatorum nostrorum lux infunditur, ad laborem compunctionis illa, quae praeierunt, memorantes, dicamus: Olim sic loquebatur in Israel unusquisque vadens consulere Dominum: Venite, eamus ad Videntem.

Israel dicitur videns Deum, sive in quo est Deus. Quod certe nomen sanctae Ecclesiae convenienter aptatur, cujus populus dicitur. Nam et in Evangelio dicitur: Ecce ego vobiscum sum usque ad consummationem saeculi (Matth. XXVIII, 20). Quae nimirum, quia in priori tempore pastores habuit spiritali conversatione floridos, magna scientia eruditos, qui magno despectu terrena vilipenderent, coelestia cogitarent: ad lumen, quod in eis videbat populus, se invicem exhortari poterant, dicentes: Eamus ad Videntem. Si ergo eundum est ad videntes, pariter est divertendum a caecis: quia reproborum praelatorum exempla non debemus imitari, sed fugere: ab eis autem, qui conversationis merito spiritualia cognoscunt, semper aedificationis nostrae eruditionem postulare. Et quia hoc non nisi viri spiritales faciunt, sequitur:

(Vers. 10.) Et dixit Saul ad puerum suum: Optimus sermo tuus; veni, eamus. 30. Optimus sermo est, quo melior audiri nequaquam potest. Quoties nobis ergo salutis nostrae consilia spiritaliter suggeruntur, intus nobis sermo fit, quo melior inveniri non possit. Pueri ergo sermonem laudamus, quoties nobis in spiritualis sensus nostri proposito complacemus. Et cum eo ire promittimus, quando spiritualibus cogitationibus consentimus. Sed quia tunc fructuosa est bona cogitatio, quando in operatione perficitur, sequitur: (Vers. 10, 11.) Et venerunt in civitatem, in qua erat eir Dei: Cumque ascenderent clivum civitatis, invenerunt puellas egredientes ad hauriendam aquam, et dixerunt ad eas: Nunquid hic est Videns?

Which well suits the holy preachers, who through knowledge are as much present to spiritual things as they disdain to fix their intention on exterior things. For such the pastor of the holy Church ought to be: because he is constituted in the way of the heavenly country to provide light to the subjects. Let him therefore always scatter rays of light, so that the faithful subjects, from the experience of his illumination, may draw others to illumination. It follows, and says:

(Verse 9.) Formerly in Israel thus every one spoke going to consult God: Come, let us go to the Seer. We go to consult the Lord when we go to learned preachers, that we may find counsel for our salvation. But because now there is such a rarity of perfect men, while we attend to the flower of the religion of ancient times, let us bewail its failure in the present time. Being compunct by the misery and calamity of the present time, let us sigh that the flower of the elapsed time has withered with the beauty of holiness. While therefore we discern the pastors of the Churches to adhere to earthly things, to seek fleeting things, to bring forth no insignia of spiritual life, while no light of our prelates is poured into us, remembering those things which have gone before for the labor of compunction, let us say: Formerly in Israel thus every one spoke going to consult the Lord: Come, let us go to the Seer.

Israel is called seeing God, or in whom is God. Which name is certainly conveniently fitted to the holy Church, whose people it is called. For also in the Gospel it is said: Behold I am with you even to the consummation of the world (Matt. 28:20). Which indeed, because in the prior time it had pastors florid with spiritual conversation, learned in great knowledge, who with great contempt vilified earthly things and thought upon heavenly things: toward the light which the people saw in them, they could exhort one another, saying: Let us go to the Seer. If therefore we must go to the seers, likewise we must turn away from the blind: because we ought not to imitate, but to flee, the examples of reprobate prelates: but always to ask the instruction of our edification from those who by the merit of conversation know spiritual things. And because none but spiritual men do this, it follows:

(Verse 10.) And Saul said to his servant: Best is thy word; come, let us go. The best word is that than which a better can by no means be heard. As often therefore as counsels for our salvation are suggested to us spiritually, the word is made within us than which a better could not be found. We praise therefore the word of the servant as often as we are well-pleased in the purpose of our spiritual sense. And we promise to go with him when we consent to spiritual thoughts. But because a good thought is then fruitful when it is perfected in operation, it follows: (Verses 10, 11.) And they came into the city, in which was the man of God: and as they went up the ascent of the city, they found maids going out to draw water, and said to them: Is the Seer here?

31. Qui virum Dei quaerunt, in civitatem veniunt: quia plerumque fit, ut vita atque doctrina praelati in subditorum conversatione requiratur. Sic nimirum et arbores saepe requiruntur, quarum species non in foliis, sed in fructu inveniuntur. Plerumque autem suborta fruteta magnis arboribus admiscentur, et fructus suos earum arborum, quibus sunt mixtae, esse mentiuntur. Qui ergo fructum discernere vult, prius discernat et ramos: ut ex qua arbore fructus procedat, agnoscat. Sic sic nimirum est in conversatione fidelium: quia in electa plebe boni praedicatoris, dum plures mali admixti sunt, velut intra bonas arbores spinae oriuntur. Conversatio itaque electi praedicatoris non est exploranda in omnibus subditis, sed in solis electis. Tunc quidem velut ramos bonae arboris cum discretione secernimus, quando in plebe rectores illos velut electa poma imitamur, qui magistri sui exemplo proficiunt: et illos velut vepres fugimus, qui antiqui hostis fraude reprobantur. Bene ergo de Saul, et ejus puero dicitur: quia venerunt in civitatem, et clivum ejusdem civitatis ascenderunt; quia nimirum perfectio sanctorum virorum cum in subditis quaeritur, non imperfecta membra, sed electa atque perfecta requirenda sunt. Nam et artifices opera sua prius inchoant, deinde comunt. Pictor etiam cum pulchros colores, aut aurum superducere appetit, prius viliorem colorem sternit. Qui ergo judicare de peritia artificum vult, non inchoata eorum opera, sed perfecta respiciat. Clivum ergo civitatis ascendat, ut qui invenire appetit Videntem, reperiat. Clivus enim infimus et defossus locus est. In qua nimirum parte civitatis illi signantur, qui adhuc in altiorem conversationem minime profecere. Clivum ergo ascendimus, cum planitiem infirmorum auditorum ad exemplum nobis proponere vitamus.

32. Et tunc quidem puellas egredientes ad hauriendam aquam invenimus: quia pulchritudinem sanctarum mentium in perfectiori conversatione respicimus. Puellae quidem sunt mentes electorum, integrae per innocentiam, decorae per virtutum claritatem. Et quia in secretiori vita pulchritudinem suam conservant, videri nequeunt, nisi cum ad hauriendam aquam egrediuntur. Puellae aquam hauriunt, quando electae animae ex profundo dolore praesentis exsilii fluenta lacrymarum fundunt. Haurire quidem aquam dicuntur: quia dum se projectas in hac valle lacrymarum lugentes memorant, quasi ad profundum, funem cogitationis mittunt, a quo cum labore aquas lacrymarum trahunt. Tunc etiam egressae videntur: quia quae quales sunt intus latent, apparent tamen in oculis; et quantum diligant Conditorem, indicant, quae in tanto dolore praesentis saeculi vitam sustinent. Ab istis ergo quaerendum est: Ubi est Videns? Quia locus perfectorum tunc bene cognoscitur, cum ab eis nobis ostenditur, qui per profectum vitae eorum conversationi vicini sunt. Sed habent praedicatores loca diversa.

31. They who seek the man of God come into the city: because it often happens that the life and doctrine of a prelate is sought in the conversation of the subjects. So surely also trees are often sought, whose species are found not in the leaves, but in the fruit. But often shrubs that have sprung up are mixed with great trees, and they lie that their fruits are of those trees with which they are mixed. He therefore who wishes to discern the fruit, let him first discern also the branches: so that he may recognize from which tree the fruit proceeds. So, so indeed it is in the conversation of the faithful: because in the elect people of a good preacher, while many evil ones are admixed, as it were thorns arise within good trees. Therefore the conversation of the elect preacher is not to be explored in all subjects, but in the elect alone. Then indeed we discern as it were the branches of a good tree with discretion, when in the people we imitate those rectors as elect apples, who profit by the example of their master: and we flee those as briars, who are reprobated by the fraud of the ancient enemy. Well therefore is it said of Saul and his servant: that they came into the city, and ascended the hill of the same city; because indeed the perfection of holy men when it is sought in subjects, not imperfect members, but elect and perfect ones are to be sought. For also artisans first begin their works, then they adorn them. A painter also, when he desires to superinduce beautiful colors or gold, first lays a viler color. He therefore who wishes to judge of the skill of artisans, let him not look back upon their begun works, but their perfected ones. Therefore let him ascend the hill of the city, so that he who desires to find the Seer may find him. For the hill is the lowest and dug-out place. In which part of the city indeed those are signified who have as yet profited very little in higher conversation. We therefore ascend the hill when we avoid proposing to ourselves the plain of weak hearers for an example.

32. And then indeed we find the maids going out to draw water: because we look back upon the beauty of holy minds in a more perfect conversation. Maids indeed are the minds of the elect, whole through innocence, comely through the brightness of virtues. And because they preserve their beauty in a more secret life, they cannot be seen, except when they go out to draw water. Maids draw water when elect souls pour forth streams of tears from the profound grief of their present exile. They are said indeed to draw water: because while they remember themselves as cast forth in this valley of tears, mourning, they as it were send the rope of thought to the deep, from which with labor they draw the waters of tears. Then also they are seen to have gone out: because they who are such within lie hidden, they appear however in the eyes; and they indicate how much they love the Creator, who sustain life in such great grief of the present world. From these therefore it is to be asked: Where is the Seer? Because the place of the perfect is then well known, when it is shown to us by those who through the progress of life are near to their conversation. But preachers have diverse places.

Alium quippe locum habent pro se, alium pro subditis: quia nimirum in seipsis in altissima contemplatione morantur, pro subditis ad doctrinae montem descendunt. Per contemplationem velut in coelo sunt; et quia alta sunt quae docent, et descendunt cum docent, et sublimia loquentes in alto se retinent. Perfectiores igitur auditores vicini suo rectori sunt, non cum in summa contemplatione est, sed in inferiori monte doctrinae. Quare et puellae respondentes dicunt:

(Vers. 12.) Hic est, ecce ante te: hodie enim venit in civitatem.

33. Quasi dicant: Ideo locum ejus indicare possumus, quia illuc venit, ubi eum videre solebamus. Nam si in suae sublimitatis arce resideret, eum tibi nemo ostenderet. In civitate etenim doctor est, quando per ministerium praedicationis moratur in eruditione populi subjecti. In civitate est doctor, quando relinquit propria, ut communia disponat. Quia enim boni praedicatoris plebes per ejus exhortationem munitae ac fortes sunt, quando in eorum ministerio moratur, in civitate esse cognoscitur. Item quia in subjectae plebis multitudine alii simplices, alii sapientes sunt, puellae subjungunt:

(Vers. 12, 13.) Festina nunc, hodie venit in civitatem: quia sacrificium est populi in excelso. Ingredientes autem statim invenietis eum, antequam ascendat in excelsum, ad vescendum. Neque enim comesturus est populus, donec ille veniat: quia ipse benedicet hostiae, et deinde comedent, qui vocati sunt.

34. Cum in civitatem venit Samuel, in excelsum ascendit: quia electus praedicator in eruditione subditorum, modo plana verba, modo alta pronuntiat. Quando igitur plana et intelligibilia praecipit, in civitate est; quando sublimia, et quae vix intelliguntur, in excelso. In civitate est, quando simplicibus proponit exempla: in excelso autem, quando perfectis verborum spiritualium alta pronuntiat. Quasi enim in civitate erat, qui dicebat: Nihil judicavi me scire inter vos, nisi Christum, et hunc crucifixum (I Cor. II, 2). Item in civitate erat, quando infirmis remedia demonstrabat, dicens: Propter fornicationem vir suam uxorem habeat, et uxor suum virum habeat (Ibid., 2). Sed in excelsum ascendit, quia non multo post subdit: De virginibus autem praeceptum non habeo, consilium autem do. Vellem omnes homines esse sicut meipsum (Ibid., 25, 7). In excelsum etiam verborum se saepe ascendere fatetur, quia dicit: Sapientiam loquimur inter perfectos (Ibid., 6).

For they have one place for themselves, another for the subjects: because indeed in themselves they dwell in the highest contemplation, for the subjects they descend to the mountain of doctrine. Through contemplation they are as it were in heaven; and because those things which they teach are high, both they descend when they teach, and speaking sublime things they retain themselves on high. Therefore the more perfect hearers are near to their rector, not when he is in the highest contemplation, but in the lower mountain of doctrine. Wherefore also the maids answering say:

(Verse 12.) He is here, behold before thee: for today he is come into the city.

33. As if they should say: Therefore we can indicate his place, because he came thither where we were accustomed to see him. For if he resided in the height of his sublimity, no one would show him to thee. For the teacher is in the city when through the ministry of preaching he dwells in the instruction of the subject people. The teacher is in the city when he leaves his own things that he may dispose common things. For because the peoples of a good preacher are fortified and strong through his exhortation, when he dwells in their ministry, he is recognized to be in the city. Likewise because in the multitude of the subject people some are simple, others are wise, the maids subjoin:

(Verses 12, 13.) Hurry now, for today he is come into the city: because there is a sacrifice of the people in the high place. And as you go in, you shall immediately find him, before he go up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he come: because he blesseth the victim, and afterwards they eat that are invited.

34. When Samuel comes into the city, he ascends into the high place: because the elect preacher in the instruction of subjects pronounces now plain words, now high ones. When therefore he commands plain and intelligible things, he is in the city; when sublime things, and those which are scarcely understood, he is in the high place. He is in the city when he proposes examples to the simple; but in the high place when he pronounces the heights of spiritual words to the perfect. For he was as it were in the city who was saying: I judged not myself to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2). Likewise he was in the city when he was demonstrating remedies to the weak, saying: Because of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband (Ibid., 2). But he ascends into the high place, because not long after he subjoins: But concerning virgins I have no commandment, but I give counsel. I would that all men were even as myself (Ibid., 25, 7). He confesses himself also often to ascend into the high place of words, because he says: We speak wisdom among the perfect (Ibid., 6).

35. Quid est ergo, quod dicunt puellae: Festina nunc, hodie venit in civitatem, nisi quia raro videbatur in civitate, videlicet tarde veniens, cito recedens? Quo nimirum magisterio sanctae Ecclesiae doctor instruitur, ut videlicet raro sit in publico, frequens in secreto: ut quo tardius aspicitur, devotius veneretur. Tunc quidem quasi coelestis excipitur: quia quo amplius in secreto contemplationis latuit, verbi Dei thesauros ad eos, qui se exspectant, ditiores trahit. Ille enim potest multa bona in infimis dicere, cui per secretum mentis intuitum conceditur summa videre. Et quia dulcius videntur illa quae dicuntur, puellae dicunt: Festina. Quasi dicant: si id, pro quo in civitate venit, expleverit, videre in secreto suo repositum non potestis.

36. Quod profecto verbum jam litteram non ad verbum, sed exemplum religiosorum est. Nam sanctus vir tantae erat districtionis, ut statutas dies et horas haberet, in quibus eum, qui cuperet, videre potuisset. Dicunt ergo: Festina. Ac si dicant: Si statutum tempus transierit, in horis suae quietis, verbis, aut actionibus non intendit. Qui ergo remotae vitae ordinem sumpsimus, hoc observare attentius debemus. Statuendae sunt nobis horae ministerii, ut breviter persistamus in opere, festinanter redire valeamus ad contemplationis arcem. Ipsae autem secreti silentii nostri morae, tanta lege districtionis custodiendae sunt, ut ipsi etiam, qui accedere solent, sciant, quia contra propositum nostrum ad nos accessum non habeant.

37. Quia vero haec spiritualiter explanare coepimus, contra simplices hoc dici convenienter intelligi potest. In civitate quippe is, qui videtur extraneus, Samuelem alloqui posse putatur, in excelso autem non putatur: quia quos simplices esse credimus, plana, non alta eruditione eos indigere existimamus. Tunc ergo praedicatores sanctos audire debent, quando plana simplicibus loquuntur, quae intelligunt: non quando dicunt alta, quae intelligere nequaquam possunt. Dicunt ergo: Festina nunc, hodie venit in civitatem: quia sacrificium est populi in excelso. Quod tale est, ac si dicat: Quia multi sunt, qui summa audire desiderant, nunc tu debes festinare, quando ille similes tui simplices videtur instruere. Sacrificium quidem populi est devotio electae plebis. Quae nimirum devotio, quia verbo praedicationis in electorum cordibus excitatur, quasi a Samuele perficitur. In excelso est autem sacrificium populi, quando corda fidelium subditorum alta verba sanctae praedicationis devote audire concupiscunt. Unde et apte dicitur: Quia populus non comedit, nisi prius Samuel hostiae benedixerit:

35. What is it, therefore, that the maids say: Hurry now, today he is come into the city, except because he was rarely seen in the city, namely, coming late and receding quickly? By which mastership surely the doctor of the holy Church is instructed, that namely he should be rarely in public, frequent in secret: so that by how much the more lately he is seen, he may be more devotedly venerated. Then indeed he is received as if heavenly: because by how much the more he has lain hidden in the secret of contemplation, he draws richer treasures of the word of God to those who expect him. For he can say many good things in lowest matters to whom it is granted to see the highest things through the secret intuition of the mind. And because those things which are said are seen more sweetly, the maids say: Hurry. As if they should say: if he shall have fulfilled that for which he came into the city, you cannot see him replaced in his secret.

36. Which word indeed is now not to the word of the letter, but is an example for the religious. For the holy man was of such great strictness (districtio) that he had appointed days and hours in which he could have been seen by him who desired it. They say therefore: Hurry. As if they should say: If the appointed time shall have passed, in the hours of his quiet he does not intend to words or actions. We therefore who have taken up the order of remote life ought to observe this more attentively. Hours of ministry are to be appointed for us, so that we may persist briefly in work, and be able to return hastily to the height of contemplation. The very delays of our secret silence are to be guarded by such a law of strictness that they themselves also who are accustomed to approach may know that they may not have access to us against our purpose.

37. Because we have begun to explain these things spiritually, this can be suitably understood as being said against the simple. For in the city, he who appears to be a stranger is thought to be able to speak to Samuel, but in the high place he is not so thought: because we consider those whom we believe to be simple to be in need of plain, not high, instruction. Therefore, they ought to hear the holy preachers then, when they speak plain things to the simple which they understand: not when they say high things which they can by no means understand. They say therefore: "Hurry now, today he has come to the city: because there is a sacrifice of the people in the high place." This is such as if one were to say: Because there are many who desire to hear the highest things, now you ought to hurry, when he appears to be instructing the simple like yourself. The sacrifice of the people is indeed the devotion of the chosen people. This devotion, because it is excited in the hearts of the elect by the word of preaching, is as it were perfected by Samuel. But the sacrifice of the people is in the high place when the hearts of the faithful subjects devoutly desire to hear the high words of holy preaching. Whence it is also aptly said: "Because the people do not eat, unless Samuel first blesses the victim":

quia perfectiores auditores, dum ad summam virtutum perfectionem pervenire desiderant, verbum scientiae, per quod ad desiderata perveniant, in magno desiderio exspectant. Quo in loco notandum est, quia oblatum sacrificium nondum erat, et tamen dicit: Sacrificium est populi in excelso. Si enim sacrificium antequam offerri incipiat, non est, quomodo erat sacrificium, quod non erat? Sed quia nos spiritalia sequimur, nondum erat sacrificium, et erat: quia cum electi fideles altius erudiri appetunt, jam quidem magnam devotionem audiendi habent, quam, post auditam praedicationem, valde majorem habent. Non est ergo adhuc oblatum sacrificium: quia illa magnitudo devotionis, quae nascitur in corde electi de verbo praedicationis, ante praedicatoris verbum in corde non est. Et est quidem in excelso sacrificium: quia de exspectatione verbi, magna jam est in corde audire volentis vis devotionis. Quare et bene dicitur: Quia populus non comedit, donec ille hostiae benedicat. Quia enim summa inhianter diligunt, donec eadem summa percipiunt, non quiescunt. Si enim hostia mentis, ejus devotio est: hostiae benedicitur, quando ad vocem praedicationis sanctificatur, ut quo purior efficitur, divina susceptione acceptior habeatur. Quod enim in Dei sacrificio benedicitur, mundum quidem est cum offertur, et materiale: oblatum vero tanto est mundius, quanto non solum materiale, sed spirituale: quanto non solum mundum, sed etiam mundans est. Hostiarum quippe oblationibus mundari peccata quis dubitet? Sic namque, sic est mentis devotio: nam cum bona audire gestit, munda est; sed cum sanctae praedicationis accepta et benedicta manibus fuerit, tanto ardentior et sacratior redditur, quanto clarius didicit, quem amare dulcius notum possit. Munda quidem ante, velut praeparatio sacrificii fuerat, quae bonum nosse cupiebat, et tamen materialis erat apparatus: quia nondum novit, quae discere appetit, sed munda valde et spiritalis, cum jam doctrinae sanctificata vocibus, non jam appetit audire, quod sciat, sed audita delectatur experiri, quae amat. Tunc etiam non solum munda est hostia, sed mundans: quia quo ferventiori coelestium amore succenditur, ab ea negligentiae carnalis tenebrae potentius effugantur. Scriptum quippe est: Quia charitas operit multitudinem peccatorum (I Petr. IV, 8): quia nimirum carnalia nostra destruimus, cum ardenti devotione ad coelestia sublevamur.

because the more perfect hearers, while they desire to reach the highest perfection of virtues, wait in great desire for the word of knowledge, through which they may reach the things desired. In which place it is to be noted that the offered sacrifice was not yet, and yet he says: "The sacrifice of the people is in the high place." For if a sacrifice is not before it begins to be offered, how was there a sacrifice which was not? But because we follow spiritual things, there was not yet a sacrifice, and yet there was: because when the chosen faithful seek to be instructed more deeply, they already indeed have a great devotion for hearing, which, after the preaching has been heard, they have much greater. The sacrifice is not yet, therefore, offered: because that greatness of devotion, which is born in the heart of the elect from the word of preaching, is not in the heart before the word of the preacher. And indeed the sacrifice is in the high place: because from the expectation of the word, there is already in the heart of the one wishing to hear a great force of devotion. Wherefore it is also well said: "Because the people do not eat until he blesses the victim." For because they greedily love the highest things, until they perceive those same highest things, they do not rest. For if the victim of the mind is its devotion: the victim is blessed when it is sanctified at the voice of preaching, so that as it is made purer, it may be held more acceptable for divine reception. For that which is blessed in the sacrifice of God is indeed clean when it is offered, and material: but the offered is so much the cleaner, as it is not only material, but spiritual: as it is not only clean, but also cleansing. For who would doubt that sins are cleansed by the offerings of victims? For thus, thus is the devotion of the mind: for when it longs to hear good things, it is clean; but when it has been received and blessed by the hands of holy preaching, it is rendered so much more ardent and sacred, as it has more clearly learned whom it can known to love more sweetly. It was indeed clean before, like a preparation of the sacrifice, which desired to know the good, and yet it was a material preparation: because it did not yet know what it sought to learn, but it is very clean and spiritual when, already sanctified by the voices of doctrine, it no longer seeks to hear what it may know, but rejoices to experience what it loves through what has been heard. Then also the victim is not only clean, but cleansing: because the more it is kindled by a more fervent love of heavenly things, the more powerfully are the darknesses of carnal negligence driven away from it. For it is written: "Because charity covers a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8): because we certainly destroy our carnal things when we are raised to heavenly things with ardent devotion.

38. Et quia subditur: Et tunc comedent, qui vocati sunt. Quid aliud designat, nisi quia devotionis affectus mentis est cibus? Tunc namque comedemus, cum hostiae benedicitur: quia cum ad praedicatorum vocem devotio nostra in amorem Conditoris extollitur, anima, quae ad dulcedinem Conditoris pervenit, habet jam cibum suum. Tunc ergo comedunt, qui ante benedictionem hostiae comedere noluerunt. Nam qui summa intentionis exspectatione ad divinae dulcedinis perceptionem se praeparant, dum mala desideria per appetitum nulla recipiunt, velut jejuni, refectione devotionis avidius replentur. Velut enim benedictionem hostiae ad refectionem exspectant, qui cuncta illicita desideria fugiunt, ut de visione internae gloriae per devotionem satientur. Scriptum quippe est: Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt (Matth. V, 8). Qui enim in corde inepta non recipit, dum superna desiderat, mundus corde est: et dum per bonum praedicationis ad divinae contemplationis dulcedinem ducitur, quasi benedictionem hostiae habet in animae saturitate. Dicit ergo: Deinde comedent, qui vocati sunt. Jejuni quippe vocantur ad comestionem, dum praedicator foris loquitur, qui a pravis desideriis mentem custodiunt, et per gratiam Spiritus sancti ad internae dulcedinis experientiam trahuntur. Vocati enim tunc erant invitati, qui venerant. Vocati ergo jejuni tunc comedunt, quando hi spiritualis gratiae devotione pascuntur, qui ad eam percipiendam se magna mentis suae custodia paraverunt. Quid vero est quod dicunt: (Vers. 13.) Ascendite, quia hodie reperietis eum?

39. Sed dum electi bona praedicatorum laudant, auditorum corda magna luce irradiant. Coelestis namque illa conversatio boni doctoris, quam praedicant, dies est. Dicant ergo: Hodie reperietis eum. Eo namque die praedicator invenitur, quando non est minor vita, quam fama: quando electorum voce laudatur, sed qui laudes audiunt, omne quod audiunt, in ejus laudabili conversatione inveniunt, atque cognoscunt. Quo contra Pharisaeos increpans Dominus, ait: Vae vobis, Scribae, et Pharisaei, qui similes estis sepulcris dealbatis, quae foris videntur hominibus pulchra, intus autem plena sunt ossibus mortuorum (Matth. XXIII, 27). Hinc iterum vane gloriosos infidelibus comparat, dicens: Quomodo potestis credere, gloriam ab hominibus accipientes (Joan. V, 44)? In die quidem laudantur, qui ejusmodi sunt, sed eo die non reperiuntur: quia qui eorum laudes audiunt, quasi candorem sepulcri a foris aspiciunt; sed cum laudatas virtutes quaerunt, intus peccatorum noctem quasi tristia atque putentia mortuorum ossa inveniunt. Dicant ergo, pro significanda vera gloria justi: Hodie reperietis eum: quia cum justi laudantur, in veritate conversationis habent, quidquid lucidum emicat de eis voce laudis.

38. And because it is added: "And then they shall eat, who are called." What else does this designate, but that the affection of devotion is the food of the mind? For then we eat, when the victim is blessed: because when our devotion is raised to the love of the Creator at the voice of the preachers, the soul, which has reached the sweetness of the Creator, already has its food. Then, therefore, they eat who before the blessing of the victim were unwilling to eat. For those who prepare themselves with the highest expectation of intention for the perception of divine sweetness, while they receive no evil desires through appetite, are filled more greedily, as if fasting, with the refreshment of devotion. For as it were they wait for the blessing of the victim for refreshment, who flee all illicit desires, so that they may be satiated by the vision of internal glory through devotion. For it is written: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). For he who does not receive foolish things in his heart, while he desires heavenly things, is pure in heart: and while he is led through the good of preaching to the sweetness of divine contemplation, he has as it were the blessing of the victim in the saturation of the soul. He says therefore: "Then they shall eat, who are called." For the fasting are called to eating, while the preacher speaks outwardly, who guard their mind from depraved desires, and are drawn through the grace of the Holy Spirit to the experience of internal sweetness. For those who had come were then called as guests. The called fasting ones, therefore, then eat, when they are fed by the devotion of spiritual grace, who have prepared themselves for perceiving it with a great guard of their mind. But what is it that they say: (Verse 13.) "Go up, for today you shall find him"?

39. But while the elect praise the good things of the preachers, the hearts of the hearers are irradiated with a great light. For that heavenly conversation of a good teacher, which they preach, is the day. Let them say therefore: "Today you shall find him." For on that day the preacher is found, when his life is not less than his fame: when he is praised by the voice of the elect, but those who hear the praises find and know in his laudable conversation all that they hear. On the contrary, the Lord rebuking the Pharisees says: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, who are like whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful to men, but within are full of dead men's bones" (Matthew 23:27). Hence again he compares the vain-glorious to unbelievers, saying: "How can you believe, receiving glory from men" (John 5:44)? In the day indeed those of this kind are praised, but on that day they are not found: because they who hear their praises behold as it were the whiteness of the sepulchre from without; but when they seek the praised virtues, they find within a night of sins like sad and stinking bones of the dead. Let them say therefore, for signifying the true glory of the just man: "Today you shall find him": because when the just are praised, they have in the truth of their conversation whatever shines bright from them by the voice of praise.

Et quia tanti viri festina devotione quaerendi sunt, sequitur: (Vers. 14.) Et ascenderunt in civitatem. Cumque illi ambularent in medio urbis, apparuit Samuel, egrediens obviam eis, ut ascenderet in excelsum.

40. Cum sanctorum virorum praeconia audimus, in civitate ascendimus: quia illic eos quaerimus, ubi descendunt, non ubi sunt. Sed, ut superius dixi, praedicatorum locus, quem pro se habent, secreta divinitatis contemplatio est: locus autem pro subditis, praedicatio. Aliquando vero plana, aliquando alta loquuntur. Habent ergo communem locum pro omnibus, habent sublimem specialemque pro quibusdam, habent secretum pro se. Haec nimirum tria spiritualia loca signantur: quia Samuel egredi dicitur, et apparere in medio urbis, et ascendere in excelsum. Nam qui, ut appareret, egressus est, erat ubi, antequam appareret, latuisset. Egrediuntur ergo sacerdotes, quando a secreto meditationis ad praedicandum veniunt. In civitate apparent, quando planiora, id est ad agendum, vel ad intelligendum dicunt. In excelsum ascendunt, quando sapientibus aut fortia praecipiunt operis, aut revelant alta mysterii. Ordinatus ergo ascensus noster ostenditur, per hoc, quod Saul in civitate ascendere perhibetur. Nam nobis Pastorum nostrorum loca, in quibus orare, aut secreti esse consueverunt, veneranda, non adeunda sunt. Quod non solum exemplo, sed etiam divina cohortatione cognoscere possumus. In Cantico quidem canticorum sponsus denuntiat, dicens: Obsecro vos, filiae Jerusalem, ne evigilare faciatis dilectam, quousque ipsa velit (Cant. III, 5). Mentes enim perfectorum sponsae sunt: quia dum secreto divini amoris se velut in thalamo collocant, ibi per visionem inveniunt, cui ineffabili amore junguntur. Cum ergo sponsa dormit in thalamo, conjungitur sponso: quia dum electa praedicatoris anima in secreta contemplatione reconditur, quasi in sponsi thalamo collocatur. Qui ergo hanc suscitat, sponso tollit: quia nimirum requies electae animae non solum sua, sed etiam delectatio sponsi est. Unde et per prophetam dicitur: Gaudebit sponsus super sponsam (Isai. LXII, 5). Merito ergo Jerusalem filias sponsus adjurat, ut ab eis sponsa, quandiu dormire voluerit, non excitetur: ne, dum illa surgit a quiete thalami, ipse perfruitionem perdat amoris. Egressus ergo Samuelis exspectetur, quia viri sancti in secreto sui silentii venerandi sunt, inquietandi non sunt.

And because such great men are to be sought with hasty devotion, there follows: (Verse 14.) "And they went up into the city. And as they were walking in the middle of the city, Samuel appeared, coming out to meet them, to go up to the high place."

40. When we hear the praises of holy men, we go up into the city: because we seek them there where they descend, not where they are. But, as I said above, the place of preachers, which they have for themselves, is the secret contemplation of divinity: but their place for subjects is preaching. Sometimes they speak plain things, sometimes high things. They have therefore a common place for all, they have a sublime and special one for some, and they have a secret one for themselves. These three spiritual places are indeed signified: because Samuel is said to go out, and to appear in the middle of the city, and to go up to the high place. For he who went out in order to appear, was where he had been hidden before he appeared. Priests go out, therefore, when they come from the secret of meditation to preach. They appear in the city, when they say plainer things, that is, for acting or for understanding. They go up into the high place, when they either command strong works to the wise or reveal high things of mystery. Our orderly ascent is therefore shown by this, that Saul is said to go up in the city. For the places of our Pastors, in which they are accustomed to pray or to be in secret, are for us to be venerated, not to be approached. Which we can know not only by example, but also by divine exhortation. In the Song of Songs indeed the bridegroom announces, saying: "I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem, that you stir not up, nor awake my beloved, until she please" (Song of Solomon 3:5). For the minds of the perfect are brides: because while in the secret of divine love they place themselves as it were in a bedchamber, there through vision they find him to whom they are joined in ineffable love. When therefore the bride sleeps in the bedchamber, she is joined to the bridegroom: because while the elect soul of the preacher is hidden in secret contemplation, it is placed as it were in the bridegroom's bedchamber. He therefore who wakes her, takes her from the bridegroom: because certainly the rest of the elect soul is not only its own delight, but also that of the bridegroom. Whence it is also said through the prophet: "The bridegroom shall rejoice over the bride" (Isaiah 62:5). Rightly therefore the bridegroom adjures the daughters of Jerusalem, that the bride be not waked by them as long as she wishes to sleep: lest, while she rises from the quiet of the bedchamber, he himself lose the enjoyment of love. The going out of Samuel is therefore to be waited for, because holy men are to be venerated in the secret of their silence, not to be disturbed.

In civitate igitur ascendendum est; quia electus doctor in communi loco doctrinae tanto lucro suis videtur, quanto ut prosit, exire cognoscitur. Quo in loco notandum, quia de Samuele non dicitur: Hodie ascendit in civitate, sed, hodie venit in civitatem: de Saule autem, et puero: non venerunt, sed ascenderunt, dicitur. Ille enim velut per planum venit, iste velut in alta conscendit. Quid aliud per hoc nobis ostenditur, nisi quia plana quae loquuntur praedicatores, nobis plana non sunt? In civitate ergo non venimus, sed ascendimus, quando aut plana praedicationis difficulter aspicimus, aut parva, quae praecipimur, cum labore portamus. Sed quia stare in civitate, munitum esse est, idcirco ascendimus; quia cum nos summi viri parva bona agere docent, malignorum spirituum consiliis acquiescere vehementer prohibent. Et quia valde laboriosum est, omnia tentamenta vincere, ad verba doctorum, quae hoc nobis praecipiunt, quasi per ascensus laborem conamur pervenire. Sed quia scriptum est, quod Unusquisque mercedem accipiet secundum suum laborem (quod nimirum non solum de aeterna retributione accipitur, sed etiam de praesenti) omnipotens Deus pro merito operis, electis suis tribuit augmenta virtutis (I Cor. III, 8). Nam et Abrahae filio non parcenti dicitur: Per memetipsum juravi: quia fecisti rem hanc, et non pepercisti filio propter me: benedicam tibi, et multiplicabo semen tuum (Gen. XXII, 16). Plerumque enim, qui fideliter laborant, in faciendis iis quae sciunt, per divinam gratiam majora, quae agant, cognoscere merentur. In quorum typo bene Saul in civitate prius ascendere dicitur, in excelsum postea a Samuele ductus perhibetur. Verum obviam venire, est per eamdem viam venienti occurrere. Cum ergo a sanctis praedicatoribus salutis viam discere volumus, nobis quidem obviam veniunt, quando cum verbo salutis, quod quaerimus, occurrunt. Quasi enim eadem via veniunt, cum id nos docere festinant, quod nos proposuimus discere. Hoc profecto morale est omnium: si enim ea quae spiritualiter quibusdam competunt, indagamus, obviam venit; quia ordinandum regem ad se venire praecognoscit. Unde autem cognoscat, adjungitur:

(Vers. 15, 16.) Dominus autem revelaverat auriculam Samuelis ante unam diem, quam veniret Saul, dicens: Hac ipsa, quae nunc est, hora, cras mittam ad te virum de terra Benjamin, et unges eum ducem super populum meum Israel, et salvabit populum meum de manu Philisthiim. 41. Exiit ergo ei obviam, ut in excelsum ducat: quia is, qui ad sanctae Ecclesiae regimen quaeritur, et divino munere demonstrandus est, et ad sublimem conversationem vocandus. Auricula Samuelis, quia diminutive dicitur, quid designat, nisi humilem intelligentiam doctoris spiritalis?

Therefore one must go up in the city; because the elect teacher in the common place of doctrine is seen with as much profit to his own as he is known to go out in order to be useful. In which place it is to be noted, that of Samuel it is not said: "Today he went up in the city," but, "today he came into the city": but of Saul and the servant it is said, not that they came, but that they "went up." For the one came as it were through a plain, the others climbed as it were into high places. What else is shown to us by this, but that the plain things which preachers speak are not plain to us? In the city, therefore, we do not come, but go up, when we either behold the plain things of preaching with difficulty, or carry with labor the small things which we are commanded. But because to stand in the city is to be fortified, therefore we go up; because when high men teach us to do small good things, they vehemently prohibit us from acquiescing to the counsels of malignant spirits. And because it is very laborious to overcome all temptations, we endeavor to reach the words of the teachers, who command this to us, as if through the labor of ascent. But because it is written, that "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (which certainly is taken not only of eternal retribution, but also of the present), almighty God for the merit of work grants to his elect increases of virtue (1 Corinthians 3:8). For even to Abraham not sparing his son it is said: "By myself have I sworn: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy son for my sake: I will bless thee, and I will multiply thy seed" (Genesis 22:16). For for the most part, they who labor faithfully in doing those things which they know, deserve through divine grace to know greater things which they may do. In whose type Saul is well said to go up first in the city, and is afterwards said to be led by Samuel to the high place. But to come to meet is to meet one coming through the same way. When therefore we wish to learn the way of salvation from holy preachers, they indeed come to meet us, when they meet us with the word of salvation which we seek. For they come as it were by the same way, when they hasten to teach us that which we have proposed to learn. This indeed is the moral meaning of all: for if we search into those things which spiritually belong to some, he comes to meet us; because he foreknows that the king who is to be ordained is coming to him. But whence he knows it, is added:

(Verse 15, 16.) Now the Lord had revealed the ear of Samuel a day before Saul came, saying: "At this very hour which is now, tomorrow I will send to thee a man from the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him leader over my people Israel, and he shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines." 41. He went out therefore to meet him, that he might lead him into the high place: because he who is sought for the government of holy Church is both to be shown by divine gift, and to be called to a sublime conversation. The ear of Samuel, because it is said diminutively (auricula), what does it designate but the humble understanding of the spiritual teacher?

Auricula ergo revelatur a Domino, quando humilis intelligentia praedicatoris a Spiritu sancto instruitur; ut quae facturus est, audiat, et audita disponat. Sed subtiliter est intuendum quod dicitur: Ante unam diem. Dies enim est vita justi, Paulo attestante, qui ait: Fuistis aliquando tenebrae, nunc autem lux in Domino (Ephes. V, 8). Quando autem vita electi ostenditur, dies latens revelatur. Nam homo videt praetextum boni operis, Deus autem lucem cordis. Quia ergo electi, et reprobi intentione cordis absconditi sunt, ante unam diem Dominus venientem regem insinuat; quando per ejus gratiam sancti praedicatores agnoscunt in eis, qui promovendi sunt, testimonium boni operis praecedere puritatem intentionis. Nulla enim est lux operis, quam non praecedit rectitudo intentionis. Recte ergo ante unam diem rex ordinandus agnoscitur. Sed subsequentem quidem diem non aspiciunt, nisi ex praecedente nascatur: ut diem ante diem intentionem ante operationem considerent, et a Deo missum in luce sanctae operationis aspiciant, quem lucere per propositum cordis divina gratia demonstrat. Et quia eadem hora, qua promittitur, exhibetur: quid dat intelligi, nisi quia perfectus debet esse, qui eligitur, non solum corpore, sed mente? Nam quando Deus loquitur sanctis viris, plena lux diei est. Habet namque originem dies, habet et finem. Juxta finem peccatorum arguit, dicens: Adam, ubi es (Gen. III, 2)? Et quia nec qui bona incipiunt, nec qui a bono opere torpescunt, promovendi sunt, hora perfectae locutionis praedicator mittitur, quando talis exhibetur, qui plena fulgeat luce boni operis, et pleno resplendeat fulgore veritatis. Qui etiam vir de terra Benjamin venire describitur. Vir quidem dicitur, pro operis fortitudine; de terra Benjamin, pro recta fidei confessione. Benjamin quidem dicitur filius dexterae. Quis ergo hic filius dextrae dicitur, quam ille, de quo scriptum est: Ascendit in coelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris (Marc. XVI, 19)? Terra ergo Benjamin sancta Ecclesia est. Quia ergo haeretici ab hac terra expulsi sunt, de terra Benjamin venit rex, quando non aliqua haeresi pollutus, sed fide catholicus sanctae Ecclesiae primatum suscipit. Qui viri praeconio fruitur, si fide firmus est, operatione fortis. Hic nimirum super populum Domini dux ungi praecipitur: quia exteriora sacramenta sacerdotibus illis prosunt, qui eorumdem sacramentorum donis indigni non sunt. Vel sacerdotes unguntur, quando per ordinantium se ministerium, gratiarum spiritualium incrementa percipiunt. Unde et sequitur: Salvabit populum meum de manu Philisthiim.

The ear, therefore, is revealed by the Lord, when the humble understanding of the preacher is instructed by the Holy Spirit; that he may hear what things he is about to do, and dispose of what has been heard. But it is to be subtilely looked into that it is said: "A day before." For a day is the life of the just man, as Paul attests, who says: "You were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8). But when the life of the elect is shown, the hidden day is revealed. For man sees the pretext of a good work, but God the light of the heart. Because, therefore, the elect and the reprobate are hidden by the intention of the heart, the Lord intimates the coming king a day before; when through his grace holy preachers recognize in those who are to be promoted that the testimony of a good work precedes the purity of intention. For there is no light of work which rectitude of intention does not precede. Rightly, therefore, a day before is the king who is to be ordained recognized. But they do not behold the subsequent day unless it be born from the preceding: that they may consider the day before the day, the intention before the operation, and behold as sent by God in the light of holy operation him whom divine grace demonstrates to shine through the purpose of the heart. And because at the same hour at which he is promised, he is exhibited: what does it give to be understood, but that he who is chosen ought to be perfect, not only in body, but in mind? For when God speaks to holy men, it is the full light of day. For the day has an origin, it has also an end. Near the end he convicts sinners, saying: "Adam, where art thou?" (Genesis 3:2). And because neither those who begin good things, nor those who grow sluggish from a good work, are to be promoted, the preacher is sent at the hour of perfect speech, when such a one is exhibited as may shine with the full light of a good work, and resplendent with the full brightness of truth. Who also is described as coming as a man from the land of Benjamin. A man indeed he is called, for the fortitude of work; from the land of Benjamin, for the right confession of faith. Benjamin indeed is called the son of the right hand. Who therefore is here called the son of the right hand, but he of whom it is written: "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father" (Mark 16:19)? The land of Benjamin therefore is the holy Church. Because therefore heretics have been expelled from this land, from the land of Benjamin comes the king, when not polluted by any heresy, but catholic in faith, he receives the primacy of holy Church. Who enjoys the praise of a man, if he be firm in faith, strong in operation. Here certainly over the people of the Lord he is commanded to be anointed as leader: because exterior sacraments benefit those priests who are not unworthy of the gifts of the same sacraments. Or priests are anointed, when through the ministry of those ordaining them, they receive increases of spiritual graces. Whence also follows: "He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines."

Velut uncti salvare alios possunt; quia spiritales gratias abundantius perceperunt. Nam qui populum salvant, super populum uncti sunt: quia qui a Domino ad regendos alios ordinantur, spiritualia charismatum dona, quibus eis prodesse possunt, accipiunt; et eis, quos ordine praecedunt, meritis etiam superiores sunt. Et quia plerumque bonus pastor merito bonae plebis eligitur, bene subjunctum est: (Vers. 16.) Quia respexi populum meum. Item quia magnis precibus a Domino bonus pastor quaerendus est, subditur: (Vers. 16.) Venit clamor eorum ad me.

42. Sed fortasse nonnulli moventur, quia contrarium videtur, quod hic dicitur, et quod superius dicebatur. Ibi enim ait: Non te abjecerunt, sed me, ne regnem super eos, juxta omnia opera sua, quae fecerunt a die, qua eduxi eos de terra Aegypti, usque in diem hanc (I Reg. VIII, 7). Nunc vero dicit: Unges eum ducem super populum meum Israel, et salvabit populum meum de manu Philistiim: quia respexi populum meum: venit enim clamor eorum ad me. Superius quasi ab irato rex ordinari permittitur, nunc quasi a pio et benigno ordinatur. Hujus etiam benignitatis verba quis non videat, quantum a sententia illa dissentiant, quae eidem a Samuele illata fuit? Quia, inquit, projecisti sermonem Domini, projecit te Dominus, ne sis rex (I Reg. XV, 26). Quod profecto celeriter solvimus, si ipsam verborum vim subtiliter intueamur. Nam omnia haec divinae benignitatis verba populi meritis ascribuntur: Salvabit populum meum; et, respexi populum meum; et, clamor eorum venit ad me. Pro illis ergo rex ordinari decernitur, quorum clamor exauditur. Nam etsi pro futura nequitia repellendus a regno erat Saul, tamen habebat in se, donec regnaret, unde populo sibi subdito prodesse potuisset. Futurus certe erat bello strenuus, mente elatus. Habiturus erat unde sibi caderet, et unde aliis staret. Illud ergo unde prodesse subditis poterat, Dominus providens dicit: Salvabit populum meum de manu Philistiim; et, venit clamor eorum ad me. Adhuc tamen valde contrarium videtur, ut ejus populi clamorem exaudire credatur, qui eum abjecisse reprehenditur. Ad quod respondendum est: quia erant in illo populo et reprobi et electi.

As it were anointed they can save others; because they have perceived spiritual graces more abundantly. For they who save the people are anointed over the people: because they who are ordained by the Lord to rule others, receive spiritual gifts of charisms by which they can be useful to them; and to those whom they precede in order, they are also superior in merits. And because for the most part a good pastor is chosen by the merit of a good flock, it is well added: (Verse 16.) "Because I have looked upon my people." Likewise because with great prayers a good pastor is to be sought from the Lord, it is added: (Verse 16.) "Their cry is come unto me."

42. But perhaps some are moved because that which is said here seems contrary to what was said above. For there he says: "They have not rejected thee, but me, that I should not reign over them, according to all their works which they have done from the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt even unto this day" (1 Samuel 8:7). But now he says: "Thou shalt anoint him leader over my people Israel, and he shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines: because I have looked upon my people: for their cry is come unto me." Above, the king is permitted to be ordained as if by one angry, now he is ordained as if by one pious and benign. Also, who does not see how much these words of benignity dissent from that sentence which was brought upon him by Samuel? "Because," he said, "thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord also hath rejected thee, that thou be not king" (1 Samuel 15:26). Which we indeed quickly solve, if we subtilely look into the force of the words themselves. For all these words of divine benignity are ascribed to the merits of the people: "He shall save my people"; and, "I have looked upon my people"; and, "their cry is come unto me." For their sake, therefore, the king is decreed to be ordained, whose cry is heard. For although Saul was to be repelled from the kingdom for his future wickedness, yet he had in himself, as long as he reigned, that whence he could have been useful to the people subject to him. He was certainly to be strenuous in war, but elated in mind. He was to have that whence he might fall for himself, and that whence he might stand for others. That, therefore, whence he could be useful to his subjects, the Lord providing says: "He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines"; and, "their cry is come unto me." Yet it still seems very contrary that the cry of that people should be believed to be heard, who are rebuked for having rejected him. To which it is to be answered: because there were in that people both the reprobate and the elect.

Ibi ergo abjecisse Dominum reprobi arguuntur, hic electorum desideria ad omnipotentis Dei aures perveniunt. Qua ex re quid colligendum est, nisi quia saepe electis bonum est, quod mali rectores ordinantur? Non ergo mirum est, si Deus quasi de abjectione sua irascitur, et regem ordinat: quia ipsa dignitas futuri regis et mala erat, et bona. Mala denique, quia superba: bona vero, quia in defensione subjectorum strenua. Quod totum, et in sancta Ecclesia nunc fieri cernimus: quia plerumque ille ejus primatum suscipit, qui verbo utilis est aliis, mente tumidus sibi. Praedicando virtutes, velut stando vitia destruit, sed alta de se sentiendo, cadit. Hic itaque praedicando populum Dei salvat, sed semetipsum tumendo praecipitat. Quasi rex potens verbo populi Dei occultos adversarios atterit, sed elatione a regni sublimitate cadit. Non ergo pro se, sed solum pro populo rex constituitur; quando ille in sancta Ecclesia praeesse permittitur, qui bona quae praedicat, superbiendo, aut nequiter vivendo, conculcat.

Quo in loco notandum est, quia cum in sancta Ecclesia pastor eligitur, aliquando ordinatur pro se, et populo; aliquando nec pro populo, nec pro se; aliquando pro se, non pro populo; aliquando vero pro populo, non pro se. Pro se et populo, quando electus praedicator electis subditis datur: quia unde subjectorum multitudo ad aeternam patriam ducitur, bono pastori meritorum dona cumulantur. Nec pro se, nec pro populo pastor datur; quando reproba plebs reprobum pastorem habere permittitur, cum sic ille praeest, sic illi obediunt, ut ad aeterna bona, nec ille qui docet, nec illi qui docentur, pervenire mereantur. De quibus per Oseam Dominus dicit - Dabo eis reges in furore meo (Osee, XIII, 11). In furore etenim Dei rex datur, quando malis pejor praeesse decernitur. Talis quippe pastor tunc datur, cum talis populus regendus suscipitur, qui pariter aeterna poena damnetur. Pro se, non pro populo pastor datur, quando bonus malis praeponitur; sicut ad Ezechielem Dominus dicit: Mitto ego te ad filios Israel, ad gentem apostatricem, quae recessit a me (Ezec. III, 3). Pro se quidem, non pro populo tunc pastor datur, quando etsi auditores suos electus praedicator convertere ad Deum non poterit, ipse tamen laboris sui aeterna lucra non perdit. Pro populo autem, non pro se; quando bonis subditis pastor tribuitur, qui dona habeat, per quae illis prosit, et sibi non prosit.

There, therefore, the reprobate are rebuked for having rejected the Lord, here the desires of the elect come to the ears of almighty God. From which thing what is to be gathered, but that often it is good for the elect that evil rulers are ordained? It is not, therefore, wonderful if God as it were is angry at his rejection, and ordains a king: because the dignity of the future king was both evil and good. Evil indeed because proud; but good because strenuous in the defense of subjects. All which we see now being done in holy Church: because for the most part he receives its primacy who is useful in word to others, but swollen in mind for himself. By preaching virtues, as if by standing, he destroys vices, but by thinking high things of himself, he falls. He here, therefore, by preaching saves the people of God, but by swelling precipitates himself. Like a powerful king, by the word of the people of God he wears down hidden adversaries, but by elation he falls from the sublimity of the kingdom. Not for himself, therefore, but only for the people is the king constituted; when he is permitted to preside in holy Church who tramples upon the good things which he preaches, by being proud, or by living wickedly.

In this place it is to be noted that when a pastor is chosen in the holy Church, he is sometimes ordained for himself and the people; sometimes for neither the people nor himself; sometimes for himself, not for the people; and sometimes indeed for the people, not for himself. For himself and the people, when a chosen preacher is given to chosen subjects: because while the multitude of subjects is led to the eternal fatherland, the gifts of merits are heaped upon the good pastor. A pastor is given neither for himself nor for the people when a reprobate people is permitted to have a reprobate pastor, since he presides in such a way, and they obey him in such a way, that neither he who teaches nor those who are taught deserve to reach eternal goods. Concerning whom the Lord says through Hosea: *I will give them kings in my fury* (Hosea 13:11). For a king is given in the fury of God when one worse than the wicked is decreed to preside. Indeed, such a pastor is given then, when such a people is received to be ruled as may equally be condemned to eternal punishment. A pastor is given for himself, not for the people, when a good man is set over the wicked; as the Lord says to Ezekiel: *I send thee to the children of Israel, to an apostate nation that has departed from me* (Ezek. 2:3). A pastor is then given indeed for himself, not for the people, when although the chosen preacher cannot convert his listeners to God, he nevertheless does not lose the eternal gains of his labor. But for the people, not for himself, when a pastor is granted to good subjects who possesses gifts through which he may benefit them, but not himself.

Tales quidem erant, de quibus Dominus discipulis praecipit, dicens: Quae dicunt, facite: quae autem faciunt, facere nolite (Matth. XXIII, 3). Quasi dicat: Quod utile pro vobis acceperunt, ab eis quasi vestrum tollite; et in eis quasi suum dimittite, quod non habent ad lucrum vestrum, sed ad interitum suum. Saul ergo, abjecto Domino, eligitur, et tamen populum Domini de manu Philistinorum liberaturum perhibetur, quia omnipotens Deus saepe suis bonis fidelibus per illos praelatos prodest, qui de officio ejusdem praelationis sibi non placent. Sequitur:

(Vers. 17.) Cumque respexisset Samuel Saul, Dominus ait: Ecce vir, quem dixeram tibi, iste dominabitur populo meo.

44. Hoc namque in sequenti die actum est, quod praecedenti Dominus repromisit, dicens: Cras hac eadem hora mittam ad te virum de terra Benjamin, et unges eum super populum meum Israel. Aspicitur ergo in secundo die, qui primo promittitur: quia praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae virtutes electorum in secreta eorum vita perquirunt. Hi enim qui promovendi sunt, dum bona proferunt, aliquid magnum ex se repromittunt. Primo igitur die rex promittitur; quia magna electorum opera praedicatores aspiciunt, et, quasi Domino loquente, intus agnoscunt, quos ordinare sanctae Ecclesiae rectores volunt. Aspicit ergo Samuel in sequenti die, quando praedicator eum, qui promovendus est, in magna luce conversationis videt. Et tunc quidem, quasi indicante Domino, ordinandum regem cognoscit: quia eum, qui in alta arce sanctitatis praeeminet, praeferre aliis dignum videt. Et quia qui magni sunt meritis, parvi sunt per humilitatem, sequitur:

(Vers. 18.) Accessit Saul ad Samuelem in medio portae. Indica, oro, mihi, inquiens, ubi est domus Videntis.

Si in civitate tunc est praedicator, cum plana et communia loquitur, quae intelliguntur, porta civitatis hujus quae est, nisi humilitas? Nam divini verbi cognitio superbis absconditur, humilibus revelatur. Unde et in Evangelio Patri loquitur, dicens: Confiteor tibi, Pater, rex coeli et terrae, quia abscondisti haec a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelasti ea parvulis (Matth. XI, 25). Sapientes quidem superbos et alta de se sentientes, parvulos vero dixit humiles. Quorum certe alia Scriptura meminit, dicens: Deus superbis resistit, humilibus dat gratiam (I Petr. V, 5).

Such indeed were those concerning whom the Lord commands the disciples, saying: *What they say, do: but what they do, do not* (Matt. 23:3). As if He were to say: Take from them what they have received as useful for you, as if it were yours; and leave in them what they do not have for your gain, but for their own destruction, as if it were theirs. Saul, therefore, having cast off the Lord, is chosen, and yet he is said to be about to deliver the people of the Lord from the hand of the Philistines, because almighty God often benefits His good faithful through those prelates who do not please Him in the office of that same prelacy (*praelationis*). It follows:

(Verse 17) *And when Samuel had looked upon Saul, the Lord said: Behold the man of whom I spoke to thee, this man shall rule over my people.*

44. For this was done on the following day, which the Lord had promised on the preceding one, saying: *Tomorrow at this same hour I will send to thee a man from the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him over my people Israel.* He is seen on the second day, therefore, who is promised on the first: because the preachers of the holy Church search out the virtues of the elect in their secret life. For those who are to be promoted, while they bring forth good things, promise something great from themselves. On the first day, therefore, a king is promised; because the preachers behold the great works of the elect and, as the Lord speaks within, they recognize those whom they wish to ordain as rectors (*rectores*) of the holy Church. Samuel looks, therefore, on the following day, when the preacher sees him who is to be promoted in the great light of his conversation. And then indeed, as if by the Lord's indication, he recognizes the king to be ordained: because he sees that it is worthy to prefer to others him who stands out in the high fortress of holiness. And because those who are great in merits are small through humility, it follows:

(Verse 18) *Saul came near to Samuel in the middle of the gate. Tell me, I pray thee, he said, where is the house of the Seer.*

If the preacher is then in the city when he speaks plain and common things which are understood, what is the gate of this city but humility? For the knowledge of the divine word is hidden from the proud and revealed to the humble. Whence also He speaks to the Father in the Gospel, saying: *I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones* (Matt. 11:25). Indeed, He called the proud and those who feel high things of themselves "wise," but the humble He called "little ones." Of whom certainly another Scripture makes mention, saying: *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble* (1 Pet. 5:5).

Resistit namque superbis, ne aeterna bona intelligant sed parvulis gratiam dat, ut eadem bona aeterna, ipso revelante, cognoscant. Electi ergo, quia ad spiritalem sententiam per humilitatem veniunt, ad audiendos praedicatores, quasi per portam vadunt. Electus etiam praedicator, quia spiritualia humiliter dicit, Samuel Sauli in eadem porta occurrit. Quasi enim ambo in porta sunt, quando ea, quae electus praedicator loquitur, ab electo alio humiliter audiuntur.

Sed qui noviter venerat, quem quaerebat, invenerat, et ignorabat. Quare et idem Saul ad Samuelem dicit: Indica mihi, oro, ubi est domus Videntis. Hoc namque proprium magnorum virorum est, ut a minimis difficile cognoscantur. Carne quidem despecti sunt, sed mente sublimes. Foris contemptibiles apparere appetunt, sed agere venerabilia non desistunt. Quia ergo valde proficere per eorum exempla appetunt, eos non solum in exterioribus, sed in intimis admirantur. Vident ergo in eis exterius, quod possit a carnalibus despici, sed et pariter attendunt, quod intus spirituales viri magna admiratione debeant venerari. Quos dum fama sublimes audiunt, in altitudine suae conversationis agnoscere concupiscunt. Secundum historiam ergo Saul Samuelem videbat, et non cognoscebat; ut quod in figura contingebat illis, nobis spiritualia designaret. Nam cum parvuli sumus, quasi videmus perfectos viros, dum eorum virtutes a referentibus audimus; sed quos videmus, non cognoscimus, quia per experientiam scire non possumus, quia hoc, quod auditu percipimus, in cordis oculis tenemus. Quando igitur ab eis conversationis ejus secreta ad imitandum requirimus, eos nimirum quasi de propria domo interrogamus. Domus namque eorum conversatio est. Hanc domum scire volebat discipulus Joannis, quando Dominum interrogavit, dicens: Magister ubi habitas (Joan. I, 38)? Qui nimirum, quia ad familiaritatem illius, quasi domesticus perducendus erat, audivit: Veni, et vide. Hanc domum visam Philippus non cognoscebat, cui dicit: Tanto tempore vobiscum sum et non cognovistis me: Philippe, qui videt me, videt et Patrem meum (Joan. XIV, 9). De Domino etiam scriptum est, quia loquebatur Moysi sicut cum amico suo; sed idem Moyses videns, et non cognoscens, interrogabat, dicens: Si inveni gratiam in conspectu tuo, ostende mihi faciem tuam (Exod. XXXIII, 13). Spiritualis autem conversatio sanctorum, quia nonnisi devotis, ac supplicibus panditur, domum Samuelis Saul indicari sibi similiter deprecatur.

(Vers. 19.) Et respondit Samuel Saul dicens: Ego sum Videns. Sed ascende ante me in excelsum hodie, ut comedas mecum, et dimittam te mane.

For He resists the proud, lest they understand eternal goods, but He gives grace to little ones, that they may know those same eternal goods by His revelation. The elect, therefore, because they come to spiritual meaning through humility, go as if through a gate to hear the preachers. The chosen preacher also, because he speaks spiritual things humbly, Samuel meets Saul in that same gate. For both are as it were in the gate when those things which the chosen preacher speaks are heard humbly by another chosen one.

But he who had newly come had found whom he was seeking, and did not know it. Wherefore also the same Saul says to Samuel: *Tell me, I pray thee, where is the house of the Seer.* For this is characteristic of great men, that they are recognized with difficulty by the least. In the flesh indeed they are despised, but in the mind they are sublime. Outwardly they desire to appear contemptible, but they do not cease to do venerable things. Because, therefore, they desire to profit greatly by their examples, they admire them not only in outward things but in their innermost parts. They see in them outwardly, therefore, what can be despised by the carnal, but they equally observe what within spiritual men ought to be venerated with great admiration. While they hear them to be sublime by fame, they desire to recognize them in the height of their conversation (*conversatio*). According to history, therefore, Saul saw Samuel and did not know him; that what happened to them in figure might designate spiritual things to us. For when we are little ones, we as it were see perfect men while we hear of their virtues from those who relate them; but those whom we see we do not know, because we cannot know by experience, because we hold in the eyes of the heart that which we perceive by hearing. When, therefore, we seek from them the secrets of their conversation to imitate them, we undoubtedly ask them as if concerning their own house. For their house is their conversation (*conversatio*). John's disciple wished to know this house when he questioned the Lord, saying: *Master, where dwellest thou? * (John 1:38). Who undoubtedly, because he was to be led to His familiarity as if a member of the household, heard: *Come and see.* Philip did not know this house when seen, to whom He says: *Have I been so long a time with you and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth my Father also* (John 14:9). Concerning the Lord it is also written that He spoke to Moses as with His friend; but the same Moses, seeing and not knowing, asked, saying: *If I have found grace in thy sight, show me thy face* (Exod. 33:13). But because the spiritual conversation of the saints is opened only to the devoted and suppliant, Saul similarly prays that the house of Samuel be shown to him.

(Verse 19) *And Samuel answered Saul, saying: I am the Seer. But ascend before me to the high place today, that thou mayest eat with me, and I will let thee go in the morning.*

47. Quid est dicere: Ego sum Videns: nisi se, sicut in oculis videbatur, humilem demonstrare? Quasi dicat: Tu in aestimatione tua magnum habes, quem quaeris, sed parvus est ille, quem vides. Hoc namque in verbo, Videns, non praedicatur, sed ego. Quasi dicat: Videns ille, est, ego: non quod aestimas, sed quod cernis. Sed qui humiliare se novit, novit dare dona non humilis, sed sublimis. Quare et in excelsum ante se ascendere eum, ut secum comedat, praecipit. In excelsum ascendit, qui ad scienda altiora mentem erigit. In excelsum quidem ascendere, est cor ad altiora intelligenda praeparare. Unde et Petrus in monte assumitur, ut gloriam transformati Redemptoris videre mereatur (Matth. XVII, 1). In illo etenim ascensu montis, sublimis praeparatio mentis exprimitur: quia alta videre non poterit, qui per intentionem animum in sublimibus non ponit. Quia ergo sublimia praeparati melius intelligimus, ante Samuelem Saul in excelsum ascendere jubetur. Quasi enim ante praedicatorem in excelsum ascendimus, quando nos prius ad alta scienda animum intendimus, et ipsi nobis ea, ad quae intendimus, postmodum loquuntur. Quid vero est, quod ait: Ut comedas mecum hodie? Sed quando praedicatores sancti coelestia loquuntur, electorum suorum auditorum corda reficiunt: testante etenim veritate, quia cibus animae est verbum Dei, Non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbo quod procedit de ore Dei (Matth. IV, 4). Panis namque alimentum corporis est, verbum mentis. Qui vero corpus sine mente reficiunt, mente mortui sunt, carne vivi. Quare et de delicata vidua Paulus ait: Vivens mortua est (I Tim. V, 6). Nam per ciborum delicias non moreretur vidua, si animam verbi Dei cibo satiaret, cum ipse Paulus dicat: Nihil esse immundum, quod cum gratiarum actione percipitur (I Tim. IV, 4). Sed vivens vidua moritur, quando cibo corpus nutrit, animam fame interficit (Matth. IV). In solo ergo pane homo non vivit: quia cum ex anima et corpore constet homo, sicut aliter per corpus vivit, ita et necesse est ut alimentis diversis singula nutriantur. Ut comedamus itaque, cum propheta ascendimus, quando ad alta divini verbi mentem erigimus, ut ejus coelesti sapore per devotionem satiemur.

48. Et quia ipsi praedicatores valde amant coelestia, quae loquuntur, quasi simul comedimus, cum devote illi loquendo proferunt, quod nos devote audiendo, in ventre animae locamus. Simul enim comedimus: quia verbum Dei pariter audimus. Praedicatoribus namque Veritas dicit: Non vos estis, qui loquimini, sed spiritus Patris vestri, qui loquitur in vobis (Matth. X, 20). Quod et Paulus probat, cum suos auditores interrogat, dicens: An experimentum quaeritis ejus, qui in me habitat Christus (II Cor. XIII, 3)?

47. What is it to say: I am the Seer: except to demonstrate himself humble, just as he was seen in the eyes? As if he were to say: You hold him whom you seek as great in your estimation, but he whom you see is small. For in this word, Seer, it is not "I" that is preached. As if he were to say: That Seer is I: not what you estimate, but what you discern. But he who knows how to humble himself, knows how to give gifts not as humble, but as sublime. Wherefore also he commands him to ascend to the high place before him, that he may eat with him. He ascends into the high place who raises his mind to know higher things. Indeed, to ascend into the high place is to prepare the heart to understand higher things. Whence also Peter is taken up into the mountain, that he may deserve to see the glory of the transformed Redeemer (Matt. 17:1). For in that ascent of the mountain, the sublime preparation of the mind is expressed: because he who does not place his soul in sublime things through intention will not be able to see high things. Because therefore we understand better the high things when we are prepared, Saul is commanded to ascend into the high place before Samuel. For as it were we ascend into the high place before the preacher when we first intend our mind to know high things, and those very things to which we intend ourselves are afterwards spoken to us. But what is it that he says: That thou mayest eat with me today? But when holy preachers speak heavenly things, they refresh the hearts of their chosen hearers: for as truth testifies, because the food of the soul is the word of God, Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). For bread is the nourishment of the body, the word of the mind. Those who refresh the body without the mind are dead in mind, living in flesh. Wherefore also Paul says of the delicate widow: Living she is dead (1 Tim. 5:6). For the widow would not die through the delicacies of foods if she satiated her soul with the food of the word of God, since Paul himself says: Nothing is unclean which is perceived with thanksgiving (1 Tim. 4:4). But the living widow dies when she nourishes the body with food, but kills the soul with hunger. Therefore in bread alone man does not live: because since man consists of soul and body, just as he lives otherwise through the body, so also it is necessary that each be nourished by different foods. That we may eat, therefore, we ascend with the prophet when we raise the mind to the high things of the divine word, that we may be satiated by its heavenly savor through devotion.

48. And because the preachers themselves greatly love the heavenly things which they speak, we as it were eat together when they devotedly bring forth in speaking what we, devotedly hearing, place in the belly of the soul. For we eat together: because we together hear the word of God. For Truth says to the preachers: It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you (Matt. 10:20). Which Paul also proves when he interrogates his hearers, saying: Do you seek a proof of Christ who dwells in me? (2 Cor. 13:3).

Quia ergo in sanctis praedicatoribus Christus, et ejus spiritus loquitur, ipsi praedicatores tanto clarius loquentem audiunt, quanto ei viciniores sunt, cujus sedes esse merentur. Tanto ergo plenius de verbi alimento poterunt refici, quanto jam intra se habent cellam refectionis. Amici etenim sponsi sunt, et stant, et gaudio gaudent propter vocem sponsi. Cum ergo divina loquuntur sancti praedicatores, audiunt: sed quia certa experientia norunt, quando in eis loquitur spiritus, audiunt se, sed non in se, quia et ipsi loquuntur, sed in se locuti, loquentem alium venerantur. In eo igitur, quod audiunt et loquuntur, et reficiunt, et reficiuntur. Reficiunt quidem auditores, dum verbum proferunt voce sua: reficiuntur ipsi, dum verbum, quod proferunt, profertur eis revelatione divina. Ipsi tamen devotius saturantur, qui in locutione spiritus, mentis delicias experti sunt. Annon experientia loquentis spiritus est, inconsultos et impraemeditatos se cernere, subitoque consultos, et paratos esse? Scire, quae nescierant: habere, quae non habuerant: torporem mentis amittere, repente mira devotione fervere: plenitudine scientiae statim et in momento mirabiliter repleri, mira verbi facundia intellecta proferre? Habent ergo electi praedicatores experientiam spiritus in se loquentis, in repentina revelatione veritatis: habent subito ardorem charitatis, habent in plenitudine scientiae, habent in facundissima verbi praedicatione. Nam et subito instruuntur, et repente fervescunt, et in momento replentur, et mirabili eloquii potestate ditantur. De illa namque repentina experientia Dominus dicit: Dabitur vobis in illa hora, quid loquamini (Matth. X, 19). De illo autem subitaneo fervore charitatis Cleophas dicit: Nonne cor nostrum ardens erat in via; dum loqueretur, et aperiret nobis Scripturas (Luc. XXIV, 32)? De repletionis quoque et facundiae experientia Lucas meminit, dicens: Factus est repente de coelo sonus tanquam advenientis spiritus vehementis, et replevit totam domum, ubi erant sedentes (Act. II, 2). In eodem quippe spiritu repleti et locuti sunt, ut hoc, quod asserimus, designarent: quia videlicet loquendo, alios pascunt, qui de eo, quod dicunt, audiendo pascuntur. Et quia sonum vehementis spiritus ardorem, sive locutionem, aut repletionem cognoscunt, tanto dulcius in donis spiritualibus epulantur, quanto ad ejus recubitum dignius assumpti sunt. Dicit ergo: Ascende, ut comedas mecum hodie; quia bonus doctor, dum dulciter, quae dicit, in devotionem mentis accipit, se et eos qui audiunt simul pascit.

Because, therefore, in the holy preachers Christ and his Spirit speak, the preachers themselves hear him speaking the more clearly, the closer they are to him whose seat they deserve to be. They will be able, therefore, to be refreshed the more fully by the nourishment of the word, the more they already have within themselves the chamber of refreshment (cella refectionis). For they are friends of the bridegroom, and they stand, and rejoice with joy because of the voice of the bridegroom. When, therefore, holy preachers speak divine things, they hear: but because they know by certain experience when the Spirit speaks in them, they hear themselves, but not in themselves, because they also speak, but having spoken in themselves, they venerate another speaker. In that, therefore, which they hear and speak, they both refresh and are refreshed. They refresh the hearers indeed, while they bring forth the word with their voice: they themselves are refreshed while the word which they bring forth is brought forth to them by divine revelation. They, however, are more devotedly saturated who, in the locution of the Spirit, have experienced the delicacies of the mind. Is it not the experience of the speaking Spirit to see themselves unconsulted and unpremeditated, and suddenly consulted and ready? To know what they had not known: to have what they had not had: to lose the torpor of the mind, and suddenly to glow with wonderful devotion: to be filled wonderfully immediately and in a moment with the fullness of knowledge, and to bring forth understood things with wonderful eloquence of the word? Therefore the chosen preachers have the experience of the Spirit speaking in them, in the sudden revelation of truth: they have suddenly the ardor of charity, they have it in the fullness of knowledge, they have it in the most eloquent preaching of the word. For they are both suddenly instructed and suddenly glow, and in a moment they are filled, and enriched with the wonderful power of speech. Of that sudden experience, the Lord says: It shall be given you in that hour what you shall speak (Matt. 10:19). Of that sudden fervor of charity, Cleopas says: Was not our heart burning in the way; while he spoke, and opened to us the Scriptures? (Luke 24:32). Of the experience of fullness and eloquence also, Luke mentions, saying: Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing Spirit, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting (Acts 2:2). In the same Spirit they were filled and spoke, that they might designate this which we assert: because namely in speaking they feed others, who are fed by hearing that which they say. And because they know the ardor of the sound of the vehement Spirit, or the locution, or the fullness, they feast the more sweetly in spiritual gifts, the more worthily they have been assumed to his reclining. He says therefore: Ascend, that thou mayest eat with me today; because the good teacher, while he sweetly receives into the devotion of the mind what he says, feeds himself and those who hear at the same time.

Quo contra doctores reprobi, quia quae dicunt, non amant, cum alios verbo pascunt, jejunant. Nam cum animae refectionem verbum Dei esse Dominus dixerit, verbum vero Dei in mente plena sit eruditio, plena devotio; verbo Dei non pascuntur, qui devote, quod loquuntur, non audiunt. Apostolus quidem, quasi jam illa verbi dulcedine repletus, ait: De plenitudine ejus omnes accepimus (Joan. I, 16). Alia quidem est plenitudo verbi, alia libri. De plenitudo quidem verbi accipere nonnisi electi possunt, de plenitudine vero Scripturae possunt et reprobi. Liber namque beati Joannis apostoli, et liber beati Pauli apostoli plenitudines quidem sunt, quae de eis habentur. Eorum nimirum verba Paulus sive Joannes scripsit, sed quod quisque scripsit, loquens in eis verbum inspiravit. Qui ergo verbum Scripturae accipit, non in amore, sed in scientia, de plenitudine accipit, non verbi, sed libri. Et quia rem mortuam accipit, in ejus ipse acceptione non vivit. Sed quid dico Scripturam mortuam? Non est mortua tantum, sed interficiens. Nam scriptum est: Littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat (II Cor. III, 6). Hoc quidem facit omnis divina littera. Nam littera corpus est, hujus vero corporis vita spiritus. Vivificatum quippe, et vivificans corpus accipit, qui litteram legit, et in amorem intelligentiae mentem reficit. Reprobi ergo, qui Scripturas rimantur, quas non amant, qui audacter foris loquuntur, cujus saporem intus non intelligunt; dum refectionem Scripturarum, quas exponunt, alii devota mente percipiunt, quasi de eo, quod ipsi dant, alii saturantur, non ipsi. Dicat ergo Samuel: Ascende, ut comedas mecum hodie: quia ex eo, quod subditis de verbo electi doctores tribuunt, et pariter audiunt, et pariter saturantur. Ecce enim in eodem ipso verbo, quod dicimus, demonstratur. Nam quis dubitat, quod hanc Scripturam, quam exponimus, Samuel scripserit? Et tamen ipse, qui scripsit, haec dicit: Respondit Samuel; ut profecto ostenderet, quia quod ipse scribebat, alius impartiebatur.

(Vers. 19.) Dimittam te mane.

50. Mane quidem ab excelso dimittitur, qui cum ad altioris scientiae lumen proficit, in magna luce boni operis se proponit immorari. Vel mane dimittitur, qui verbum magnae scientiae, quod praedicatoris ore didicit, praedicare aliis intendit. Quando enim bona proponimus, quasi mane in initio diei sumus; quia boni claritatem jam aspicere coepimus, quam sequamur. Sed hoc mane in plenum diem crescit, quando is, qui magna bona agere, aut alta aeternitatis gaudia praedicare proposuit, id quod proposuit, in magna exhibet luce virtutis.

In contrast, reprobate teachers, because they do not love what they say, fast while they feed others with the word. For since the Lord has said that the word of God is the refreshment of the soul, and the word of God in the mind is full erudition and full devotion; they are not fed by the word of God who do not devoutly hear what they speak. The Apostle indeed, as if already filled with that sweetness of the word, says: *Of his fullness we all have received* (John 1:16). There is indeed one fullness of the word, and another of the book. Indeed, only the elect can receive from the fullness of the word, but from the fullness of Scripture even the reprobate can [receive]. For the book of the blessed John the Apostle and the book of the blessed Paul the Apostle are indeed fullnesses which are had of them. Undoubtedly Paul or John wrote their words, but the Word speaking in them inspired what each one wrote. He, therefore, who receives the word of Scripture not in love but in knowledge, receives from the fullness not of the word, but of the book. And because he receives a dead thing, he himself does not live in the receiving of it. But why do I say dead Scripture? It is not only dead, but killing. For it is written: *The letter killeth, but the spirit vivifieth* (2 Cor. 3:6). This indeed every divine letter does. For the letter is the body, but the life of this body is the spirit. He indeed receives a vivified and vivifying body who reads the letter and refreshes his mind in the love of understanding. Reprobates, therefore, who search the Scriptures which they do not love, who speak boldly outwardly what they do not understand inwardly in its flavor; while others perceive with a devout mind the refreshment of the Scriptures which they [the reprobates] expound, others are as it were satiated by that which they themselves give, but not themselves. Let Samuel say, therefore: *Ascend, that thou mayest eat with me today*: because from that which the chosen teachers grant to their subjects from the word, they both hear together and are satiated together. For behold, it is demonstrated in the very same word that we speak. For who doubts that Samuel wrote this Scripture which we are expounding? And yet he himself who wrote says these things: *Samuel answered*; so that he might clearly show that what he himself was writing, another was imparting.

(Verse 19) *I will let thee go in the morning.*

50. He is indeed let go from the high place in the morning who, when he profits in the light of higher knowledge, proposes to dwell in the great light of good work. Or he is let go in the morning who intends to preach to others the word of great knowledge which he learned from the mouth of the preacher. For when we propose good things, we are as it were in the morning at the beginning of the day; because we have already begun to behold the clarity of the good which we should follow. But this morning grows into the full day when he who proposed to do great good things or to preach the high joys of eternity, exhibits in the great light of virtue that which he proposed.

Mane ergo Saul ab excelso dimittitur; quia auditores praedicatorum bonorum, quod ab eis sublime audiunt, exercere sublimiter non morantur. Sed electi viri, bona quae habent, et abscondere, et manifestare sciunt. Abscondunt quippe, ne per elationem pereant, sed ne infructuosa remaneant, manifestant. Dum absconderunt, tunc custodiunt; sed dum manifestant, proferunt fructum. Nam sequitur:

(Vers. 19, 20.) Et omnia quae sunt in animo tuo indicabo tibi; et de asinis, quas perdidisti nudiustertius, ne sollicitus sis, quia inventae sunt.

Celare se quidem praedicatores qualiter studeant, superius in verbo Samuelis ostenditur, ubi dicitur: Ego sum Videns. Nunc autem quia dicit: Omnia, quae sunt in animo tuo, indicabo tibi; quid aliud tenemus, nisi quia saepe viri sancti, virtutes, quas habent, et abscondunt et proferunt? Sed, ut dixi, abscondunt, ne in magnis virtutibus magni videantur; proferunt eas, ut electi imitentur. Verbo itaque sapientiae, aut prophetiae spiritu se pollere asserunt, non ut venerentur, sed ut audiantur. Quare et Psalmista verbi gratiam se habere insinuans, ait: Super omnes docentes me intellexi (Psal. CXVIII, 99). Certus ergo de peritia spiritus, confidenter nos invitat, dicens: Venite, filii, audite me, timorem Domini docebo vos (Psal. XXXIII, 11). Propheta namque se affirmabat Michaeas, cum diceret: Utinam non essem vir habens spiritum; et mendacium potius loquerer (Mich, II, 11). Hinc Helisaeus de Naaman Syro dicit: Veniat ad me, et sciat Prophetam esse in Israel (IV Reg. V, 8). Hinc Paulus ait: Hebraei sunt, et ego; semen Abrahae sunt, et ego; ministri Christi sunt, et ego; ut minus sapiens dico, plus ego (II Cor. XI, 22, 23). E contra autem Amos dicit: Non sum propheta, sed armentarius vellicans sycomoros (Amos. VII, 14). Hinc etiam Paulus cum se vult abscondere ad custodiam, dicit: Non sum dignus vocari apostolus, quia persecutus sum Ecclesiam Dei (I Cor. XV, 9). Hinc interrogatus Joannes Baptista ait: Non sum propheta (Joan. I, 21). Non erat quippe ad elationem, sed erat propheta et plusquam propheta ad ministerium. Samuel ergo, ut se custodiat, ait: Ego sum Videns; et ut se ad lucrum exhibeat, dicit; Omnia indicabo tibi. Quod si aliquis vult, eodem modo intelligere potest; quia cum dicit: Ego sum Videns, si videntem se asserit, ad hoc dicit ut bonum, quod habet, cum electis communicet. Ut ergo quod asserit, probet, subsequenter adjungit; Omnia indicabo tibi. Quod sanctae Ecclesiae doctores agunt; quia dum virtutes mentium intuentur, et vitia; et mederi vitiis, et p...

In the morning, therefore, Saul is let go from the high place; because the listeners of good preachers do not delay to exercise sublimely what they hear sublimely from them. But chosen men know both how to hide and how to manifest the good things which they have. They hide them indeed, lest they perish through elation (*elationem*), but they manifest them lest they remain unfruitful. While they hide them, they then guard them; but while they manifest them, they bring forth fruit. For there follows:

(Verses 19, 20) *And I will tell thee all that is in thy heart; and as for the donkeys (*asinis*) which thou lost three days ago, be not solicitous, because they are found.*

How preachers study to conceal themselves is shown above in the word of Samuel, where it is said: *I am the Seer*. But now, because he says: *I will tell thee all that is in thy heart*, what else do we hold but that holy men often both hide and bring forth the virtues which they have? But, as I said, they hide them lest they should appear great in great virtues; they bring them forth so that the elect may imitate them. And so they assert that they are strong in the word of wisdom or the spirit of prophecy, not that they may be venerated, but that they may be heard. Wherefore the Psalmist also, insinuating that he had the grace of the word, says: *I have understood more than all my teachers* (Ps. 118:99). Certain, therefore, of the skill of the spirit, he confidently invites us, saying: *Come, children, hearken to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord* (Ps. 33:11). For Micah affirmed that he was a prophet when he said: *Would that I were not a man having the spirit; and that I rather spoke a lie* (Mic. 2:11). Hence Elisha says of Naaman the Syrian: *Let him come to me, and let him know that there is a prophet in Israel* (4 Kings 5:8). Hence Paul says: *They are Hebrews, so am I; they are the seed of Abraham, so am I; they are ministers of Christ, so am I; (I speak as a fool) I am more* (2 Cor. 11:22, 23). On the contrary, however, Amos says: *I am not a prophet, but a herdsman plucking sycamores* (Amos 7:14). Hence also Paul, when he wishes to hide himself for [his own] guarding, says: *I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God* (1 Cor. 15:9). Hence John the Baptist, being questioned, says: *I am not the prophet* (John 1:21). Indeed, he was not for elation, but he was a prophet and more than a prophet for his ministry. Samuel, therefore, that he may guard himself, says: *I am the Seer*; and that he may present himself for gain, says: *I will tell thee all*. Which, if someone wishes, he can understand in the same way; because when he says: *I am the Seer*, if he asserts himself to be a seer, he says this so that he may communicate the good which he has with the elect. That he may, therefore, prove what he asserts, he subsequently adds: *I will tell thee all*. Which the doctors of the holy Church do; because while they intuit the virtues of minds, and the vices; and [they study] to heal the vices, and p...

52. Hoc superius in persona Saul, qualiter rudibus praedicatoribus conveniat, expositum est. Asinas quippe perdidit, qui peccatores, quibus verbum vitae praebuit, ad poenitentiam nequaquam traxit. Inveniret quidem, si ii qui se in nocte pravitatis absconderant, ad lucem justitiae redirent, in qua viri inveniri potuissent. Cur ergo dicit: Inventae sunt, nisi quia saepe in eis summi viri salutis bonum facile inveniri posse considerant, de quorum vita ineruditi desperant? Nam et periti medici corporum, illos saepe curare praesumunt, de quorum salute imperiti praesumere non possunt. Sic nimirum et ab eruditis doctoribus saepe ad poenitentiam, et satisfactionem peccatores trahuntur, qui trahi ab ineruditis rudibus nequiverunt. Quia igitur tam praedicatione quam exemplo perfectorum illi ad Dominum poenitendo redeunt, qui converti per aliorum ministerium nequiverunt; bene Samuel inventas asinas dicit, quas Saul invenire non potuit. Potest etiam hoc dictum pro profectu ordinandi rectoris intelligi. Quasi dicat: Dum eruditione et vita proficis, illos etiam lucrari Domino poteris, quos nondum potuisti. Tam certa quidem virtus profectionis est, ut fructus ejus, qui nondum constant in re, constent in spei certitudine. Et quia his verbis ad perferendos labores sanctae praedicationis invitatur, quae mercedis lucra exspectare debeat, exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 20.) Et cui erunt quaeque optima Israel, nonne tibi et omni domui patris tui?

53. Israel, qui dicitur, videns Deum, quem rectius hoc loco significat, quam aeternorum civium illam beatam societatem, qui ex labore vitae hujus, ad aeternam omnipotentis Dei visionem pervenerunt? Quae ergo sunt Israel optima, nisi aeternae retributionis dona? Paulus quidem dicit: Unusquisque mercedem accipiet secundum laborent suum (I Cor. III, 8). Hinc item dicit: Alia est gloria solis, alia lunae, et stellarum. Stella enim differt a stella in claritate (I Cor. XV, 41). Omnium ergo fidelium retributiones, et praemia, bona sunt Israel. Quia vero electorum praedicatorum merces summa est, eorum sunt optima Israel. De his quippe Israelis optimis Dominus fideli servo suo repromittit, dicens: Amen dico vobis, super omnia bona sua constituet eum (Matt. XXIV, 47). Qui enim non in omnibus, sed super omnia constituitur, non tantum bona Israel, sed etiam optima habere declaratur. Dicat ergo Samuel: Cui erunt quaeque optima Israel, nonne tibi et omni domui patris tui? Quasi dicat: Et si magnus est labor praedicationis, tanto devotius ferri debet, quanto majora lucra mercedis habet.

52. This was expounded above in the person of Saul, as it befits rudimentary preachers. Indeed, he lost the donkeys (*asinas*) who by no means drew to penance (*poenitentiam*) the sinners to whom he offered the word of life. He would find them indeed if those who had hidden themselves in the night of wickedness returned to the light of justice, in which men could have been found. Why then does he say: *They are found*, unless because very great men often consider that the good of salvation can easily be found in those of whose life the unlearned despair? For even skilled physicians of bodies often presume to cure those of whose health the unskilled cannot presume. In this way undoubtedly sinners are often drawn to penance and satisfaction by learned doctors, who could not be drawn by the unlearned and rudimentary. Because, therefore, both by the preaching and the example of the perfect those return to the Lord by repenting who could not be converted through the ministry of others, Samuel rightly says the donkeys are found, which Saul could not find. This saying can also be understood for the progress of the rector (*rectoris*) to be ordained. As if he were to say: While thou profitest in erudition and life, thou wilt be able to gain for the Lord even those whom thou couldst not yet. So certain indeed is the virtue of progress, that its fruits, which do not yet consist in reality, consist in the certainty of hope. And because by these words he is invited to endure the labors of holy preaching, he expounds what rewards of merit he ought to expect, saying:

(Verse 20) *And to whom shall be all the best things of Israel? Shall they not be to thee and to all thy father's house?*

53. Israel, which is called "seeing God," whom does it more rightly signify in this place than that blessed society of eternal citizens who, from the labor of this life, have arrived at the eternal vision of almighty God? What then are the best things of Israel, if not the gifts of eternal retribution? Paul indeed says: *Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor* (1 Cor. 3:8). Hence he likewise says: *There is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, and another of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory* (1 Cor. 15:41). The retributions and prizes of all the faithful, therefore, are the good things of Israel. But because the reward of chosen preachers is supreme, to them belong the best things of Israel. Concerning these best things of Israel the Lord indeed promises to His faithful servant, saying: *Amen I say to you, he shall place him over all his goods* (Matt. 24:47). For he who is placed not among all, but over all things, is declared to have not only the good things of Israel, but even the best. Let Samuel say, therefore: *To whom shall be all the best things of Israel? Shall they not be to thee and to all thy father's house?* As if he were to say: Even if the labor of preaching is great, it ought to be borne so much the more devoutly as it has greater gains of reward.

Sollicita ergo mente doctor sanctae Ecclesiae pensare debet: quia Israel non bona tantum, sed etiam optima ejus sunt, ut majora et excellentiora agat semper, qui tam summa et optima exspectat. Eadem quippe summa, non summo ordini debentur, sed summo labori. Nam et doctor egregius non dixit: Unusquisque mercedem accipiet juxta suam dignitatem, sed, juxta laborem. Cum ergo praedicatorum aeternae vitae optima referuntur, magnus eis in hac vita labor injungitur: quia nimirum meliora caeteris habere non praevalet, qui melior esse non studet. Et quia hoc omnium praedicatorum sanctae Ecclesiae commune est, non solum Saul, sed omni domui patris sui Israel optima esse referuntur. Quasi enim ex patre filii nascuntur, quando in ordinem praedicatorum noviter alii aliis, eadem nobilitate sanctitatis splendidi subrogantur. Domus quoque praedicatoris est spiritualis ejus conversatio. Omni ergo domui patri...

(Vers. 21.) Respondens Saul, ait: Nunquid non filius Gemini ego sum de minima tribu Israel, et cognatio mea novissima inter omnes familias de tribu Benjamin? Quare ergo locutus est mihi sermonem istum?

54. Quasi dicat: Quare mihi tam magna adscribis, cum sim nihil? Gemini quippe filius est, qui negligentes imitatur in cura sui, et in exemplo proximi. Geminus quippe est, quia dum curam sui negligit, exempla boni operis aliis non impendit. Qui ergo tales imitatur, filius Gemini dicitur. Qui de minima tribu Israel esse dicitur: quia ultimus ordo sanctae Ecclesiae conversorum peccatorum est. Merito igitur, qui peccatorem se esse fatetur, de minima tribu Israel esse dicitur. Cujus etiam cognatio novissima inter alias esse perhibetur: quia juxta Veritatis vocem: Qui minimum mandatum solvit, minimus est in regno coelorum (Matth. V, 19). Benjamin quippe dicitur filius dexterae. Qua profecto appellatione sanctae Ecclesiae populus designatur: qui dum in fide Redemptoris nascitur, per bona opera ad coelestis patriae bona praeparatur. Dextera quidem Dei illa aeternae vitae fortitudo est. Cognationes tribus Benjamin, sunt diversae conversationes electorum. Nam velut ab uno generationis principio diversae cognationes veniunt: quando ab una origine orthodoxae fidei, conversationes fidelium plures oriuntur. Sancti ergo viri, cum se per humilitatem dejiciunt, quia peccatores se esse fatentur, et tamen recte in Deum credere, quasi se et Gemini filios asserunt, et de novissima Israel cognatione. Sed quia quanto plus se humiliant, juxta Veritatis vocem, amplius exaltantur (Luc. XIV, 10, 11), sequitur:

With a solicitous mind, therefore, the doctor of the holy Church ought to ponder that not only the good things of Israel, but even the best are his, so that he who expects things so supreme and best may always do greater and more excellent things. For those same supreme things are owed not to the supreme order, but to the supreme labor. For even the excellent doctor did not say: *Every man shall receive his reward according to his dignity*, but *according to his labor*. When, therefore, the best things of eternal life are referred to the preachers, a great labor is enjoined upon them in this life: because undoubtedly he does not prevail to have better things than others who does not study to be better. And because this is common to all preachers of the holy Church, the best things are referred to be not only Saul's, but for all his father's house. For sons are as it were born from a father when others are newly substituted for others in the order of preachers, splendid with the same nobility of holiness. The house of the preacher is also his spiritual conversation (*conversatio*). Therefore to all the house of the father...

(Verse 21) *Saul answering, said: Am I not a son of Jemini of the least tribe of Israel, and my kindred the last among all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then hast thou spoken this saying to me?*

54. As if he were to say: Why do you ascribe such great things to me, when I am nothing? For he is a son of Jemini who imitates those who are negligent in the care of themselves and in the example of their neighbor. He is indeed a "Twin" (Geminus), because while he neglects the care of himself, he does not bestow examples of good work upon others. He, therefore, who imitates such people is called a son of Jemini. He is said to be from the least tribe of Israel because the last order of the holy Church is that of converted sinners. Meritously, therefore, he who confesses that he is a sinner is said to be from the least tribe of Israel. His kindred also is said to be the last among others because, according to the voice of Truth: He that shall break the least commandment, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:19). For Benjamin is called the "son of the right hand." By this name the people of the holy Church are surely designated; for while they are born in the faith of the Redeemer, they are prepared through good works for the goods of the heavenly fatherland. The right hand of God is indeed that strength of eternal life. The kindreds of the tribe of Benjamin are the diverse ways of life (conversationes) of the elect. For as diverse kindreds come from one principle of generation, so many ways of life of the faithful arise from one origin of orthodox faith. Holy men, therefore, when they cast themselves down through humility because they confess themselves to be sinners, and yet rightly believe in God, assert themselves as it were to be both sons of Jemini and from the last kindred of Israel. But because the more they humble themselves, according to the voice of Truth, the more they are exalted (Luke 14:10, 11), there follows:

(Vers. 22.) Assumens itaque Samuel Saul et puerum ejus, introduxit eos in triclinium, et dedit eis locum in capite eorum qui fuerant invitati.

55. Samuel Saul assumit quando praedicator sanctae Ecclesiae electo auditori suae alta praedicationis aperit. Assumitur quippe subditus, quando per verbum doctoris in cognitionem coelestium elevatur. Et quia non carnali intentione spiritualia scire appetit, non solum ipsum Saul, sed etiam ejus assumpsit puerum. Quasi enim sine puero in imis remanserat, qui dicebat: Cor meum dereliquit me (Psal. XXXVII, 11). Cor quippe nostrum nos derelinquit, quando sic a concupiscentiis carnalibus vincimur, ut intentionem cordis in terrenis, et carnalibus, atque corporeis, et non in coelestibus, et spiritualibus ponimus. Hunc puerum perditum invenerat, qui dicebat: Invenit servus tuus cor suum (II Reg. VII, 27). Cor quippe nostrum invenimus, quando per intentionem cordis spiritalia quaerimus; quando hanc a terrenis avellimus, ut ad coelestia dirigamus. Electus ergo praedicator iis, qui adhuc carnales sunt, nec fortia imperat, nec spiritalia manifestat. Nam et Paulus Corinthiis dicit: Non potui vobis loqui tanquam spiritualibus, sed quasi carnalibus, tanquam parvulis in Christo lac vobis potum dedi, non escam (I Cor. III, 1). Quasi his verbis dicat: Idcirco vos ad excelsum non duxi, quia spiritualem sensum vobiscum, velut Saul puerum, non habebatis. Quare et causam insinuans, ait: Adhuc enim estis carnales. Bene ergo Samuel Saul, et puerum assumpsisse dicitur: quia doctores sanctae Ecclesiae illis fortia imperant, illis alta manifestant, quos spirituales esse considerant. Qui etiam in triclinium introducuntur: quia eis charitatis latitudo monstratur. Velut enim in triclinio ponitur, qui per id, quod altum didicit, moratur in latitudine charitatis. Vel certe introitus noster ad triclinium, amor est; triclinium pulchritudo est spiritalis vitae. Unde Joannes dicit: Qui non diligit, manet in morte (I Joan. III, 14). Si enim, qui non diligit, manet in morte, ille qui diligit, in vita manet. In triclinium ergo introducimur, quando in affectum supernae conversationis surgimus per affectum amoris. Est enim locus refectionis: quia ibi mens interna Redemptoris sui dulcedine recreatur. Subsequitur:

(Vers. 22.) Erant enim quasi triginta viri.

(Vers. 22.) Erant enim quasi triginta viri.

(Verse 22) Samuel therefore taking Saul and his servant, brought them into the parlor, and gave them a place at the head of them that were invited.

55. Samuel takes Saul when the preacher of the holy Church opens the heights of preaching to his chosen hearer. For the subject is taken when, through the word of the teacher, he is elevated into the knowledge of heavenly things. And because he does not desire to know spiritual things with a carnal intention, he took not only Saul himself, but also his servant. For he had remained as it were in the depths without a servant who said: My heart hath forsaken me (Ps. 37:11). Our heart indeed forsakes us when we are so conquered by carnal concupiscences that we place the intention of the heart in earthly, carnal, and corporeal things, and not in heavenly and spiritual things. He had found this lost servant who said: Thy servant hath found his heart (2 Sam. 7:27). For we find our heart when we seek spiritual things through the intention of the heart; when we tear this away from earthly things to direct it toward heavenly things. The chosen preacher, therefore, neither commands strong things nor manifests spiritual things to those who are still carnal. For even Paul says to the Corinthians: I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat (1 Cor. 3:1). As if he were to say by these words: Therefore I did not lead you to the high place, because you did not have a spiritual sense with you, like Saul's servant. Wherefore also suggesting the cause, he says: For you are yet carnal. Well, therefore, is Samuel said to have taken Saul and his servant: because the doctors of the holy Church command strong things to those, and manifest high things to those, whom they consider to be spiritual. They are also brought into the parlor (triclinium): because the latitude of charity is shown to them. For he is placed as it were in a parlor who, through that which he has learned on high, dwells in the latitude of charity. Or certainly, our entrance to the parlor is love; the parlor is the beauty of spiritual life. Whence John says: He that loveth not, abideth in death (1 John 3:14). For if he who loves not abideth in death, he who loves abideth in life. We are brought into the parlor, therefore, when we rise into the affection of heavenly conversation (conversatio) through the affect of love. For it is the place of refection, because there the mind is refreshed by the internal sweetness of its Redeemer. There follow the words:

(Verse 22) For there were about thirty men.

(Verse 22) For there were about thirty men.

56. Ter decem triginta fiunt. Ternarius vero numerus fidem sanctae et individuae Trinitatis insinuat. Denarius vero per decem praecepta legis, boni operis perfectionem designat. Tricenarius ergo numerus eos designat, qui eam fidem tenent, quae per dilectionem operatur. In horum capite Saul ponitur, quando per divinam gratiam is, qui futurus est pastor Ecclesiae, sublimior fit merito, quibus debet esse superior dignitate. Hunc sublimem locum Samuel tribuit: quia qui tantam vitae meretur celsitudinem, ad eam majorum proficit institutione. Cui nimirum quia jam magna, quae agat, et non minima demonstrantur, subditur:

(Vers. 23, 24.) Dixit Samuel coquo: Da partem, quam dedi tibi, et praecepi, ut reponeres seorsum apud te. Tulit ergo coquus armum, et posuit ante Saul. Dixitque Samuel: Ecce quod remansit, pone ante te, et comede: quia de industria servatum est tibi, quando populum vocavi: et comedit Saul cum Samuele in die illa.

57. Quid in armo pectoris, nisi fortitudo signatur actionis? Quae a Samuele coquo tribuitur, quando a summis praedicatoribus minoribus demonstratur. Coqui etenim sacerdotes sunt: quia dum electis fidelibus in fervore spiritus loquuntur, cibos mentis, velut per ignem coquunt. Sed pars, quae datur, posita seorsum dicitur: quia fortitudo boni operis in praedicatore debet esse singularis. Quam ante Saul ponit, quando ordinandum pastorem sanctae Ecclesiae, quantae fortitudinis esse debet, considerare praecipit. Sed et de eo, quod coquus apposuit, Samuel Saul dicit: Ecce quod remansit, pone ante te. Remansit quidem, quia non omnia nostra Christus explevit, per crucem quidem suam omnes redemit, sed remansit, ut qui redimi et regnare cum eo nititur, crucifigatur. Hoc profecto residuum viderat, qui dicebat: Si compatimur, et conregnabimus (II Tim. II, 12). Quasi dicat: Quod explevit Christus, non valet, nisi ei, qui id, quod remansit, adimplet. Hinc beatus Petrus apostolus dicit: Christus passus est pro nobis, vobis relinquens exemplum ut sequamini vestigia ejus (I Pet. II, 21). Hinc Paulus ait: Adimpleo ea, quae desunt passioni Christi, in corpore meo (Col. I, 24).

56. Three times ten make thirty. The number three suggests the faith of the holy and undivided Trinity. The number ten, through the ten commandments of the law, designates the perfection of good work. The number thirty, therefore, designates those who hold that faith which works through love. Saul is placed at the head of these when, through divine grace, he who is to be the future pastor of the Church becomes higher in merit than those over whom he ought to be superior in dignity. Samuel attributes this sublime place: because he who merits such highness of life profits by the institution of his elders. To whom, indeed, since great things which he should do, and not the least, are now demonstrated, there is added:

(Verses 23, 24) And Samuel said to the cook: Bring the portion which I gave thee, and commanded thee to set it apart by thee. And the cook took up the shoulder, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said: Behold what is left, set it before thee, and eat: because it was kept on purpose for thee, when I invited the people: and Saul ate with Samuel on that day.

57. What is signified by the shoulder of the breast, if not the fortitude of action? Which is attributed to the cook, when it is demonstrated to lesser ones by the supreme preachers. For the cooks are the priests: because while they speak to the chosen faithful in the fervor of the spirit, they cook the foods of the mind, as it were, through fire. But the portion which is given is said to be set apart: because the fortitude of good work in the preacher ought to be singular. Which he sets before Saul when he commands the pastor about to be ordained in the holy Church to consider how great his fortitude ought to be. But also concerning that which the cook set before him, Samuel says to Saul: Behold what is left, set it before thee. It remained, indeed, because Christ did not fulfill all our things; through His cross He indeed redeemed all, but it remained that he who strives to be redeemed and to reign with Him should be crucified. He surely had seen this residue who said: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him (2 Tim. 2:12). As if he were to say: What Christ fulfilled is not valid, except for him who fulfills that which remained. Hence the blessed apostle Peter says: Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps (1 Pet. 2:21). Hence Paul says: I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my body (Col. 1:24).

58. Sed notandum quia armum ante Saul coquus posuit, et tamen Samuel Saul praecipit, ut ante se eum ponere debeat. Quid est hoc? Sed ponere ante discumbentes dapifer in mensa ferculum solet: quod dum is, qui discumbit, trahit ad se, illud ponit ante se vicinius, quod paulo longius erat ante se. Coquus ergo ponit armum ante Saul, Samuel Saul praecipit, ut ponat ante se: quia hoc quod novo praedicatori injungitur de fortitudine boni operis, velut ad se propius debet trahere per studium considerationis. Quod etiam postquam ad se traxerit, comedit: quia diu consideratum agere disponit. Armum quippe manducare, est quod exterius de forti actione praecipitur, per propositum in mente recondere. Quasi enim armum ante se ponere et manducare electo cuique suadebat, qui dicebat: Si sederis ad mensam potentis, sapienter attende, quae apponuntur tibi: quia similia oportet te praeparare (Prov. XXIII, 1). In mensa quippe potentis virtutem armi designavit. Et dum dixit: Sapienter attende, quae opponuntur tibi: armum ante se eum, cui dixit, ponere docuit. Sed manducare eum debere insinuavit, quia dixit: Similia oportet te praeparare. Similia enim praeparando manducamus; quia dum fortia, quae audimus, proponimus agere, velut comedentes, in cordis ventre reponimus cibos vitae. Sed ipsis summis doctoribus vas electionis sub unius discipuli eruditione imperat, dicens: Manum cito nemini imponas (I Tim. V, 22). Quia enim magna retractatione consilii eligendi sunt, qui in culmine sublimentur, apte subjectum est: Quia de industria servatum est tibi, quando populum vocavi. Quasi dicat: Pone ante te, quod antequam apponeretur, ego posui ante me; considera quod ego consideravi. De industria quippe pars armi servatur; quia fortissima praedicatoris actio illi bene committitur, qui a summis viris magna consideratione dignus tanto ministerio judicatur. Ista vero pars tunc servata est de industria, quando populus vocatur; quia cum ad suscipiendum praedicationis ministerium subditi fideles veniunt...

(Vers. 25.) Et descenderunt de excelso in oppidum, et locutus est Samuel cum Saul in solario. Stravitque Saul in solario, et dormivit.

59. Quicunque ad celsitudinem curae pastoralis assumitur, in eadem ordinis sui sublimitate habere debet et vitae propriae altitudinem, et alienae infirmitatis compassionem. Ascendat ergo Saul cum Samuele, descendat in oppidum. Sciat rector, quae agat alta: sciat quae disponat, communia. Dicat cum Paulo: Nostra conversatio in coelis est (Philip. III, 20). Dicat nobiscum: Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus? Video aliam legem contradicentem legi mentis meae, et captivum me ducentem in lege peccati (Rom. VII, 24).

58. But it should be noted that the cook set the shoulder before Saul, and yet Samuel commands Saul that he ought to set it before himself. What is this? A server at the table is accustomed to set a dish before those dining: which, while he who is dining draws it to himself, he sets more closely before himself what was a little further from him. The cook, therefore, sets the shoulder before Saul, and Samuel commands Saul to set it before himself: because that which is enjoined upon a new preacher concerning the fortitude of good work, he ought to draw as it were closer to himself through the study of consideration. Which also, after he has drawn it to himself, he eats: because he disposes to do what has been long considered. For to eat the shoulder is to hide in the mind through purpose what is commanded outwardly concerning strong action. For he was as it were persuading every chosen person to set the shoulder before himself and to eat it, who said: When thou shalt sit to eat with a prince, consider diligently what is set before thy face: because it behooves thee to prepare the like (Prov. 23:1). In the table of the prince, indeed, he designated the virtue of the shoulder. And while he said: Consider diligently what is set before thee, he taught him to whom he spoke to set the shoulder before himself. But he suggested that he ought to eat it, because he said: It behooves thee to prepare the like. For by preparing similar things we eat; because while we propose to do the strong things which we hear, as it were eating, we store the foods of life in the belly of the heart. But the vessel of election commands the supreme doctors themselves under the instruction of a single disciple, saying: Impose not hands lightly upon any man (1 Tim. 5:22). For because they are to be chosen with great retraction of counsel, who are to be elevated to the summit, it is aptly added: Because it was kept on purpose for thee, when I invited the people. As if he were to say: Set before thee what I set before myself before it was set before thee; consider what I have considered. For the part of the shoulder is kept on purpose (de industria); because the most strong action of the preacher is well committed to him who is judged by supreme men, with great consideration, worthy of such a ministry. That part was indeed kept on purpose then, when the people were called; because when the faithful subjects come to receive the ministry of preaching...

(Verse 25) And they went down from the high place into the town, and Samuel spoke with Saul on the roof. And Saul spread a bed on the roof, and slept.

59. Whoever is assumed to the highness of pastoral care ought to have in that same sublimity of his order both the altitude of his own life and compassion for the infirmity of another. Let Saul, therefore, ascend with Samuel, and let him descend into the town. Let the rector know the high things he should do; let him know the common things he should dispose. Let him say with Paul: Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Let him say with us: Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I see another law contending against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin (Rom. 7:24).

In excelso est rector, cum sapientiam loquitur inter perfectos. Carnalia quando disponit, descendit in oppidum, dicens: Propter fornicationem unusquisque uxorem habeat, et unaquaeque virum: uxori vir debitum reddat, uxor viro similiter (I Cor. VII, 2). In excelso est, quando dicit: Nulla creatura poterit nos separare a charitate Christi (Rom. VIII, 39). In oppidum vero descendit: quia loquens, ait: Factus sum infirmis infirmus, ut infirmos lucrifaciam: omnia omnibus factus sum, ut omnes facerem salvos (I Cor. IX, 22). Samuel ergo Saul ad excelsum tulit, et in oppidum deposuit: quia summi viri cum sanctae Ecclesiae culmen ordinant, illos quos in eodem culmine ponunt docent sublimiter vivere, plana praedicare, sibi esse rigidos, sed subditis temperatos: sic attendere propriae saluti, ut cum infirmis possint infirmari: infirmari dixerim per affectum mentis, non per languorem internae aegritudinis. Nam si per mentis languorem doctor jacet, curare aegros et jacentes erigere non potest. Bene ergo cum Samuele Saul in oppidum descendisse, et in solario locuti esse referuntur. Oppidum quippe in plano est, solarium vero in alto. Ad excelsum quoque solarium planum est, ad oppidum non planum, sed altum. Sic nimirum electi praedicatores, quando minoribus membris compatiuntur, quasi excelsum deserunt: sed in oppidum descendentes, in solario sunt; quia ab alto quidem veniunt, sed infirmitatem subditorum miserando et consulendo, non agendo et infirmando.

60. Et quia ad haec agenda multa consideratione novus praedicator indiget, stravisse sibi Saul, et dormisse perhibetur. Dormire in solario novo praedicatori, est in sublimi sua consideratione disponere, qualiter subditorum onera debeat portare. Nam si ad saeculi intentionem vigilat, hoc profecto agit, ut tantae discretionis bonum in intimis non requirat. Dormire igitur debet, ut saecularia nulla cogitet: quia spiritualia disponere oppressus saecularibus nunquam potest. Sed et dormire non poterit, qui sibi non sternit: quia nimirum si bonorum exempla, sive dicta non cogitat, impossibile est, ut ab exterioribus requiescat. Velut mollia quidem nobis subjicimus, quando electorum doctrinam, aut vitam cogitamus. In eisdem quoque stramentis dormimus: quia quiescere tunc bene consideratione possumus, quando in rebus spiritualibus occupamur. Dicat ergo: Quia stravit sibi Saul, et dormivit, ut electae menti insinuet: quia si negligenter ad exteriora se occupat, intimae quietis gratiam non acquirat. Sed qui spiritualia bene vult considerando disponere, donec ea intus perfecte ordinet, ad ea quae foris sunt, evigilare non debet. Apte ergo subjungitur:

The rector is in the high place when he speaks wisdom among the perfect. When he disposes carnal things, he descends into the town, saying: For fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband: let the husband render the debt to his wife, and the wife in like manner to her husband (1 Cor. 7:2). He is in the high place when he says: No creature shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:39). But he descends into the town because, speaking, he says: I became weak to the weak, that I might gain the weak: I became all things to all men, that I might save all (1 Cor. 9:22). Samuel, therefore, took Saul to the high place and set him down in the town: because supreme men, when they ordain the summit of the holy Church, teach those whom they place in that same summit to live sublimely, to preach plain things, to be rigid to themselves but tempered to their subjects: so to attend to their own salvation that they can be weak with the weak; I would say weak through the affection of the mind, not through the languor of internal sickness. For if the doctor lies down through languor of mind, he cannot cure the sick and raise those who are lying down. Well, therefore, are Saul and Samuel said to have descended into the town and to have spoken on the roof (solario). For the town is on the level, but the roof is on high. To the high place also the roof is level; to the town it is not level, but high. Thus indeed chosen preachers, when they have compassion for the lesser members, as it were desert the high place: but descending into the town, they are on the roof; because they come indeed from on high, but by pitying and consulting the infirmity of the subjects, and not by doing and [becoming infirm].

60. And because the new preacher needs much consideration to do these things, Saul is said to have spread a bed for himself and to have slept. For a new preacher to sleep on the roof is to dispose in his sublime consideration how he ought to bear the burdens of his subjects. For if he is awake to the intention of the world, he surely acts so as not to seek the good of such great discretion in his innermost parts. He ought, therefore, to sleep, so that he thinks of no secular things: because he who is oppressed by secular things can never dispose spiritual things. But also he will not be able to sleep who does not spread a bed for himself: because undoubtedly if he does not think of the examples or words of the good, it is impossible for him to rest from outward things. We place soft things under us, as it were, when we think of the doctrine or the life of the elect. We also sleep on those same beddings: because we can then rest well in consideration when we are occupied in spiritual things. Let it be said, therefore: Because Saul spread a bed for himself, and slept, to suggest to the chosen mind: that if it occupies itself negligently with outward things, it may not acquire the grace of internal rest. But he who wishes to dispose spiritual things well by considering, until he perfectly orders them within, ought not to wake up to those things which are without. Aptly, therefore, is added:

(Vers. 26.) Cumque mane surrexissent, et jam dilucesceret, vocavit Samuel Saul in solario, dicens: Surge, et dimittam te.

61. Mane quidem lucescit, quando quietae menti veritatis splendor se aperit. Humana etenim mens per ignorantiam tenebrosa, et per illustrationem veritatis lucida fit. Ignorans ergo, in nocte est; cum illustratur, in die. Mane autem surgit qui dormit nocte: quando ad agenda se erigit ea, quae per considerationem ordinavit. Et quia ordinandi regis negotium tractabatur, ambo surrexisse perhibentur. Surgit quidem summus praedicator, ut auditorem suum ad ministerium ejusdem praedicationis ordinet. Surgit qui ordinandus est, ut tam sublimem ordinem imo cordis affectu recipiendum esse non speret. Pariter quidem surgunt, quia sublime officium datur, sublime recipitur. Quo in loco est aliud notandum: quia ambo prius surrexerunt, deinde Samuel Saul vocavit, dicens: Surge, et dimittam te. Sed ad historiam si ambo surrexerunt, a somno Saul, quia consurgere praecipitur, ad opus praeparari admonetur. Quia vero tam summi sacerdotes, quam ille, qui ad ordinem praedicationis assumitur, tanti ministerii onus attente considerant, quasi pariter dormiunt, pariter surgunt. Sed qui noviter ordinandus est, surgens a somno, ad opus item surgere jubetur: quia ad altitudinem ordinis quanquam pensare meditando studuit, pertingere debet tamen per meritum conversationis. Surgens ergo surgere jubetur, ut sublimem ordinem, quem subire deliberat, aequare meritis proponat. Unde et in solario vocatur: quia ad alta conari praecipitur. Qui etiam dicit: Et dimittam te. Surgit quippe ut dimittatur: quia ille liber esse in ministerio praedicationis poterit, qui in altitudine magnae conversationis excrevit. Surrexit quidem qui surrexerat: quia qui considerando didicit altitudinem dignitatis, in eadem dignitatis altitudine erigere se curavit per sublimitatem vitae.

Unde et subditur:

(Vers. 26.) Et surrexit Saul.

Deinde subditur:

(Vers. 26.) Egressique sunt ambo; ipse videlicet et Samuel.

(Verse 26) And when they were risen in the morning, and it began now to be light, Samuel called Saul on the roof, saying: Arise, that I may let thee go.

61. It becomes morning, indeed, when the splendor of truth opens itself to a quiet mind. For the human mind becomes dark through ignorance, and bright through the illustration of truth. He who is ignorant, therefore, is in the night; when he is illustrated, he is in the day. But he who sleeps in the night rises in the morning: when he raises himself to do those things which he has ordered through consideration. And because the business of ordaining the king was being treated, both are said to have risen. The supreme preacher rises, indeed, that he may ordain his hearer to the ministry of that same preaching. He who is to be ordained rises, that he may not hope to receive so sublime an order without the innermost affect of the heart. They rise equally, indeed, because a sublime office is given, a sublime one is received. In which place another thing is to be noted: that both rose first, then Samuel called Saul, saying: Arise, that I may let thee go. But according to the history, if both rose, Saul is admonished to be prepared for work because he is commanded to rise from sleep. But because both the supreme priests and he who is assumed to the order of preaching attentively consider the burden of so great a ministry, they as it were sleep together, and rise together. But he who is newly to be ordained, rising from sleep, is commanded to rise also to work: because although he studied to ponder by meditating on the height of the order, he ought nevertheless to reach it through the merit of conversation. Rising, therefore, he is commanded to rise, that he may propose to equal by merits the sublime order which he deliberates to undergo. Whence also he is called on the roof: because he is commanded to strive for high things. Who also says: And I will let thee go. For he rises that he may be let go: because he will be able to be free in the ministry of preaching who has grown in the height of great conversation. He rose indeed who had risen: because he who by considering learned the height of dignity, took care to raise himself in that same height of dignity through sublimit of life.

Whence also is added:

(Verse 26) And Saul arose.

Then is added:

(Verse 26) And they both went out: to wit, he and Samuel.

62. Pastor egreditur, quando a secreto meditationis venit ad publicum operis. Quando enim dispone, quae vult agere, intus est: quando autem ea agit foris, quae cogitavit, quasi exit. Exiit etiam Saul, quia in exteriori dignitate, is qui promovetur, illud suscipit quod, an esset suscipiendum, diutius cogitavit. Ambo igitur dicuntur egressi, quia ambo fuerunt intus: dum ille sollicita mente praeviderit, quid aut cui daret; ille item attentius cogitaret, qualis esset, qui tam summa perciperet. Quia ergo ministerium sanctae praedicationis cum summa discretione tribuendum atque recipiendum est, dum rex Israelis ungitur, et rex et propheta uncturus eum, egressi perhibentur. Plerique autem codices habent: Cumque mane surrexissent, antequam dilucesceret: quod nimirum intelligi convenienter potest. Mane est quidem, antequam dilucescat, quando quodammodo aspirare dies incipit, et tamen plena lux diei non est. Praedicatores autem sanctae Ecclesiae, dum eorum bonam conversationem considerant quos ordinare disponunt, quasi mane est. Sed quia eorum futura scire non possunt, mane est, sed antequam dilucescat. Quod bene in ejus ordinatione dicitur, qui omnipotenti Deo postea displicuisse memoratur. Quasi enim mane, antequam dilucesceret, propheta vidit hunc, qui ei in luce bonae conversationis apparuit. Sed plena diei claritas nondum erat, quia in eo futuras tenebras per praesentem cognitionis lucem videre non poterat. Quod nimirum toties sanctae Ecclesiae agitur, quoties boni sunt, qui eliguntur in praesenti, sed in eodem bono perseveraturi non sunt. Quasi enim mane, et ante lucem egreditur, qui lucem boni operis praesentem monstrat, caliginem vitae futuram celat. Sed quid inde actum sit, sequitur:

(Vers. 27, seq.) Cumque descenderent in extrema parte civitatis, Samuel dixit ad Saul: Dic puero ut antecedat nos, et transeat: tu autem subsiste paulisper, ut indicem tibi verbum Domini. Tulit autem Samuel lenticulam olei, et effudit super caput ejus, et osculatus est eum.

63. Quid est enim, quod in extrema parte civitatis rex ducitur, et ungitur? Sed extrema pars civitatis est ultima pars populi subjecti. Qui ergo ultimum locum tenent in sancta Ecclesia, velut in extrema parte civitatis sunt. Ipsius autem Ecclesiae in ultima parte, conversi peccatores esse videntur. Nam justi quique in superiori vel prima sunt parte. Aut fortasse primum locum virginitas tenet, secundum continentia, tertium conjugalis vita, ultimum conversio peccatorum. In extrema igitur civitatis parte rex ungitur: quia sanctae Ecclesiae rector ordinatur, pro peccatoribus, non pro justis.

62. The pastor goes out when he comes from the secret of meditation to the public of work. For when he disposes what he wants to do, he is within; but when he does those things outside which he thought, he as it were goes out. Saul also went out, because in outward dignity, he who is promoted receives that which he thought about for a long time, whether it should be received. Both are therefore said to have gone out, because both were within: while the one with a solicitous mind foresaw what or to whom he should give; the other likewise more attentively thought what kind of person he was who should perceive such great things. Because, therefore, the ministry of holy preaching is to be given and received with the highest discretion, while the king of Israel is anointed, both the king and the prophet about to anoint him are said to have gone out. But many manuscripts have: And when they were risen in the morning, before it began to be light: which indeed can be conveniently understood. It is morning, indeed, before it begins to be light, when in some way the day begins to breathe, and yet there is not the full light of day. But for the preachers of the holy Church, while they consider the good conversation of those whom they dispose to ordain, it is as it were morning. But because they cannot know their future, it is morning, but before it begins to be light. Which is well said in the ordination of him who is recorded to have afterwards displeased almighty God. For as it were in the morning, before it began to be light, the prophet saw him who appeared to him in the light of good conversation. But the full clarity of day was not yet, because he could not see the future darkness in him through the present light of knowledge. Which indeed is done in the holy Church as many times as there are those who are good, who are chosen in the present, but are not going to persevere in that same good. For he goes out as it were in the morning and before the light, who shows the present light of good work, but hides the future darkness of life. But what was done from there follows:

(Verse 27, seq.) And as they were going down in the last part of the city, Samuel said to Saul: Speak to the servant to go before us, and pass on: but do thou stay a little, that I may declare the word of the Lord to thee. And Samuel took a little vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him.

63. For what is it, that the king is led and anointed in the farthest part of the city? But the last part of the city is the last part of the subject people. Those, therefore, who hold the last place in the holy Church, are as it were in the farthest part of the city. But in the last part of the Church itself, converted sinners seem to be. For all the just are in the superior or first part. Or perhaps virginity holds the first place, continence the second, conjugal life the third, and the conversion of sinners the last. In the farthest part of the city, therefore, the king is anointed: because the rector of the holy Church is ordained for sinners, not for the just.

Hinc enim per semetipsum Veritas dicit: Non veni vocare justos, sed peccatores ad poenitentiam (Matth. IX, 13). Hinc iterum dicit: Non opus habent sani medico, sed male habentes (Ibid., 13).

64. Sed puerum Saulis spiritualem sensum designare diximus. Quid est ergo, quod praecedere et transire a Samuele imperatur? Sed praecedit puer, quando hoc agitur, quod a spirituali sensu nobis suggeritur, non quod a motu carnali imperatur. Sed quosdam praecedit et transit, quosdam praecedit et non transit. Non transit quidem praecedens puer arrogantes, transit humiles: nam dum arrogantes magna et spiritualia agunt, in oculis suis magni sunt. Quasi enim secum habent puerum, quem sequuntur, qui in spiritualibus, quae agunt, spirituales se esse gloriantur. Quibus profecto propheta exprobrat, dicens: Vae qui sapientes estis in oculis vestris, et coram vobismetipsis prudentes (Isa. V, 21). Electi ergo in omnibus quae agunt, esse quidem spirituales curant, et tenere se spirituales vitant. Magni quidem sunt merito, humiles aestimatione: quia semper magna agunt, sed in eisdem magnis se magnos nunquam aspiciunt. Quasi ergo puerum, quem praemittunt, transire faciunt, cum spiritualem sensum praesentem habent in opere, sed longe ab aestimatione. Quid vero est, quod paulisper subsistere praecipitur, ut ei verbum Domini indicetur? Sed paulisper subsistit, praemisso puero, qui ad horam se proprio arbitrio subtrahit, et alienam voluntatem facit. Transire ergo facit puerum, et paulisper subsistit, qui ad praeceptum majoris illa etiam, quae putat spiritualia, deserit: deserit, ut ea, quae sibi injunguntur, efficere convenienter possit. Quod certe ordinando praedicatori convenit: nam dum pondus pastoralis curae considerat et infirmitatem suam, hoc sibi se praecedens spiritus dicit: quia tantum onus tam infirmus indigne suscipit. Praetermittat ergo non solum, sed transire faciat puerum: ut non arbitrium suum sequatur, sed illud suscipiat, quod ei melioris provisione decernitur. Et de subsistente protinus additur.

4. Quasi enim humili pastori, et de tanto ministerio trepidanti dicat: Tu idcirco trepidas, quia an sit ex Deo hoc, quod de te actum est, nescis; sed quia hoc scire potes, trepidare non debes. Hoc igitur tibi signum, quia te non homo, sed Deus in principem unxerit: duo videlicet viri illi tibi dicent: Inventae sunt asinae, ad quas ieras perquirendas. Quasi dicat: Si illos duos viros inveneris, et hoc tibi dixerint, scito, quia te Deus principem, non ego constitui. Quid ergo duo viri isti nobis, nisi perfectos quosque sanctae Ecclesiae praedicatores designant?

Hence for this reason Truth says through Himself: I came not to call the just, but sinners to penance (Matt. 9:13). Hence again He says: They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill (Ibid. 12).

64. But we said that Saul's servant designated the spiritual sense. What is it, therefore, that he is commanded by Samuel to go before and pass on? But the servant goes before when that is done which is suggested to us by the spiritual sense, not what is commanded by carnal motion. But he goes before and passes some, he goes before and does not pass others. The servant going before does not pass the arrogant, but he passes the humble: for while the arrogant do great and spiritual things, they are great in their own eyes. For they have as it were with them the servant whom they follow, who glory that they are spiritual in the spiritual things which they do. To whom indeed the prophet reproaches, saying: Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own conceits (Isa. 5:21). The elect, therefore, in all things which they do, take care indeed to be spiritual, and avoid holding themselves as spiritual. They are great indeed in merit, humble in estimation: because they always do great things, but in those same great things they never behold themselves as great. As if, therefore, they make the servant pass on, whom they send ahead, when they have the spiritual sense present in work, but far from estimation. But what is it, that he is commanded to stay a little, that the word of the Lord may be declared to him? But he stays a little, the servant having been sent ahead, who for the hour withdraws himself from his own judgment and does the will of another. He makes the servant pass on, therefore, and stays a little, who at the command of a superior deserts even those things which he thinks are spiritual: he deserts them, that he may be able to conveniently effect those things which are enjoined upon him. Which certainly suits the preacher about to be ordained: for while he considers the weight of pastoral care and his own infirmity, the spirit going before says this to him: that he unworthily receives so great a burden being so weak. Let him, therefore, not only let the servant go before, but make him pass on: that he may not follow his own judgment, but receive that which is decreed for him by the provision of a better person. And concerning the one staying, there is immediately added.

4. For he says as if to a humble pastor, trembling before such a great ministry: You tremble for this reason, because you do not know whether this which has been done concerning you is from God; but because you can know this, you ought not to tremble. This therefore shall be a sign to you, that not man, but God has anointed you as prince: namely, those two men will say to you: The asses are found, which you had gone to seek. As if he were to say: If you find those two men, and they tell you this, know that God, not I, has appointed you prince. What then do these two men designate for us, if not the perfect preachers of the holy Church?

Duo quidem sunt, quia perfecti in utroque praecepto charitatis; viri, quia in sancta conversatione robusti. Qui juxta sepulcrum Rachel inveniri perhibentur, quia per contemplativae vitae studium divisi sunt ab intentione saeculi; et dum animarum lucra quaerunt, non sunt sepulti. Per Rachel quippe contemplativae vitae speciositatem signari venerabilium patrum indubitata sententia est. Juxta sepulcrum ergo Rachel stant viri, quia sic supernae contemplationi perfecti doctores vacant, ut sanctae Ecclesiae sollicitudinem gerant. Juxta sepulcrum Rachel stant, quia statum boni operis dirigunt per virtutem contemplationis: et quia nihil gerunt in opere, nisi quod contemplando disponunt. Et quia in ipsa altitudine supernae contemplationis non praesumptionem suam, sed rationem sanctae Ecclesiae tenere student, sepulcrum Rachel in finibus Benjamin esse describitur. Ut jam dixi, 231 in Benjamin, qui filius dexterae dicitur, Redemptor humani generis designatur. Fines ergo Benjamin regulae sanctarum Scripturarum sunt: de quibus profecto finibus scriptum est: Ne transgrediaris terminos, quos posuerunt patres tui (Prov. XXII, 28). Quia ergo sancti praedicatores, cum summa contemplando vident, a fidei regula non discordant; sepulcrum, juxta quod stant, esse in finibus Benjamin recte dicitur. Qui profecto viri in meridie magnas foveas saliunt, quia per fervorem perfectae charitatis, in qua assumpti sunt, cuncta, quae videntur, saeculi alta despiciunt. Quidquid enim in hoc saeculo altum cernitur, non est vera altitudo, sed fovea, quae omnes, quos in sua ambitione recipit, ad inferna deponit. Alta ergo saeculi viris spiritualibus vitanda, non appetenda sunt, quia ex occulto se aperiunt, et quos absorbendo recipiunt, ad inferna perducunt. Viri ergo spirituales foveas saliunt; quia dum se per coeleste desiderium erigunt, terrena contemnunt. Velut enim visis foveis saltum dant, quando ut terrena contemnant, ad aeterna bona concupiscenda se elevant. In meridie ergo foveas saliunt; quia saeculum non possunt contemnere, nisi qui plenam lucem et ardorem supernae charitatis habent. Tunc ergo Saul unctum a Domino in principem se intelligat, quando isti sibi dicent: Inventae sunt asinae, quas quaerebas. Inventas quippe asinas Saul dicunt, quando ad colligenda animarum lucra idoneum cernunt. Quasi aliter dicat: Electum te a Deo in ministerium praedicationis non ab hominibus credas, si illi hoc de te indicant, qui dum Dei spiritu pleni sunt, quae dicunt, non humana, sed divina esse sentiuntur.

They are two indeed, because they are perfect in both precepts of charity; men, because they are robust in holy conversation. They are said to be found near Rachel's sepulcher, because through the study of the contemplative life they are divided from the intention of the world; and while they seek the gains of souls, they are not buried. For it is the undisputed opinion of the venerable fathers that by Rachel the beauty of the contemplative life is signified. Near Rachel's sepulcher, therefore, the men stand, because perfect teachers so devote themselves to heavenly contemplation that they may carry the solicitude of the holy Church. They stand near Rachel's sepulcher, because they direct the state of good work through the virtue of contemplation: and because they do nothing in work, except what they arrange by contemplating. And because in the very height of heavenly contemplation they study to hold not their own presumption, but the reason of the holy Church, Rachel's sepulcher is described as being in the borders of Benjamin. As I have already said, in Benjamin, who is called the son of the right hand, the Redeemer of the human race is designated. The borders of Benjamin, therefore, are the rules of the holy Scriptures: concerning which borders indeed it is written: Do not transgress the bounds which your fathers have set (Prov. 22:28). Because therefore holy preachers, when they see high things by contemplating, do not discord from the rule of faith; the sepulcher, near which they stand, is rightly said to be in the borders of Benjamin. Which men indeed at midday leap over great pits, because through the fervor of perfect charity, into which they have been taken up, they despise all the high things of the world that are seen. For whatever is discerned as high in this world is not true height, but a pit, which casts down to the lower parts all whom it receives in its ambition. The high things of the world, therefore, are to be avoided by spiritual men, not sought after, because they open themselves from hidden places, and those whom they receive by absorbing, they lead to the lower parts. Spiritual men, therefore, leap over pits; because while they raise themselves through heavenly desire, they despise earthly things. For as if having seen the pits they give a leap, when, so that they may despise earthly things, they elevate themselves to desire eternal goods. At midday, therefore, they leap over pits; because those cannot despise the world except those who have the full light and ardor of heavenly charity. Then, therefore, let Saul understand that he has been anointed as prince by the Lord, when these shall say to him: The asses are found, which you were seeking. Indeed they tell Saul the asses are found, when they discern him suitable for gathering the gains of souls. As if he were to say otherwise: Believe that you have been chosen by God for the ministry of preaching, not by men, if those indicate this concerning you who, while they are full of the spirit of God, what they say is felt to be not human, but divine.

Quia ergo de nobis non nobis, sed nobis melioribus credendum est, apte Saul a viris in meridie magnas foveas salientibus, se a Domino unctum in principem recognoscit. Sed alius est a quo ungitur, alii qui ipsam unctionem a Domino esse attestantur; quia omne negotium sanctae Ecclesiae, sicut collatione sanctorum patrum magis probatur, ita et magis robustum est.

5. Quasi enim signum suae unctionis beatus Paulus tunc quaesivit, quando videre Petrum Jerosolymam venit, et cum eo, et caeteris apostolis Evangelium contulit. Non enim ab homine neque per hominem, sed a coelo, vocante Domino Jesu, apostolatum susceperat (Gal. I); et tamen ministerium unctionis suae per coapostolorum suorum collationem probabat. Nam de seipso ait: Contuli cum illis Evangelium, ne in vacuum currerem, aut cucurrissem (Gal. II, 2). Praecursor etiam Redemptoris discipulos unxerat, sed ut signa suae unctionis agnoscerent, quasi ad salientem magnas foveas mittebat, dicens: Tu es qui venturus es, an alium exspectamus (Matth. XI, 3)? Sciebat enim Joannes, quem praedicaverat, quem baptizaverat; sed discipulos mittebat, ut visis signis, quo firmius crederent, electionis suae indicia securius tenuissent. Qui ergo ad praedicationis ordinem idonei providentur, in signum suae electionis inventas esse peccatorum, quas quaerunt, animas recognoscunt. Et quia omnipotens Deus non solum praedicatione, sed etiam conversatione electi doctoris gaudet, subdit, atque ait: Et intermissis, pater tuus, asinis, sollicitus est pro vobis, et dicit: Quid faciam de filio meo? Patrem Saul Cis, qui durus nostro eloquio dicitur, eos designare diximus, qui verbo et exemplo docent terrena despicere, et ad coelestem patriam per duram et asperam conversationem festinare. Hanc quoque coelestis vitae duritiam tam in verbo, quam in vita nostri Redemptoris agnovimus. 232 Si ergo ad summam nostrae eruditionis aspicimus, filii Redemptoris sumus. Pater ergo noster, dimissis asinis, sollicitus est pro nobis; quia Redemptor noster sic vult nos quaerere salutem alienam, ut non negligamus nostram. Vult, ut vocentur peccatores ad poenitentiam, sed non vult ut pereant ii qui ipsos peccatores vocant. Vult, ut conversus peccator justitiam, quam non habuit, habeat; sed non vult, ut justus eam quam habet, justitiae palmam perdat. Intermissis ergo asinis pro filio sollicitus est, quia praedicatores suos vult ad horam ab aliorum sollicita intentione quiescere, ut sibi ipsis per quietem valeant melius providere.

Because therefore concerning ourselves we must believe not ourselves, but those better than us, Saul aptly recognizes from the men leaping over great pits at midday, that he has been anointed as prince by the Lord. But it is one by whom he is anointed, others who attest that the anointing itself is from the Lord; because every business of the holy Church, just as it is more proved by the collation of the holy fathers, so also is it more robust.

5. For as it were a sign of his anointing the blessed Paul then sought, when he came to Jerusalem to see Peter, and conferred the Gospel with him and the other apostles. For he had received the apostolate not from man nor through man, but from heaven, by the Lord Jesus calling (Gal. 1); and yet he proved the ministry of his anointing through the collation of his fellow apostles. For he says of himself: I conferred the Gospel with them, lest perhaps I should run, or had run in vain (Gal. 2:2). The Precursor of the Redeemer also had anointed disciples, but that they might recognize the signs of their anointing, he sent them as it were to the one leaping over great pits, saying: Are you he who is to come, or do we look for another (Matt. 11:3)? For John knew whom he had preached, whom he had baptized; but he sent the disciples, so that having seen the signs, they might believe more firmly and might have held the indications of their election more securely. Those therefore who are provided as suitable for the order of preaching, recognize in sign of their election that the souls of sinners, which they seek, have been found. And because almighty God rejoices not only in the preaching but also in the conversation of the chosen teacher, he adds and says: And your father, having left off the asses, is concerned for you, and says: What shall I do for my son? We have said that Saul's father Kish, who is called hard in our speech, designates those who by word and example teach to despise earthly things, and to hasten to the heavenly country through a hard and rough conversation. This hardness of the heavenly life we have recognized both in the word and in the life of our Redeemer. If therefore we look to the summit of our erudition, we are sons of the Redeemer. Our father, therefore, having dismissed the asses, is concerned for us; because our Redeemer so wishes us to seek the salvation of others, that we may not neglect our own. He wishes sinners to be called to penance, but he does not wish those who call those same sinners to perish. He wishes that the converted sinner may have the justice which he did not have; but he does not wish the just man to lose the palm of justice which he has. Having left off the asses, therefore, he is concerned for his son, because he wishes his preachers for an hour to rest from the solicitous intention for others, so that through rest they may be able better to provide for themselves.

Et quia ipsa sollicitudo sanctae Ecclesiae a bono rectore resumenda est, intermittitur quies nostra; quia praevenit hanc sollicitudo prior, comitatur posterior. Electus ergo praedicator vacet utilitati subditorum, vacet suae; sed sic suae curam habeat, ut statim ad eam, quam deserit, alienam recurrat; quia tunc Conditor noster nos, quasi filios diligit, cum et subditos nostros, tanquam fratres diligimus, et ipsum quasi patrem amamus, dum per affectum sollicitudinis istis jungimur, et ad illum per quietem nostram, quam diligit, quasi ad patrem festinamus. Haec namque dilectio quietis nostrae exprimitur in hoc, quod dicitur: Quid faciam de filio meo? Hoc profecto pater dicit, qui tenere filium diligit. Hoc igitur non dicitur de praesente filio, sed absente. Sed quia perditas asinas patris quaerit, ei valde dilectus est; quia qui peccatorum animas convertere praedicando nititur, Redemptori nostro jam in magna charitate copulatur. Qui certe per aliorum sollicitudinem ab eo quasi longe est, per quietem contemplationis, et affectum orationis prope. Quia ergo nos sibi vicinos esse et per contemplationem, et orationem appetit, quasi diligens pater dicit: Quid faciam de filio meo? Quasi dicat: Quomodo absentem illum, mihi praesentem exhibebo? Quia vero praedicationis nostrae sollicitudinem magni sanctae Ecclesiae viri laudant, sed sollicitudinis nimietatem vituperant, illi qui inventas patris asinas dicunt, sollicitum patrem pro filio asserunt. Signum ergo suae unctionis cognoscere electi possunt; quia nimirum tunc a Deo ad sanctae Ecclesiae culmen perducuntur, cum per verba et exempla idonei sunt ad salutem alienam, et per quietem studiosi ad suam; et cum peccatores ad coelum quaerunt, semetipsos ad saeculum non relinquunt. Sequitur:

(Vers. 3, 4.) Cum inde abieris, et ultra transieris, et veneris ad quercum Thabor, invenient te tres ibi viri, ascendentes ad Dominum in Bethel, unus portans tres haedos, et alius tres tortas panis, et alius lagenam vini. Cumque te salutaverint, dabunt tibi duos panes, et accipies de manu eorum.

6. Cum bene proficere in sancta conversatione volumus, necessarium nobis est, ut electorum plurimorum nobis exempla colligamus; nam et apes componere mella nequeunt, si ea in floribus variis nequaquam legunt. Bene ergo Saul a viris aliis ad alios pervenit; quia exempla sanctorum, quo copiosius cernimus, melius edocemur. Flores quippe aeternorum fructuum, sunt opera sanctorum, quae dum superni amoris rore perfunduntur, ex eis carpimus, unde ad nostram doctrinam, et ad aliorum utilitatem repleamur.

And because that same solicitude for the holy Church is to be resumed by a good rector, our rest is interrupted; because a prior solicitude precedes this, and a posterior one accompanies it. Let the chosen preacher, therefore, be free for the utility of his subjects, and free for his own; but let him so have care for his own, that he may immediately return to that of others which he deserts; because then our Creator loves us as sons, when we both love our subjects as brothers, and love Him as father, while through the affect of solicitude we are joined to them, and hasten to Him through our rest, which He loves, as to a father. For this love of our rest is expressed in this, that it is said: What shall I do for my son? This indeed the father says, who tenderly loves his son. This, therefore, is not said concerning the son being present, but absent. But because he seeks the lost asses of the father, he is very beloved to him; because he who strives to convert the souls of sinners by preaching, is already joined to our Redeemer in great charity. Who certainly through the solicitude for others is as if far from him, but near through the rest of contemplation and the affect of prayer. Because therefore he desires us to be near him both through contemplation and prayer, as a loving father he says: What shall I do for my son? As if he were to say: How shall I exhibit him present to me, who is absent? But because the great men of the holy Church praise the solicitude of our preaching, but vituperate the excess of solicitude, those who say the father's asses are found, assert that the father is concerned for his son. The elect, therefore, can recognize the sign of their anointing; because undoubtedly they are then led by God to the summit of the holy Church, when through words and examples they are suitable for the salvation of others, and through rest studious for their own; and when they seek sinners for heaven, they do not leave themselves behind for the world. It follows:

(Vers. 3, 4.) And when you shall have gone from there, and passed farther on, and shall have come to the oak of Tabor, three men will meet you there, going up to the Lord in Bethel, one carrying three kids, and another three loaves of bread, and another a flagon of wine. And when they shall have saluted you, they will give you two loaves, and you shall receive them from their hand.

6. When we wish to profit well in holy conversation, it is necessary for us to collect for ourselves the examples of many of the elect; for even bees cannot compose honey if they do not gather it from various flowers. Saul, therefore, well proceeds from some men to others; because the more copiously we discern the examples of the saints, the better we are taught. For the flowers of eternal fruits are the works of the saints, which while they are bedewed with the dew of heavenly love, we pluck from them that whence we may be filled for our own doctrine and for the utility of others.

Inde etenim abit, et ultra transit Saul; quando rudis praedicator per electorum exempla proficit, et a conspecta virtute unius, ad explorandam alterius conversationem vadit. Quem saepe delectat in aliis mirari laborem praedicationis, 233 saepe in aliis fortitudinem boni operis; illos loquentes veneratur, istos operantes imitari nititur. Illos aspicit, qua pulchritudine foris fulgeant, istorum splendorem non in exteriori conversatione, sed in intima perscrutatur. Unde et bene cum transit, ad quercum Thabor venire perhibetur. Quercus enim umbrosa est arbor, et fortis. In qua profecto arbore secretior conversatio sanctorum exprimitur. Hujus namque conversationis viri, dum ad exteriora opera activae vitae non exeunt, quasi in umbra sunt; quia incendia tentationum sentire non possunt. Quia enim in coelesti desiderio requiescunt, quo longius amoti sunt ab amore mundi, eo et quietiores manent in umbra refrigerii. Sed umbra haec fortis est arboris, quia conversatio sanctorum tanto validius terrena despicit, quanto purius in amorem coelestium surgit. Fortis est etiam, quia saeculi adversa potenter tolerant, qui sola coelestia, quae vident, amant. Et quia in magno lumine interni splendoris sunt, qui terrena respicere per amorem dedignantur, quercus ipsa Thabor esse dicitur. Thabor quippe veniens lumen interpretatur. Lumen etenim venit, quando electae menti se interna Conditoris claritas aperit. Quercus ergo Thabor dicitur: quia secreta conversatio, terrena despiciendo agit, quo intimam Conditoris lucem clarius aspiciat. Secreti namque sumus, quando sensus nostros in Dei timore custodimus. Et tunc quidem veniens lumen cernimus, quia cum bene reguntur membra corporis, menti nostrae refunditur gratia Conditoris. Et notandum, quia ad quercum Thabor venire dicitur, qui a salientibus foveas sollicitum pro se patrem esse sciebat. Nam praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae plerumque virtutes laudant, quibus ipsi vacare non possunt. Contemplativae quidem vitae secretum praedicant; sed dum solliciti sunt pro subditorum custodia, illius vitae adhaerere secretis vitant. Quasi ergo Samuel dicat: Viri illi tibi contemplationis studium laudant; sed quia quod laudant, tenere non possunt, in aliis quaerendum est. Inde ergo ad quercum Thabor transimus, quando a sanctis praedicatoribus contemplativae vitae studium laudabile noscimus; sed perfectionem ejus in illis quaerimus, qui ad eam spiritualiter intendunt. Tres ergo viri, qui unctum regem ad quercum Thabor inveniunt, illos designant, qui in contemplativae vitae studio perfecti sunt. Qui bene non inveniri a rege, sed regem illic invenire perhibentur. Non enim inveniuntur; quia absconditi sunt. Ipsi vero nos inveniunt; quia lucem suae secretae conversationis nobis aperiunt, cum dignantur.

For Saul goes away from there and passes farther on, when the rude preacher profits through the examples of the elect, and goes from the beheld virtue of one to explore the conversation of another. Whom it often delights to wonder at the labor of preaching in some, often in others the strength of good work; he venerates those speaking, he strives to imitate these working. He looks at those, with what beauty they shine without; the splendor of these he scrutinizes not in exterior conversation, but in the innermost parts. Whence also he is rightly said to come to the oak of Tabor when he passes on. For the oak is a shady and strong tree. In which tree indeed the more secret conversation of the saints is expressed. For the men of this conversation, while they do not go out to the exterior works of the active life, are as it were in the shade; because they cannot feel the fires of temptations. For because they rest in heavenly desire, the farther they are removed from the love of the world, the more quiet they remain in the shade of refreshment. But this shade is of a strong tree, because the conversation of the saints despises earthly things all the more strongly as it rises more purely into the love of heavenly things. It is strong also because those powerfully tolerate the adversities of the world who love only the heavenly things which they see. And because they are in the great light of internal splendor, who disdain to look back at earthly things through love, the oak itself is called of Tabor. For Tabor is interpreted as coming light. For light comes when the internal clarity of the Creator opens itself to the chosen mind. The oak is therefore called of Tabor: because secret conversation acts by despising earthly things, that it may more clearly behold the innermost light of the Creator. For we are secret when we guard our senses in the fear of God. And then indeed we discern the coming light, because when the members of the body are well ruled, the grace of the Creator is poured back into our mind. And it is to be noted that he is said to come to the oak of Tabor, who knew from those leaping over pits that the father was concerned for him. For the preachers of the holy Church for the most part praise virtues which they themselves cannot be free for. They preach indeed the secret of the contemplative life; but while they are concerned for the guardianship of their subjects, they avoid adhering to the secrets of that life. As if Samuel were to say: Those men praise to you the study of contemplation; but because they cannot hold what they praise, it is to be sought in others. Therefore we pass from there to the oak of Tabor, when we know the laudable study of the contemplative life from holy preachers; but we seek its perfection in those who spiritually intend toward it. The three men, therefore, who find the anointed king at the oak of Tabor, designate those who are perfect in the study of the contemplative life. Who are rightly said not to be found by the king, but to find the king there. For they are not found, because they are hidden. But they find us, because they open the light of their secret conversation to us when they deign.

Non inveniuntur; quia vitam suam ab omni hominum testimonio auferunt. Sed nos inveniunt; quia per affectum charitatis nobis ad imitandum aliquid suae lucis ostendunt. Qui item imitandas virtutes suas non proferunt, nisi iis, qui magno desiderio eas obtinere et exercere concupiscunt. Prius ergo nos oportet ad quercum Thabor venire, ut a viris illis tribus valeamus inveniri. Nam velut jam in umbra venientis luminis sumus, quando magnis summae contemplationis desideriis inflammamur.

7. Tunc ergo nobis tres viri apparent: quia qui se nobis desiderantibus dignantur ostendere, in custodia locutionis, cogitationis et operis fortes sunt. Nam secretioris vitae esse non possunt, si oculorum, cordis et oris ostia aperta tenuissent. Quia ergo cor ab inepta cogitatione, os ab otioso sermone, 234 totum corpus a prava operatione custodiunt, tres sunt; viri autem, quia eamdem custodiam fortissime observant. Tres ergo viri nobis apparent: quia cum tales cernimus, in eis robur virtutis intuemur. Qui certe in umbra venientis sunt luminis; quia videre internam lucem Conditoris tanto clarius possunt, quanto studiosius mundum cor a mundi inquinatione custodiunt. Talibus quidem a mortuis resurgens apparuit Dominus, tales replevit Spiritus sanctus. De illo etenim secreto dicitur: Cum sero esset una sabbatorum, et fores essent clausae, ubi erant discipuli propter metum Judaeorum (Joan. XX, 19). Et rursum: Post dies octo iterum erant discipuli ejus intus, et Thomas cum eis, venit Jesus januis clausis, et stetit in medio, et dixit eis: Pax vobis. De alio item secreto scriptum est: Dum complerentur dies Pentecostes, erant omnes discipuli pariter in eodem loco, et factus est repente de coelo sonus advenientis spiritus vehementis, et replevit totam domum, ubi erant sedentes. Et apparuere illis dispertitae linguae, tanquam ignis, seditque super singulos eorum, et repleti sunt omnes Spiritu sanctu (Act. II, 1). Clausas quidem januas habent, qui contra humani lapsus negligentiam officia corporis, sub forti custodia stricta retinent. Intus etiam sunt; quia in interna dilectione supernae vitae requiescunt. Quibus profecto resurgens Dominus apparet, quia ejus gloriam tanto clarius aspiciunt, quanto per mundi contemptum passionis ejus mysterium strictius sequuntur. Hi etiam repleri Spiritu sancto, quasi in domo possunt; quia illi percipiunt abundanter gratiarum ejus dona, qui ad ea percipienda sese, visibilia contemnendo, paraverunt.

They are not found, because they withdraw their life from all testimony of men. But they find us, because through the affect of charity they show us something of their light to imitate. Who likewise do not proffer their virtues to be imitated except to those who desire to obtain and exercise them with great desire. First, therefore, it behooves us to come to the oak of Tabor, that we may be able to be found by those three men. For we are as it were already in the shade of the coming light, when we are inflamed with great desires of the highest contemplation.

7. Then therefore the three men appear to us: because those who deign to show themselves to us who desire them, are strong in the guardianship of speech, thought, and work. For they cannot be of a more secret life if they had kept the doors of the eyes, heart, and mouth open. Because therefore they guard the heart from inept thought, the mouth from idle speech, and the whole body from wicked operation, they are three; but men, because they observe that same guardianship most strongly. Three men therefore appear to us: because when we discern such as these, we intuit in them the strength of virtue. Who certainly are in the shade of the coming light; because they can see the internal light of the Creator all the more clearly, as they more studiously guard a clean heart from the pollution of the world. To such indeed the Lord appeared rising from the dead, and such the Holy Spirit filled. For of that secret it is said: When it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut, where the disciples were gathered together, for fear of the Jews (John 20:19). And again: After eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: Jesus comes, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. Concerning another secret likewise it is written: And when the days of Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place: and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:1). They have indeed shut doors who, against the negligence of human lapse, keep the offices of the body strictly under strong guardianship. They are also within; because they rest in the internal love of the heavenly life. To whom indeed the rising Lord appears, because they behold his glory all the more clearly, as they more strictly follow the mystery of his passion through contempt of the world. These also can be filled with the Holy Spirit, as if in a house; because those receive the gifts of his graces abundantly who have prepared themselves to receive them by contemning visible things.

8. Qui bene ad Dominum in Bethel ascendere dicuntur. Bethel quippe dicitur domus Dei. Domus vero Dei quae est, nisi domus illa, quam inhabitat lux inaccessibilis? Lux etiam inaccessibilis est, revelatio divinitatis ejus. Lux quippe est; quia a mundis cordibus qualitercunque videri potest. Plenissima quidem in semetipsa replet omnia, sed abundanter replens universa, non capitur. Capitur quidem, ut repleat, sed replens non capitur, quae repletis omnibus, non expletur. Revelatio itaque Conditoris, quia tanta immensitas lucis est, ut illuminet omnia, et angustetur in nullo; dum videtur et non comprehenditur, lux est inaccessibilis. Viri ergo hi tres ad Dominum ascendunt; quia qui se in secretiori vita custodiunt, in divinae lucis contemplatione sublimantur. Sed quia ad ipsam Dei omnipotentis speciem adhuc pertingere non possunt, in Bethel ascendere dicuntur. Quidquid enim de omnipotente Deo humana mens potest cogitare, Deus non est. Sed dum cogitando cuncta transcendit, dum quidquid potest intimae lucis, quidquid internae suavitatis et dulcedinis, quidquid spiritualis delectationis sibi fingere, minus illa esse creditur, ad quamdam lucem tamen pervenit, quae non est Deus, sed quam inhabitat Deus. Et quia tunc electi anima mirabiliter inflammatur, mirabiliter reficitur, ineffabiliter delectatione fruitur, cogitare compellitur quam ineffabilis lux, dulcedo, et delectatio sit, quae ipse est, si tam immensa lux est illa, quam inhabitat, et non est ipse. Ad Dominum quippe in Bethel Moyses ascenderat, quando cum eo in monte loquebatur. Sed qui ad lucem pervenerat, quam inhabitat Deus, lucem, quae ipse Deus erat, quaerebat, dicens: Ostende mihi faciem tuam (Exod. XXXIII, 13). De quo etiam scriptum est, quia, Loquebatur Moysi 235 Dominus facie ad faciem (Ibid.). Quid est, quod facie ad faciem Moyses cum Domino loquitur, et tamen Dominum obsecrat, ut faciem suam Dominus ostendat? Sed facies Dei cognitio ejus est. Cognoscitur autem Deus per speculum, cognoscitur per seipsum. Per speculum hic, per semetipsum in coelo. Speculum vero est illa lux, quam habitat Deus; ipse autem lux illa, quae ipse est (I Cor. XIII, 12). Moyses autem qui facie ad faciem Deum videre dicitur, et ejus faciem ad videndum postulare (Exod. XXXIII, 13), quid rectius designat, quam perfectionem electorum, qui jam speculum illius summae lucis intuentur, sed tamen ad ipsam lucis veritatem pertingere vehementer cupiunt? Ista quidem cognitio lucis electorum desideria satiare non novit, sed excitare; illa vero et satiare, et excitare. Nam tam jucunda res est, ut ineffabiliter concupiscatur; et tam plena, ut qui jam semper hanc in magno desiderio viderunt, semper ineffabili plenitudine satientur. Viri ergo, qui ad Dominum ascendunt, in Bethel ascendere dicuntur; quia cum multum in ista vita proficimus, videre ipsam lucem Conditoris per speculum possumus, in seipsam autem minime valemus.

8. Who are rightly said to ascend to the Lord in Bethel. For Bethel is called the house of God. But what is the house of God, if not that house which inaccessible light inhabits? The inaccessible light also is the revelation of his divinity. It is indeed light; because it can be seen in some way by clean hearts. Most full indeed in itself, it fills all things, but abundantly filling the universe, it is not contained. It is contained indeed, that it may fill, but filling it is not contained, which, all things having been filled, is not exhausted. And so the revelation of the Creator, because there is such an immensity of light that it illuminates all things and is narrowed in none; while it is seen and not comprehended, it is inaccessible light. These three men therefore ascend to the Lord; because those who guard themselves in a more secret life are sublimated in the contemplation of divine light. But because they cannot yet reach the very sight of almighty God, they are said to ascend into Bethel. For whatever the human mind can think concerning almighty God, is not God. But while by thinking it transcends all things, while whatever of innermost light, whatever of internal sweetness and pleasantness, whatever of spiritual delight it can imagine for itself, it is believed to be less than that, yet it reaches a certain light which is not God, but which God inhabits. And because then the soul of the elect is wonderfully inflamed, wonderfully refreshed, ineffably enjoys delight, it is compelled to think how ineffable a light, sweetness, and delight He is who is Himself, if that light which He inhabits, and is not He Himself, is so immense. Moses indeed had ascended to the Lord in Bethel when he spoke with him on the mount. But he who had reached the light which God inhabits, sought the light which was God himself, saying: Show me your face (Exod. 33:13). Concerning whom it is also written, that the Lord spoke to Moses face to face (Ibid.). What is it, that Moses speaks face to face with the Lord, and yet beseeches the Lord that the Lord show his face? But the face of God is the knowledge of him. God is known, however, through a mirror, and he is known through himself. Through a mirror here, through himself in heaven. But the mirror is that light which God inhabits; but he is that light which he himself is (1 Cor. 13:12). But Moses, who is said to see God face to face, and to ask for his face to be seen (Exod. 33:13), what does he more rightly designate than the perfection of the elect, who already behold the mirror of that highest light, but yet vehemently desire to reach the very truth of the light? This knowledge of the light indeed does not know how to satiate the desires of the elect, but to excite them; but that other both satiates and excites. For it is so pleasant a thing that it is ineffably desired; and so full, that those who have now always seen this in great desire, are always satiated with ineffable plenitude. The men, therefore, who ascend to the Lord, are said to ascend in Bethel; because when we profit much in this life, we can see the very light of the Creator through a mirror, but we are by no means able to see it in itself.

9. Et quia ad hanc sublimem visionem nonnisi humiles exaltantur, bene de eisdem viris dicitur: Quia unus tres haedos, alius tres tortas panis ferebat. Tres denique haedos portat, qui ore, corde, et opere se deliquisse poenitendo considerat. Quia enim per haedos, peccatores significantur, ii qui in extremo examine ad sinistram aeterni judicis statuendi sunt, haedorum nomine exprimuntur. Tres ergo haedos ad Dominum portat, qui peccata operis, verbi, et cogitationis poenitendo considerare non desinit. Et vir quidem est, et tamen haedos portat; quia peccare fortiter cavet, sed quasi peccator non desinit satisfacere. Nam vir erat, et haedos portabat, qui dicebat: In multis offendimus omnes (Jac. III, 2). Et quia peccata, quae confitentur, delere poenitendo satagunt: unus tres haedos, alius vero tres tortas panis portat. Tortas quippe panis superius ad afflictionem poenitentiae retulimus; quia si panis aliquando delectationem praesentis vitae significat, panis torquetur, cum pro praeterita carnis delectatione cruciamur. Unde et rex Ezechias cum poenitendo compungitur, delectationes regias se torturum promittit, dicens: Recogitabo omnes dies meos in amaritudine animae meae (Isai. XXXVIII, 15). Quando etenim carnalis mens in culpae delectationes resolvitur, quasi diem habet; quia hoc quod agit, laetanter videt. Dies ergo mentis reprobae sunt delectationes malae. Omnes ergo dies suos peccator recogitat; quia cum per divinam gratiam resipiscit, satisfacere pro universis malis non desinit. Prius enim dicitur unus portare tres haedos, deinde alius tres tortas panis; ut electi cujusque virtus appareat, qui fortis est in bono opere, humilis per aestimationem, afflictus per contritionem poenitentiae. Et quia tantae perfectionis esse nequeunt, nisi qui amore aeternorum bonorum, temporalium obliti sunt, tertius lagenam vini portare dicitur. Lagenam quippe vini portat, qui mentem replevit calore Spiritus sancti, quo et anteriora fortiter currendo appetat, et ea quae retro sunt, velut in magna ebrietatis oblivione derelinquat. Nam haedos portabat, qui dicebat: Venit Christus vocare peccatores, quorum primus ego sum (I Tim. I, 15). Et quia etiam tortam panis portabat, dicit: Castigo corpus meum, et in servitutem redigo (I Cor. IX, 27). Sed quasi amphorae vino ebrius, dicit: Quae retro sunt obliviscens, ad ea vero, quae sunt priora, extendens meipsum, ad destinatum persequor 236 bravium supernae vocationis Dei, in Christo Jesu (Phil. III, 13).

9. And because none but the humble are exalted to this sublime vision, it is well said of those same men: Because one carried three kids, another three loaves of bread. Finally, he carries three kids who considers that he has failed by mouth, heart, and work in repenting. For because sinners are signified by kids, those who in the final examination are to be placed at the left of the eternal judge are expressed by the name of kids. He therefore carries three kids to the Lord who does not cease to consider the sins of work, word, and thought by repenting. And he is indeed a man, and yet he carries kids; because he strongly takes care not to sin, but as a sinner he does not cease to make satisfaction. For he was a man, and he carried kids, who said: In many things we all offend (James 3:2). And because they strive to blot out the sins which they confess by repenting: one carries three kids, but another carries three loaves of bread. Loaves of bread indeed we have referred above to the affliction of penance; because if bread sometimes signifies the delight of the present life, bread is twisted (tortured) when we are tormented for the past delight of the flesh. Whence also King Hezekiah, when he is pricked by repenting, promises that he will twist his royal delights, saying: I will recount all my years in the bitterness of my soul (Isa. 38:15). For when the carnal mind is dissolved in the delights of fault, it as it were has a day; because it joyfully sees that which it does. The days of a reprobate mind, therefore, are evil delights. The sinner therefore recounts all his days; because when he comes to his senses through divine grace, he does not cease to make satisfaction for all evils. For first one is said to carry three kids, then another three loaves of bread; so that the virtue of each of the elect may appear, who is strong in good work, humble by estimation, afflicted through the contrition of penance. And because they cannot be of such great perfection except those who by love of eternal goods have forgotten temporal ones, the third is said to carry a flagon of wine. He indeed carries a flagon of wine who has filled his mind with the heat of the Holy Spirit, by which he may both seek the things that are before by running strongly, and abandon those things which are behind, as if in a great oblivion of drunkenness. For he carried kids, who said: Christ came to call sinners, of whom I am the first (1 Tim. 1:15). And because he also carried a loaf of bread, he says: I chastise my body, and bring it into servitude (1 Cor. 9:27). But as if drunk with the wine of an amphora, he says: Forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching myself forth to those that are before, I pursue towards the mark, for the prize of the supernal vocation of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13).

Viri ergo tres ad Dominum ascendunt, et tres haedos, et tres panis tortas, et vini lagenam deferunt: quia remotioris vitae studiis dediti, ad contemplationem veri luminis surgunt ex merito humilitatis. Sed quales sunt in se, quales vero sint aliis exponit, dicens: Cumque te salutaverint, dabunt tibi tres tortas panis, et accipies de manu eorum. Salutant nos viri sancti, quando nobis bona aeterna salutis annuntiant. Qui vero nos per corpus salutant, caput inclinant, ut reverentiam salutatis exhibeant. Viris autem spiritualibus caput inclinare, est mentem a summa contemplatione deponere. Nam si caput non inclinant, salutare non possunt: quia nos salutari eruditione non instruunt, si mentem a summa contemplatione coelestium non deponunt. Tunc enim nobis magnam reverentiam exhibent: quia eos, pro quibus ab alto suo culmine descendere dignantur, parvos esse non tenent.

10. Sed dum futurus rex salutatur, duo ei panes tribuuntur. Duo enim panes ordinando praedicatori dantur, quando flere docetur peccata non solum sua, sed aliena. Habet ergo panem unum tortum, quando pro peccatis suis affligitur, habet alium, quando subditorum peccata plangere conatur. Sed et hunc panem Psalmista clarius insinuans, ait: Surgite, postquam sederitis, qui manducatis panem doloris (Psal. CXXVI, 2). Hinc Domino confitetur, dicens: Cibabis nos pane lacrymarum, et potum dabis nobis in lacrymis cum mensura (Psal. LXXIX, 9). Panis ergo torta, panis est doloris, et panis lacrymarum. Et fortasse idcirco ille vir unus tres panis tortas portabat: quia tres erant, qui simul pergebant, ut cum inter se eos dividerent, singuli singulos panes haberent. Quod etiam de haedis intelligi convenienter potest. Qua in re quid notandum est, nisi quia remotioris vitae viri dum singularem conversationem tenent, sollicitudinem aliorum non habent? Unum ergo haedum, et unum panem habent, qui pro solis suis peccatis compunguntur, et alienis per pastorale officium non gravantur. Et quia, qui ejusdem perfectae conversationis sunt, in seipsis afflictionem carnis aemulantur; bene tres panes unus, et alius tres haedos, et tertius vini lagenam portat. Velut enim unus portat, quod oblaturi, aut comesturi sunt omnes; et omnes manducant vel offerunt, quod portat unus, quando pia aemulatione eorum quisque succensus, in se habet bona exempla pro aliis, et bona, quae habent alii, non negligit imitari. Et quia feminino genere dicuntur tortae panis, hoc profecto insinuat; quia qui ex consuetudine compungitur, ei nimirum ex lacrymis aliis aliae plures oriuntur.

The three men therefore ascend to the Lord, and bring three kids, and three loaves of bread, and a flagon of wine: because devoted to the studies of a more remote life, they rise to the contemplation of the true light from the merit of humility. But what sort they are in themselves, and what sort they are to others, he explains, saying: And when they shall have saluted you, they will give you three loaves of bread, and you shall receive them from their hand. Holy men salute us when they announce to us the eternal goods of salvation. But those who salute us through the body, bow the head, so that they may exhibit reverence to the one saluted. But for spiritual men to bow the head is to put down the mind from high contemplation. For if they do not bow the head, they cannot salute: because they do not instruct us with salutary erudition if they do not put down the mind from the highest contemplation of heavenly things. For then they exhibit great reverence to us: because they do not hold those for whom they deign to descend from their high summit to be small.

10. But while the future king is saluted, two loaves are given to him. For two loaves are given to the preacher being ordained, when he is taught to weep for not only his own sins, but those of others. He has therefore one twisted loaf, when he is afflicted for his own sins; he has another, when he endeavors to bewail the sins of his subjects. But the Psalmist, more clearly insinuating this bread, says: Rise after you have sat, you who eat the bread of sorrow (Ps. 126:2). Hence he confesses to the Lord, saying: Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears, and give us drink in tears with measure (Ps. 79:6). The twisted loaf (torta panis) therefore is the bread of sorrow, and the bread of tears. And perhaps for that reason that one man was carrying three twisted loaves: because there were three who were going together, so that when they divided them among themselves, each might have one loaf. Which can also be conveniently understood of the kids. In which matter what is to be noted, except that men of a more remote life, while they hold a singular conversation, do not have the care of others? They have therefore one kid, and one loaf, who are pricked for their own sins alone, and are not burdened with those of others through the pastoral office. And because those who are of the same perfect conversation emulate the affliction of the flesh in themselves, it is well that one carries three loaves, another three kids, and the third a flagon of wine. For as one carries what all are to offer or eat, and all eat or offer what one carries, when each of them, kindled by pious emulation, has in himself good examples for others, and does not neglect to imitate the good things which others have. And because twisted loaves (tortae panis) are spoken of in the feminine gender, this surely insinuates that for him who is pricked by custom, more and more tears arise from others.

Quasi enim in femineo sexu foecunda est poenitentis afflictio; quia quo saepius quisque compungitur, eo et largiora ei lacrymarum fluenta ministrantur. Saul ergo non unus panis, sed duo dantur, quia flere praedicatori pro se solo non sufficit. Accipiat ergo de virorum manibus duos panes; ut videlicet flere exemplo perfectorum discat, sed...

11. Et notandum, quia uncto regi Samuel praecipit, dicens: Et accipies de manu eorum. Cujus verbi, quae melior ratio colligi potest, quam ea quae palam cernitur: quia videlicet in sanctis viris afflictionem non libenter aemulamur? Nam qui honorem praelationis, et dignitatem ambiant, innumeri sunt: qui vero laborem ministerii, et afflictionem carnis de eadem praelatione appetant, pauci. Libenter quidem volumus super alios sublimari, sed eorum plangere peccata vitamus. Tunc enim panes nobis oblatos videmus, sed de manibus offerentium recipere nolumus: quia in electis viris afflictionem cernimus, quam non imitamur. Praecipiat ergo propheta, dicens: Accipies de manu eorum. Ut qui idoneus esse appetit rector Ecclesiae, quod dictum est, assumere nequaquam vitet. Bene quoque Saul prius ad viros salientes magnas foveas ducitur, deinde ad eos, qui panes, haedos, et vinum portant: ut rudis praedicator in aliis discat, saeculi alta despicere, et in aliis carnis afflictionem, et lacrymarum hostias pro se, et subditis omnipotenti Deo offerre. Sed et adhuc profectus ejus summam insinuans propheta, subjungit, dicens:

(Vers. 5, 6.) Post haec venies ad collem Domini, ubi est statio Philisthinorum, et cum ingressus fueris urbem, obvium habebis gregem prophetarum, descendentem de excelso, et ante eos psalterium, et tympanum, et tibiam, et citharam; ipsosque prophetantes. Et insiliet in te spiritus Domini, et prophetabis cum eis, et mutaberis in virum alium.

12. Collis, altitudo est montis. Quid vero in colle hoc rectius accipitur, quam sancta intentio Scripturarum? Altitudo quidem montis est: quia non jacet in plano litterae, sed nimis erecta est in spiritualium sensuum sublimitate. Recto igitur virtutum itineri rudis innititur praedicator, si postquam publicos praedicatores et remotos anachoretas viderit, Scripturae altitudinem videat et agnoscat. Qua in re notandum est, quia Saul in eo quod ab humero et sursum supra omnem populum eminet, eruditum, et magnae conversationis virum signare diximus.

For as if in the feminine sex, the affliction of the penitent is fecund; because the more often each one is pricked, the more abundant flows of tears are ministered to him. To Saul, therefore, not one loaf, but two are given, because it does not suffice for the preacher to weep for himself alone. Let him therefore receive from the hands of the men two loaves; so that he may clearly learn to weep by the example of the perfect, but...

11. And it is to be noted, because Samuel commands the anointed king, saying: And you shall receive from their hand. Of which word, what better reason can be gathered than that which is openly seen: because namely we do not willingly emulate affliction in holy men? For those who ambition the honor of prelacy and dignity are innumerable: but those who seek the labor of ministry and the affliction of the flesh from the same prelacy are few. We indeed willingly wish to be sublimated over others, but we avoid bewailing their sins. For then we see the loaves offered to us, but we are unwilling to receive them from the hands of those offering: because in the elect men we discern an affliction which we do not imitate. Let the prophet therefore command, saying: You shall receive from their hand. So that he who ambitions to be a fit ruler of the Church may by no means avoid assuming what has been said. Well also Saul is first led to the men leaping over great pits, then to those who carry loaves, kids, and wine: so that the rude preacher may learn in others to despise the high things of the age, and in others to offer the affliction of the flesh and the hosts of tears for himself and his subjects to almighty God. But still insinuating the sum of his progress, the prophet adds, saying:

(Vers. 5, 6.) After these things you shall come to the hill of the Lord, where is the garrison of the Philistines, and when you shall have entered the city, you shall meet a company of prophets, coming down from the high place, and before them a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a harp; and they themselves prophesying. And the spirit of the Lord shall leap upon you, and you shall prophesy with them, and you shall be changed into another man.

12. A hill is the height of a mountain. But what is more rightly accepted in this hill than the holy intention of the Scriptures? It is indeed the height of a mountain: because it does not lie in the plain of the letter, but is exceedingly erect in the sublimity of spiritual senses. Therefore the rude preacher leans upon the right path of virtues if, after he has seen public preachers and remote anchorites, he sees and acknowledges the height of Scripture. In which matter it is to be noted, that we said that Saul, in that he stands out from the shoulder and upwards above all the people, signifies an erudite man and a man of great conversation.

Cur ergo ad collem Domini ascendit, ut ad Scripturarum altitudinem veniat, quam cognoscit? Sed simili modo de eo quaeri potuit, quod ad videndos viros salientes magnas foveas ierit, qui magnae conversationis esse dicebatur. Ad quod dicendum: quia magnos viros designare ostensus est in conversatione, sed ministerio praedicationis rudes. Qui ergo per exempla meliorum proficere, et in contemplationis puritate et officio praedicationis potest, redire ad altitudinem Scripturarum debet: quia quo altiori vita proficit, sublimitatem sacri eloquii valde subtilius attendit. Dicat ergo propheta: Post haec venies ad collem Domini. Quasi dicat: Cum perfectionem sanctorum virorum perfecta imitatione comprehendis, in tantam Scripturae sacrae intelligentiam proficies; ut planum jam esse videas, quod in ea te sublimiter videre cogitabas.

13. Ibi est statio Philistinorum: quia qui superbiae potu de coelo ceciderunt, Judaeis atque haereticis per Scripturas illudunt. Stant ergo in colle: quia eorum corda, quae possident, in Scripturis decipiunt intelligentiae falsitate. Quoties ergo Judaei ad collem Domini ascendere praesumunt, a Philisthaeis ibi stantibus captivantur. Dum enim Scripturae sensum se sublimiter intelligere aestimant, eis in ascensu suo daemones obviant, et decipientes necant. Merito ergo Saul non statim, sed prius, visis salientibus foveas, et panes et vinum portantibus, ad collem Domini ire praecipitur: quia viri fideles magna et doctrinae meliorum et exemplorum tutela muniuntur. Unde et eidem Saul dicitur: Obvium habebis gregem prophetarum venientium de excelso. Quasi dicat: Philisthinorum stationem timere tanto minus poteris, quanto ad securitatem obvios prophetas habebis. Et quia grex prophetarum dicitur, magna defensorum nostrorum multitudo signatur. Timeat ergo Judaeus: quia dum solus ascendit, interit. Quid enim iidem prophetae nobis obviam venientes dicunt? Vae soli, quia si ceciderit, non est qui erigat eum (Eccle. IV, 10). Solus namque est, qui a Deo relinquitur. Hunc certe cadentem nullus erigit, quia relictum a Deo sanctorum aliquis non assumit. Electus ergo quisque securus ascendit: quia solus non est. Qui enim per nos loquitur, nobiscum est. Nam et repromittit, dicens: Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem saeculi (Matth. XXVIII, 20). Solus quippe non erat, qui dicebat: Solus non sum, sed qui misit me, mecum est (Joan. VIII, 16).

Why therefore does he ascend to the hill of the Lord, to come to the height of the Scriptures which he knows? But in like manner it could be asked of him, why he went to see the men leaping over great pits, who was said to be of great conversation. To which it is to be said: that he was shown to designate great men in conversation, but rude in the ministry of preaching. He therefore who can profit through the examples of the better, and in the purity of contemplation and the office of preaching, ought to return to the height of the Scriptures: because by how much higher life he profits, by so much more subtly he attends to the sublimity of the sacred eloquence. Let the prophet therefore say: After these things you shall come to the hill of the Lord. As if he should say: When you comprehend the perfection of holy men by perfect imitation, you will profit in such great understanding of sacred Scripture; that you may see that to be plain now, which you thought you saw sublimely in it.

13. There is the station of the Philistines: because those who fell from heaven by the drink of pride mock the Jews and heretics through the Scriptures. They stand, therefore, on the hill: because they deceive the hearts which they possess in the Scriptures by the falsity of understanding. As often as the Jews presume to ascend to the hill of the Lord, they are captivated by the Philistines standing there. For while they estimate that they understand the sense of Scripture sublimely, demons meet them in their ascent and, deceiving them, kill them. Deservedly, therefore, Saul is commanded to go to the hill of the Lord not immediately, but first, having seen those jumping the ditches, and those carrying loaves and wine: because faithful men are fortified by the great protection both of the doctrine of the better and of examples. Whence also it is said to the same Saul: Thou shalt have a company of prophets coming down from the high place meeting thee. As if he were to say: Thou wilt be able to fear the station of the Philistines so much the less, as thou shalt have prophets meeting thee for security. And because it is called a "company" (grex) of prophets, a great multitude of our defenders is signified. Let the Jew fear, therefore: because while he ascends alone, he perishes. For what do these same prophets meeting us say? Woe to him that is alone, for if he fall, there is none to lift him up (Eccles. 4:10). For he is alone who is abandoned by God. Surely no one lifts him up when he falls, because some one of the saints does not assume him who is abandoned by God. Every chosen one, therefore, ascends secure: because he is not alone. For he who speaks through us is with us. For he also promises again, saying: Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. 28:20). Surely he was not alone who said: I am not alone, but he who sent me is with me (John 8:16).

Solus item non erat, qui exquirebat, dicens: An experimentum ejus quaeritis, qui in me loquitur Christus (II Cor. XIII, 3)? Quod non solum de Domini spiritali praesentia, sed et materiali electorum doctrina intelligi convenienter potest. Sancti quidem praedicatores in collem Domini, ubi est statio Philisthinorum, ascendunt: sed quia prophetarum gregem habent obvium, ipsos Philisthaeos nequaquam metuunt. Qui vero sunt hi prophetae, nisi magni praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae? Prophetae namque ministerium est occulta revelare, et futura praedicere. Doctores autem sanctae Ecclesiae dum occultos Scripturarum sensus ad communem scientiam trahunt, secreta, quae nesciuntur, aperiunt: et dum aeterna gaudia praedicant, futura revelant. Prophetae ergo nobis obviam veniunt: quia doctores sanctae Ecclesiae, Scripturae sanctae veritatem nobis ostendunt. Dum enim ea, quae de sacro eloquio scire volumus, nobis dicunt, per viam, qua ad collem Domini pergitur, euntibus occurrunt. Ibi ergo per occursum prophetarum securi sumus, ubi Philisthaei sunt: quia per auctoritatem sanctorum praedicatorum Scripturae intellectum agnoscimus, in qua Judaei, et haeretici errorum suorum gladio a daemonibus perimuntur. Ecce enim si ad Legem Moysi recurrimus, collem profecto Domini invenimus. Ibi certe de tabernaculo, ibi de magno pontifice, ibi de hircorum et vitulorum simul, et Agni paschalis sanguine legimus. Judaei hoc suo spiritu juxta litteram intelligunt, in quo quia nullum prophetarum secum habent, moriuntur. Ego si ad hunc montem ascendere volo, ante descendentes prophetas video, et securus ascendo. Et ut novos interim deseram, Isaias ascendenti prius occurrit, dicens: Quasi ovis ad occisionem ducetur, et quasi agnus coram tondente se, non aperiet os suum (Isai. LIII, 7). Hinc Paulus ait: Christus assistens pontifex futurorum bonorum, per amplius et perfectius tabernaculum, non manu factum, id est non hujus creationis, neque per sanguinem hircorum aut vitulorum, sed per proprium sanguinem introivit semel in sancta, aeterna redemptione inventa (Hebr. IX, 11, 12). Sed si plures habere volumus in isto colle, omnes prophetas requirentes invenimus: quia quod veteres doctores promiserant, hoc in Redemptore nostro novi praedicatores impletum esse demonstrant.

14. Quare et collis nomine Redemptor humani generis convenienter designari potest. Unde Isaias vaticinans, dicit: Erit in novissimis diebus praeparatus mons domus Domini in vertice montium (Isai. II, 2). Collis quidem dicitur pro sublimitate sanctitatis: Domini vero, quia summi est filius Genitoris. In quo nimirum colle statio Philisthinorum esse dicitur: quia et in signum natus est, cui contradicatur. Statio quidem Philisthinorum est contrarietas haereticorum.

Likewise he was not alone who inquired, saying: Do you seek a proof of Christ who speaks in me? (2 Cor. 13:3). Which can be conveniently understood not only of the spiritual presence of the Lord, but also of the material doctrine of the chosen. Holy preachers indeed ascend to the hill of the Lord, where the station of the Philistines is: but because they have the company of prophets meeting them, they by no means fear the Philistines themselves. But who are these prophets, except the great preachers of the holy Church? For it is the ministry of a prophet to reveal hidden things and to foretell future things. But the doctors of the holy Church, while they draw the hidden senses of the Scriptures to common knowledge, open the secrets which are not known: and while they preach eternal joys, they reveal future things. The prophets, therefore, come to meet us: because the doctors of the holy Church show us the truth of the holy Scripture. For while they tell us those things which we wish to know about the sacred word, they occur to those going by the way by which one proceeds to the hill of the Lord. There, therefore, through the meeting of the prophets we are secure, where the Philistines are: because through the authority of the holy preachers we acknowledge the understanding of the Scripture, in which the Jews and heretics are destroyed by the sword of their errors by demons. For behold, if we recur to the Law of Moses, we surely find the hill of the Lord. There surely we read of the tabernacle, there of the great high priest, there of the blood of goats and calves together, and of the paschal Lamb. The Jews understand this in their own spirit according to the letter, in which because they have none of the prophets with them, they die. I, if I wish to ascend to this mountain, first see the prophets descending, and I ascend secure. And to leave aside the new ones for now, Isaiah first meets the one ascending, saying: He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer, he shall not open his mouth (Isa. 53:7). Hence Paul says: Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, neither by the blood of goats or of calves, but by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having found eternal redemption (Heb. 9:11, 12). But if we wish to have more on this hill, we find all the prophets seeking it: because what the old doctors had promised, the new preachers show fulfilled in our Redeemer.

14. Wherefore also the Redeemer of the human race can be conveniently designated by the name of a hill. Whence Isaiah, prophesying, says: It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains (Isa. 2:2). It is indeed called a hill for the sublimity of holiness: but of the Lord, because He is the Son of the highest Begetter. In which hill, namely, the garrison of the Philistines is said to be: because He was born for a sign that shall be contradicted. The garrison of the Philistines indeed is the contrariety of heretics.

Velut enim in colle stantes, ad collem ascendentibus insidiantur: et dum Scripturas sacras male exponendo pervertunt, ad cognoscendum Redemptorem negligenter ascendentes perimunt. Electus ergo ne trepidet, gregem prophetarum ascendens obvium habet: quia ei ipsum Redemptorem annuntiant omnes praedicatores Testamenti veteris et novi. Qui nimirum de excelso veniunt: quia quae in terra praedicant, in coelo vident. Unde et Joanni quasi vero ex electo grege prophetarum a coelo dicitur: Ascende huc, et ostendam tibi quid oporteat fieri post haec (Apoc. IV, 1). Qui cum ascendisset, agnum quem Moyses occidendum figuraverat, et ipse in cruce oblatum viderat, jam regnantem conspexit et agnovit: et quantas gratias agerent ei ii pro quibus occisus fuerat, didicit. De excelso igitur praedicatores veniunt: quia quod minoribus praedicant, in coelesti contemplatione didicerunt.

15. Bene etiam grex prophetarum Saul occursus in ingressu urbis asseritur; quia summos praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae illic videre possumus, ubi descendunt, non ubi sublimantur. Ea enim, quae nobis parvulis dicunt, audimus: sed ea quae vident in coelestibus, quomodo videant, aut dulciter ament, non videmus. Paulus namque apostolus raptus est in paradisum, et assumptus est ad tertium coelum, audivit etiam arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui (II Cor. XII, 4). Quis ergo invenire tantum praedicatorem possit in paradisum raptum, aut ad tertium coelum assumptum? Sed ista de se coactus beatus Paulus dixit. Unde et in fine expositae sublimitatis se humilians, ait: Factus sum insipiens, vos me coegistis (II Cor. XII, 11). Quanta ergo fuerunt illa, quae dicere noluit, si ad haec manifestanda coactus venit? Nam et qui audivit et quae homini non licet loqui, vidit quae homini non licet scire. Dicas fortasse: Si vellet, humana tamen quomodo dicere posset locutione, illius tertii coeli pulchritudinem, intimae illius claritatis lucem referre, angelorum fulgorem inenarrabilem, et inaccessibilem claritatem, quam dulciter de plenitudine illius electi et beati illi aeterni cives omnes accipiant, quam desideranter sumant, quam pleniter repleantur, quam suaviter divinae bonitatis dulcedinem gustent, quam delectabili plenitudine satientur: qui splendores sunt singulis de una ineffabili illa luce Conditoris, quae simul omnium de una illa gloria pulchritudo: qua excellentia dignitatis alii praeemineant aliis, qua sunt boni melioribus ineffabilis justitiae jucunditate subjecti?

For as if standing on the hill, they lie in wait for those ascending the hill: and while they pervert the sacred Scriptures by expounding them badly, they destroy those who carelessly ascend to know the Redeemer. Let not the elect person therefore tremble, ascending he has a company of prophets meeting him: because all the preachers of the Old and New Testament announce to him the Redeemer Himself. Who namely come from the high place: because what they preach on earth, they see in heaven. Whence also it is said from heaven to John, as if indeed from the elect company of prophets: Come up hither, and I will show thee what must be done after these things (Rev. 4:1). Who when he had ascended, beheld and acknowledged already reigning the Lamb whom Moses had figured to be slain, and he himself had seen offered on the cross: and he learned how great thanks they gave to Him for whom He had been slain. From the high place therefore the preachers come: because what they preach to the lesser ones, they learned in celestial contemplation.

15. Well also the company of prophets is asserted to meet Saul at the entrance of the city; because we can see the highest preachers of the holy Church there, where they descend, not where they are sublimated. For those things which they say to us little ones, we hear: but those things which they see in heavenly places, how they see them, or sweetly love them, we do not see. For Paul the apostle was caught up into paradise, and taken up to the third heaven, he heard also secret words, which it is not permitted for man to speak (2 Cor. 12:4). Who therefore could find so great a preacher caught up into paradise, or taken up to the third heaven? But the blessed Paul said these things of himself, being forced. Whence also in the end of the exposed sublimity, humbling himself, he says: I am become foolish, you have forced me (2 Cor. 12:11). How great therefore were those things which he was unwilling to say, if he came forced to manifest these? For he also who heard what it is not permitted for man to speak, saw what it is not permitted for man to know. You might say perhaps: If he wished, how could he nevertheless say in human speech the beauty of that third heaven, relate the light of that inward clarity, the inenarrable brightness of the angels, and the inaccessible clarity, how sweetly all those elect and blessed eternal citizens receive from His fullness, how desirously they take, how fully they are replenished, how sweetly they taste the sweetness of divine goodness, with what delectable fullness they are satiated: what splendors there are for each from that one ineffable light of the Creator, what beauty there is of all together from that one glory: by what excellence of dignity some excel others, how the good are subject to the better with the ineffable joy of justice?

16. Ad hoc ergo excelsum Paulum sequi non possumus, sed urbem ingredimur, in qua velut ab alto descendens, nobis obviam venit. Nam qui cernere non possumus alta quae praedicatores vident, venerabiliter audire debemus plana, quae docent. Sed cum descendunt, ante se psalterium, tympanum, tibiam, et citharam deferunt. Psalterium quippe habent, quia regnum coelorum annuntiant: tympanum habent, quia praedicant mortificationem carnis: tibiam habent, quia flere subditos jubent pro acquisitione aeternae laetitiae: citharam quoque habent, quia gaudere pios pro certitudine aeternorum bonorum edocent. Psalterium quidem, qui a superiori parte resonat, etiam aeternorum gaudiorum praedicationem designat: quia dum superna amare suggerit, quasi a superiori parte suae dulcedinis sonum mittit. Tympanum vero, quia de mortui animalis corio tenditur, in eo non inconvenienter carnis nostroe mortificatio figuratur. Tibiam autem, quia in mortuorum hominum exequiis haberi soleat, de Evangelio didicimus: quia dum Dominus archisynagogi filiam resuscitare vellet, de domo illius tibicines ejecit, et turbam tumultuantem expulit (Matth. IX, 25). Quid ergo in tibia, nisi sanctorum luctus exprimitur? Nam dum se ab illa vita aeterna, quam appetunt, projectos aspiciunt, semetipsos quasi mortuos plangunt. Cithara autem valde laetum musicum est instrumentum. Quo nimirum instrumento verbum solatii electorum apte figuratur: quia velut ad sonum citharae hilarescimus, quando nos electi praedicatores inter aerumnas praesentis exsilii consolantur. Psalterium ergo primum in promissione praedicatorum ponitur: quia ante omnia coelestis regni gloria praedicanda est; ut dum bonum agnoscimus quod amemus, laborare pro eodem bono adipiscendo cupiamus. Hinc est quod cum in Evangelio Matthaeus principia Dominicae Incarnationis assereret, dixit: Coepit Joannes praedicare, et dicere: Poenitentiam agite, appropinquabit regnum coelorum (Matth. IV, 17). Sed quia cum coelestia noscimus, si ad ea pervenire volumus, necesse est, ut passiones carnis mortificemus, praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae velut post psalterium, sonum tympani faciunt. Ipsa autem mortificatio corporis quid est aliud, quam praeparatio aeternae beatitudinis? Coelestia ergo praeparari diligimus, et ardentissimis fletibus ea postulare jubemur. Quasi enim tibia mortuos plangimus, quando vehementer dolemus, quia adhuc in illa aeterna vita non vivimus. Post tympanum ergo, praedicatores nostri tibiam habent, quando et membra nostra nos docent mortificare, et pro amore aeternae vitae ingemiscere. Citharam quoque post tibiam ducunt: quia praecipiunt sic deflere aerumnas praesentis exsilii, ut gaudeamus de promissione aeternae haereditatis. Nam psalterium insonabat propheta magnus, cum dicebat: Oves meae vocem meam audiunt, et vitam aeternam do eis (Joan. X, 27).

16. We cannot follow Paul to this high place, but we enter the city, in which as if descending from on high, he comes to meet us. For we who cannot discern the high things which the preachers see, ought to hear venerably the plain things which they teach. But when they descend, they carry before them the psaltery, the tympanum, the pipe, and the cithara. For they have the psaltery because they announce the kingdom of heaven: they have the tympanum because they preach the mortification of the flesh: they have the pipe because they command the subjects to weep for the acquisition of eternal joy: they have also the cithara because they teach the pious to rejoice for the certainty of eternal goods. The psaltery indeed, which resounds from the superior part, also designates the preaching of eternal joys: because while it suggests loving the things above, it as it were sends the sound of its sweetness from the superior part. The tympanum truly, because it is stretched from the skin of a dead animal, in it not inconveniently the mortification of our flesh is figured. But the pipe, because it is accustomed to be had in the funerals of dead men, we have learned from the Gospel: because when the Lord wished to raise the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, he cast out the pipers from her house and expelled the tumultuous crowd (Matt. 9:25). What then is expressed in the pipe but the mourning of the saints? For while they behold themselves cast away from that eternal life which they desire, they bewail themselves as it were dead. But the cithara is a very joyful musical instrument. By which instrument surely the word of consolation of the chosen is aptly figured: because as it were we are cheered at the sound of the cithara when the chosen preachers console us among the hardships of the present exile. The psaltery therefore is placed first in the promise of the preachers: because before all things the glory of the heavenly kingdom is to be preached; so that while we acknowledge the good which we may love, we may desire to labor for obtaining that same good. Hence it is that when in the Gospel Matthew asserted the principles of the Lord's Incarnation, he said: John began to preach and to say: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven will approach (Matt. 4:17). But because when we know heavenly things, if we wish to arrive at them, it is necessary that we mortify the passions of the flesh, the preachers of the holy Church as it were after the psaltery make the sound of the tympanum. But that mortification of the body, what else is it than the preparation for eternal beatitude? Therefore we love that heavenly things be prepared, and we are commanded to ask for them with most ardent weepings. For as it were with the pipe we bewail the dead when we vehemently grieve because we do not yet live in that eternal life. After the tympanum, therefore, our preachers have the pipe when they teach us both to mortify our members and to groan for the love of eternal life. They also lead the cithara after the pipe: because they command us so to bewail the hardships of the present exile that we may rejoice in the promise of the eternal inheritance. For the great prophet resounded the psaltery when he said: My sheep hear my voice, and I give them eternal life (John 10:27).

Psalterium item percutiens, ait: Exaltari oportet filium hominis, ut omnis qui credit in eum, non pereat, sed habeat vitam aeternam (Joan. III, 14). Tympanum sonabat, qui dicebat: Mortificate membra vestra, quae sunt super terram: fornicationem, immunditiam, libidinem, concupiscentiam (Coloss. III, 5). Tibiam sonabat, qui dicebat: Miseri estote, lugete, risus vester vertatur in luctum, et gaudium in moerorem (Jac. IV, 9). Tympanum sonabat, qui dicebat: Propter te mortificamur tota die, aestimati sumus, sicut oves occisionis (Psal. XLIII, 22). Tibiam vero ante se habet, qui item Deo loquitur, dicens: Cibabis nos pane lacrymarum, et potum dabis nobis in mensura (Psal. LXXIX, 6). Tibiam ante se habebat Dominus, cum dicebat: Amen dico vobis, quia plorabitis et flebitis vos, mundus autem gaudebit, vos vero contristabimini (Joan. XVI, 20). Sed velut citharae sonum subjungens, ait: Tristitia vestra vertetur in gaudium (Ibid.). Quasi citharam nobis sonabat, qui dicebat: Gaudete in Domino semper, iterum dico, gaudete: modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus; Dominus prope est (Philip. IV, 4). Citharam nobis sonat, qui civitatis nostrae bona annuntians, ait: Gaudium et laetitia invenietur in ea, gratiarum actio et vox laudis (Isa. LI, 3). Quia ergo praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae coeleste regnum annuntiant, et pro eodem regno adipiscendo, mortificare carnem, flere captivitatem, in spe futurae beatitudinis nos exsultare praecipiunt: prophetae ab excelso descendentes, ante se psalterium, tympanum, tibiam, et citharam habere perhibentur. Et grex quidem prophetarum dicitur, quia multi sunt pastores sanctae Ecclesiae, et pastorem unum habent Dominum Jesum Christum.

17. Et notandum quia psalterium, tympanum, tibiam, et citharam ante se habere prophetae perhibentur, ut electorum praedicatorum forma videatur. Reprobi namque post se, quae praedicant, habent: quia dicunt et non faciunt, negligunt bona agere, quae cognoscunt. Unde et adhuc regi Saul, jam Domini mandata contemnenti, dicitur: Quia projecisti sermonem Domini, projecit te Dominus, ne sis rex (I Reg. XV, 23). Hinc per prophetam de Judaeis Dominus queritur, dicens: Projecerunt me post corpus suum (III Reg. XIV, 9). Sancti ergo doctores, quia iter supernae conversationis, quod praedicant, continuo incessu boni operis servant, in eorum typo dicitur, quia prophetae psalterium, tympanum, tibiam, et citharam ante se descendentes habuerunt. Possunt enim haec instrumenta ad praedicationem redemptoris referri. Et quia non valde superius, collem Domini ipsum esse Redemptorem diximus, organorum convenientiam intueamur. Qui regni aeterni eum regem nominat, nobis profecto psalterium sonat. Et qui disciplinam mortificationis nostrae in eo asserit, velut tympanum ferit.

Striking the psaltery likewise, he said: The Son of man must be exalted, that every one that believeth in him may not perish, but may have eternal life (John 3:14). He sounded the tympanum who said: Mortify your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, lust, concupiscence (Col. 3:5). He sounded the pipe who said: Be miserable, and mourn, let your laughter be turned into mourning, and joy into sorrow (James 4:9). He sounded the tympanum who said: For thy sake we are mortified all the day, we are estimated as sheep of slaughter (Psalm 43:22). But he has the pipe before him who likewise speaks to God, saying: Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears, and shalt give us drink in measure (Psalm 79:6). The Lord had the pipe before him when he said: 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). But subjoining as it were the sound of the cithara, he says: Your sorrow shall be turned into joy (Ibid.). He sounded the cithara as it were to us who said: Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say, rejoice: let your modesty be known to all men; the Lord is at hand (Phil. 4:4). He sounds the cithara to us who, announcing the goods of our city, says: Joy and gladness shall be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of praise (Isa. 51:3). Because therefore the preachers of the holy Church announce the heavenly kingdom, and for the sake of obtaining the same kingdom, command to mortify the flesh, to bewail captivity, to exult in the hope of future beatitude: the prophets descending from the high place are said to have before them the psaltery, the tympanum, the pipe, and the cithara. And it is called a "company" of prophets because there are many shepherds of the holy Church, and they have one shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

17. And it is to be noted that the prophets are said to have the psaltery, the tympanum, the pipe, and the cithara before them, so that the form of the chosen preachers may be seen. For the reprobate have after them the things which they preach: because they say and do not, they neglect to do the good things which they know. Whence also it is still said to king Saul, already contemning the commands of the Lord: Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord hath rejected thee, that thou shouldst not be king (1 Sam. 15:23). Hence through the prophet the Lord complains of the Jews, saying: They have cast me behind their body (1 Kings 14:9). But the holy doctors, because they keep the way of heavenly life which they preach by the continuous gait of good work, it is said in their type that the prophets had the psaltery, the tympanum, the pipe, and the cithara before them as they were descending. For these instruments can be referred to the preaching of the Redeemer. And because not much earlier we said that the hill of the Lord is the Redeemer himself, let us look at the agreement of the organs. He who names him the king of the eternal kingdom surely sounds the psaltery for us. And he who asserts in him the discipline of our mortification, as it were strikes the tympanum.

Tibiam sonat, qui mortuum Redemptorem pro salute mundi denuntiat. Citharam percutit, qui eum a mortuis surrexisse, et ad coelos ascendisse dicat. Sed ad tantorum organorum jucunditatem hilarescimus, si ipsum prophetarum gregem insonantem audiamus. David namque dicit: A summo coelo egressio ejus, et occursus usque ad summum (Psal. XVIII, 7). Hinc item dicit: Adorabant eum omnes reges terrae, omnes gentes servient ei (Psal. LXXI, 11). Velut enim psalterium in laudem Redemptoris tenuit, qui superiorem partem laudis obtinuit, et Redemptoris adventum a summo coelo praedicavit. Tympanum mortificationis ejus Isaias tetigit, dicens: Et vidimus eum, et non erat aspectus, et desideravimus eum, despectum, et novissimum virorum, virum dolorum, et scientem infirmitatem: et quasi absconditus vultus ejus et despectus; unde nec reputavimus eum (Isa. LIII, 3). Tibiam mortis ejus item sonans, ait: Tanquam ovis ad occisionem ducetur, et quasi agnus obmutuit (Ibid., 7). Citharam resurrectionis David increpitans, ait: Commoveatur a facie ejus universa terra, dicite in gentibus, quia Dominus regnavit a ligno: etenim firmavit orbem terrae, qui non commovebitur (Psal. XCV, 10). Citharam ascensionis etiam tangens, dixit: Regna terrae cantate Deo, qui ascendit super coelos coelorum ad orientem (Psal. LXVII, 33, 34). Prophetae ergo de excelso descendunt, quando sancti praedicatores illa sacramenta nobis annuntiant, quae alta contemplatione didicere. Et psalterium, tibiam, et citharam dicunt: quia Redemptorem nostrum aeterni regni Dominum asserunt, et per humanam conditionem humiliatum, et morte sua mundum redimere, et resurgendo coelestia reparare. Quae nimirum laudis instrumenta ante se habent: quia ea, quae dicunt, intelligunt. E contra vero Caiphas prophetare dicitur (Joan. XI), et ea quae dixit, ignorare; cum tibiam Dominicae mortis, quam tetigit, et non ut electus propheta haberet ante se, sed post se. Bene ergo de electis prophetis subjungitur: Ipsosque prophetantes. Quia dum vident quae dicant, velut ante se habent instrumenta, quae tangant; et dum praedicant, illud proferunt, quod praevidendo cognoverunt. Saul ergo ad collem Domini venit, quando electus et rudis praedicator spirituali scientia proficit, et Redemptorem humani generis non in plano humanitatis, sed in alta divinitatis ejus majestate cognoscit. Tunc quidem prophetarum choros concinentes audit: quia omnes Scripturas, quae de ipso sunt, perfecte intelligit. Qui igitur viros magnas foveas salientes vidit, qui haedos, et tortas panis, et amphorani vini portantes aspexit, ad collem Domini pervenit; quando is, qui per electorum exempla profecisse cognoscitur, ad culmen scientiae sublimatur, et Redemptorem sublimiter sciens, ineffabiliter diligit, a quo quod item scire de eo appetit, quasi familiaris amicus possit.

He sounds the pipe who announces the Redeemer dead for the salvation of the world. He strikes the cithara who says that he rose from the dead and ascended to the heavens. But at the pleasantness of so many organs we are cheered, if we hear the very company of prophets sounding. For David says: His going out is from the highest heaven, and his meeting is even to the highest (Psalm 18:7). Hence likewise he says: All the kings of the earth shall adore him, all nations shall serve him (Psalm 71:11). For he who obtained the superior part of praise, and preached the coming of the Redeemer from the highest heaven, held as it were the psaltery in the praise of the Redeemer. Isaiah touched the tympanum of his mortification, saying: And we have seen him, and there was no sightly appearance, and we desired him, despised, and the latest of men, a man of sorrows, and knowing infirmity: and as it were his face was hidden and despised; wherefore neither did we esteem him (Isa. 53:3). Sounding likewise the pipe of his death, he says: As a sheep he shall be led to the slaughter, and as a lamb he was dumb (Ibid. 7). David, striking the cithara of the resurrection, says: Let the whole earth be moved from his face, say ye among the nations that the Lord hath reigned from the tree: for he hath established the world, which shall not be moved (Psalm 95:10). Also touching the cithara of the ascension, he said: Sing to God, ye kingdoms of the earth, who ascendeth above the heavens of heavens to the east (Psalm 67:33, 34). The prophets, therefore, descend from the high place when holy preachers announce to us those sacraments which they learned in high contemplation. And they speak the psaltery, the pipe, and the cithara: because they assert our Redeemer to be the Lord of the eternal kingdom, and humbled through the human condition, and by his death to redeem the world, and by rising to repair heavenly things. Which instruments of praise surely they have before them: because they understand those things which they say. On the contrary, indeed, Caiaphas is said to prophesy (John 11), and to be ignorant of those things which he said; when he touched the pipe of the Lord's death, and not as a chosen prophet had it before him, but after him. Well, therefore, is added of the chosen prophets: And they prophesying. Because while they see what they say, they as it were have before them the instruments which they touch; and while they preach, they bring forth that which they knew by foreseeing. Saul, therefore, comes to the hill of the Lord when the chosen and raw preacher profits in spiritual knowledge, and knows the Redeemer of the human race not in the plain of his humanity, but in the high majesty of his divinity. Then indeed he hears the choirs of the prophets singing together: because he perfectly understands all the Scriptures which are of him. He therefore who saw the men jumping the great ditches, who beheld those carrying the kids and the cakes of bread and the flagon of wine, arrives at the hill of the Lord when he who is known to have profited through the examples of the chosen is uplifted to the height of knowledge and, knowing the Redeemer sublimely, loves him ineffably, from whom he can ask what he likewise desires to know of him, as a familiar friend.

18. Bene subditur: Et insiliet in te spiritus Domini, et prophetabis cum eis. Insilire spiritus Domini dicitur, quia electorum corda donis ejus subito replentur. Qui statim prophetare incipiunt: quia qui divino spiritu pleni sunt, Dei magnalia tacere non possunt. Vel prophetaturus asseritur, cui Samuel divini verbi gratiam pollicetur. Quod tale est, ac si dicat: Qui modo in illa abundantia in te supervenientis spiritus loqui non potes, quando illa se tibi plenitudo infuderit, loquendi copia abundabis. Hunc quippe insilientem spiritum discipulis promittens Dominus, ait: Cum venerit ille spiritus veritatis, docebit vos omnem veritatem, et quae ventura sunt, annuntiabit vobis (Joan. XVI, 13). In eos quidem superveniens spiritus insilit, quorum corda repente veniens, illustravit (Act. II, 2). Et illustrati prophetavere, quia Redemptorem humani generis omni lingua praedicaverunt. Quod certe in sancta Ecclesia etiam nunc fieri cernimus: quia saepe qui divina loqui appetunt, ab eodem spiritu subito docentur, et loqui optime ea etiam possunt, quae praemeditatione nulla didicere. Pro custodia quippe mandatorum Dei, percipiunt gratiam verbi in sublimi revelatione Redemptoris. Quid enim mirum, si lucem scientiae percipere subito possunt, qui per vitae puritatem sedes sancti Spiritus semper sunt? Sed quale esset sancti Spiritus donum, si scientiam daret, et affectum magnae charitatis non daret? Qui enim illo spiritu replentur, coelestia praedicant, sed quae loquuntur, amant. Apte ergo subjungit: Et mutaberis in virum alium. Amor electae mentis quid est aliud, quam immutatio vetustatis? Natura enim nostra per lapsum primi hominis sic damnata est, ut quotidie labendo deficiat, et deficiendo veterascat. Sed qui in nobismetipsis deficimus, cum in nos ille spiritus insilit, renovamur: quia statim quod non eramus, efficimur. Tepidus erat quis, sed repente visitatus a spiritu, fervens efficitur. Incipit ardere per devotionem, fortiter exerceri in bono opere. In virum ergo alium mutatus est: quia esse coepit, quod ante insilientem spiritum in se, esse non potuit. Jam bonae conversationis est aliquis, coelestia amat, terrena despicit, sed pro iis, quae sursum diligit, et pro iis, quae odit in infimis, flere non praevalet. Saepe vero flere appetit et non potest qui plura, quae flere debeat, commisisse recolit: sed cum subito ille spiritus insilit, in lacrymarum fontes erumpit. In virum ergo alium mutatur, qui compunctionis gratiam per advenientem spiritum suscipit, quam ante adventum ejusdem spiritus non habebat.

18. Well it is added: And the spirit of the Lord shall leap upon you, and you shall prophesy with them. The spirit of the Lord is said to leap, because the hearts of the elect are suddenly filled with His gifts. Who immediately begin to prophesy: because those who are full of the divine spirit, cannot be silent about the great works of God. Or he is asserted to be about to prophesy, to whom Samuel promises the grace of the divine word. Which is such as if he should say: You who now in that abundance cannot speak in the spirit coming upon you, when that fullness shall have infused itself into you, you will abound in the copiousness of speaking. For the Lord, promising this leaping spirit to the disciples, said: When that spirit of truth shall have come, he will teach you all truth, and will announce to you the things that are to come (John 16:13). The spirit coming upon them indeed leaps, whose hearts, coming suddenly, it illustrated (Acts 2:2). And being illustrated they prophesied, because they preached the Redeemer of the human race in every tongue. Which certainly we discern to be done in the holy Church even now: because often those who desire to speak divine things, are suddenly taught by the same spirit, and can speak very well even those things which they have learned by no premeditation. For the keeping of the commands of God, they perceive the grace of the word in the sublime revelation of the Redeemer. For what wonder, if they can suddenly perceive the light of science, who through the purity of life are always seats of the Holy Spirit? But what sort of gift of the Holy Spirit would it be, if it gave science, and did not give the affection of great charity? For those who are replenished with that spirit, preach heavenly things, but they love what they speak. Aptly therefore he subjoins: And you shall be changed into another man. What else is the love of an elect mind than the change of antiquity? For our nature through the fall of the first man was so damned, that daily by slipping it fails, and by failing it grows old. But we who fail in ourselves, when that spirit leaps upon us, are renewed: because immediately we are made what we were not. Someone was lukewarm, but suddenly visited by the spirit, he is made fervent. He begins to burn through devotion, to be strongly exercised in good work. He is therefore changed into another man: because he begins to be what, before the leaping spirit in him, he could not be. Someone is already of good conversation, he loves heavenly things, he despises earthly things, but for those things which he loves above, and for those which he hates in the lowest things, he does not prevail to weep. Often indeed he desires to weep and cannot, who recalls that he has committed many things which he ought to bewail: but when that spirit suddenly leaps upon him, he breaks forth into fountains of tears. He is therefore changed into another man, who receives the grace of compunction through the arriving spirit, which he did not have before the arrival of the same spirit.

Puritatem cordis quis obtinere appetit, coelestia cogitare, nullis curarum saecularium occursionibus impediri; sed ad id, quod per devotionem appetit, assurgere nequit per affectum puritatis. Repente autem raptus in virtute supervenientis spiritus esse carnalis desinit, potenter saeculi curas abjicit, et in aeternorum contemplationem mira puritate consurgit. Miratur se tunc esse, quod non erat: miratur se tunc non fuisse, quod est. Nam cum in spiritualibus talem se vidit, miratur qui talis est, quod talis fuisse non potuit. In virum ergo alium mutatur, qui illud, quod non fuit, se videt esse, et illud, quod fuerat, non esse. Bene ergo de Saul: Mutaberis in virum alium. Quia praedicatores sanctae Ecclesiae cum gratiam divinae praedicationis accipiunt, non accipiunt solam scientiam verbi, sed virtutem amoris: ut per verbum aliis prodesse valeant, et per verbi amorem ipsi meliores fiant. Quando etenim loquuntur, mutantur in virum alium: quia cum per eos spiritus loquitur, ipsi mira charitate eidem spiritui conjunguntur, et ab ejus voluntate jam nec verbo nec operatione dissentiunt. Talem namque virum sacra Scriptura collaudans, dicit: Qui adhaeret Deo, unus spiritus est (I Cor. VI, 17). Deo namque adhaeremus, quando Spiritus sancti gratiam abundanter accipimus; et unus spiritus cum eo efficimur, quando divinae voluntati mente, ore, et opere concordamus. Bene ergo propheta Samuel subjunxit, dicens:

(Vers. 7.) Quando enim venerint tibi omnia signa haec, fac quodcunque invenit manus tua: quia Dominus tecum est.

19. Haec quidem signa sunt in quibus se praedicator agnoscat, et tunc omne, quod disponit agere, audeat, cum certa experientia noverit; quia in magna charitatis abundantia virtutem suscipit Spiritus sancti. Sed docere ea debet praedicator, quae agit, sicut de Domino Lucas dicit: Quia caepit Jesus facere et docere, usque in diem qua praecipiens apostolis per Spiritum sanctum, quos elegit, assumptus est (Act. I, 1, 2). Hinc Paulus ait: Non audeo loqui ea, quae per me non effecit Deus, in obedientia gentium verbo et factis (Rom. XV, 18). Samuel itaque uncto regi praecipit, dicens: Fac quodcunque invenit manus tua. Quasi dicat: Cum te divina gratia plenum videris, doce alios quidquid facis, quia ex praesidente tibi eadem divina gratia habes et optime vivere, et utiliter praedicare. Sed tamen quid ante haec omnia observare debeat subjungit, dicens:

(Vers. 8.) Et descendes ante me in Galgala. Ego quippe descendam ad te, ut offeras oblationem, et immoles victimas pacificas. Septem diebus exspectabis me, donec veniam et ostendam tibi quae facias.

Someone desires to obtain purity of heart, to think heavenly things, to be hindered by no occurrences of secular cares; but he cannot rise to that which he desires through devotion by the affection of purity. But suddenly snatched in the virtue of the supervening spirit, he ceases to be carnal, he powerfully casts away the cares of the age, and rises into the contemplation of eternal things with wonderful purity. He wonders then that he is what he was not: he wonders that he then was not what he is. For when in spiritual things he sees himself such, he wonders who is such, that he could not have been such. He is therefore changed into another man, who sees himself to be that which he was not, and not to be that which he had been. Well therefore of Saul: You shall be changed into another man. Because the preachers of the holy Church when they receive the grace of divine preaching, do not receive only the science of the word, but the virtue of love: so that through the word they may be able to profit others, and through the love of the word they themselves may become better. For when they speak, they are changed into another man: because when the spirit speaks through them, they themselves are joined to the same spirit by wonderful charity, and from His will they now dissent neither in word nor in operation. For praising such a man, sacred Scripture says: He who adheres to God is one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). For we adhere to God when we receive the grace of the Holy Spirit abundantly; and we are made one spirit with Him, when we accord with the divine will in mind, mouth, and work. Well therefore the prophet Samuel subjoined, saying:

(Verse 7.) When all these signs have come upon you, do whatever your hand finds to do: for the Lord is with you.

19. These are indeed the signs by which a preacher may recognize himself, and then he may dare to do all that he disposes to act, when he knows it by certain experience; because in a great abundance of charity he receives the power of the Holy Spirit. But a preacher ought to teach those things which he does, as Luke says of the Lord: That Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day in which, giving instructions to the apostles through the Holy Spirit whom he chose, he was taken up (Acts 1:1, 2). Hence Paul says: I do not dare to speak of those things which God has not effected through me, in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deeds (Rom. 15:18). Therefore Samuel commands the anointed king, saying: Do whatever your hand finds to do. As if he were to say: When you see yourself full of divine grace, teach others whatever you do, because from the same divine grace presiding over you, you have both the ability to live excellently and to preach usefully. But nevertheless, what he ought to observe before all these things he subjoins, saying:

(Verse 8.) And you shall descend before me to Gilgal. For I indeed shall descend to you, that you may offer an oblation, and immolate peace offerings. For seven days you shall wait for me, until I come and show you what you should do.

20. Quid est, quod prius dicit: Fac quodcunque invenit manus tua, deinde subdit: Septem diebus exspectabis me, donec veniam, et ostendam tibi, quae facias. Sed qui signa perceperat, quibus se unctum regem a Domino sciret, probandus erat an ipsa signa cognosceret. Quod quidem magis spirituali, quam historicae explanationi convenit. Nam venire in collem Domini, ad perfectam cognitionem et amorem Redemptoris pertinere diximus: prophetiae dono repleri, ad virtutem Spiritus sancti. Dicit ergo: Quando tibi omnia haec signa venerint, fac quodcunque manus tua invenit. Quia quisquis certus est de intima inspiratione sancti Spiritus, praesumere potest tam de proposito boni operis, quam de dispositione praedicationis. Dixit item: Septem diebus exspectabis me, donec veniam; et ostendam tibi, quae facias. Quia summi pastores sanctae Ecclesiae dum de minorum profectione dubitant, solliciti valde sunt, ut hanc in eis certis indiciis recognoscant. Quae autem sunt indicia spiritus, nisi excellentia dona humilitatis. Sanctus enim Spiritus, quo majori luce virtutum electorum corda irradiat, eo et abundantiori dono humilitatis ditat. Quo enim celsiores sunt meritis, planiores sunt per virtutem humilitatis. Qui ergo ante prophetam in Galgala descendere et exspectare jubetur, ei nimirum pro cognoscenda humilitate, obedientiae onus injungitur. Rectus quoque ordo electae conversationis est, ut obedientiam non injungat aliis, quam ipse aliis impendere non curavit. Exspectare ergo praecipitur, ut, an sit vere humilis, agnoscatur. Si ergo signum perfecti praedicatoris est repletio sancti Spiritus, et virtus humilitatis signum illius plenitudinis, quid in laude humilitatis dicitur, nisi quia ejus dona sunt signa signorum?

21. Sed quia immolaturus rex per prophetam praeire jubetur, ea, quae dicuntur, melius cernimus, si ex ordine videantur. Galgala quidem interpretatur rota. Quid vero rota in isto loco significat, nisi vitam obedientium? Rota quidem volvendo graditur, et modo alta petit, modo inferiora. Sic nimirum vita obedientium, quia inferius agit quod sursum pertrahit, et sursum videt quod inferius exhibet, quasi ad alta sublevatur, et ad ima deponitur.

20. What is it that he first says: Do whatever your hand finds to do, and then adds: For seven days you shall wait for me, until I come, and show you what you should do? But he who had received the signs, by which he knew himself to be the anointed king from the Lord, was to be proved whether he recognized those very signs. This indeed is more suited to a spiritual than to a historical explanation. For to come into the hill of the Lord, we said pertains to the perfect knowledge and love of the Redeemer: to be filled with the gift of prophecy, to the power of the Holy Spirit. He says therefore: When all these signs have come upon you, do whatever your hand finds. Because whoever is certain of the inward inspiration of the Holy Spirit can presume both concerning the purpose of a good work and concerning the arrangement of preaching. He said likewise: For seven days you shall wait for me, until I come; and I will show you what you should do. Because the supreme pastors of the holy Church, while they doubt concerning the progress of the lesser ones, are very solicitous that they may recognize this in them by certain indications. But what are the indications of the spirit, if not the excellent gifts of humility? For the Holy Spirit, with whatever greater light of virtues He irradiates the hearts of the elect, with that He also enriches them with a more abundant gift of humility. For by how much they are higher in merits, they are more level through the virtue of humility. He therefore who is commanded to descend to Gilgal before the prophet and to wait, upon him indeed the burden of obedience is enjoined for the sake of knowing his humility. For the right order of an elect conversation is that he should not enjoin obedience upon others, which he himself has not cared to bestow upon others. Therefore he is commanded to wait, so that it may be known whether he is truly humble. If therefore the sign of a perfect preacher is the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the virtue of humility the sign of that fullness, what is said in praise of humility, except that its gifts are the signs of signs?

21. But because the king, about to offer sacrifice, is commanded to go before through the prophet, we discern those things which are said better if they are seen in order. For Gilgal is interpreted as a wheel. But what does the wheel signify in this place, if not the life of the obedient? A wheel indeed proceeds by turning, and now seeks the heights, now the lower parts. So indeed is the life of the obedient, because it acts below what it draws upwards, and sees above what it exhibits below, as if being raised to the heights and put down to the lowest parts.

Nam quod obedientes inferius agunt, sursum tollunt; quia quando praelatorum jussis obediunt, terrena sunt quae operantur; sed de terrenis, quae faciunt, superna praemia praestolantur. Item quod sursum habent, ad terram flectunt, quia ut bene terrena agant, coelestia contemplantur, et illud solummodo operantur, quod summae illi felicitati convenire conspiciunt. Hanc profecto rotam flectere Moysi Dominus praecipiens, ait: Omnia fac sicut ostensum est tibi in monte (Exod. XXV, 40). Qui enim in summis vidit, quod fecit in infimis; nimirum superiorem rotae partem ad terram flexit. Inferiorem quoque partem ad superiora extulerat, qui dicebat: Vivit Dominus in cujus conspectu sto (III Reg. XVII, 1). In imo quidem stabat per humilitatem obedientiae, dum regi perfido exprobraret; sed planitiem operis in sublimitate extulit divinae contemplationis, ut velut currentem rotam optime volveret, dum in terreno opere, quid coeleste mereretur, aspiceret. Haec profecto forma est electae obedientiae; ut in omni, quod foris agimus, ad potentiam Conditoris ubique praesentem respiciamus. Sic nimirum in subditione obedientiae nostrae habere possumus et rectitudinem operis, et incrementa devotionis. Recti quidem tunc sumus opere, quia pro eo, quem cernimus, nos in labore obedientiae exercemus. Devoti etiam sumus, quia ei nos placere credimus, quem inspectorem nostrorum laborum attendimus, et largitorem aeternae retributionis. Et quia majorum imperia perfecta humilitate observanda sunt, bene Saul dicitur: Septem diebus exspectabis. Septenarius quippe numerus propter dona septiformis Spiritus est. Septem diebus doctores Ecclesiae exspectamus, quando per virtutem septiformis Spiritus, tantam intimae devotionis claritatem suscipimus, ut eorum praecepta nullatenus negligamus. Quo in loco notandum est, quia non dixit: Septem diebus eris in Galgala, sed: Septem diebus exspectabis me, postquam descenderis ante me. Ante praedicatorem descendimus, quando hoc agimus, quod ejus nobis judicio imperatur. Tunc quidem descendere dicimur, quia mentes nostras eorum imperio subjugamus. Septem vero diebus exspectare est bonum obedientiae omni luce cordis implere. Quod tunc certe agimus quando majorum mandata nec dura nec levia praeterimus. Nullam quippe dierum ab hac luce vacantem Dominus esse volebat, quando dicebat: Qui solverit unum de mandatis istis minimis, et docuerit sic homines, minimus vocabitur in regno coelorum (Matth. V, 19). Et quia perfecta obedientia quam hominibus exhibemus munus est Creatoris; qui septem diebus exspectat oblationem offerre dicitur et pacificas victimas immolare. Oblatio quidem Domini est quia hominibus pro Deo offertur, sed oblata hominibus a Deo suscipitur.

For what the obedient act below, they lift upwards; because when they obey the commands of their prelates, the things they work are earthly; but from the earthly things which they do, they look forward to supernal rewards. Likewise, what they have above, they bend toward the earth, because that they may act earthly things well, they contemplate celestial things, and they work only that which they see to be suitable for that highest happiness. The Lord indeed commanding Moses to bend this wheel, says: Do all things according to what was shown to you on the mount (Exod. 25:40). For he who saw in the highest things what he did in the lowest; indeed he bent the upper part of the wheel toward the earth. He had also raised the lower part toward the higher things, who said: The Lord lives in whose sight I stand (3 Kings 17:1). In the lowest indeed he stood through the humility of obedience, while he reproached a perfidious king; but he raised the plainness of his work in the sublimity of divine contemplation, so that he might best turn it like a running wheel, while in earthly work he looked at what he might merit celestially. This indeed is the form of elect obedience; that in all that we do outwardly, we should look back everywhere to the present power of the Founder (Conditoris). So indeed in the subjection of our obedience we can have both the rectitude of the work and the increases of devotion. We are indeed then right in work, because for His sake whom we see, we exercise ourselves in the labor of obedience. We are also devoted, because we believe that we please Him whom we attend to as the inspector of our labors and the bestower of eternal retribution. And because the commands of superiors are to be observed with perfect humility, it is well said to Saul: For seven days you shall wait. For the number seven is on account of the gifts of the sevenfold Spirit. For seven days we wait for the teachers of the Church, when through the power of the sevenfold Spirit, we receive such clarity of inward devotion that we in no way neglect their precepts. In which place it is to be noted, that he did not say: For seven days you shall be in Gilgal, but: For seven days you shall wait for me, after you have descended before me. We descend before the preacher when we do that which is commanded of us by his judgment. Then indeed we are said to descend, because we subjugate our minds to their command. But to wait for seven days is to fill the good of obedience with all the light of the heart. Which we certainly then act when we pass by neither the hard nor the light commands of superiors. Indeed the Lord willed no one of the days to be vacant from this light, when He said: He who shall loosen one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:19). And because the perfect obedience which we exhibit to men is a gift of the Creator; he who waits for seven days is said to offer an oblation and to immolate peace offerings. The oblation indeed is of the Lord because it is offered to men for the sake of God, but what is offered to men is received by God.

Victimae sunt obsequia obedientium, quia cum hominibus pro Deo subjicimur, superbos spiritus superamus. Caeteris quidem virtutibus daemones impugnamus, per obedientiam vincimus. Victores ergo sunt, qui obediunt, quia dum voluntatem suam aliis perfecte subjiciunt, ipsi lapsis per obedientiam Angelis dominantur.

22. Sed notandum est quia Samuel ante se Saul in Galgala descendere praecipit, sine se autem eum offerre oblationem et victimas noluit. Nam dixit: Ego quidem descendam ad te ut offeras oblationem, et immoles victimas pacificas. Septem diebus exspectabis me, donec veniam ad te, et ostendam tibi quae facias. Quid est hoc nisi quia ipsa bona nostra et ignorare sapienter, et scire aliquando utiliter debemus? Ignoranda quidem sunt, ne infirmis nobis elationem praebeant: sed a perfectioribus scienda sunt, ut per devotionem crescant. Unde et bene in Evangelio de Elisabeth praegnante dicitur: Et occultabat se mensibus quinque (Luc. I, 24). Qui enim spirituales ac fortes esse nequeunt adhuc, per quinarium numerum designantur. Quae autem noviter concipit, quinque se mensibus celat: quia per sensus corporis bona agit: sed quia spiritualis ac fortis in hoc bono opere nondum est, ea quae agit sapienter abscondit. Ille ergo victimas Deo, ille oblationem offert, qui septem diebus exspectans venientem prophetam recipit: quia tunc Deo dignum est quod impendit, cum impendens justus est virtute obedientiae, et divinae immensitatis consideratione timoratus; cum se aliud esse non credit, nisi quod majorum probatione cognoscit. Quasi enim, praesente propheta, offerimus, quando illa solummodo opera nostra digna esse divina susceptione credimus, quae sanctorum praedicatorum judicio comprobantur. Et quia coram propheta immolare dicitur, hoc profecto signat: quia operibus [Forte in operibus] nostris sapientibus atque spiritualibus viris credere debemus. Quia item septem diebus exspectat Saul, praedicator sanctae Ecclesiae virtutem subjecti disponere sapienter debet, ut coram eo bona ejus non laudet nisi quando laudis suae contemnere favorem potest. Unde et eadem oblatio et victimae Deo offerri a Saul praedicuntur, et non sibi. Deo quippe victimas offert, qui de virtute quam habet inaniter non extollitur, sed omne quod perficit gratiae tribuit conditoris. Hoc etiam, quia doctorum magisterio discimus, bene Samuel sermonem concludens, ait: Et ostendam tibi quae facias. Exspectanti quidem quae faciat, indicat: quando is, qui perfecte obedire cognoscitur, qualiter imperare aliis debeat, edocetur. Sed istud Saul adhuc non exhibetur, sed promittitur. Non enim mittitur ad immolandum, sed ad exspectandum. Et quia sanctorum collocutione proficimus, apte illatum est.

The victims are the services of the obedient, because when we are subjected to men for the sake of God, we overcome proud spirits. By the other virtues indeed we assault the demons, by obedience we conquer them. Therefore they are victors who obey, because while they perfectly subject their own will to others, they themselves rule over the Angels who fell through disobedience.

22. But it is to be noted that Samuel commands Saul to descend to Gilgal before him, but he did not want him to offer the oblation and victims without him. For he said: I indeed shall descend to you that you may offer an oblation, and immolate peace offerings. For seven days you shall wait for me, until I come to you, and show you what you should do. What is this, if not that we ought both to be wisely ignorant of our own good things, and sometimes to know them usefully? They are to be ignored, lest they provide elation to us who are weak; but they are to be known by the more perfect, so that they may grow through devotion. Whence also it is well said in the Gospel concerning the pregnant Elizabeth: And she hid herself for five months (Luke 1:24). For those who cannot yet be spiritual and strong are designated by the number five. But she who has newly conceived hides herself for five months: because she acts good things through the senses of the body; but because she is not yet spiritual and strong in this good work, she wisely hides those things which she acts. He therefore offers victims to God, he offers an oblation, who receiving the coming prophet waits for seven days: because then what he bestows is worthy of God, when the bestower is just by the virtue of obedience, and fearful by the consideration of the divine immensity; when he does not believe himself to be anything else, except what he recognizes by the trial of his superiors. For we offer, as it were, in the presence of the prophet, when we believe only those works of ours to be worthy of divine reception which are approved by the judgment of holy preachers. And because he is said to immolate before the prophet, this indeed signifies: that in our works [Perhaps in our works] we ought to believe wise and spiritual men. Because likewise Saul waits for seven days, the preacher of the holy Church ought to arrange the virtue of the subject wisely, so that he may not praise his good things before him except when he can despise the favor of his own praise. Whence also the same oblation and victims are foretold to be offered by Saul to God, and not to himself. To God indeed he offers victims, who is not vainly extolled concerning the virtue which he has, but attributes all that he performs to the grace of the Founder (conditoris). This also, because we learn by the magisterium of teachers, Samuel well concludes his speech, saying: And I will show you what you should do. To him indeed who waits for what he should do, he indicates it: when he who is known to obey perfectly is taught how he ought to command others. But this is not yet exhibited to Saul, but promised. For he is not sent to immolate, but to wait. And because we profit by the conversation of the saints, it is aptly added:

(Vers 9.) Itaque, cum avertisset humerum suum, ut abiret a Samuele, immutavit ei Deus cor aliud.

23. Cor enim aliud immutatur, quando ad appetenda meliora dirigitur; cor etiam immutatur; quando ad malum deseritur. In Saul autem qui prius bonus, postea malus fuit, quomodo potius intelligi ad litteram debeat non valde clarum est. Sed si pro profectu ejus dicitur, cor immutatum habebat, quia qui asinas quaesierat, jam de regni dispositione cogitabat. Si vero malum cor tunc recepisse cognoscitur, coram propheta humilis fuit: sed ut coepit discedere, pariter coepit et superbire. In mente sua jam non esse parvulum sed regem cogitabat. Adhuc non erat sublimis ordine, sed erat sublimis aestimatione. Sed quia per hanc sacram historiam adhuc de ejus superbia aperte nihil dicitur, rectius nos quoque agimus, si interim quod de eo sinistrum videri potest reticemus. Quod vero adhuc manenti ejus innocentiae suffragari potest, in sequentibus dicitur: Quia filius unius anni erat Saul, cum regnare coepisset, et duobus annis regnavit super Israel (I Reg. XIII, 1). Si enim duobus annis humilis rex fuit, immutatum ei cor asseritur pro vigore propositi, non pro novitate tumoris. In eo ergo quod immutatum cor Saul habere dicitur, novis praedicatoribus sanctae Ecclesiae similatur, qui cum ordinem praedicationis accipiunt, per divinam gratiam meliores fiunt. Samuel quippe Saul in principem unxit, Deus autem ei cor aliud immutavit, quia sacrorum ordinum sacramenta ab Ecclesiae doctoribus foris accipimus, sed sacramentorum virtute ab omnipotente Deo interius roboramur. Virtus vero sacramenti gratia est spiritus septiformis. Quam certe gratiam qui accipiunt, quasi alio accepto corde immutantur, quia quos gratia sua sanctus Spiritus roborat, esse eos facit protinus quod non erant. Sic nimirum et Redemptoris discipuli ante metuebant; sed ubi per adventum sancti Spiritus cor aliud eis immutatum est, verbum Dei cum fiducia praedicabant (Act. IV, 31). Aliud quippe Deus cor eis immutavit, quibus linguarum omnium peritiam tribuit (Act. II, 6). Aliud quippe cor eis immutavit quos mira charitate induit et virtutum omnium splendoribus illustravit. Et notandum, quia tunc ei Deus cor aliud immutavit, quando ut abiret a propheta humerum avertit. Quasi enim ut abeat, humerum avertit, quando is qui praedicationis ordinem suscipit, id quod sibi de pastorali officio praecipitur agere disponit. Disponit quidem, sed non praevalet, si Deus ei cor aliud non immutet, quia summus locus bene non regitur, nisi rectoris mens divini muneris summa gratia repleatur. Haec autem, quia ei in futuro promittitur, subjunctum est:

(Vers. 10.) Et venerunt ei omnia signa haec in die illa.

(Verse 9.) Therefore, when he had turned his shoulder to go away from Samuel, God changed another heart for him.

23. For another heart is changed when it is directed to seeking better things; the heart is also changed when it is abandoned to evil. But in Saul, who was first good and later was evil, how it ought rather to be understood according to the letter is not very clear. But if it is said for his progress, he had a changed heart, because he who had sought asses was now thinking about the arrangement of the kingdom. If indeed he is recognized to have received an evil heart then, he was humble before the prophet: but as he began to depart, he likewise began to be proud. In his mind he was already thinking of himself not as a little one but as a king. He was not yet sublime in order, but he was sublime in estimation. But because through this sacred history nothing is yet said openly concerning his pride, we also act more rightly if in the meantime we remain silent about what might seem sinister concerning him. But what can yet support his remaining innocence is said in the following: For Saul was the son of one year when he had begun to reign, and he reigned for two years over Israel (1 Sam. 13:1). For if he was a humble king for two years, a changed heart is asserted for him on account of the vigor of his purpose, not on account of the novelty of pride (tumor). In that therefore which Saul is said to have a changed heart, he is likened to the new preachers of the holy Church, who when they receive the order of preaching, become better through divine grace. For Samuel anointed Saul as prince, but God changed another heart for him, because we receive the sacraments of sacred orders outwardly from the teachers of the Church, but we are strengthened inwardly by the power of the sacraments from almighty God. But the power of the sacrament is the grace of the sevenfold Spirit. Which grace certainly those who receive are changed as if having received another heart, because those whom the Holy Spirit strengthens by His grace, He makes them immediately to be what they were not. So indeed also the disciples of the Redeemer feared before; but when another heart was changed for them through the coming of the Holy Spirit, they preached the word of God with confidence (Acts 4:31). Indeed God changed another heart for them, to whom He gave the skill of all tongues (Acts 2:6). Indeed He changed another heart for them whom He clothed with wondrous charity and illustrated with the splendors of all virtues. And it is to be noted, that God changed another heart for him then, when he turned his shoulder to go away from the prophet. For he turns his shoulder, as if to go away, when he who receives the order of preaching disposes to do that which is commanded of him concerning the pastoral office. He disposes indeed, but he does not prevail if God does not change another heart for him, because a high place is not well ruled unless the mind of the ruler is filled with the highest grace of the divine gift. But because this is promised to him in the future, there is added:

(Verse 10.) And all these signs came upon him in that day.

24. Doctrina etenim electi praedicatoris, quid est aliud, quam dies eruditi discipuli? Nam qui in die ambulat, videt et plana quae ambulet, et praecipitia quae declinet. Sic nimirum, dum sanctorum praedicatorum doctrinis illuminamur, quod agendum et quod vitandum est patenter aspicimus. In illa ergo die qua propheta praedicat, bonus auditor suae electionis signa percipit, qui in se ea virtutum dona conspicit quae ante ei affutura suus praedicator ostendit. Signa quidem sunt, quia per haec se a Deo electos intelligunt qui ad praedicationis ordinem promoventur. Unctum ergo se aliquis ad Ecclesiae principatum non teneat, qui diei illius signa adesse non viderit in virtute perfectionis. Primum ergo signum prius attente conspiciat, videlicet si exemplo virorum salire jam magnas foveas sciat. Sequens etiam signum cognoscat, si ad quercum Thabor tres viros obvios habuit, quos haedos et panis tortas portare in Bethel ad domum Domini vidit, si panes duos de eorum manibus accepit. Tertium nihilominus videat, si ad collem Domini venit, si prophetantes cuneos aspexit, si in eum spiritus Domini insilivit et in eorum medio prophetare jam possit. And viros quidem salientes foveas vidit, si perfectorum exemplo omnia saeculi confutare jam didicit. Ad quercum Thabor venit, si contemplativae vitae fortitudinem atque amoenitatem experiri jam novit. In qua et haedos et panis tortas et vinum ad Dominum portantes aspexit, quia ab amatoribus vitae contemplativae jam didicit, et peccatorem se indesinenter agnoscere, et pro eisdem peccatis carnem affligere, et afflictionis suae dolorem omnipotenti Deo gratanter offerre. Ad collem Domini venit, si ad revelatam intimam Redemptoris gloriam aut Scripturarum sublimem intellectum proficiendo conscendit. Obvium gregem prophetarum habuit, si praedicatorum sanctae Ecclesiae concordem scientiam intellexit. In quorum medio insilientem in se spiritum Domini sensit, in illa ineffabili suavitate internae experientiae in se donum supervenientis divinitatis agnovit, et notae gratiae abundantiam loquendo effudit. Haec quoties sancti praedicatores imperfectis nobis ostendunt, per doctrinam, qua nos illuminant, quasi clarissimum diem produnt. Et ista quidem omnia jam promoti praedicatores, exponentibus ordinatoribus, sciunt.

24. For the doctrine of the elect preacher, what is it else than the day of the learned disciple? For he who walks in the day sees both the level places which he may walk, and the precipices which he may decline. So indeed, while we are illuminated by the doctrines of holy preachers, we clearly see what is to be done and what is to be avoided. In that day, therefore, in which the prophet preaches, the good hearer of his election perceives the signs, who beholds in himself those gifts of virtues which his preacher showed him would be present before. They are indeed signs, because by these those who are promoted to the order of preaching understand themselves to be elect of God. Therefore, let no one consider himself anointed to the primacy of the Church who has not seen the signs of that day to be present in the power of perfection. First, therefore, let him attentively behold the first sign, namely, if by the example of men he already knows how to leap over great pits. Let him also know the following sign, if at the oak of Tabor he has met three men, whom he saw carrying kids and loaves of bread to Bethel to the house of the Lord, if he received two loaves from their hands. Let him nevertheless see the third, if he has come to the hill of the Lord, if he has beheld the companies of those prophesying, if the spirit of the Lord has leapt upon him and he can already prophesy in their midst. And indeed he saw the men leaping over pits if by the example of the perfect he has already learned to refute all things of the age. He has come to the oak of Tabor if he has already learned to experience the strength and pleasantness of the contemplative life. In which he also beheld those carrying kids and loaves of bread and wine to the Lord, because from the lovers of the contemplative life he has already learned both to acknowledge himself incessantly as a sinner, and for those same sins to afflict the flesh, and to offer the grief of his affliction gratefully to almighty God. He has come to the hill of the Lord if by progressing he has ascended to the revealed inward glory of the Redeemer or the sublime understanding of the Scriptures. He has met the company of prophets if he has understood the concordant science of the preachers of the holy Church. In whose midst he has felt the spirit of the Lord leaping upon him, in that ineffable sweetness of internal experience he has recognized in himself the gift of the supervening divinity, and has poured out the abundance of known grace in speaking. As often as holy preachers show these things to us who are imperfect, through the doctrine by which they illuminate us, they as it were bring forth a most clear day. And indeed promoted preachers already know all these things, the ordainers explaining them.

25. Quia ergo diem signorum habent, salubriter attendant si promissa signa jam videant. Nam qui mundi gloriam contemnere nondum didicit, primum signum audire promissum potuit, sed non vidit ostensum. Si contemplativae vitae robur et dulcedinem nescit, sequentis signi bonum videre non meruit. Si altitudinem Scripturarum per intimae eruditionis notitiam non conscendit, ad collem Domini nondum venit. Si supervenientis in se Spiritus sancti virtutem nondum habet, prophetare non potest. Sine illo etenim spiritu pastor carnalis est, et quod loquitur, non ad dignitatem praedicationis referri potest, sed ad ausum temeritatis. Qua ergo formidine nos miseri terreri possumus? Ecce enim aliorum ducatum suscepimus, qui virtutem suscepti regiminis non habemus. Signa spiritualis praelationis audivimus quae in nobis per lucem experientiae non videmus. Terrena concupiscimus, curis exterioribus occupamur, et tanto longius a coelesti contemplatione repellimur, quanto terrenorum actuum sollicitudine praegravamur. Hac quoque terrenae vitae mole depressi, quando illum splendorem intimae gloriae Redemptoris attingere, quando ad altissimos sanctarum Scripturarum sensus possumus pervenire? Sed et coelestia, quae nescimus, loqui quasi nota non, possumus. Et qui per quietem amori internae vitae vacare nolumus, insilientem in nos spiritum Domini non sentimus. Nota ergo et non habita signa nos terreant: ut cum pro negligentiae nostrae immensitate compungimur, virtutem suscepti ordinis per fletus et lamenta requiramus. Hinc Psalmista voce infirmorum deplorat dicens: Signa nostra non vidimus, jam non est propheta (Psal. LXXIII, 9). Nam propheta est, cum jam dicta haec prophetiae signa ei adesse praevidentur. Si ergo ad culmen praelationis assumitur, non se teneat, quod est altitudine ordinis, sed quod est virtute perfectionis. Dicat ergo: Signa nostra non vidimus, jam non est propheta. Quasi dicat: Esse nunc prophetam dicerem, si dona spiritus cernerem, quibus prophetae persona fulgere debet. Qui ergo suscepti ordinis pastoralis perfectionem audivit quam in se obtinere vivendo non meruit, idoneus sanctae Ecclesiae doctor non est. In primo igitur rege, pastorum omnium sanctae Ecclesiae profectus ostenditur, dum dicitur: Venerunt ei omnia signa haec in die illa. Et quia idem profectus electorum praedicatorum mirabilis est, sequitur:

(Vers. 11.) Videntes autem eum, qui noverant eum heri et nudiustertius, quod esset cum prophetis, et prophetaret, dixerunt ad invicem: Quaenam res est, quae accidit filio Cis? Num Saul inter prophetas?

25. Since therefore they have the day of signs, let them healthfully attend if they already see the promised signs. For he who has not yet learned to despise the glory of the world could hear the first sign promised, but he has not seen it shown. If he does not know the strength and sweetness of the contemplative life, he has not merited to see the good of the following sign. If he has not ascended to the height of the Scriptures through the knowledge of inward erudition, he has not yet come to the hill of the Lord. If he does not yet have the power of the Holy Spirit supervening in him, he cannot prophesy. For without that spirit he is a carnal pastor, and what he speaks cannot be referred to the dignity of preaching, but to the daring of temerity. By what dread therefore can we wretches be terrified? For behold, we have received the leadership of others, we who do not have the power of the received government. We have heard the signs of spiritual prelacy which we do not see in ourselves through the light of experience. We desire earthly things, we are occupied with exterior cares, and we are repelled so much further from celestial contemplation, as we are weighed down by the solicitude of earthly acts. Depressed also by this mass of earthly life, when can we touch that splendor of the inward glory of the Redeemer, when can we arrive at the highest senses of the holy Scriptures? But also we cannot speak of celestial things, which we do not know, as if they were known. And we who do not wish to be vacant for the love of the internal life through quiet, do not feel the spirit of the Lord leaping upon us. Therefore let the known and not possessed signs terrify us: so that when we are pricked (compungimur) for the immensity of our negligence, we may seek the power of the received order through weeping and lamentations. Hence the Psalmist deplores in the voice of the weak, saying: We have not seen our signs, there is now no prophet (Psalm 73:9). For he is a prophet when these already mentioned signs of prophecy are foreseen to be present in him. If therefore he is assumed to the height of prelacy, let him not consider himself for what he is by the altitude of his order, but for what he is by the virtue of perfection. Let him say therefore: We have not seen our signs, there is now no prophet. As if he were to say: I would say that there is now a prophet, if I discerned the gifts of the spirit with which the person of a prophet ought to shine. He therefore who has heard the perfection of the received pastoral order which he has not merited to obtain in himself by living, is not a fit teacher of the holy Church. In the first king, therefore, the progress of all the pastors of the holy Church is shown, while it is said: All these signs came upon him in that day. And because the same progress of the elect preachers is wonderful, there follows:

(Verse 11.) But those who knew him yesterday and the day before, seeing that he was with the prophets and prophesied, said to one another: What is this thing that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?

26. Quid est, quod dicunt: Quaere res est, quae accidit, nisi valde admirari, quod ab eis non poterat comprehendi? Hominem hominis filium noverant, prophetis sociatum videbant: carnalem noverant, spiritualem videbant: simplicem noverant, prophetam videbant. Dicunt ergo: Quaenam res accidit filio Cis? Qui nosse quod fuerat poterant: quod erat, qualiter esse posset ignorabant. Hic denique profectus spiritualis praedicatoris est, ut qui in communi vita aliquando notus est, in superiori ordine habeat, quod ignoretur. Tres quidem gradus perfectionis ostensi sunt, quia dicit: Heri, et nudiustertius. In duobus quidem diebus praedicator agnoscitur, in tertio habet quod etiam ii, qui noverant, non cognoscant. Primus namque dies auditoribus pertinet, secundus sodalibus, tertius est praedicationis. Primum namque diem pastor habuit, quando praelatis suis discipulus obedivit. Quasi enim in magna luce cernitur, qui in virtute obedientiae devotus est. Secundum diem habuit, quando meliorum coadjutor esse jam coepit. Ista quippe claritas magnae conversationis, in electorum exemplo maximum diem facit. Hanc diem Dominus innuans, ait: Sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant vestra bona opera, et glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in coelis est (Matth. V, 16). Tertius vero dies insilientis spiritus est, et prophetiae. In tertio quippe die pastor aspicitur, quando sublimitatem dignitatis suae adaequat splendore conversationis, quando coelesti virtute indutus, ea vita eaque doctrina subditis lucet, ut videri ab eis possit, discuti, et judicari non possit. Talis quidem erat Moyses, quando lucidissimo vultu a monte descendit, cujus subditi fulgorem videbant, sed in fulgentem claritatem intendere visum non poterant (Exod. XXXIV, 35; I. Cor. III, 7). Talis erat qui gloriabatur, dicens: Nos autem revelata facie gloriam Dei speculantes, in eamdem imaginem transformamur, tanquam a Domini spiritu (I Cor. III, 18). Tales utique erant, quos Spiritus sanctus repleverat. Unde et qui in Jerusalem convenerant, admirantes dicunt: Nonne isti, qui loquuntur, Galilaei sunt (Act. II, 7)? Interrogabant quippe, ut scirent quod audiebant, et scire non poterant. Qui autem noverant Saul, de re quae ei accidit admirantes interrogant; quia eos aliquando in humiliori ordine sanctae Ecclesiae humiles et despectos cernimus, quos dum sanctus Spiritus ad ordinem praedicationis assumit, gratiarum suarum splendoribus induit et in eisdem splendoribus mirabiles ostendit. Sed bene sanctorum virtutes admiramur, cum eas bonitati conditoris ascribimus. Quare et Moyses Domino confitens ait: Quis similis tibi in diis, Domine, quis similis tibi gloriosus in sanctis, mirabilis in majestate, faciens prodigia (Exod. XV, 11). Hinc Psalmista dicit: Mirabilis Deus in sanctis suis, ipse dabit virtutem, et fortitudinem plebi suae (Psal. LXVII, 36)? Bene subjungitur:

(Vers. 12.) Respondit alter ad alterum, dicens: Et quis pater eorum?

26. What is it that they say: What is this thing that has happened, if not to wonder greatly at what could not be comprehended by them? They knew him as a man, the son of a man; they saw him associated with prophets: they knew him as carnal, they saw him as spiritual: they knew him as simple, they saw him as a prophet. They say therefore: What is this thing that happened to the son of Kish? They who were able to know what he had been: how he could be what he was, they were ignorant. Here finally is the progress of a spiritual preacher, that he who is sometimes known in common life, may have in a superior order that which is ignored. Three steps of perfection indeed are shown, because he says: Yesterday and the day before. Indeed in two days the preacher is recognized, in the third he has what even those who knew him do not recognize. For the first day pertains to the hearers, the second to companions, the third is of preaching. For the pastor had the first day when as a disciple he obeyed his prelates. For he is seen as if in great light who is devoted in the virtue of obedience. He had the second day when he already began to be a coadjutor of the better. Indeed that clarity of great conversation, in the example of the elect, makes a very great day. The Lord hinting at this day, says: So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:16). But the third day is of the leaping spirit and of prophecy. Indeed in the third day the pastor is beheld when he equals the sublimity of his dignity with the splendor of his conversation, when clothed with celestial power, he shines for his subjects with such life and such doctrine that he can be seen by them, discussed, and yet cannot be judged. Such indeed was Moses, when he descended from the mount with a most bright face, whose subjects saw the brightness, but could not direct their sight into the shining clarity (Exod. 34:35; 2 Cor. 3:7). Such was he who gloried, saying: But we, beholding the glory of God with revealed face, are transformed into the same image, as if by the spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). Such certainly were they whom the Holy Spirit had filled. Whence also those who had come together in Jerusalem, wondering, say: Are not these who speak Galileans? (Acts 2:7). For they were asking that they might know what they were hearing, and yet could not know. But those who knew Saul, wondering, ask concerning the thing which happened to him; because we sometimes see those humble and despised in the lower order of the holy Church, whom while the Holy Spirit assumes to the order of preaching, He clothes with the splendors of His graces and shows them wonderful in those same splendors. But well do we wonder at the virtues of the saints when we ascribe them to the goodness of the Founder (conditoris). Wherefore also Moses confessing to the Lord says: Who is like to You among the gods, Lord, who is like to You, glorious in the saints, wonderful in majesty, doing prodigies? (Exod. 15:11). Hence the Psalmist says: God is wonderful in His saints, He Himself will give power and strength to His people (Psalm 67:36). It is well subjoined:

(Verse 12.) Another answered to another, saying: And who is their father?

27. Quid est quod hucusque de solo Saul dicebatur: Quaenam res accidit filio Cis? Et nunc quasi de multis repondetur: Et quis pater eorum? Sed si ad historiam intelligatur, stare nullo modo potest. Restat ergo ut sensus qui litterae demitur in spirituali significatione requiratur. Cum ergo dicitur: Quis pater eorum? Non solum Saul prophetans attenditur, sed omnis ille cuneus prophetarum. Qui nimirum prophetae omnes, quia valde spirituales erant, non ex carnali progenie, sed ex coelesti origine censebantur. Pater quidem prophetarum ille est, qui per Malachiam exquirit, dicens: Si Dominus sum, ubi est timor meus? Et si pater sum, ubi est amor meus (Malach. I, 6)? Quia enim omnipotenti Deo in magna charitate conjuncti sunt, ejus, quem quasi patrem diligunt, filii nominantur. Quod novae Ecclesiae praedicatoribus tanto decentius convenit quanto ille eos in coelestem nobilitatem altius extulit, qui eis claritatem tanti generis in forma detexit orationis. Sic, inquit, orabitis: Pater noster qui es in coelis (Matth. VI, 9). Quod tale est, ac si dicat: Mirandi essent sancti praedicatores, si mira quae agunt, sua virtute perficerent: nunc mirum non est quod cernitur; quia per eos ille hoc agit cui aliquid difficile non videtur. Dicat ergo alter ad alterum: Et quis pater eorum? Quasi dicat: Quid mirum est, si mirabiliter doceant cum non ipsi sint, qui loquuntur: sed spiritus patris eorum qui loquitur in eis? Non ergo dicitur: Quis pater ejus (Joan. VI, 42)? Ne, quod pluribus convenit filiis, unico conferatur. Solus etenim ille, qui natura Filius est, dicere audet: Pater meus usque modo operatur (Joan. V, 17). Et item: Dominus dixit ad me, Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te (Psal. II, 7). Nam ut utriusque dignitatis differentiam promeret, Mariae Magdalenae loquitur, dicens: Ascendo ad Patrem meum, et Patrem vestrum; Deum meum, et Deum vestrum (Joan. XX, 17). Quoties ergo unus praedicator mirabili vita aut praedicatione clarus aspicitur, in superna generatione non solus, sed cum aliis innumeris videtur; quia omnipotens Deus qui mirabilis in uno ostenditur mirabiliorem valde hominum admirationem facit, cum innumerabiles attenduntur, qui id, quod in uno mirantur, habuerunt. Quich tamen ad detractionem carnalium referri convenienter potest: nam cum spiritualium virorum famam minuere tentant, eorum carnalia explorant quae ad derogationem proferant. Et plerumque in sancta Ecclesia miram sanctitatis famam habent qui saecularem altitudinem nullam habent. Cum ergo carnales quique aut carnis originem aut paupertatem in eis reprehendunt, qui divina generatione jam magni et divites sunt, quasi subsannando de prophetarum patre sciscitantur. Et quia pro re valde nova habent quod parvi homines saeculi tam magni videri possunt, subjungitur: Propterea versum est in proverbium: Num Saul inter prophetas?

27. What is it that hitherto was said of Saul alone: What is this thing that happened to the son of Kish? And now it is answered as if of many: And who is their father? But if it be understood according to history, it can in no way stand. It remains therefore that the sense which is taken away from the letter should be sought in a spiritual signification. When therefore it is said: Who is their father? Not only Saul prophesying is attended to, but all that company (cuneus) of prophets. All which prophets indeed, because they were very spiritual, were not judged from carnal progeny, but from celestial origin. Indeed the father of the prophets is He who through Malachi inquires, saying: If I am Lord, where is my fear? And if I am father, where is my love? (Mal. 1:6). For because they are joined to almighty God in great charity, they are named sons of Him whom they love as a father. Which is so much more fittingly suitable to the preachers of the new Church as he has lifted them higher into celestial nobility, who uncovered to them the clarity of such a race in the form of prayer. So, he says, you shall pray: Our Father who art in heaven (Matt. 6:9). Which is such as if he were to say: The holy preachers would be to be wondered at, if they performed the wonderful things which they do by their own power: now it is not a wonder what is seen; because He through them acts this to whom nothing seems difficult. Let one therefore say to another: And who is their father? As if he were to say: What wonder is it if they teach wonderfully since it is not they themselves who speak: but the spirit of their father who speaks in them? It is not said therefore: Who is his father? (John 6:42). Lest what is suitable to many sons should be conferred upon one alone. For only He who is Son by nature dares to say: My Father works until now (John 5:17). And likewise: The Lord said to me, You are my Son, today I have begotten you (Psalm 2:7). For that he might bring out the difference of each dignity, he speaks to Mary Magdalene, saying: I ascend to my Father, and your Father; my God, and your God (John 20:17). As often therefore as one preacher is beheld bright with a wonderful life or preaching, he is seen not alone in the supernal generation, but with innumerable others; because almighty God who is shown wonderful in one makes a very much more wonderful admiration of men, when innumerable ones are attended to, who had that which they wonder at in one. Which nevertheless can be referred conveniently to the detraction of the carnal: for when they try to diminish the fame of spiritual men, they explore their carnal things which they may bring forth for derogation. And mostly in the holy Church they have a wonderful fame of sanctity who have no secular height. When therefore carnal ones reproach in them either the origin of the flesh or poverty, who by divine generation are already great and rich, they as if mocking inquire concerning the father of the prophets. And because they have it as a very new thing that small men of the age can be seen so great, there is subjoined: Therefore it was turned into a proverb: Is Saul also among the prophets?

28. Quod nimirum si oculis cordis inspicerent, pro nova re non haberent. More etenim suo agit Spiritus sanctus, cum ad virtutum culmen pauperes, humiles, atque simplices erigit. Nam de eo scriptum est: Qui ponit humiles in sublime, et moerentes erigit sospitate (Job. V, 11). Hinc omnipotens Pater de eodem omnipotente suo Spiritu per prophetam dicit: Super quem requiescit spiritus meus, nisi super humilem, et quietum, et trementem sermones meos (Isa. LXVI, 2)? Hinc Paulus ait: Non multi sapientes secundum carnem, non multi nobiles, sed quae stulta sunt mundi elegit Deus, ut confundat fortia: et ignobilia mundi elegit Deus, ut ea, quae sunt, destrueret; ut non glorietur omnis caro in conspectu ejus (I Cor. I, 26, etc.) Quod certe proverbium etiam electis ascribi potest. Non enim minor admiratio habita est de beato Paulo apostolo, quando auditum est ab Ecclesia quia ille evangelizaret, qui Ecclesiam minando et caedendo expugnare solebat, nunc praedicando defenderet. Tunc quidem ii qui audiebant dicere poterant: Num Saulus inter apostolos? Nunquid ille Jesum praedicat, qui Jesum persequi solebat? Sed hoc jam in electorum proverbium versum est. Proverbium quidem est, quando in eo, quod dicitur, aliud occultatur. Conversio autem beati Pauli apostoli, facta est proverbium peccatoris. Audiat ergo unusquisque peccator beati Pauli conversionem, et non desperet de criminum multitudine. Saulus enim spirans minarum et caedis in discipulos Domini, ubique electos affligebat, lapidantium protomartyrem Stephanum vestimenta servabat, et velut omnium manibus lapidabat, qui expeditos ad lapidandum omnes reddebat (Act. IX, 1 seq.). Sed qui talis exstitit Christum persequens, ad Christum conversus, caput effectus est nationum, quia obtinuit totius Ecclesiae principatum. Dum ego tam magnum peccatorem conversum, tam sublimi dignitate a Domino honoratum conspicimus, peccatorum nostrorum invenire nos posse remissionem praesumamus. Proverbium ergo nostrum id est quod ad evangelizandum persecutor assumitur, quod hoc mysterium continet; quia conversus peccator non solum sperare a Domino veniam, sed quod viriliter certando pertingere valeat ad coronam. Sed hoc distare inter carnales et spirituales praedicatores solet, quia carnales post alta verba praedicationis, ad ima descendunt pravi operis, spirituales vero post sublimia quae loquuntur in altiora valde coelestis patriae desideria se sustollunt.

(Vers. 13.) Cessavit autem prophetare, et venit ad excelsum.

28. Which indeed if they looked at with the eyes of the heart, they would not have it as a new thing. For the Holy Spirit acts in His own manner, when He raises the poor, the humble, and the simple to the height of virtues. For concerning Him it is written: Who puts the humble on high, and lifts up those who mourn with safety (Job 5:11). Hence the almighty Father says concerning His same almighty Spirit through the prophet: Upon whom does my spirit rest, if not upon him who is humble, and quiet, and trembling at my words? (Isa. 66:2). Hence Paul says: Not many wise according to the flesh, not many noble, but the foolish things of the world God has chosen, that He may confound the strong: and the ignoble things of the world God has chosen, that He might destroy those things which are; that all flesh may not glory in His sight (1 Cor. 1:26, etc.). Which proverb certainly can also be ascribed to the elect. For no less wonder was had concerning the blessed apostle Paul, when it was heard by the Church that he evangelized, who was accustomed to assault the Church by threatening and slaughter, and now defended it by preaching. Then indeed those who heard could say: Is Saul also among the apostles? Does he preach Jesus, who was accustomed to persecute Jesus? But this has now been turned into a proverb of the elect. Indeed it is a proverb when something else is hidden in that which is said. But the conversion of the blessed apostle Paul was made a proverb of the sinner. Let every sinner therefore hear the conversion of the blessed Paul, and let him not despair concerning the multitude of crimes. For Saul, breathing threats and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, everywhere afflicted the elect, kept the garments of those stoning the protomartyr Stephen, and as it were stoned with the hands of all, who rendered all ready for stoning (Acts 9:1 seq.). But he who stood such as a persecutor of Christ, being converted to Christ, was made the head of the nations, because he obtained the primacy of the whole Church. While we behold such a great sinner converted, and honored with such a sublime dignity by the Lord, let us presume that we can find the remission of our sins. Our proverb therefore is that the persecutor is assumed for evangelizing, which contains this mystery; that the converted sinner can not only hope for pardon from the Lord, but that by manfully contending he is able to reach the crown. But this is accustomed to be the distance between carnal and spiritual preachers, because carnal ones after high words of preaching descend to the depths of a wicked work, but spiritual ones after the sublime things which they speak raise themselves up into much higher desires of the celestial fatherland.

(Verse 13.) And he ceased prophesying, and came to the high place (excelsum).

29. Ad excelsum post prophetiae ministerium venit, qui ad coelestia gaudia, quae praedicat, mentem erigit: et ad ea amando se sublevat, quae loquendo monstrat. Doctores quidem cum minoribus plana praedicant, cum eis quos docent , quasi in plano sunt. Et quia post verba praedicationis ad promerenda ea quae praedicant se bonis operibus praeparant, ad excelsum venire perhibentur. Qui certe sublimes verbo et opere sunt, cogitatione elationis non sunt. Magna quidem semper agunt, sed magni videri nunquam appetunt. Bene ergo subjungitur:

(Vers. 14, 15 et 16.) Dixit autem patruus Saul ad eum, et ad puerum ejus: Quo abistis? Qui respondere: Quaerere asinas, quas cum non reperissemus, venimus ad Samuelem. Et dixit ei patruus suus: Indica mihi, quid dixerit Samuel. Et ait Saul ad patruum suum: Indicavit nobis, quia inventae sunt asinae. Sermonem autem regni non indicavit ei, quem locutus ei Samuel fuerat.

30. Sermo regni est honorabilis dignitas pastoralis. Ipsa enim repraesentatione sua loquitur: quia patruus non est qui tanto ordine sublimatur. Verbum ergo regni rex non indicat: quia pastor Ecclesiae magno divinitatis splendore loquitur, sed elatione non loquitur. Qui vero verbum non indicat illud celat quod loquitur. Verbum enim semper loquitur cui verbum est, alioquin verbum non est. Verbum ergo regni habet qui ea conversatione fulget, quae exempla coelestis itineris aliis quasi loquendo praebet. Verbum ergo non indicat qui magnitudinem sanctitatis per vanam gloriam non revelat. Habet quidem quod indicet, sed quod per seipsum ostenditur indicare non vult. Nam qui magna dignitate magnaque sanctitate radiat, multa vivendo ostendit quae loquendo non dicit. Hoc profecto regni verbum habere Dominus praedicatorem voluit, quando in veste pontificis tintinnabula poni mandavit (Exod. XXVIII, 34). Vestis quidem pontificis est ostensio bonae conversationis. Quae quasi tintinnabulis multis inseritur, quando opera bona multiplicat quae ad minorum exemplum clamant. Sed indicare rex regni verbum non audet: quia praeceptum est sacerdotibus ut coram Domino vestis decorem portent. Coram Domino quidem vestis decorem portat et qui bona ostendit, et de ostensione bonorum operum non hominibus per vanitatem foris, sed Deo intus per amorem placere appetit. Tunc certe sacerdos tacet, sed dum incedit quod portat clamat; quia electus praedicator se jactando non indicat, sed bene vivendo loqui nequaquam cessat. Dicatur ergo de Saul, quia patruo suo sermonem regni non indicavit: quia electi viri, cum splendorem dignitatis aut bonae vitae incrementa percipiunt, per exempla se proferunt, sed silentio occultant.

29. He comes to the high place after the ministry of prophecy, who raises his mind to the celestial joys which he preaches: and by loving raises himself to those things which he shows by speaking. Teachers indeed preach level things with the lesser ones, with those whom they teach they are as it were on a level. And because after the words of preaching they prepare themselves by good works to merit those things which they preach, they are said to come to the high place. They who certainly are sublime in word and work are not so in the thought of elation. They always act great things indeed, but they never desire to be seen as great. Well therefore there is subjoined:

(Verses 14, 15 and 16.) And Saul's uncle said to him and to his boy: Where did you go? Who answered: To seek the asses, which when we had not found, we came to Samuel. And his uncle said to him: Tell me what Samuel said to you. And Saul said to his uncle: He indicated to us that the asses were found. But concerning the matter of the kingdom he did not tell him, which Samuel had spoken to him.

30. The word of the kingdom is the honorable pastoral dignity. For it speaks by its very representation: because he is not an uncle who is sublimated in such an order. Therefore the king does not tell the word of the kingdom: because the pastor of the Church speaks with great splendor of divinity, but does not speak with elation. But he who does not tell the word hides that which he speaks. For he always speaks a word to whom he has a word, otherwise it is not a word. Therefore he has the word of the kingdom who shines with that conversation which provides examples of the celestial journey to others as if by speaking. Therefore he does not tell the word who does not reveal the magnitude of sanctity through vain glory. He has indeed what he may indicate, but he does not wish to indicate what is shown through itself. For he who radiates with great dignity and great sanctity shows many things by living which he does not say by speaking. The Lord willed the preacher to have this word of the kingdom, when He commanded bells to be placed on the garment of the high priest (Exod. 28:34). The garment of the high priest indeed is the showing of a good conversation. Which is as it were inserted with many bells, when he multiplies good works which cry out for the example of the lesser ones. But the king does not dare to tell the word of the kingdom: because it is commanded to the priests that they should carry the decorum of the garment before the Lord. Before the Lord indeed he carries the decorum of the garment who both shows good things, and desires to please not men outwardly through vanity, but God inwardly through love from the showing of good works. Then certainly the priest is silent, but while he walks that which he carries cries out; because the elect preacher does not indicate himself by boasting, but by living well he by no means ceases to speak. Let it be said therefore of Saul, that he did not tell his uncle the word of the kingdom: because elect men, when they perceive the splendor of dignity or the increases of a good life, bring themselves forth through examples, but hide them by silence.

Et quia aliis electis se esse meritis minores credunt, ille cui sermonem non indicat ejus patruus esse dicitur. Patruus quippe dicitur frater patris. Redemptor autem generis humani quotquot fidei suae et doctrinae sacramentis instituit, ad immarcescibilem aeternae haereditatis gloriam tot filios facit. Qui enim instituuntur in Ecclesia, quasi parvuli adhuc filii sunt. Sed, qui magnis meritis ei jam in virum perfectum occurrit, frater est redemptoris. Tales nimirum beatus Paulus apostolus collaudans, ait: Haeredes Dei, cohaeredes Christi (Rom. VIII, 17). Quia ergo perfecti praedicatores electos alios perfectos tenent et se imperfectos, patruus Saul dicitur qui de regni sermone eum interrogasse perhibetur. Eumdem vero regni sermonem Saul Samuel dixerat: quia electi viri spiritualem conversationem quam habent majorum locutione didicerunt. Sed rex qui initiatus per unctionem fuerat, a populo adhuc electus non erat. Unde et sequitur:

(Vers. 17.) Vocavit Samuel populum ad Dominum in Masphath.

31. Masphath, ut dixi, speculatio interpretatur. In ordinatione autem regis populus in Masphath vocatur, quia qui ad ordinandum sanctae Ecclesiae pastorem conveniunt, ejus spiritualia, non carnalia attendere docentur. Speculari quidem est per formam sacrae Scripturae ordinandum praedicatorem cognoscere. Nam electorum speculum sacra Scriptura est. Quasi enim per speculum noscitur pastor, quando moribus talis ostenditur, qualis in sacro eloquio praedicatur. Bene igitur Samuel populum in Masphath convocat, ut electio boni antistitis non sit humano judicio, sed divino: cum non talis eligitur, qualis hominum arbitrio decerni potest, sed qualis in sacro eloquio declaratur. Quod quia divini muneris est, oportet ut populus qui a Deo tam magna exspectare cognoscitur a reatu suo per poenitentiae satisfactionem purgetur. Ipsa autem cognitio peccati est praeparatio divini muneris, quia saepe cum nos divino munere indignos credimus, id per humilitatem promeremur. Unde et Samuel eos qui ad excipiendum regem convenerant prius ad peccatorum suorum considerationem convertere satagit, quia subjunctum est:

And because they believe themselves to be lesser in merits than other elect ones, he to whom he does not tell the word is said to be his uncle. For an uncle is said to be the brother of a father. But the Redeemer of the human race, as many as He institutes by the sacraments of His faith and doctrine, He makes so many sons for the unfading glory of the eternal inheritance. For those who are instituted in the Church are as it were little ones yet sons. But he who by great merits already meets Him as a perfect man, is a brother of the Redeemer. Such indeed the blessed apostle Paul praising says: Heirs of God, co-heirs of Christ (Rom. 8:17). Since therefore perfect preachers hold other elect ones as perfect and themselves as imperfect, he is called the uncle of Saul who is reported to have interrogated him concerning the word of the kingdom. But Samuel had told Saul that same word of the kingdom: because elect men have learned the spiritual conversation which they have by the speech of their superiors. But the king who had been initiated through anointing, had not yet been chosen by the people. Whence also follows:

(Verse 17.) Samuel called the people to the Lord in Mizpah.

31. Mizpah, as I said, is interpreted as speculation (speculatio). But in the ordination of a king the people are called to Mizpah, because those who come together for ordaining a pastor of the holy Church are taught to attend to his spiritual things, not carnal. Indeed to speculate is to know the preacher to be ordained through the form of holy Scripture. For the holy Scripture is the mirror of the elect. For as if through a mirror the pastor is known, when he is shown such in morals as he is preached in the sacred eloquence. Well therefore Samuel convokes the people in Mizpah, so that the election of a good prelate may not be by human judgment, but by divine: since not such a one is chosen as can be decreed by the judgment of men, but such as is declared in the sacred eloquence. Which because it is of the divine gift, it is necessary that the people who are known to expect such great things from God should be purged from their guilt through the satisfaction of penance. But the very knowledge of sin is the preparation for the divine gift, because often when we believe ourselves unworthy of the divine gift, we merit it through humility. Whence also Samuel strives to turn those who had come together to receive the king first to the consideration of their own sins, because there is subjoined:

(Vers. 18, 19.) Et ait Samuel ad filios Israel: Haec dicit Dominus Deus Israel: Ego eduxi Israel de Aegypto, et erui vos de manu omnium regum, qui affligebant vos. Vos autem hodie projecistis Dominum Deum vestrum, qui solus salvavit vos de universis malis et tribulationibus vestris, et dixistis: Nequaquam, sed rex erit super nos. 32. Attente quidem ostendit eis et bona quae eis impendit Dominus et mala quae Domino fecerunt ipsi ut tanto gravius se deliquisse cognoscerent, quanto illum peccando offendere ausi sunt, a quo tanta bona perceperant. Quid vero sit abjicere Dominum, et qualiter secundum litteram et secundum spiritualem sensum intelligi debeat, superius late expositum est (Supra in exposit. vers. 7, cap. VIII), ubi ad Samuelem Dominus ait: Non te abjecerunt, sed me, juxta omnia opera sua, quae fecerunt a die, qua eduxi eos de terra Aegypti. Sed quia sancti praedicatores eos quos arguendo compungunt, docendo instruunt, subintulit, dicens: (Vers. 19.) Nunc ergo state coram Domino per tribus et familias vestras.

33. Coram Domino quidem stare praecipimur, quando majorum praecepto corda nostra ad scienda ejus mandata praeparamus. Vel coram Domino stant electi, quando a summis viris in spiritualibus virtutibus considerantur: ut qui melior in eis aspicitur, per pastoralem curam caeteris praeferatur. Et quia plures sunt fidelium ordines, per tribus et familias stare coram Domino jubentur. Quod profecto latius exsequens, subdit dicens: (Vers. 20, 21.) Et applicuit Samuel omnes tribus Israel, et cecidit sors super tribum Benjamin, et applicuit tribum Benjamin et cognationes ejus, et cecidit cognatio Metri, et pervenit usque ad filium Cis.

34. Stare omnes per tribus et familias fecit; ut omnes consideraret, et consideratis omnibus utiliorem eligeret. Sed quia ipse jam, Domino revelante, regem cognoverat, eumque ipso praecipiente in principem unxerat, quid est quod adhuc eligendum [Forte, eligendus] per tribus et familias quaeritur? sed inventus rex a solo propheta erat. Inventus ergo quaeritur, ut non inventus a populo inveniatur. Sorte etiam quaeritur, ut eum quem propheta eligeret dispensatione divina provisum populus non posset dubitare.

(Verses 18, 19.) And Samuel said to the children of Israel: Thus says the Lord God of Israel: I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the hand of all the kings who were afflicting you. But you today have rejected the Lord your God, who alone saved you from all your evils and tribulations, and you said: By no means, but a king shall be over us. 32. He carefully shows them both the good things which the Lord bestowed upon them and the evil things which they themselves did to the Lord, so that they might acknowledge themselves to have transgressed all the more grievously as they dared to offend Him by sinning, from whom they had received such great benefits. What it truly means to reject the Lord, and how it ought to be understood according to the letter and according to the spiritual sense, has been set forth extensively above (Above in the exposition of verse 7, chapter 8), where the Lord says to Samuel: They have not rejected you, but me, according to all their works which they have done from the day in which I brought them out of the land of Egypt. But because holy preachers instruct by teaching those whom they prick by reproving, he added, saying: (Verse 19.) Now therefore stand before the Lord by your tribes and families.

33. We are commanded to stand before the Lord indeed when, by the precept of our superiors, we prepare our hearts to know His mandates. Or the elect stand before the Lord when they are considered by the highest men in spiritual virtues: so that he who appears better among them may be preferred over the others through pastoral care. And because there are many orders of the faithful, they are commanded to stand before the Lord by tribes and families. Executing this indeed more extensively, he adds, saying: (Verses 20, 21.) And Samuel applied all the tribes of Israel, and the lot fell upon the tribe of Benjamin, and he applied the tribe of Benjamin and its kindreds, and the kindred of Matri fell, and it came even to the son of Kish.

34. He made them all stand by tribes and families; so that he might consider all, and having considered all, choose the more useful one. But since he himself already, by the Lord revealing it, had known the king, and by His command had anointed him as prince, why is he who is to be chosen [Perhaps, eligendus] still sought through tribes and families? But the king had been found by the prophet alone. Therefore he who was found is sought, so that he who was not found by the people may be found. He is also sought by lot, so that the people could not doubt that him whom the prophet would choose was provided by divine dispensation.

Quid ergo in hoc facto signatur, nisi quia sanctae Ecclesiae principes multa consideratione eligendi sunt? Summi etenim praedicatores, ex interna gratia sancti spiritus quam habent, magno providentiae lumine pleni sunt. Et quia valde sunt humiles, de internae illuminationis suae magnitudine non praesumunt. Quare et ea quae apud se bene ordinant coram aliis probant. Solus enim propheta 253 regem futurum noscit, quando summus sanctae Ecclesiae rector personam ordinandi rectoris et merita conspicit. Quem etiam in principem ungit quando eum donis spiritualibus plenum asserit. Tamen adhuc populum convocat, per tribus et cognationes dividit, sortes ponit, et eum quem novit quasi per artem invenit. Tribus quidem et familiae quasi divisae stant, quando in statu virtutum diversi sanctae Ecclesiae ordines attenduntur. Nam cum perfectiones electorum plures intuemur, cum candorem virginum, cum robur continentium, cum honesta ministeria clericorum, cum monachorum sollicitudinem videmus, velut stantes tribus attendimus. Et quia in Dei servitio horum multa varietas est, dum ea quae sunt in singulis ordinibus, item varietates aspicimus, quasi stantes non solum tribus, sed etiam cognationes videmus. Et sors super tribum cadit: quia meliores viri saepe in uno ordine quam in alio inveniuntur. Nam velut sortem tribus accipit, quando ii qui perfectiores sunt aliis convenire videntur ministerio praedicationis. Sed non super personam adhuc, sed super tribum sors cadit, quando plures sunt in quibus persona digna reconditur. Adhuc itaque summis viris remanet quod inquirant. Bene ergo sors super tribum Benjamin cecidisse dicitur; Samuel autem ipsam tribum et ejus cognationes applicuisse et ad Cis filium pervenisse, quia electi et summi viri sanctae Ecclesiae considerare virtutes singulorum non desinunt, donec ad eum veniant qui ministerii pastoralis sorte dignus inveniatur. Sed qui digni sunt, onus tanti ordinis suscipere vehementer expavescunt. Unde et sequitur:

(Vers. 21, 22.) Quaesierunt ergo eum, et non invenerunt: et consuluerunt pro eo Dominum, utrumnum venturus esset illuc. Responditque Dominus: Ecce absconditus est domi.

35. Abscondunt quippe se ne inveniantur: quia subire dignitatem refugiunt cujus oneri se esse impares arbitrantur. Habet quippe spiritualis praelatio exteriorem gloriam dignitatis, habet et interioris magnitudinem operis. Nam rector et onoratur a subditis, et portat eos a quibus honoratur. Cum honoris ergo principio causa nascitur honeris, quia unde honor a rectore excipitur, inde illud suscipit quo gravetur. Quanquam ipse honor dignitatis per seipsum magnum sit onus mentis, quia contemni debet, et placet.

What then is signified in this deed, except that the princes of the holy Church are to be chosen with much consideration? For the highest preachers, from the internal grace of the Holy Spirit which they have, are full of a great light of providence. And because they are very humble, they do not presume upon the magnitude of their internal illumination. Wherefore they also prove before others those things which they order well within themselves. For the prophet alone knows the future king, when the highest rector of the holy Church beholds the person of the rector to be ordained and his merits. Whom he also anoints as prince when he asserts him to be full of spiritual gifts. Nevertheless he still convokes the people, divides them by tribes and kindreds, places lots, and finds him whom he knew as if by art. The tribes indeed and families stand as if divided, when in the state of virtues the diverse orders of the holy Church are attended to. For when we gaze upon the many perfections of the elect, when we see the brightness of virgins, the strength of the continent, the honorable ministries of clerics, the solicitude of monks, we attend to them as if to standing tribes. And because in the service of God there is much variety of these, while we behold those things which are in individual orders, likewise the varieties, we see as if standing not only tribes, but also kindreds. And the lot falls upon a tribe: because better men are often found in one order than in another. For a tribe receives as it were a lot, when those who are more perfect than others seem to agree with the ministry of preaching. But the lot does not yet fall upon a person, but upon a tribe, when there are many in whom a worthy person is hidden. Therefore it still remains for the highest men to inquire. Well therefore is the lot said to have fallen upon the tribe of Benjamin; and Samuel to have applied that tribe and its kindreds and to have arrived at the son of Kish, because the elect and highest men of the holy Church do not cease to consider the virtues of individuals, until they come to him who may be found worthy by the lot of the pastoral ministry. But those who are worthy vehemently dread to take up the burden of such an order. Whence also follows:

(Verses 21, 22.) They sought him therefore, and they did not find him: and they consulted the Lord concerning him, whether he would come thither. And the Lord answered: Behold, he is hidden at home.

35. For they hide themselves lest they be found: because they refuse to undergo a dignity whose burden they judge themselves to be unequal to. For spiritual prelation has the external glory of dignity, and it has the magnitude of internal work. For the rector is both honored by his subjects, and he carries those by whom he is honored. With the beginning of honor, therefore, the cause of a burden is born, because from where honor is received by the rector, from there he receives that by which he is weighed down. Although the honor of dignity itself is in itself a great burden of the mind, because it ought to be despised, and yet it pleases.

Contemni quidem debet ne mentem per superbiam elevet; et suscipi debet, ut coelestia quae doctor loquitur, subjecti venerentur. Gravius ergo onus de honore nascitur, quia electus pastor magna animi virtute ferre potest, ut despiciat illud in se quod pro Deo recipit in se, ut videlicet talis pro Deo sit, sed sibi talis non sit et semetipsum abneget et non abneget; ut sit quod est pro Deo, et quod est pro semetipso, non sit. Honor itaque oblatus a subjecto suscipitur, ut praedicatio commendetur. Honorem quoque oblatum praedicator despicit quia non extollitur quod honoratur, sed gaudet quod verbi Dei ministerium commendetur. Hoc autem quam difficile agatur, cogitando melius quam loquendo comprehenditur. Nam infirmis mentibus impossibile est onus aliorum fortiter ferre et oblati honoris reverentiam mentis virtute disponere; ut inter ejusdem honoris obsequia, de profectu subditorum gaudere sciat, et pro reverentia sua tumere nesciat. Quia ergo electi viri displicere Deo nolunt, 254, praelationis officium suscipere vocati refugiunt. Sed et eamdem fugam ministerii ad virtutem humilitatis habent, non ad jactantiam dignitatis. Nam quantum possunt fugiunt; sed si a Domino provisi sunt, delitescere nequaquam possunt. Quare et idem Saul domi absconditur, sed Domino pandente monstratur, quia electi viri exterioribus se sanctae Ecclesiae ministeriis subtrahunt, sed tamen ad exteriora ministeria disponenda Domino dispensante producuntur. Quia vero nunc in sancta Ecclesia qui se subtrahant tantis honoribus pauci sunt, qui se ingerant multi, notare qui se ingerunt debent; quia is qui a propheta domi absconditus dicitur, non ad spiritualem Ecclesiae dignitatem, sed ad saecularem regni gloriam quaerebatur. Non enim in pontificem hunc quaerebant, sed regem facere volebant. Videat ergo sacerdos, qua mente fugiendum sit culmen sanctae Ecclesiae, si culmen saeculi conscendere tam caute reges fugere. Sed quia sancti viri quo instantius suscipere ordinem praelationis refugiunt a devotis plebibus devotius requiruntur, sequitur:

(Vers. 23.) Concurrerunt et tulerunt eum inde. Post haec etiam subditur: (Ibidem.) Stetitque in medio populi.

36. In medio populi stat praelatus, quando ab universis subditis ejus fortitudo conspicitur. Stare namque virtutis est. Qui ergo bona operatur instanter stat. Et quia bona opera exemplum minoribus praestant, in medio populi stare non in solitudine cernitur. Quod etiam pro rectitudine intentionis dictum esse convenienter accipitur. Qui enim stat rectitudine corporis, caput in sublime tollit. Qui vero bona publice agit non stat fortitudine operis si rectitudinem non habet intentionis.

It ought indeed to be despised lest it elevate the mind through pride; and it ought to be received so that the subjects may venerate the celestial things which the teacher speaks. Therefore a heavier burden is born from honor, because the elect pastor can bear with great virtue of soul that he should despise that in himself which he receives in himself for God's sake, namely so that he may be such for God, but to himself he may not be such, and he may both deny and not deny himself; so that he may be what he is for God's sake, and what he is for his own sake, he may not be. And so the honor offered is received from the subject, so that the preaching may be commended. The preacher also despises the offered honor because that which is honored is not extolled, but he rejoices that the ministry of the word of God is commended. How difficult this is to do, however, is better understood by thinking than by speaking. For it is impossible for weak minds to bear the burden of others strongly and to dispose the reverence of offered honor with virtue of mind; so that among the obsequies of the same honor, he may know how to rejoice in the progress of the subjects, and may not know how to swell with his own reverence. Because therefore elect men do not wish to displease God, they refuse when called to take up the office of prelation. But they also have this same flight from the ministry for the virtue of humility, not for the boasting of dignity. For they flee as much as they can; but if they have been provided by the Lord, they can by no means hide away. Wherefore also this same Saul is hidden at home, but is shown by the Lord disclosing him, because elect men withdraw themselves from the external ministries of the holy Church, but nevertheless they are brought forth to dispose the external ministries by the Lord's dispensation. Because indeed now in the holy Church there are few who withdraw themselves from such great honors, and many who thrust themselves in, those who thrust themselves in ought to note; because he who is said to have been hidden at home by the prophet was sought not for the spiritual dignity of the Church, but for the secular glory of the kingdom. For they were not seeking this man for a high priest, but they wished to make him king. Let the priest see, therefore, with what mind the summit of the holy Church is to be fled, if kings flee to ascend the summit of the world so cautiously. But because the more urgently holy men refuse to take up the order of prelation, the more devotedly they are sought by devoted peoples, follows:

(Verse 23.) They ran and fetched him thence. After these things it is also subjoined: (Ibidem.) And he stood in the midst of the people.

36. The prelate stands in the midst of the people when his strength is seen by all his subjects. For to stand is of virtue. He therefore who works good things constantly stands. And because good works provide an example to the lesser ones, he is seen standing in the midst of the people, not in solitude. Which also is conveniently accepted to be said for the rectitude of intention. For he who stands with the rectitude of the body raises his head on high. But he who does good things publicly does not stand with the strength of the work if he does not have the rectitude of intention.

In medio ergo populi stare rex dicitur, ut praelatorum sanctae Ecclesiae forma monstretur; quia ad exemplum subditorum bona opera debent ostendere, sed de eodem bono opere suscipere mundi gloriam devitare. Sed et quantus apparere debeat subdit, atque ait: (Ibidem.) Et altior erat omni populo ab humero et sursum.

37. Late supra ostendimus (Lib. IV, cap. 4, num. 20), quod excellens magnitudo corporis in sanctis praedicatoribus designet augmentum perfectionis. In medio ergo populi sublimis aspicitur, qui in virtutum culmine positus, a subditis non nescitur. Rectus quidem ordo electi praedicatoris est ut ante sublimitatem ecclesiastici culminis, culmen conscendat virtutis, pro honore Dei culmen obtineat gloriae, sed majori sublimitate fulgeat revelata virtutum perfectione. Talis quidem Pastor a perfectis viris valde praedicandus est, a minoribus cupiendus atque diligendus. Bene ergo subjunctum est: Et ait ad omnem populum: Certe videtis, quem elegit Dominus, quod non sit ei similis in omni populo.

(Vers. 23.) Et clamavit cunctus populus: Vivat rex.

Sequitur: (Vers. 24.) Locutus est Samuel ad populum legem regni, et scripsit in libro, et posuit coram Domino.

38. De jure regio, quia late superius diximus (Lib. IV, cap. 4, num. 4, seq.), hoc tantum de illo memoramus, quia ad historiam non praecipitur, sed ostenditur quid acturi sint reges reprobi, quid vitaturi sint boni. A regibus quidem defendendi sunt subditi, non bonis propriis spoliandi. Auxilium praestare subjectis debent, agros, vineas et oliveta auferre non debent. Quod si non vitanda, sed agenda scripta haec contendere 255 quis voluerit, tyrannorum jus pro eo rege scribitur qui, abjecto Domino, postulatur. Crudelis ergo lex regni, ultio est Dominum abjicientis populi. Non enim injustum erat ut agros et vineas perderet, qui regnantem super se Dominum sponte perdebat. Cuncta ergo quae contra aequitatem in hoc jure regio continentur aequa esse cernimus, si in petendo rege quidquid populus deliquerat consideramus. Nam quod magnum in divinae aequitatis examine onus legis est, si filios et filias in regis opere inviti ponerent quos a Dei libertate sponte tulissent? Et quid inconveniens esse cernitur, si quod ad ultimum ponitur, ipsi fierent servi hominum qui abjiciebant super se regnantem Deum?

Therefore the king is said to stand in the midst of the people, so that the form of the prelates of the holy Church may be shown; because they ought to show good works for the example of the subjects, but avoid receiving the glory of the world from the same good work. But he also subjoins how great he ought to appear, and says: (Ibidem.) And he was higher than all the people from the shoulder and upward.

37. We have extensively shown above (Book 4, chapter 4, number 20), that excellent magnitude of body in holy preachers designates the increase of perfection. In the midst of the people, therefore, he is seen sublime who, placed at the summit of virtues, is not unknown to his subjects. The right order of the elect preacher indeed is that before the sublimity of the ecclesiastical summit, he should ascend the summit of virtue, and for the honor of God he should obtain the summit of glory, but shine with greater sublimity through the revealed perfection of virtues. Such a Pastor indeed is to be greatly preached by perfect men, and to be desired and loved by the lesser ones. Well therefore is it subjoined: And he said to all the people: Surely you see whom the Lord has chosen, that there is none like him in all the people.

(Verse 23.) And all the people cried out: Long live the king.

Follows: (Verse 24.) Samuel spoke to the people the law of the kingdom, and he wrote it in a book, and placed it before the Lord.

38. Concerning the royal right (jus regium), because we have spoken extensively above (Book 4, chapter 4, number 4, following), we remember only this much about it, that it is not prescribed for history, but it is shown what reprobate kings are going to do, and what good ones are going to avoid. Subjects are indeed to be defended by kings, not to be spoiled of their own goods. They ought to provide help to their subjects, they ought not to take away fields, vineyards, and olive groves. But if anyone should wish to contend that these things were written not to be avoided, but to be done, the right of tyrants is written for that king who, having rejected the Lord, is demanded. Therefore the cruel law of the kingdom is the vengeance of the people rejecting the Lord. For it was not unjust that he should lose fields and vineyards, who was spontaneously losing the Lord reigning over him. All things therefore which are contained in this royal right against equity, we see to be equitable, if we consider whatever the people had transgressed in asking for a king. For what great burden of the law is there in the examination of divine equity, if they should place sons and daughters unwillingly in the king's work, whom they had spontaneously taken away from the liberty of God? And what is seen to be inconvenient, if what is placed at the end, they themselves should become servants of men who were rejecting God reigning over them?

Dum ergo regni lex scribitur, perpetuae memoriae poena traditur qua audaces puniantur; quae quia per Domini justitiam lata fuerat, coram Domino reponi perhibetur. Sed fortasse jus illud aliud fuit quam lex ista quae scribitur. Quod si verum est, hanc Samuel coram rege ad populum loquitur, ut rex sciat a populo quid exquirat, sciat populus quid exhibere suis regibus debeat. Quae lex in libro scribitur ut pro futurorum memoria reservetur. Coram Domino ponitur, ut venerabilis habeatur. Nos autem reges Ecclesiarum esse sanctos praedicatores diximus, quibus aperte omnia convenire ostendimus quae jure regio continentur. Hanc ergo legem Samuel ad populum loquitur, quando electus doctor fideles sanctae Ecclesiae instruit, qua humilitate suis praepositis debeant subjugari. In libro etiam scribitur quando in eorum mente haec firmiter inserit. Nam qui sic loquitur, ut audita auditores ejus obliviscantur, ad populum legem dicit, sed hanc in libro non scribit. Verba ergo, quae doctor loquitur, in libro scribere, est auditorum suorum mentibus attente commendare. Quasi scribere volebat Dominus, quae dixerat, quando dicebat: Mementote sermonis mei, quem ego dixi vobis. Non est servus major Domino suo (Joan. XV, 20). Hinc Paulus locutam regni legem in libro describens, ait: Mementote praepositorum vestrorum, qui vobis locuti sunt verbum Dei, quorum intuentes exitum conversationis, imitamini fidem (Heb. XIII, 7). Si vero et hic aliam legem quis esse praesignatam accipere voluerit, illam aspiciat, quam beatus Paulus ostendit, dicens: Qui evangelium annuntiat, de evangelio vivat: et qui altario servit, de altario vivat (I Cor. IX, 14). Hanc quippe legem regni Dominus loquebatur ad populum, quando dicebat: Qui recipit prophetam in nomine prophetae, mercedem prophetae accipiet; et qui recipit justum in nomine justi, mercedem justi accipiet (Matth. X, 41). Et ut arctius hanc in libro describeret, a minori verbum roborans, ait: Qui dederit uni ex minimis meis calicem aquae frigidae tantum in nomine discipuli, non perdet mercedem suam (Marc. IX, 40).

Sequitur: (Vers. 25, 26, 27.) Dimisit Samuel omnem populum, singulos in domum suam. Sed Saul abiit in domum suam in Gabaa, et abiit cum eo pars exercitus, quorum tetigit Deus corda. Filii vero Belial dixerunt: Nunquid salvare nos poterit iste? Et despexerunt eum.

While therefore the law of the kingdom is written, a punishment of perpetual memory is handed down by which the audacious may be punished; which because it had been brought by the justice of the Lord, is reported to be replaced before the Lord. But perhaps that right was other than this law which is written. If this is true, Samuel speaks this before the king to the people, so that the king may know what he should require from the people, and the people may know what they ought to exhibit to their kings. Which law is written in a book so that it may be reserved for the memory of future things. It is placed before the Lord, so that it may be held venerable. But we have said that the kings of the Churches are holy preachers, to whom we have shown that all things which are contained in the royal right clearly agree. Therefore Samuel speaks this law to the people when the elect teacher instructs the faithful of the holy Church with what humility they ought to be subjugated to their superiors. It is also written in a book when he firmly inserts these things in their minds. For he who speaks so that his hearers forget what has been heard, says the law to the people, but does not write it in a book. Therefore to write in a book the words which the teacher speaks is to commend them attentively to the minds of his hearers. The Lord as it were wished to write what He had said, when He said: Remember my word which I said to you: The servant is not greater than his Lord (John 15:20). Hence Paul, describing the spoken law of the kingdom in a book, says: Remember your superiors, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose end of conversation beholding, imitate their faith (Heb. 13:7). But if anyone should wish to take another law to be pre-signified here, let him behold that one which the blessed Paul shows, saying: He who announces the gospel, let him live of the gospel: and he who serves the altar, let him live of the altar (1 Cor. 9:14). For the Lord was speaking this law of the kingdom to the people when He said: He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a just man in the name of a just man, shall receive a just man's reward (Matt. 10:41). And so that He might describe this more strictly in a book, strengthening the word from the lesser, He says: He who shall give to one of these my little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward (Mark 9:40).

Follows: (Verses 25, 26, 27.) Samuel dismissed all the people, each one to his own home. But Saul went to his home in Gibeah, and a part of the army went with him, whose hearts God had touched. But the children of Belial said: Shall this one be able to save us? And they despised him.

39. Si simplex historia quaeritur, quid unquam planius dici potuit? Sed si vim verborum singulorum attendimus, magna sunt quae in hac simplicitate verborum clauduntur. Nam populus in domum suam dimissus asseritur, rex autem in domum non esse dimissus, sed abiisse perhibetur. Separatim quoque de domibus populi et de domo regis dicitur: quia populus refertur dimissus in domum suam, et rex abiisse in suam. Prius tamen populus 256 dimissus est quam abiret rex. De abeunte etiam populo caute signatur, et non simul, sed singuli abiisse in domum suam referuntur. De his vero qui regem secuti sunt non dicitur: Abiit pars exercitus, singuli post regem, sed: Abiit cum eo pars exercitus. Ad extremum vero qui regem sequuntur, eorum corda a Deo tacta referuntur; qui regem spernunt, Belial filii nominantur. Hic profecto modus dicendi non simplex, sed valde ei subtilis est, qui considerare novit, non quod simpliciter foris sonat, sed quod sapienter intus insinuat. Quid est ergo, quod rex in domum suam abire, populus vero dimitti dicitur? Sed regem, Ecclesiae pastorem, populos, subjectos designare ostendimus. Ire autem liberi est; dimitti ejus, qui retineri potest. Rex ergo abire dicitur ut in persona praedicatoris libertas animi praedicetur. Abire quippe doctores possunt, cum volunt, et redire, quia fortes sunt in bono opere, sapientes in interna dispositione. Veniunt quippe, quando ad subditos exeunt aut exemplo boni operis aut verbo praedicationis. Abeunt autem, quando ad mentis secretum redeunt, et quod foris acturi sunt, intus disponunt. In qua nimirum consideratione quia quotidie permanent quasi intra domum latent. Abire ergo in domum suam rex dicitur, quia praedicator aeternae vitae operatione probatus, sapientiae doctrina securus, liber ad opera potest egredi, et ad consilia mentis intrare.

40. Populus autem in domum suam dimittitur, quia fideles subjecti non sunt liberi ad disponenda quae volunt, sed ad ea quae jubentur. Quasi tenti quidem dimittuntur, dum jussa praecipiuntur agere; praesumere non jussa, devitare. Et quia ad opera diversa mittuntur, in suam domum eorum unusquisque dimittitur. Ut enim ea quae nobis praecipiunt bene perficiamus, priusquam appareamus in opere, intus recondimur in interna consideratione. Reges ergo nostri nos singulos in domum nostram dimunt, quia ad ea quae nobis injungunt, nos per secretam mentis dispositionem ire praecipiunt.

39. If a simple history is sought, what could ever be said more plainly? But if we attend to the force of the individual words, great are the things which are enclosed in this simplicity of words. For the people are asserted to have been dismissed to their own home, but the king is held not to have been dismissed to his home, but to have gone. It is said separately also of the houses of the people and of the house of the king: because the people are reported dismissed into their own home, and the king to have gone into his own. Yet the people were dismissed before the king went away. Concerning the departing people also it is cautiously signaled, and they are reported to have gone into their own home not together, but individually (singuli). But concerning those who followed the king it is not said: A part of the army went, individually after the king, but: A part of the army went with him. And at the end, those who follow the king, their hearts are reported touched by God; those who despise the king are named sons of Belial (Belial filii). Here indeed the manner of speaking is not simple, but is very subtle to him who knows how to consider, not what simply sounds outwardly, but what it wisely insinuates within. What is it, therefore, that the king is said to go into his own home, but the people to be dismissed? But we have shown that the king designates the pastor of the Church, and the people the subjects. To go, however, is of a free man; to be dismissed is of him who can be retained. Therefore the king is said to go so that in the person of the preacher the liberty of the mind may be preached. For the teachers (doctores) can go when they wish, and return, because they are strong in good work, wise in internal disposition. For they come when they go out to their subjects either by the example of a good work or by the word of preaching. But they go away when they return to the secret of the mind, and dispose within what they are to do without. In which consideration surely because they remain daily, they are as it were hidden within the house. Therefore the king is said to go into his own home, because the preacher of eternal life, proven by operation, secure in the doctrine of wisdom, is free to go out to works, and to enter into the counsels of the mind.

40. But the people are dismissed to their own home, because the faithful subjects are not free to dispose of what they wish, but to those things which are commanded. They are dismissed as it were held, while they are instructed to do what is ordered; to avoid presuming what is not ordered. And because they are sent to diverse works, each one of them is dismissed to his own home. For so that we may well perform those things which are commanded to us, before we appear in work, we are hidden within in internal consideration. Therefore our kings dismiss us individually to our home, because to those things which they enjoin upon us, they command us to go through a secret disposition of the mind.

Bene quidem ipsi praecipiunt, sed si operationis nostrae modum negligimus praevidere, quae bene praecepta sunt, inconsulta mente dissipamus. Singuli ergo in domum suam redeunt, quando unusquisque fidelis subditus opus obedientiae quod proponit consilio mentis disponendo praevenit. Quia vero electo rege in domum suam ante populus dimissus, quam rex abiisse asseritur, potest in hoc aliud designari. Qui enim regem excipiunt in domum suam vadunt quando se unusquisque subjectus considerando praeparat, ut ei quem praeesse sibi petiit fidelem obedientiam impendat. In hoc ergo loco non est imperata considerare, sed imperandis infima se dispositione substernere. Regi quoque in domum suam abire est ut discrete paratis imperet considerare. Alia ergo est domus regis, alia populi subjecti; quia alta illi mente subditorum itinera disponenda considerant, isti praelatorum imperia exsequi per intimi propositi robur parant. Unde et domus regis in Gabaa sita perhibetur. Gabaa quippe sublimis dicitur. Domus ergo regis in Gabaa esse ostenditur; quia electus doctor non ima et terrena cogitando incolere, sed alta et coelestia meditari studet. Unde et bene pars exercitus cum eo ire in Gabaa dicitur, quia hi, qui contra diabolum fortes sunt, electum pastorem suum ad virtutum alta prosequuntur. Pars ergo exercitus ire cum rege dicitur, quia in sancta ecclesia plerique fideles sunt, qui praelatis suis humiliter obedire student, et eorum vitam per bona opera imitantur.

41. Et quia hoc nonnisi illi possunt, qui Spiritus sancti gratia praeventi sunt, cum pars exercitus ire cum rege dicitur, subjungitur. Quorum Deus tetigit corda. Quia enim digito tangere solemus, Deus corda Sanctorum tangit, quando eis Spiritus sancti gratiam tribuit. Et ejus tactum sentiunt: quia, recepto internae virtutis munere, a carnalitatis suae debilitate commoventur. Qui protinus coelestis exercitus milites fiunt, quia per virtutem sancti Spiritus infirma deserunt, et ad agenda fortia in Christi bello praeparantur.

They indeed command well, but if we neglect to foresee the manner of our operation, we dissipate with an unconsulted mind those things which were well commanded. Therefore individuals return to their own home when each faithful subject anticipates by disposing in the counsel of the mind the work of obedience which he proposes. But because, after the king was chosen, the people are asserted to have been dismissed to their own home before the king went away, another thing can be designated in this. For those who receive the king go into their own home when each subject prepares himself by considering, so that he may pay faithful obedience to him whom he sought to be over him. In this place, therefore, it is not for considering things commanded, but for subjecting oneself with the lowest disposition to things to be commanded. For the king also to go away into his own home is so that he may consider with discretion the things to be commanded to those prepared. Therefore one is the house of the king, another that of the subject people; because the former consider with a high mind the paths of the subjects to be disposed, the latter prepare to execute the commands of the prelates through the strength of an intimate purpose. Hence also the house of the king is reported to be situated in Gibeah (Gabaa). For Gibeah is said to be high. Therefore the house of the king is shown to be in Gibeah; because the elect teacher strives not to inhabit by thinking low and earthly things, but to meditate on high and heavenly things. Hence also correctly a part of the army is said to go with him into Gibeah, because those who are strong against the devil follow their elect pastor to the heights of virtues. Therefore a part of the army is said to go with the king, because in the holy church there are many faithful who strive to obey their prelates humbly, and imitate their life through good works.

41. And because none can do this except those who have been prevented by the grace of the Holy Spirit, when a part of the army is said to go with the king, it is added: Whose hearts God touched. For because we are accustomed to touch with the finger, God touches the hearts of the Saints when He grants them the grace of the Holy Spirit. And they feel His touch: because, having received the gift of internal virtue, they are moved from the weakness of their carnality. These immediately become soldiers of the heavenly army, because through the power of the Holy Spirit they desert weak things, and are prepared for doing strong things in the war of Christ.

Quia vero intra sanctam Ecclesiam quidam praelatos suos despicere non verentur, audiant, quia qui regem despiciunt Belial filii dicuntur. Per superbiae quidem vitium in illius imitatione generantur, de quo scriptum est: Omne sublime videt, et ipse est caput super omnes filios superbiae (Job XLI, 25). Qui apte superborum mores insinuant, quia dicunt: Nunquid iste salvare nos poterit? Sancti etenim viri, quia praesentia despiciunt, aeterna inquirunt, contemptum mundi quem in mente retinent proferunt etiam in exteriori conversatione; intus venerabiles sunt, foris despicabiles videntur. Superbi ergo, quia illud solum quod in Sanctis foris despici potest aspiciunt; illud vero, quod valde venerandum est, cernere non merentur, dicunt: Nunquid iste salvare nos poterit? Quasi despiciendo interrogent: A tam parvo tam grandia speranda sunt? Iste tam parvus, nos tam magnos, tam debilis, tam fortes salvare posse credendus est? Nam quid est aliud quod dicunt: Iste et nos; nisi quod superbi et arrogantes inspicientes alios, semper parvos 258 et debiles esse credunt; se autem magnos, fortes, atque sapientes? Merito igitur Belial filii dicuntur, quia dum superbiendo se extollunt, illi se conformant, qui eodem modo cecidisse de coelo dicitur. De quibus etiam regem despicientibus dicitur: (Ibidem). Et non attulere ei munera.

42. Si ad litteram ista discutimus, hoc profecto insinuant, quia et terrarum domini, et spirituales sanctae Ecclesiae praelati exterioribus officiis honorandi sunt. Unde et beatus Paulus Apostolus elatos Romanos alloquitur, dicens: Reddite omnibus debita; cui tributum, tributum: cui vectigal, vectigal (Rom. XIII, 7). Hinc Apostolorum princeps exhortans, ait: Subjecti estote omni humanae creaturae propter Deum, sive regi tanquam praecellenti, sive ducibus tanquam ab eo missis (I Petr. II, 13). Spiritualia vero munera rectoribus nostris tribuimus, quando debitam eis honoris reverentiam offerimus, et ea quae praecipiunt cum magna devotione servamus. Magna enim munera sunt reverentia honoris et humilitas subjectionis; quia dum rectoribus nostris, et intus per humilitatem subdimur, et per exteriora obsequia foris honoris reverentiam exhibemus, munus eis unum praebemus a corpore, aliud a corde. Ut ergo superborum typum insinuet propheta, non dicit: Non attulere ei munus; sed, non attulere ei munera; quia dum electos praedicatores despiciunt, eis utique honorem a corpore offerre dedignantur et humilitatem a corde. Sed cum electi praedicatores subditorum culpam agnoscunt, aliquando eam statim corrigere increpando gestiunt, aliquando hanc se nosse dissimulant; ut ad eam delendam congruum tempus quaerant. Unde et de eodem despecto rege protinus subditur: (Ibidem.) Ille vero dissimulabat se audire.

But because within the holy Church some do not fear to despise their prelates, let them hear that those who despise the king are called sons of Belial. Indeed, through the vice of pride they are generated in the imitation of him of whom it is written: He beholds every high thing, and he is king over all the children of pride (Job 41:25). These aptly insinuate the ways of the proud, because they say: Shall this one be able to save us? For holy men, because they despise present things and seek eternal things, bring forth even in their outward conversation the contempt for the world which they retain in their mind; they are venerable within, they seem despicable without. Therefore the proud, because they behold only that which can be despised outwardly in the Saints; but that which is greatly to be venerated, they do not deserve to discern, say: Shall this one be able to save us? As if by despising they might ask: Are such great things to be hoped for from one so small? Is this one so small, and we so great, he so weak, and we so strong, to be believed able to save? For what else is it that they say: This one and we; unless that the proud and arrogant, looking at others, always believe them to be small and weak; but themselves to be great, strong, and wise? Deservedly therefore are they called sons of Belial, because while by being proud they extol themselves, they conform themselves to him who is said to have fallen from heaven in the same way. Concerning whom also despising the king it is said: (In the same place). And they brought him no gifts.

42. If we discuss these things according to the letter, they indeed insinuate this, that both the lords of the lands and the spiritual prelates of the holy Church are to be honored with outward offices. Hence also the blessed Apostle Paul addresses the elated Romans, saying: Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom (Rom. 13:7). Hence the prince of the Apostles, exhorting, says: Be subject to every human creature for God's sake, whether to the king as pre-eminent, or to governors as sent by him (1 Pet. 2:13). But we grant spiritual gifts to our rectors when we offer them the due reverence of honor, and keep with great devotion those things which they command. For great gifts are the reverence of honor and the humility of subjection; because while we are subjected to our rectors within through humility, and through outward services we exhibit the reverence of honor without, we provide them one gift from the body, another from the heart. Therefore, so that the prophet might insinuate the type of the proud, he does not say: They brought him no gift; but, they brought him no gifts; because while they despise the elect preachers, they surely disdain to offer them honor from the body and humility from the heart. But when the elect preachers recognize the fault of their subjects, sometimes they desire to correct it immediately by rebuking, sometimes they dissemble that they know it; so that they may seek a fitting time for deleting it. Hence also concerning the same despised king it is immediately added: (In the same place.) But he dissembled that he heard.

LIBER QUINTUS.

CAPUT PRIMUM.

1. Cum sacrae hujus historiae profunditatem asserere in istius operis praefatione voluissem, in eo potissimum videri posse asserui, quod scripta fuerit a prophetis. Ipsi quidem mystica dicere, non solum verbis, sed etiam rebus consueverant; plana proferre, sed alta signare. Quia enim per eos Spiritus sanctus loquebatur, et planum erat, quod ipsi, velut homines dicebant, sed profundum et mysticum; quia locutionem hominibus summus et incircumscriptus Spiritus suggerebat. Quia ergo prophetam Samuelem loquentem exponimus, tanto majori studio indigemus, quanto ipse in Spiritus sancti gratia sublimiter assumptus, exteriora dixit, sed interiora vidit. Carnalia plerumque asseruit, sed intima et spiritualia signavit. Sed quia humano studio ad divina pervenire impossibile est, non est 259 nobis confidendum de viribus propriis, sed de dignatione Spiritus sancti qui a Redemptore missus, Replevit orbem terrarum, et hoc, quod continet omnia, in omnibus jam scientiam habet vocis (Sap. I, 7). Quid ergo jam idem propheta de incoeptis Israelitarum gestis exsequatur, audiamus. (I Reg. cap. XI, vers. 1, 2.) Et factum est (inquit) quasi post mensem, ascendit Naas Ammonites, et pugnare coepit adversus Jabes Galaad. Dixeruntque omnes viri Jabes ad Naas: Habeto nos faederatos, et serviemus tibi. Et respondit ad eos Naas Ammonites: In hoc feriam vobiscum foedus, ut eruam omnium vestrum oculos dextros, ponamque vos opprobrium in universo Israel.

2. Si historia quaeritur, nihil planius dici, nihil facilius potest intelligi. Si vero spiritum sequi volumus, Paulum prius loquentem audiamus qui vetera intuens ait: Omnia in figura contingebant illis: scripta sunt autem propter nos, in quos fines saeculorum devenerunt (I Cor. X, 11). Esse etiam spiritualia bella insinuat, dicens: Non est nobis colluctatio adversus carnem, et sanguinem, sed adversus principes et potestates, adversus spiritualia nequitiae in coelestibus (Ephes. VI, 12). Cum ergo Naas ascendere et pugnare contra Jabes Galaad dicitur, interiora vitiorum praelia designantur. Quibus nimirum verbis sacrae historiae processus ostenditur, ut novo regi nova bella moverentur; quae dum bene conficeret, strenuitatis suae gloriam demonstraret. Quis est ergo iste Naas Ammonites? quae est Jabes Galaad? Sed Naas interpretatur, serpens, Jabes exsiccata. De serpente autem in Genesi dicitur: Quia callidior erat cunctis animantibus (Gen. III, 1). Cujus profecto serpentis similitudo si in vitiis quaeritur, quid similius quam violentum gastrimargiae, id est gulae motum invenimus?

BOOK FIVE.

CHAPTER ONE.

1. When I wished to assert the depth of this sacred history in the preface of this work, I asserted that it could be seen most especially in this, that it was written by prophets. They indeed were accustomed to speak mystical things, not only in words, but also in things; to bring forth plain things, but to signal high things. For because the Holy Spirit spoke through them, it was plain what they themselves said as men, but profound and mystical because the highest and uncircumscribed Spirit suggested the speech to men. Because therefore we are expounding the prophet Samuel speaking, we stand in need of so much the greater study, as he himself, sublimely assumed in the grace of the Holy Spirit, spoke of outward things, but saw inward things. He mostly asserted carnal things, but signaled intimate and spiritual things. But because it is impossible to reach divine things by human study, we must not trust in our own strengths, but in the condescension (dignatio) of the Holy Spirit who, sent by the Redeemer, filled the whole world, and this, which contains all things, now has knowledge of the voice in all (Wis. 1:7). What therefore the same prophet now pursues concerning the begun deeds of the Israelites, let us hear. (1 Samuel, chapter 11, verses 1, 2.) And it came to pass (it says) as it were after a month, Nahash the Ammonite went up, and began to fight against Jabesh-Gilead. And all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash: Have us as confederates, and we will serve you. And Nahash the Ammonite answered them: On this condition will I strike a covenant with you, that I may pluck out all your right eyes, and place you as a reproach in all Israel.

2. If the history is sought, nothing can be said more plainly, nothing can be understood more easily. But if we wish to follow the spirit, let us first hear Paul speaking, who, looking at the old things, says: All these things happened to them in figure: but they are written for us, upon whom the ends of the ages are come (1 Cor. 10:11). He also intimates that there are spiritual wars, saying: Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the spiritual things of wickedness in the high places (Eph. 6:12). When, therefore, Nahash is said to go up and fight against Jabesh-Gilead, internal battles of vices are designated. By which words, indeed, the progress of the sacred history is shown, so that new wars would be stirred up for the new king; which, while he finished them well, he would demonstrate the glory of his strenuousness. Who, therefore, is this Nahash the Ammonite? What is Jabesh-Gilead? But Nahash is interpreted as 'serpent,' Jabesh as 'dried up.' Concerning the serpent, moreover, it is said in Genesis: Because he was more subtle than all living things (Gen. 3:1). If the likeness of this serpent is sought in vices, what do we find more similar than the violent motion of gastrimargia, that is, of gluttony?

Luxuriae quidem motus, furti crimen, turpis lucri appetitus, irae impetus, amaritudo saecularis tristitiae, desidia acediae, appetitus vanae gloriae, tumor superbiae aperte detestabilis est; gulae vero vitium tanto est fraudulentius, quanto et occultius, quia et quasi necessarium suggerit cibum corpori, sed dum abundanter carnem reficit, luxuriae gladium in mentem mergit. Suadet quod peccatum non est, sed unde comestio quasi non peccatum recipitur, inde peccato luxuriae anima subjugatur. Unde et in paradiso ad mulierem gulae vitio decipiendam serpens venisse ostenditur qui aliud suggereret, aliud obtineret; ut dum comedenda ostenderet, improvisam mortem propinaret. Serpens ergo iste gulae designat aviditatem, quia et respectu justae necessitatis repit et virus impiae delectationis spargit. Bene etiam Ammonites dicitur, qui populus moeroris interpretatur, quia laetum videtur quod suadet, sed valde luctuosum erit in aeterna damnatione. Populus autem dicitur, quia gulosi quique pro sollicitudine ventris innumerabilium curarum frequentia deprimuntur. Qui ad Jabes Galaad ascendit, quia in alta abstinentiae virtute posita justorum corpora ad ciborum concupiscentiam praecipitare appetit. Exsiccata quidem recte caro dicitur, quae humore pinguedinis non gravatur. Ad eos quidem Naas ascendit, quos exsiccatos videt: quia illis graviora bella gulae spiritus ingerit, quos attenuatos jejuniis agnoscit. Bene autem pugnare coepisse Naas dicitur: quia sancti viri gulae suggestionem non habent in foedere amicitiae, sed in pugnae contrarietatem. Abstinentes enim, quasi cum serpente pugnant, quando gulae appetitum magna virtute deprimunt, ut veneno luxuriae non inficiantur. Pugnare quidem gulae est esurientia abstinentium corpora ad 260 inordinatam ventris repletionem provocare.

3. Sed perfectos viros gulae appetitus tentare potest, superare non potest. Bene ergo pugnare coepisse contra exsiccatam dicitur, non vicisse, quia electi viri desideriorum carnalium impetum sentiunt, sed eisdem desideriis sciunt virtute mentis obsistere, sciunt necessaria per discretionem providere. Sciunt quidem gulae impetum ferociter insurgentem deprimere, sciunt necessitati corporis alimenta justa praestare. Hinc namque Doctor egregius dicit: Scio manducare et esurire (Philip. IV, 12).

The motion of lust, the crime of theft, the appetite for base gain, the impetus of anger, the bitterness of worldly sadness, the sloth of acedia, the appetite for vain glory, and the tumor of pride are openly detestable; but the vice of gluttony is so much more fraudulent as it is more hidden, because it suggests food to the body as if it were necessary, but while it abundantly refreshes the flesh, it plunges the sword of lust into the mind. It persuades that which is not sin, but from where eating is received as if it were not sin, from there the soul is subjugated to the sin of lust. Whence also in paradise the serpent is shown to have come to deceive the woman by the vice of gluttony, who would suggest one thing and obtain another; so that while he showed things to be eaten, he would proffer unforeseen death. This serpent, therefore, designates the greed of gluttony, because it both creeps with respect to just necessity and spreads the poison of impious delight. Well also is he called an Ammonite, which is interpreted as 'a people of sorrow,' because that which he persuades seems joyful, but it will be very mournful in eternal damnation. Moreover, he is called 'a people' because all gluttonous persons are weighed down by a frequency of innumerable cares for the solicitude of the belly. He goes up to Jabesh-Gilead because he desires to precipitate the bodies of the just, placed in the high virtue of abstinence, into the concupiscence of foods. Rightly, indeed, is the flesh called 'dried up' which is not weighed down by the moisture of fatness. To those indeed Nahash goes up whom he sees to be dried up: because the spirit of gluttony brings more serious wars upon those whom he recognizes as attenuated by fasts. Well, moreover, is Nahash said to have begun to fight: because holy men do not have the suggestion of gluttony in a covenant of friendship, but in the contrariety of a battle. For those who abstain fight as if with a serpent when they suppress the appetite of gluttony with great virtue, so that they may not be infected by the poison of lust. To fight, indeed, belongs to gluttony, to provoke the hungry bodies of those who abstain to 260 an inordinate repletion of the belly.

3. But the appetite of gluttony can tempt perfect men, it cannot overcome them. Well, therefore, is he said to have begun to fight against the dried up (city), not to have conquered, because chosen men feel the impetus of carnal desires, but they know how to resist the same desires by the virtue of the mind, they know how to provide necessary things through discretion. They know indeed how to suppress the impetus of gluttony rising up fiercely, they know how to afford just nourishment to the necessity of the body. For hence the excellent Doctor says: I know how to be full and to be hungry (Phil. 4:12).

Manducare quidem et esurire novit, qui et corpus moderate reficit, et ad immoderatam ciborum perceptionem suggerenti gulae vitio non consentit. Quare et ad Naas respondentes, dicunt: Habeto nos foederatos, et serviemus tibi. Foedus quippe a gula petunt qui vellent carnem pro voto reficere, si in carne nulla possent incitamenta sentire luxuriae. Quasi dicant: Nos dabimus quod tibi justum est ut tu nobis non inferas quod justum non est. Justum quidem est ut reficiatur corpus, sed iniquum valde est ut refecta caro per ardorem libidinis ad contumeliam spiritus excitetur. Foedus ergo expetimus, cum sic favere carni ad ciborum perceptionem volumus, ut a carne nulla luxuriae mala sentiamus. Sed hoc profecto velle possumus, obtinere non possumus, quia nimirum nos justam refectionem quasi tributum carni offerimus, sed a carne nobis nulla pacis bona promittuntur. Nam cum auditum mentis ad vitiorum responsa bene dirigimus, hoc profecto in gulae voce cognoscimus, quia si carnem impinguemus per excrescentem concupiscentiam, cordis caecitate percutimur. Quare et idem Naas dicit: In hoc feriam vobiscum foedus, ut eruam omnium vestrum oculos dextros. Dexter oculus noster est intuitus aeternae claritatis, sinister vero oculus est concupiscentia carnalis. Dexter ergo oculus eruitur, quando mens ea caecitate percutitur, ut ultra ad videnda coelestia non aperiatur. Eruitur quidem oculus quando a mente reproba sic lumen evellitur, ut radix ei nulla remaneat de qua redivivum lumen erumpat. Naas ergo dextros oculos foederatorum suorum eruit, quando gula sic devictis abstinentibus praevalet ut carnalia sola cupiant, et ultra quae solebant amare non attendant. Et quia quisquis in hac vita projicitur, in futura coram angelis et electis hominibus condemnatur, subjungitur: Ponamque vos opprobrium in universo Israel. Tunc quippe reprobi in universo Israel opprobrium ponuntur, quando in extremo examine, coram electis omnibus de perpetratis iniquitatibus erubescunt. Vel in opprobrium in hac vita ponuntur: quia, dum ipsi obcaecato corde mala audacter perpetrant, sancti viri pro eorum culpis erubescunt. Sed qui turpes videri, avulsis dextris oculis, dedignantur, attendant quod sequitur: (Vers. 3.) Et dixerunt ad eum habitatores Jabes: Concede nobis septem dies, ut mittamus nuntios ad terminos Israel; et si non fuerit qui defendat nos, egrediemur ad te.

He indeed knows how to be full and to be hungry, who both refreshes the body moderately, and does not consent to the vice of gluttony suggesting an immoderate perception of foods. Wherefore also answering to Nahash, they say: Have us as confederates, and we will serve you. Those indeed seek a covenant from gluttony who would wish to refresh the flesh according to their will, if they could feel no incitements of lust in the flesh. As if they should say: We will give what is just to you so that you may not bring upon us what is not just. It is just indeed that the body be refreshed, but it is very iniquitous that the refreshed flesh be excited through the ardor of libido to the contumely of the spirit. We seek a covenant, therefore, when we wish so to favor the flesh for the perception of foods that we may feel no evils of lust from the flesh. But this we can indeed wish, we cannot obtain, because for certain we offer a just refreshment to the flesh as if a tribute, but no good things of peace are promised to us from the flesh. For when we direct the hearing of the mind well to the responses of the vices, we recognize this for certain in the voice of gluttony, because if we fatten the flesh through increasing concupiscence, we are struck by blindness of heart. Wherefore also the same Nahash says: On this condition will I strike a covenant with you, that I may pluck out all your right eyes. Our right eye is the intuition of eternal clarity, but the left eye is carnal concupiscence. The right eye, therefore, is plucked out when the mind is struck by that blindness, so that it is no longer opened to seeing heavenly things. The eye is indeed plucked out when light is so torn away from a reprobate mind that no root remains to it from which a revived light may burst forth. Nahash, therefore, plucks out the right eyes of his confederates when gluttony so prevails over conquered abstainers that they desire carnal things alone, and no longer attend to those things which they were accustomed to love. And because whoever is cast forth in this life is condemned in the future before the angels and chosen men, there is added: And I will place you as a reproach in all Israel. Then indeed the reprobate are placed as a reproach in all Israel when, in the extreme examination, they blush before all the chosen concerning the iniquities they have perpetrated. Or they are placed as a reproach in this life because, while they themselves boldly perpetrate evil things with a blinded heart, holy men blush for their faults. But those who, with their right eyes torn out, disdain to appear base, let them attend to what follows: (Verse 3.) And the inhabitants of Jabesh said to him: Grant us seven days, that we may send messengers to the borders of Israel; and if there be none to defend us, we will come out to you.

4. Qui sunt habitatores Jabes, id est exsiccatae, nisi qui castigationem extenuatae carnis in longo habent usu virtutis? Nam plerique resistere gulae incipiunt, sed dum fatigari abstinentiae labore inchoant, ad usum se consuetae gulositatis inclinant. Velut enim urbem Jabes ingredi et effici ejus cives appetunt, sed dum exsiccatae et esurientis carnis cruciatum non perferunt, fieri ejus habitatores nequaquam possunt. Jabes ergo inhabitant, qui attenuationem corporis 261 per vigorem mentis in jus habent possessionis, et velut exsiccatae muris ambiuntur, dum per id quod corpus extenuant ab ignitis luxuriae jaculis proteguntur. Qui cum validissimis insurgentibus gulae stimulis fatigantur, septem diebus inducias expetunt, in quibus si auxilia desunt, ad Naas egrediantur. Sed hoc Ammonitarum bellum melius exponimus, si in eo deprehensae carnis infirmitatem intucamur et sagacitatem eruditae mentis. Hanc quoque clarius videmus, si quod contrarium est, in stultis infirmis subtilius attendamus. Nam quidam intra sanctam Ecclesiam devoti per desiderium sunt, sed consueta vitiorum debilitate remissi. Possunt quidem bona proponere, sed quia exsequi quod proponunt nequeunt, et a praesenti concupiscentia superantur, et bonum quod in praesenti deserunt in vicino tempore se recuperare posse confidunt. Saepe quidem jejunare disponunt, sed cum consueta gula vincuntur, eo die manducandum judicant, in futuros jejunandum. Cumque gulae feritas semper eis praesens sit, praesens et desiderium futurae bonitatis, hoc serpentis fraude agitur, ut bonum quod proponitur non inveniatur. Cras enim quod semper promittitur nunquam reperitur. Sed quia hoc ab illis agitur quorum mens debilis est, caro fortis, videamus qualiter serpenti illudant illi quorum mens fortis est, caro autem infirma. Nam de eodem serpente Psalmista ad Dominum dicit: Draco iste, quem formasti, ad illudendum ei (Psal. CIII, 27). Nunquam enim convenientius vincitur quam cum ejus versutia pia fraude superatur. Unde et sapientiae suae astutiam beato Job Redemptor improperans, ait: In oculis, quasi hamo, capies eum (Job XL, 10). In oculis quippe, quasi hamo serpentem cepit qui ei carnem exhibuit, divinitatem celavit; et dum cepit ille quod appetiit, eo tentus, et peremptus est, quod non vidit.

5. Sancti ergo viri, ut hosti illudant, rigorem conversationis in praesenti virtute habent; pro illusione infirmitatis carni commodum quoddam in futuro promittunt. Nam saepe ingentia sunt, quae agunt, sed pro infirmitate carnis semper agere dura, et aspera promittere non praesumunt. Tanto quidem facilius eadem dura sustinent, quanto eorum onera sibi inesse in perpetua promissione non vident.

4. Who are the inhabitants of Jabesh, that is, of the dried up (city), unless they who have the chastisement of the attenuated flesh in long use of virtue? For many begin to resist gluttony, but while they begin to be fatigued by the labor of abstinence, they incline themselves to the use of their accustomed gluttony. For as it were, they desire to enter the city of Jabesh and to be made its citizens, but while they do not endure the torture of the dried up and hungry flesh, they can by no means become its inhabitants. Those, therefore, inhabit Jabesh who have the attenuation of the body 261 through the vigor of the mind in right of possession, and are surrounded as it were by the walls of the dried up (city), while through that by which they attenuate the body they are protected from the ignited darts of lust. These, when they are fatigued by the very strong stings of gluttony rising up, seek a truce for seven days, in which if aids are lacking, they may go out to Nahash. But we expound this war of the Ammonites better if we look into it for the infirmity of the caught flesh and the sagacity of the learned mind. This also we see more clearly if we subtilely attend to that which is contrary in the foolish and the weak. For some within the holy Church are devoted through desire, but remiss through the accustomed debility of vices. They can indeed propose good things, but because they are unable to follow out what they propose, they are both overcome by present concupiscence and they trust that they can recover in a near time the good which they desert in the present. They often indeed dispose themselves to fast, but when they are conquered by accustomed gluttony, they judge that they must eat on that day and fast on future ones. And since the ferocity of gluttony is always present to them, and the desire of future goodness is also present, this is acted by the fraud of the serpent, so that the good which is proposed is not found. For tomorrow, which is always promised, is never found. But because this is acted by those whose mind is weak and whose flesh is strong, let us see how they mock the serpent whose mind is strong but whose flesh is weak. For concerning the same serpent the Psalmist says to the Lord: This dragon, which thou hast formed, to mock him (Ps. 103:27). For he is never more conveniently conquered than when his versuteness is overcome by pious fraud. Whence also the Redeemer, reproaching blessed Job for the astuteness of his wisdom, says: In his eyes, as with a hook, thou shalt catch him (Job 40:19). In his eyes, indeed, as with a hook he caught the serpent, who exhibited flesh to him and concealed divinity; and while that one caught what he desired, he was held and destroyed by that which he did not see.

5. Holy men, therefore, so that they may mock the enemy, have the rigor of conversation in present virtue; for the mocking of the infirmity of the flesh they promise a certain advantage in the future. For often those things which they do are huge, but for the infirmity of the flesh they do not presume always to do hard things, and to promise rough things. They indeed sustain the same hard things so much more easily as they do not see their burdens to be in them in a perpetual promise.

Sed dum optime vivunt, et quotidie proficere et non deficere conantur, illud carnis licitum blandimentum, de quo desperare non possunt, semper carni in futura aestimatione promittunt; sed ei coeptae afflictionis dolorem infligere nequaquam desinunt. Per id ergo, quod in appetitu suo spes carni relinquitur, quasi ad futurum bonum ejusdem carnis, sui adventus praesentiam spiritus pollicetur. Sed quia solitum continentiae rigorem deficiendo non deserit, promissum voluptatis caro habet in futuro, et electa mens virtutis robur in praesenti. Quo in loco notandum est, quia ad Naas egredi sub conditione promittunt, sed urbis moenibus sine conditione muniuntur: quia abstinentes eo etiam, quod secundum carnem infirmi sunt, roborari per divinam misericordiam confidunt. Et quia gulae vitium decipiendo supplantare se gestiunt, dicunt: Concede nobis septem dies. Quasi enim a gula tempus conceditur, quando eo respectu comprimitur ut ejus desideriis quandoque serviatur. Quo nimirum dierum spatio Naas egressum ad se obsessorum civium, cives vero Jabes auxilia praestolantur, quia nimirum gulae appetitus de infirma carne refici 262 appetit, sed electa mens in abstinentiae virtute roborari. In septem vero diebus auxilia quaeruntur, quando contra tentamentorum tenebras omni luce cordis erigimur, quando adversus prava consilia quidquid possumus, invenimus ratione nostra; et lucis radios quos in nobis non cernimus de eruditione munimur aliena. Dum enim ad robur nostrae virtutis, perfectorum conversationes aspicimus, quasi per septem dies auxilia defensionis invenimus. Inducias quidem petimus; quia cum Naas, id est serpente, pugnamus, cujus quo latentia sunt venena, eo nobis subtiliora sunt quaerenda consilia. Unde et in universos terminos Israel mittere nuntios se promittunt: quia electi viri ad aedificationis suae commodum, omnium videntium Deum exemplis adjuvantur, sed quod dicitur: Si non est qui defendat, egrediemur ad vos: in electorum voce, non auxiliorum dubitatio, sed certitudo monstratur. Quasi astutis verbis suadenti adversario illudentes, verba proferunt quibus illi spem tribuant et sibi fiduciam nequaquam tollant. Qui enim dicunt: Si non fuerit qui defendat, egrediemur ad vos; quamdam exeundi spem tribuunt. Sed quia illi hoc dicunt, qui de auxilio certi sunt, hostes suos promittendo decipiunt. Sed ubi jam eadem auxilia inveniantur, exponit dicens: (Vers. 4 et 5.) Venerunt ergo nuntii in Gabaa Saul, et locuti sunt verba haec, audiente populo, et levavit omnis populus vocem suam, et flevit. Et ecce Saul veniebat mane sequens boves de agro, et vidit plorantem populum, et ait: Quid habet populus, quod plorat?

But while they live very well, and strive to profit daily and not to fail, they always promise to the flesh that licit blandishment of the flesh, concerning which they cannot despair, in a future estimation; but they by no means cease to inflict the pain of begun affliction upon it. Through that, therefore, by which hope is left to the flesh in its appetite, as if to the future good of the same flesh, the spirit promises the presence of its arrival. But because it does not desert the accustomed rigor of continence by failing, the flesh has the promise of pleasure in the future, and the chosen mind the strength of virtue in the present. In which place it is to be noted that they promise to go out to Nahash under condition, but they are fortified by the walls of the city without condition: because those who abstain, even in that in which they are weak according to the flesh, trust to be strengthened through divine mercy. And because they desire to supplant the vice of gluttony by deceiving, they say: Grant us seven days. For as it were time is granted by gluttony when it is suppressed in that respect that its desires may sometimes be served. In which space of days, indeed, Nahash awaits the exit of the besieged citizens to himself, but the citizens of Jabesh await aids, because indeed the appetite of gluttony desires to be refreshed from the weak flesh 262, but the chosen mind to be strengthened in the virtue of abstinence. In seven days, moreover, aids are sought when we are erected by every light of the heart against the darkness of temptations, when against depraved counsels we find whatever we can by our reason; and we are fortified from the erudition of others concerning the rays of light which we do not discern in ourselves. For while we look to the conversations of the perfect for the strength of our virtue, we find as it were through seven days the aids of defense. We indeed seek a truce; because we fight with Nahash, that is, the serpent, whose poisons are the more hidden, so we must seek the more subtle counsels. Whence also they promise to send messengers into all the borders of Israel: because chosen men are aided by the examples of all those who see God for the advantage of their edification, but that which is said: If there be none who defends, we will come out to you: in the voice of the chosen, not a doubt of aids, but a certainty is shown. As if mocking the adversary persuading with astute words, they proffer words by which they may give hope to him and by no means take away confidence from themselves. For they who say: If there there shall not be one who defends, we will come out to you; give a certain hope of going out. But because they say this who are certain of aid, they deceive their enemies by promising. But where the same aids may now be found, he expounds saying: (Verses 4 and 5.) Messengers therefore came into Gibeah of Saul, and they spoke these words in the hearing of the people, and all the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And behold, Saul was coming in the morning following oxen from the field, and he saw the people weeping, and said: What has the people, that it weeps?

6. Gabaa, ut supra jam diximus, sublimis interpretatur. Et quia omnium electorum non est aequalis altitudo meritorum, in Gabaa Saul nuntii venisse perhibentur; ut spirituali significatione doceamur, ut cum validis tentamentis impellimur, ad praedicatorum nostrorum consilia recurramus. Sed et flentis populi afflictione instruimur, ut fraternis necessitatibus intima mentis compassione jungamur. Saul autem flentem populum vidit, ob quam causam fleret interrogavit, quia electus doctor subditorum necessitatem compatiendo suam facit, et hanc relevare appetit. De agro quidem venit, quia a secreto sui fertilis cordis exit. Mane vero de agro venit, quia in oriente sibi splendore veri luminis subditorum causas inquirit. Et boves sequitur, quia eum validi affectus charitatis antecedunt. Quasi enim duos boves ante se habet, qui et proximis per amorem jungitur, et divina charitate inflammatur et inde proximum ordinate diligit, quia hunc amor Dei fortiter accendit. Quare et per Moysen Dominus ait: Non arabis in bove et asino (Deut. XXII, 10). Asinus quippe est amor carnalis, quia qui portat quos amat, quasi forte est animal; et quia inordinate idem non pro Deo diligit, lascivum. In bove ergo et asino arari non potest, quia fructu aeternae mercedis anima non excolitur, si puritas amoris, quo Deo conjungitur, inordinato proximi amore polluitur. Saul ergo de agro veniens, boves sequitur quia electus doctor utrumque affectum charitatis in frugifero corde integrum retinet, ex quibus praeparare sibi aeternae retributionis uberes fructus potest. Et mane venit, quia cum ad subditos exit, diem suae virtutis aperit. Sed jam cognitis necessitatibus populi, quid egerit audiamus. Nam sequitur: (Ibid. et vers. 6, 7.) Et narraverant ei verba virorum Jabes. Et insiluit spiritus Domini in Saul, cum audisset verba haec; et 263 iratus est furor ejus nimis. Et assumens utrumque bovem, cecidit in frusta misitque in omnes terminos Israel per manus nuntiorum, dicens: Quicunque non exierit, secutusque fuerit Saul et Samuelem, sic fiet bobus ejus.

7. Quid in his verbis dicimus, nisi quia sanctorum infirma, et quae videntur carnalia, non sunt infirma et carnalia, sed spiritualia et robusta? Irae quippe nimietatem in religiosis viris reprehendere solemus, sed ecce Saul, ut irasci nimis potuerit, prius in eum spiritus Domini insiliit. Quam metuenda sit ergo sanctorum ira cernimus, si insilientem in eos Domini spiritum cogitamus, si dum illos foris irascentes aspicimus, commoventem spiritum intus pariter attendamus.

6. Gibeah, as we have already said above, is interpreted as 'high.' And because the height of merits is not equal for all the chosen, the messengers are related to have come into Gibeah of Saul; that we may be taught by a spiritual signification, that when we are impelled by strong temptations, we should recur to the counsels of our preachers. But also we are instructed by the affliction of the weeping people, that we may be joined to fraternal necessities by an intimate compassion of the mind. Saul, moreover, saw the people weeping, and asked for what cause they wept, because the chosen teacher makes the necessity of his subjects his own by compatient feeling, and desires to relieve it. He comes indeed from the field, because he goes out from the secret of his fertile heart. In the morning indeed he comes from the field, because in the rising splendor of the true light upon him he inquires into the causes of his subjects. And he follows oxen, because the strong affections of charity precede him. For as it were he has two oxen before him, who is both joined to his neighbors through love, and is inflamed by divine charity and thence loves his neighbor ordinately, because the love of God strongly enkindles this one. Wherefore also through Moses the Lord says: Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass (Deut. 22:10). The ass indeed is carnal love, because he who carries those whom he loves is as it were a strong animal; and because he does not inordinately love the same for the sake of God, he is lascivious. In an ox and an ass, therefore, it cannot be plowed, because the soul is not cultivated by the fruit of eternal reward if the purity of love, by which it is joined to God, is polluted by an inordinate love of the neighbor. Saul, therefore, coming from the field, follows oxen because the chosen teacher retains both affections of charity integral in his fruitful heart, from which he can prepare for himself the abundant fruits of eternal retribution. And he comes in the morning, because when he goes out to his subjects, he opens the day of his virtue. But now, the necessities of the people being known, let us hear what he did. For there follows: (Ibid. and verses 6, 7.) And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. And the spirit of the Lord leaped upon Saul when he had heard these words; and his fury was enkindled exceedingly. And taking both oxen, he cut them into pieces and sent them into all the borders of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying: Whosoever shall not come out, and shall not follow Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen.

7. What do we say in these words, unless that the weak things of the saints, and those which seem carnal, are not weak and carnal, but spiritual and robust? We are indeed accustomed to reprehend an excess of anger in religious men, but behold Saul, that he might be able to be exceedingly angry, first the spirit of the Lord leaped upon him. How much to be feared, therefore, the anger of the saints is, we discern if we think of the spirit of the Lord leaping upon them, if while we look at them being angry outwardly, we equally attend to the spirit moving them inwardly.

Quoties ergo majorum zelo corrigimur, sub eorum indignatione vehementer possumus pavere, si eorum impetum motum sancti Spiritus credimus. Et quia Saul utrumque bovem in frusta concidit, in omnes terminos Israel misit, minas protulit, sic omnium bobus fieret, qui se et Samuelem sequi noluissent, quid aliud insinuat, nisi quia pigriores quique ad auxilia praebenda proximis, non solum invitandi, sed cogendi sunt? Unde et statim subjunctum est. (Vers. 7.) Invasit ergo timor Domini populum, et egressi sunt quasi vir unus.

8. Quia enim proximos sicut nos ipsos diligere jubemur, recto ordine eis auxilia praebemus, quando ad haec exhibenda non timore cogimur, sed amore provocamur. Cum vero nos effectum hujus debiti amoris perdimus, ad praedicatorum nostrorum zelum pertinet, ut in fratrum auxilia ex timore consurgamus. Bene ergo dicitur: Invasit timor Domini populum, et egressi sunt quasi vir unus: quia plerumque sumus in amore proximorum tepidi; sed praelatorum nostrorum minis erigimur ad statum devotionis, et ex timore bonum opus aggredimur, sed ex initio timoris, ad vinculum perducimur magnae charitatis. Unde et bene timor invasisse populum dicitur, sed quasi vir unus omnes egressi perhibentur. Quasi vir quippe unus plures non possunt egredi, nisi qui ad parem conscendunt unitatem dilectionis. Hinc namque et de perfectis discipulis Redemptoris dicitur: Erat illis cor unum, et anima una (Act. IV, 32). Sequitur:

(Vers. 8.) Et recensuit eos in Bezech; fueruntque filiorum Israel trecenta millia, virorum autem Juda triginta millia.

9. Prius dicuntur filii Israel egressi, deinde a Saul recensiti, quia electus praedicator, cum contra occultos hostes movere subjectorum suorum militiam tentat, prius eorum forte propositum aspicit, deinde eos in numero bellatorum ponit. Quasi enim intus sumus, et recenseri non possumus, quandiu virtus nostrae mentis nostris pastoribus occultatur. Et cum egrediemur recensemur, quia cum mentium nostrarum eis fortitudinem pandimus, nos jam habere socios in spirituali pugna confidunt. Sed cum infirmas mentes ad propositum boni operis erigere appetunt, non solum majorum doctrinis nos erudire conantur, sed etiam minorum electorum exemplis accendere. Bene ergo filiorum Israel trecenta millia, virorum autem Juda triginta millia, recensita fuisse perhibentur. Tricenarius quippe numerus ad rectitudinem fidei et studium pertinet bonae operationis: quia nulla sunt praecepta legis, si ad contemplationem non tendunt summae Trinitatis. Apte ergo viri Juda dicuntur, qui triginta millibus continentur, quia confessionem 264 habent rectae fidei, et robur bonae operationis.

As often, therefore, as we are corrected by the zeal of our elders, we can vehemently fear under their indignation, if we believe their impetus to be a motion of the Holy Spirit. And because Saul cut both oxen into pieces, sent them into all the borders of Israel, and brought forth threats, that so it should be done to the oxen of all who had been unwilling to follow him and Samuel, what else does he intimate, unless that all those who are more sluggish to affording aids to neighbors are not only to be invited, but to be compelled? Whence also it is immediately subjoined. (Verse 7.) The fear of the Lord therefore invaded the people, and they went out as one man.

8. For because we are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves, we afford aids to them in a right order when we are not compelled to exhibiting these by fear, but are provoked by love. But when we lose the effect of this due love, it pertains to the zeal of our preachers that we should rise up in aids of the brothers from fear. Well, therefore, is it said: The fear of the Lord invaded the people, and they went out as one man: because for the most part we are lukewarm in the love of neighbors; but by the threats of our prelates we are erected to a state of devotion, and from fear we approach a good work, but from the beginning of fear we are brought through to the bond of great charity. Whence also well is fear said to have invaded the people, but all are related to have gone out as one man. For many cannot go out as it were as one man unless those who ascend to an equal unity of love. For hence also it is said of the perfect disciples of the Redeemer: They had one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32). There follows:

(Verse 8.) And he numbered them in Bezek; and there were three hundred thousand of the children of Israel, and thirty thousand of the men of Judah.

9. First the children of Israel are said to have gone out, then to have been numbered by Saul, because the chosen preacher, when he attempts to move the militia of his subjects against hidden enemies, first looks at their strong purpose, then he places them in the number of warriors. For as it were we are within, and cannot be numbered, as long as the virtue of our mind is hidden from our pastors. And when we go out we are numbered, because when we open the fortitude of our minds to them, they trust that they now have associates in the spiritual fight. But when they desire to erect weak minds to the purpose of a good work, they not only strive to erudite us by the doctrines of the greater, but also to enkindle us by the examples of the lesser chosen ones. Well, therefore, are three hundred thousand of the children of Israel, and thirty thousand of the men of Judah, related to have been numbered. Indeed, the number thirty pertains to the rectitude of faith and the study of good operation: because there are no precepts of the law if they do not tend to the contemplation of the supreme Trinity. Aptly, therefore, are the men of Judah said to be contained in thirty thousand, because they have the confession 264 of the right faith and the strength of good operation.

Patres autem nostri ejusdem fidei atque operationis fuere, sed in contemplatione divinitatis, quo longe altius quam nos profecerant, eo et opera fidei fortiora exhibebant. Quare etiam filiorum Israel trecenta millia recensentur. Triginta quidem a tribus, et decem in triginta veniunt, sed in tricenario numero tam denarius, quam ternarius simplex est; sed ut usque ad trecentos numeremus, et denarium tricesies, tricenarium decies multiplicamus, quia et si magna est contemplatio, magna sunt opera subjectae plebis, illa tamen quae praecesserunt in patribus nostris incomparabilia fuerunt. Velut enim denarius noster numerus decies in illorum perfectione glomeratur, dum eorum perfectioni valde nostra submittuntur. Triginta ergo millia virorum Juda, et trecenta filiorum Israel nobiscum recensita, ad pugnandum contra Naas praedicatores ducunt; si cum adjuvare tentatos abstinentes subditos volunt, et fortissimorum patrum eis eximia facta proponunt et minorum. Israel quidem dicitur Videns Deum, sive, in quo est Deus; quod profecto nomen infirmo adhuc aut imperito non convenit. Quotquot perfectos viros in afflictione carnis et contemplatione mentis proferimus, serpentem Naas tot armatis elidimus. Sed jam obsessos quibus verbis regis exercitus confortet audiamus. (Vers. 9.) Et dixerunt iis qui venerant: Sic dicetis viris, qui sunt Jabes Galaad: Cras erit vobis salus, cum incaluerit sol.

10. Tale fortasse est illud, quod nobis sapientis illius consilio dicitur: Si spiritus potestatem habentis ascenderit super te, locum tuum cito non deseras (Eccle. X, 4). Locus uniuscujusque electi est situs bonae conversationis. Quando autem permittitur, impugnans spiritus potestatem habere potest, quia impugnare electorum corda nullatenus posset, nisi hoc dispensatio divina permitteret. Praecipit ergo, ut locum nostrum non deseramus, quia si inter tentationum breves tenebras fortes sumus, cito divina lux aderit, in cujus adventu tenebrarum virtus evanescit. Bene ergo dicitur: Cras enim, cum incaluerit sol, erit vobis salus. Sanctorum praedicatorum exhortatio dies est, quia dum tentata minorum corda tangit, ad spem victoriae erigit. Sed hanc nox sequitur, quia etsi divina auxilia separantur, adhuc tamen irruentes desideriorum carnalium tenebrae non discedunt. Quis est ergo dies crastinus nisi divinae visitationis adventus? Crastinus enim dies dicitur, quia tentatis electis divini auxilii splendor valde vicinus est. Unde et per prophetam Dominus dicit: Ego Deus de vicino, et non Deus de longe (Jerem. XXIII, 23).

Moreover, our fathers were of the same faith and operation, but in the contemplation of the divinity, in which they had profited far more highly than we, by so much also they exhibited stronger works of faith. Wherefore also three hundred thousand of the children of Israel are numbered. Thirty indeed comes from three, and ten into thirty, but in the tricenary number both the denary and the ternary are simple; but so that we may number up to three hundred, we multiply both the denary thirty times and the tricenary ten times, because even if the contemplation is great, and the works of the subject people are great, those things however which preceded in our fathers were incomparable. For as it were our denary number is massed ten times in their perfection, while our things are greatly submitted to their perfection. Thirty thousand men of Judah, therefore, and three hundred thousand children of Israel numbered with us, preachers lead to fighting against Nahash; if when they wish to aid the tempted abstaining subjects, they propose to them the exceptional deeds of the very strong fathers and of the lesser ones. Israel indeed is called 'Seeing God,' or 'in whom is God'; which name certainly does not suit one still weak or unlearned. However many perfect men we bring forth in the affliction of the flesh and contemplation of the mind, we dash the serpent Nahash with so many armed men. But now let us hear by what words the king's army may comfort the besieged. (Verse 9.) And they said to those who had come: Thus shall you say to the men who are in Jabesh-Gilead: Tomorrow there shall be salvation for you, when the sun shall be hot.

10. Such perhaps is that which is said to us by the counsel of that wise man: If the spirit of him that hath power ascend upon thee, leave not thy place (Eccl. 10:4). The place of each of the chosen is the site of good conversation. But when it is permitted, the impugning spirit can have power, because he could in no way impugn the hearts of the chosen unless divine dispensation permitted this. He commands, therefore, that we should not desert our place, because if we are strong amidst the brief darkness of temptations, quickly the divine light will be present, at whose arrival the power of darkness vanishes. Well, therefore, is it said: For tomorrow, when the sun shall be hot, there shall be salvation for you. The exhortation of holy preachers is day, because while it touches the tempted hearts of the lesser ones, it erects them to the hope of victory. But night follows this, because even if divine aids are separated, nevertheless the rushing darkness of carnal desires does not yet depart. What, therefore, is the day of tomorrow unless the arrival of divine visitation? For it is called 'the day of tomorrow' because the splendor of divine aid is very near to the tempted chosen. Whence also through the prophet the Lord says: I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off (Jer. 23:23).

Hinc Psalmista dicit: Prope est Dominus omnibus invocantibus eum in veritate (Psal. CXLIV, 18). Hinc item ipse Dominus repromittit, dicens: Antequam me invocetis, dicam: Ecce, adsum (Isa. LVIII, 9). Dies ergo primus, lux praedicationis, crastinus divinae gratiae est. Sed notandum quia dixit: Cum incaluerit sol; ut diei claritas obscuritatem sensus illuminet, et calor solis accendat amorem cordis; ut mens bonum quod cupiat per lucem videat, et quod videt per calorem mentis concupiscat. Geminum quippe hoc mentis remedium contra duplum diaboli bellum exhibetur. Nam malignus spiritus, ut mentes electorum tentando superet, prius tenebras cogitationum malarum objicit, deinde concupiscentiarum flammas accendit, quia nisi prius mentem caecaverit, ad pravitatem concupiscentiae non impellit. Electa vero 265 mens dum tentari permittitur, ejus status in utroque turbatur, quia in tantum concupiscentiarum molestias sentire potest, in quantum, permittente Deo, cogitationum tenebras abjicere a se non potest. Sed quia a Deo tentari permittitur, in adventu ejus gratiae, ab utroque malo relevatur: dum contra tenebras lucem accipit, et per calorem advenientis spiritus, abjicit frigus mentis. Incipit enim videre coelestia qui levare mentem a carnalibus non valebat, et quae amanter aspicit ardenter cupit. Bene ergo dicitur: Cras erit vobis salus, cum incaluerit sol; quia si validas antiqui hostis impugnationes viriliter ferimus, divinae gratiae celeritate sublevamur ad lucem cordis et virtutem magnae charitatis. Et quia hoc sanctorum praedicatorum consilium electa subditorum corda gratanter excipiunt, sequitur: (Vers. 9.) Venerunt ergo nuntii et annuntiaverunt viris Jabes. Qui laetati sunt. Sed etiam promisso sibi auxilio, quid Ammonitis respondeant audiamus. Nam sequitur: (Vers. 10.) Et dixerunt: Mane exibimus ad vos, et facietis nobis omne quod placuerit vobis.

11. Hoc profecto, quia illi dicunt qui jam de vicino auxilio securi sunt quamdam spem hostibus tribuunt quos promittendo illudunt. Voce quidem debilitatem simulant, sed fortitudinem promissi auxilii intus servant. Aliud ergo promittunt, aliud credunt. Qui enim dicebant: Cras exibimus ad vos, et facietis nobis omne quod placuerit vobis, hoc dabant hostibus credere, quod sic se in eorum manibus traderent, ut facere de eis possent quaecunque voluissent. Sed qui in diem sequentem venturum regem in suum auxilium noverant, exire cum eo non ad hostium manus, sed ad interfectionem cogitabant.

Hence the Psalmist says: The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth (Ps. 144:18). Hence item the Lord himself promises back, saying: Before you call upon me, I will say: Behold, I am here (Isa. 58:9). The first day, therefore, is the light of preaching, the tomorrow is that of divine grace. But it is to be noted because he said: When the sun shall be hot; so that the clarity of the day may illuminate the obscurity of the sense, and the heat of the sun may enkindle the love of the heart; so that the mind may see by light the good which it desires, and concupisce by the heat of the mind that which it sees. This double remedy of the mind, indeed, is exhibited against the double war of the devil. For the malignant spirit, that he may overcome the minds of the chosen by tempting, first objects the darkness of evil thoughts, then he enkindles the flames of concupiscences, because unless he has first blinded the mind, he does not impel it to the depravity of concupiscence. The chosen 265 mind, indeed, while it is permitted to be tempted, its state is disturbed in both, because it can feel the molestations of concupiscences in so far as, God permitting, it cannot cast off from itself the darkness of thoughts. But because it is permitted by God to be tempted, at the arrival of his grace, it is relieved from both evils: while against darkness it receives light, and through the heat of the arriving spirit, it casts off the cold of the mind. For he begins to see heavenly things who was not strong enough to lift his mind from carnal things, and he ardently desires those things which he lovingly beholds. Well, therefore, is it said: Tomorrow there shall be salvation for you, when the sun shall be hot; because if we manfully bear the strong impugnations of the ancient enemy, we are uplifted by the celerity of divine grace to the light of the heart and the virtue of great charity. And because the chosen hearts of subjects gratefully receive this counsel of holy preachers, there follows: (Verse 9.) The messengers therefore came and told the men of Jabesh. And they were glad. But also, with the aid promised to them, let us hear what they may respond to the Ammonites. For there follows: (Verse 10.) And they said: In the morning we will come out to you, and you shall do to us all that shall please you.

11. This indeed, because they who are already secure of near aid say it, they afford a certain hope to the enemies whom they mock by promising. In voice indeed they simulate debility, but they keep the fortitude of promised aid within. Another thing, therefore, they promise, another they believe. For they who said: Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you shall do to us all that shall please you, gave the enemies this to believe, that they would so deliver themselves into their hands that they could do with them whatever they wished. But they who knew the king would come into their aid on the following day, thought of going out with him not to the hands of the enemies, but to their slaughter.

Secundum spiritualem vero sensum serpenti Naas, id est gulae concupiscentiae in die suo nostrum exitum promittimus, sed nos in die nostro ejus acies debellamus. Dies quidem ejus est delectatio corporeae saturitatis. Qui enim proponit ventrem pro voto replere, quasi diem primum concupiscentiae dedicat, et tamen adhuc intus est, quia quamdam lucem delectationis proposuit, quam operando non vidit. Cras ergo exiit, qui hoc laetum quod carni promisit, et operando et delectando exhibuit. Sed sancti viri, ut superius dixi, gulae illudunt; quia cum ab ejus appetitu desperare in perpetuum nequeunt, illud quod promittunt et non sumunt, quasi in futura luce delectationis repromittunt, Coacti quidem sunt foris nimia fragilitate carnis, et intus induti robore magnae charitatis. Per illud quidem, qui appetitibus renuntiare nequeunt, quasi exteriori voce promittunt, quod in intentione non habent. Per illud vero, quia de divino securi sunt, aliud proponunt agere, quam loquuntur infirmitatis voce. In die igitur suo ad Naas exeunt, quia ad oppugnandum gulae concupiscentiam, per lucem superni auxilii progrediuntur, et visitati superna gratia, jam contra omnem carnis impetum fortes sunt, qui derelicti ad modicum, ejus impugnamenta timuere. Qui profecto divinae gratiae splendor, quia per ora praedicatorum aliquando minoribus sanctae Ecclesiae membris infunditur, sequitur: (Vers. 11.) Et factum est, cum venisset dies crastinus, constituit Saul populum in tres partes, et ingressus est media castra in vigilia matutina, et percussit Ammon usque dum incalesceret sol.

12. In partes quidem dividitur populus, ut serpentem Naas 266 non una acie feriamus. Et quidem in tres partes dividitur, ut sacrae abstinentiae fructus et dignitas ostendatur: quia ad eam, quam manducando perdimus, sanctae Trinitatis contemplationem jejunando revocamur. Hinc est enim, quod legis, et Prophetiae, et Evangelii jejunia commendantur. Nam Moyses ut legem percipere mereretur, bis quadraginta dierum numero jejunavit (Exod. XXXIV, 28). Elias ut Jesabel manus evaderet, quadraginta diebus in unius cibi fortitudine ad Oreb Dei montem pervenit (III Reg. XIX, 8).

According to the spiritual sense, indeed, we promise our exit to the serpent Nahash, that is, to the concupiscence of gluttony, in its day, but we defeat its battle lines in our day. Its day indeed is the delight of corporeal satiety. For he who proposes to fill the belly according to his will, dedicates as it were the first day to concupiscence, and yet he is still within, because he proposed a certain light of delight which he has not seen by working. Tomorrow, therefore, he has gone out who exhibited this joyful thing which he promised to the flesh, both by working and by delighting. But holy men, as I said above, mock gluttony; because when they cannot despair of its appetite in perpetuity, they promise back that which they promise and do not take, as if in the future light of delight. They are indeed compelled outwardly by the excessive fragility of the flesh, and clothed inwardly with the strength of great charity. Through that indeed, that they cannot renounce appetites, they promise as it were with an exterior voice what they do not have in intention. Through that however, because they are secure concerning the divine, they propose to act another thing than they speak with the voice of infirmity. In their day therefore they go out to Nahash, because for the sake of oppugning the concupiscence of gluttony, they proceed through the light of supernal aid, and visited by supernal grace, they are now strong against every impetus of the flesh, who, having been left for a little while, feared its impugnations. Which splendor of divine grace, because it is sometimes infused through the mouths of preachers into the lesser members of the holy Church, there follows: (Verse 11.) And it came to pass, when the tomorrow was come, Saul appointed the people in three parts, and he entered the middle of the camp in the morning watch, and he struck Ammon until the sun was hot.

12. The people indeed is divided into parts, that we may not strike the serpent Nahash 266 with only one battle line. And indeed it is divided into three parts, that the fruit and dignity of sacred abstinence may be shown: because to that contemplation of the holy Trinity, which we lose by eating, we are recalled by fasting. For hence it is that the fasts of the Law, and of Prophecy, and of the Gospel are commended. For Moses, that he might deserve to receive the Law, fasted twice for the number of forty days (Exod. 34:28). Elijah, that he might evade the hands of Jezebel, arrived in the fortitude of one meal for forty days at Horeb the mountain of God (3 Kings 19:8).

Dominus ac Redemptor noster Jesus Christus per quadraginta dies in eremo jejunans, nullum omnimodo cibum sumpsit (Matth. IV. 2). In tres ergo partes Saul populum dividit: quia in exemplum abstinentium, Legis et Prophetarum, atque Evangelii jejunia producuntur. Et veniente die crastino, media castra doctor ingreditur: quia cum divina gratia, quae ad docendum corda praedicatorum illuminat, auditorum etiam mentes irradiat, et ad spem victoriae potenter levat. In die igitur crastino doctor triumphaturus castra inimicorum ingreditur, et aperit, in eisque concupiscentiarum acies potenter ferit. Et quia ipsorum subditorum mentes audiendo proficiunt, in vigilia matutina rex dicitur castra Ammonitarum ingredi, et usque dum dies incalesceret, in eorum caedibus immorari. Vigilia quidem matutina in Dei aspiratione est fervor solis in ejus plenitudine. Velut enim matutina nobis lux oritur, quando tenebris tentationum depressi, lucem virtutis ab ore praedicatorum videre incipimus, quam sequamur. Et sol nobis incalescit, cum per eorum verba mens nostra succenditur, et quasi ferventis solis calore decocta, desideriis inflammatur. Tunc quippe Ammon vehementer caeditur: quia vitiorum populus de nostris sensibus effugatur. Rector igitur, qui in vigilia matutina Ammonitarum castra ingreditur, usque dum incalescat dies, ab interfectione gladium non recondat, quia tandiu debet subditorum suorum eruditioni insistere, quandiu illos aspiciat magnis interni luminis caloribus inflammari. Quo in loco notandum est: quia Naas, id est serpens Ammonitarum rex esse dicitur: ipse autem Ammon populus moeroris interpretatur. Et quia in hoc serdente gulae vitium designari diximus, cum Naas percutitur, moeroris populus debellatur: quia ex uno gulae vitio, innumera vitiorum agmina ad conflictum animae producuntur. Et cum idem gulae vitium reciditur, alia multa nobis vitia subjugamus. Unum quidem gulae vitium est, sed aculei libidinis innumeri sunt, qui praecedentem illum, quasi regem sequuntur. Qui laeta quidem suggerunt, sed ad aeterni fletus lamenta perducunt. Cum Naas ergo pugnatur, sed moeroris populus caeditur: quia cum gulam domamus, libidinum incitamenta perimuntur. Unde bene non ipse Naas, sed Ammon subjectus sibi, id est populus interfectus asseritur: quia appetitus comestionis restringendus, non exstinguendus est. Sed bene nunquam restringitur, si subsequens moeroris populus, id est turpes motus libidinum non necantur. Contra Naas ergo nobis principale certamen est: quia cum iste superatur, Ammon interficitur: quia libido tunc bene caeditur, si ejus principale initium subjugatur. Sed profectus pudicitiae quousque procedat, latenter ostenditur per ea quae subsequuntur. (Vers. 11.) Reliqui vero dispersi sunt, ita ut nec relinquerentur duo pariter.

Our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ, fasting for forty days in the desert, took no food at all (Matt. 4:2). Saul, therefore, divides the people into three parts: because the fasts of the Law and the Prophets, and of the Gospel, are brought forward as an example for those who abstain. And when the tomorrow comes, the teacher enters the middle of the camps: because with divine grace, which illuminates the hearts of preachers for teaching, it also irradiates the minds of the hearers, and powerfully lifts them to the hope of victory. On the tomorrow, therefore, the teacher about to triumph enters and opens the camps of the enemies, and in them he powerfully strikes the battle lines of concupiscences. And because the minds of those same subjects profit by hearing, the king is said to enter the camps of the Ammonites in the morning watch, and to dwell in their slaughters until the day should be hot. The morning watch, indeed, in God's inspiration is the fervor of the sun in its plenitude. For as it were the morning light rises for us when, depressed by the darkness of temptations, we begin to see the light of virtue from the mouth of preachers, which we may follow. And the sun becomes hot for us when through their words our mind is enkindled, and as if boiled down by the heat of the burning sun, is inflamed with desires. Then indeed Ammon is vehemently struck: because the people of vices is put to flight from our senses. The ruler, therefore, who enters the camps of the Ammonites in the morning watch, should not hide the sword from slaughter until the day becomes hot, because he ought to insist on the erudition of his subjects so long as he may see them inflamed with the great heats of internal light. In which place it is to be noted: because Nahash, that is, the serpent, is said to be the king of the Ammonites: moreover, Ammon himself is interpreted as 'a people of sorrow.' And because we said that the vice of gluttony is designated in this serpent, when Nahash is struck, the people of sorrow is defeated: because from the one vice of gluttony, innumerable columns of vices are brought forward to the conflict of the soul. And when the same vice of gluttony is cut back, we subjugate many other vices to ourselves. There is indeed one vice of gluttony, but there are innumerable stings of libido which follow that preceding one as if a king. They indeed suggest joyful things, but lead through to the lamentations of eternal weeping. With Nahash, therefore, it is fought, but the people of sorrow is struck: because when we tame gluttony, the incitements of libidos are destroyed. Whence well not Nahash himself, but Ammon subject to him, that is, the people, is asserted to be slain: because the appetite for eating is to be restricted, not extinguished. But it is never well restricted if the following people of sorrow, that is, the base motions of libidos, are not killed. Our principal contest, therefore, is against Nahash: because when he is overcome, Ammon is slain: because libido is then well struck if its principal beginning is subjugated. But how far the progress of modesty may proceed is shown latently through those things which follow. (Verse 11.) But the rest were dispersed, so that two were not left together.

13. Probatio verae abstinentiae non est in attenuatione corporis, sed in perfectione castitatis. Nam 267 bene serpens atteritur, si sic gula restringitur, ut libidinosi motus corporis omnis violentia minuatur. Nam motus illicitus carni, quandiu ipsa caro est, tolli non potest, violentia movendi tolli potest. Non quidem tolli potest carni, quod lex carnis membra non moveat; sed tamen tolli potest carni violentia motionis, ut relinquatur ei motus; sed eidem motui omnis delectationis obscoenitas auferatur, et simplex motus ille sit, in quo reliqua libidinis turpitudo non sit. Bene ergo alii in fugam versi perhibentur, quia cum abstinentes quosque divina gratia perfecte remunerat a corporalibus eorum motibus omnium obscoenitatum aculeos tollit; sed eis ipsos motus naturales deserit, ut tentari semper possint, vinci nunquam possint; dum id deserit, quod eis valde displicet, sed sic debilitat quod deserit, ut praevalere victoribus non permittat. Ammonitas quippe percusserat, qui dicebat: Castigo corpus meum, et servituti subjicio, ne aliis praedicans, reprobus efficiar (I Cor. IX, 27). Interfectis etiam aliis, fugitivos interficere non poterat, quia deplorat, dicens: Video aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meae (Rom. VII, 23). Item quia debilitatos videbat, qui remanserant, dicit: Nulla creatura poterit nos separare a charitate Christi (Ibid. VIII, 39). Quid est ergo, quod deplorat legem inesse membris legi mentis repugnantem, si extinctis aliis, alii in fugam versi sunt; nisi quia perfecti viri hoc ipsum, quod simplices motus carnis contra voluntatem sustinent, vehementer dolent? Vellent quippe sic manere in carne, ut contra mentis voluntatem de carne nulla sustinerent. Quod quidem, quia impossibile est, praemisit dicens: Velle adjacet mihi, posse autem non invenio. Non enim quod volo bonum, hoc ago; sed quod odi malum, illud facio (Ibid. VII, 18, 19). Quasi dicat: Vellem esse in carne, non ea perfectione, qua perfectus in carne perfectus est, sed sicut Angeli Dei in coelo. Sed hoc posse non invenio, quia quandiu mors peccati absorpta in futura resurrectione non fuerit, illud, quod in me peccatum inhabitat, movet me contra me. Sed quod exstingui peccatum non potest, effugari potest. Motus quippe carnis quasi in fugam vertitur, dum ipsa bene jejunando castigatur. Tanto enim rarius ac difficilius se contra spiritum erigit, quanto sibi eam praesidens spiritus per extenuationem subdit, cum sic eam domat, ut tarde superbiat, cito conquiescat.

13. The proof of true abstinence is not in the attenuation of the body, but in the perfection of chastity. For 267 well is the serpent worn down if gluttony is so restricted that all violence of the libidinous motions of the body is diminished. For an illicit motion cannot be taken away from the flesh as long as it is the flesh itself, but the violence of moving can be taken away. That the law of the flesh should not move the members cannot indeed be taken away from the flesh; but nevertheless the violence of motion can be taken away from the flesh, so that motion may be left to it; but all obscenity of delight be taken away from the same motion, and that motion may be simple, in which the remaining turpitude of libido may not be. Well, therefore, are others related to have been turned to flight, because when divine grace perfectly remunerates any who abstain, it takes away the stings of all obscenities from their corporeal motions; but it leaves to them those natural motions, so that they can always be tempted, but can never be overcome; while it leaves that which is very displeasing to them, but so debilitates what it leaves that it does not permit it to prevail over the victors. He had indeed struck the Ammonites who said: I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway (1 Cor. 9:27). Others also being slain, he could not slay the fugitives, because he deplores, saying: I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind (Rom. 7:23). Item because he saw those who had remained to be debilitated, he says: No creature shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ (Ibid. 8:39). What is it therefore, that he deplores that a law is in his members fighting against the law of his mind, if others being extinct, others have been turned to flight; unless because perfect men vehemently grieve at this very thing, that they sustain simple motions of the flesh against their will? For they would wish so to remain in the flesh that they would sustain nothing from the flesh against the will of the mind. Which indeed, because it is impossible, he premissed saying: To will is present with me; but to accomplish that which is good, I find not. For the good which I will, I do not; but the evil which I will not, that I do (Ibid. 7:18, 19). As if he should say: I would wish to be in the flesh, not with that perfection by which one perfect in the flesh is perfect, but as the Angels of God in heaven. But this I find not the power to do, because as long as the death of sin shall not have been swallowed up in the future resurrection, that sin which dwells in me moves me against me. But that which cannot be extinguished as sin, can be put to flight. Indeed, the motion of the flesh is as it were turned to flight while it is well chastised by fasting. For it erects itself against the spirit so much more rarely and with more difficulty as the presiding spirit subjects it to itself through extenuation, when it so tames it that it is late to grow proud and quick to rest.

14. Sed subtiliter est intuendum, quod dicitur: Ut non relinquerentur duo pariter. Duo quidem remanent, sed pariter non remanent. Duo quidem sunt, cogitatio immunda, et naturalis motus carnis. Ad sanctorum quidem conflictum aliquando immunda cogitatio praevenit, aliquando insurgentem sibi sentiunt legem carnis contra legem mentis; sed qui victores jam sunt, hostes in fugam versos non timent, si iterum ad pugnam redeunt; quia cum eis pariter pugnare non possunt. Nam cum prava cogitatio obviat, prius eam abjiciunt, quam de ejus suggestione caro moveatur. Et cum carnis lex membra commovet, lex mentis turpem motum, turpia cogitando nequaquam fovet; et dum alterum abjicit, alterius pugnam nequaquam sentit. Bene ergo de electorum perfecta victoria dicitur, quia: Dispersi sunt alii, ut duo pariter ex eis non sint relicti: quia per macerationem corporis in tantum proficiunt culmen perfectionis, ut ab eis quidquid a carne, quidquid a mente ingeritur, leviter superetur, dum convenire in pugnam non sinitur. 268 Et haec quidem victoria de omnibus sensibus corporis electi percipiunt, qui obsidentem Naas sibi subjicere per abstinentiae virtutem possunt. Nam refecta caro et impinguata, ad lapsum linguae, oculorum, auditus, olfactus, et tactus facilis est. Dum ergo illiciti corporalium sensuum motus a gulae vitio, ad mentis pugnam deducuntur, quasi Ammon populus Naas regem ad Israelitarum obsidionem comitatur. Sed dum Naas perfecte vincitur, Ammon et exstinguitur ex parte, et ex parte sic in fugam vertitur, ut ex eo duo pariter non inveniantur; quia dum per abstinentiam corpus atterimus, innumeros nostrorum sensuum illicitos motus enervamus; et quos omnino eradicare non possumus, quasi debiles effugamus. Ex quibus duo pariter nobis in pugnam non remanent; quia in oblectatione alicujus sensus corporei, non conjungimus sensum mentis. Nam saepe oculis aspicimus, saepae audimus auribus, saepe tactu, saepe olfactu percipimus, quae carnalem animum trahere ad illicitum amorem possunt.

Et ait populus ad Samuelem: Quis est, qui dixit: Saul num regnabit super nos? Date viros, et interficiemus eos. Et ait Saul: Non occidetur quisquam in die hac, quia fecit Dominus salutem in Israel.

15. Ad Samuelem quippe Dominus superius dixerat: Non te abjecerunt, sed me, ne regnem super eos (I Reg. VIII, 7). De Saul autem paulo ante dictum est: Quia despexerunt eum, et non attulerunt ei munera (Ibid., X, 27). Sed ille abjectus, iste despectus, caesis jam hostibus consecuta victoria, vociferantem populum audivit: Date nobis viros, et interficiemus eos.

14. But it must be subtly considered what is said: That two should not be left together. Two indeed remain, but they do not remain together. There are two indeed: impure thought and the natural motion of the flesh. For the conflict of the saints, sometimes an impure thought comes first, sometimes they feel the law of the flesh rising within them against the law of the mind; but those who are already victors do not fear enemies turned to flight if they return again to the fight, because they cannot fight with them together. For when a perverse thought encounters them, they cast it off before the flesh is moved by its suggestion. And when the law of the flesh moves the members, the law of the mind by no means fosters the base motion by thinking base things; and while it casts off one, it by no means feels the fight of the other. Well, therefore, is it said of the perfect victory of the elect, because: Others were dispersed, so that two of them together were not left: because through the maceration of the body they profit into such a height of perfection that whatever is brought in by the flesh, whatever by the mind, is easily overcome by them, while it is not permitted to meet in battle. 268 And the elect perceive this victory concerning all the senses of the body, those who can subject the besieging Nahash to themselves through the virtue of abstinence. For the flesh, refreshed and fattened, is easy to a slip of the tongue, of the eyes, of hearing, of smell, and of touch. Therefore, while the illicit motions of the corporeal senses are led from the vice of gluttony to the battle of the mind, the Ammonite people as it were accompany King Nahash to the siege of the Israelites. But while Nahash is perfectly conquered, Ammon is both extinguished in part and in part so turned to flight that two of them together are not found; because while we wear down the body through abstinence, we enervate the innumerable illicit motions of our senses; and those which we cannot altogether eradicate, we put to flight as if they were weak. Of which two do not remain together for us in the fight; because in the delight of any corporeal sense, we do not join the sense of the mind. For often we look with the eyes, often we hear with the ears, often we perceive by touch, often by smell, those things which can draw the carnal soul to illicit love.

And the people said to Samuel: Who is he that said: Shall Saul reign over us? Give up the men, and we will put them to death. And Saul said: No man shall be put to death this day, because the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.

15. To Samuel indeed the Lord had said above: They have not rejected thee, but me, that I should not reign over them (1 Sam. 8:7). But concerning Saul it was said a little before: But they despised him, and brought him no presents (Ibid. 10:27). But that one being rejected, this one despised, the enemies now being slain and victory obtained, he heard the people shouting: Give us the men, and we will put them to death.

Posset quidem uterque, non interficiendo, sed consentiendo, de inimicis vindicari, sed etiam quia abjectus fuerat propheta loquitur, rex despectus favet dicenti: Non occidetur quisquam, quia sancti praedicatores nostri majori victoria coronantur, cum adversa proximorum tolerant, quam cum foris hostes expugnant. Unde et vera sapientia in Salomone loquitur, 269 dicens: Melior est patiens, viro forti (Prov, XVI, 32). Sed notandum, quod dicitur: In die hac. In die quidem victoriae suae occidere appetit, qui eos, quos claritate virtutum ad amorem Dei pertrahit, ad nocendum aliis accendit. Vel in die victoriae occidit; quia ea luce claritatis, qua in venerationem praedicatoris adducitur, ad odia eidem doctori detrahentium excitatur. Qui enim odit fratrem suum, homicida est (I Joan. III, 15). Quia enim de doctrina boni pastoris sic adjuvandi sunt boni, ut tolerentur mali; causa, qua nemo occidendus sit, bene subjungitur: Quia, inquit, hodie fecit Dominus salutem in Israel.

Dixit autem Samuel ad populum: Venite, eamus in Galgala, et innovemus ibi regnum. Et perrexit omnis populus in Galgala, et fecere ibi regem Saul coram Domino.

16. Si ergo omnia eo modo, quo superius in ordinando regem, fiunt, ad sanctae Ecclesiae morem deducimus, magna subtilitate ejus rectores ordinantur. Prius quippe prophetae rex eligendus ostensus est, deinde quaesitus quasi incognitus: postea etiam sorte inventus, domi absconditus, revelatus a Domino, a populo sublatus, et in regiam dignitatem ab omnibus receptus est. Quid est ergo, quod adhuc in Galgala tenditur, ut illic regnum innovetur? Sed magna discretione rex quaeritur et invenitur, quia altissima sunt Ecclesiarum negotia, quae si infirmi et imperitisuscipiunt, ipsa rerum magnitudine deprimuntur. Attente ergo et subtilissima investigatione perquiritur, qui tanto culmini praeferatur. Qui profecto valde praedicandus est, non cum quaerentium judicio constituitur, sed quando in ipsa dispositione summi ministerii strenuus invenitur. Bene ergo jam triumphante constituto rege dicitur: Perrexerunt in Galgala, et fecerunt ibi regem Saul coram Domino: quia cum praedicatoris fortitudo cognoscitur, in auditorum suorum mentibus honoratur. In Galgala quidem, id est rotam, imus, quando per sacrum eloquium doctoris nostri operationem discutimus, et eum illic coram Domino regem facimus: quia, quem probabilem cernimus, dignum esse tanto culmine judicamus.

Both could indeed, not by putting to death but by consenting, be avenged of their enemies; but also because the rejected prophet speaks, the despised king favors the one saying: No man shall be put to death, because our holy preachers are crowned with a greater victory when they tolerate the adversities of their neighbors than when they conquer external enemies. Whence also true wisdom speaks in Solomon, 269 saying: The patient man is better than the valiant (Prov. 16:32). But it must be noted what is said: In this day. He indeed desires to kill in the day of his victory who inflames those whom he draws to the love of God by the brightness of virtues to harm others. Or he kills in the day of victory; because by that light of brightness by which he is brought into the veneration of the preacher, he is excited to hatred of those detrating the same teacher. For he that hateth his brother is a murderer (1 John 3:15). Because from the doctrine of the good shepherd the good are so to be helped that the evil are tolerated; the cause for which no one is to be killed is well subjoined: Because, he says, today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.

And Samuel said to the people: Come and let us go to Gilgal, and let us renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the Lord.

16. If therefore all things are done in that way which was said above in ordaining the king, we lead it to the custom of the holy Church, its rulers are ordained with great subtlety. For first the king to be chosen was shown to the prophet, then sought as if unknown: afterwards also found by lot, hidden at home, revealed by the Lord, taken up by the people, and received into the royal dignity by all. What is it therefore that they still go to Gilgal, that the kingdom may be renewed there? But the king is sought and found with great discretion, because the affairs of the Churches are very high, which if the weak and unskilled undertake, they are depressed by the very magnitude of the things. Attentively therefore and with the most subtle investigation he is sought out, who is to be preferred to such a height. Who surely is to be greatly preached, not when he is constituted by the judgment of those seeking, but when in the very disposition of the highest ministry he is found strenuous. Well therefore, with the king already constituted triumphing, it is said: They proceeded to Gilgal, and they made Saul king there before the Lord: because when the strength of the preacher is known, he is honored in the minds of his hearers. Indeed we go into Gilgal, that is, the wheel (rota), when through the sacred word we discuss the operation of our teacher, and we make him king there before the Lord: because him whom we see to be probable, we judge to be worthy of such a height.

Prius ergo dicitur Saul a populo electus, ad extremum rex in Galgala constitutus coram Domino: quia licet multa consilii gravitate in sancta Ecclesia pastor eligatur, utrum sit merito, quod est ordine, non cognoscitur, nisi cum operum fortitudine declaratur. Dicatur ergo non de alio, sed de eo alio [Forte alio superfluit], qui magna victoria claruit: Perrexit omnis populus in Galgala, et fecerunt ibi regem Saul coram Domino, ut dignitas summi pontificis non constet in ambitione culminis, sed in summa virtutis. Et in Galgala quidem itur, ut judicare de summo loco non audeat, cui Scripturae sacrae abscondita sunt praecepta. Et coram Domino rex constituitur: quia tunc doctor subjectorum suorum devotione colitur, cum ipsi acceptam ejus vitam omnipotenti Domino recognoscunt. De ipsa autem cognitione vitae, et doctrinae pastoris sui: quia saepe non sibi, sed melioribus creditur, bene dicitur populus in Galgala regem coram Domino constituisse: sed idem populus in Galgala, monente Samuele perrexisse. Eamus, inquit, in Galgala, et innovemus ibi regnum. Regnum quippe innovatur: quia dum electus praedicator in magna virtute conspicitur, ei nova et recenti devotione auditorum corda submittuntur. Unde quasi ostensa regis victoria regnum innovatur, quando cognita magna conversatione doctoris, ipsa subditorum corda splendorem novae devotionis accipiunt, et per ejus exemplum ad propositum magnae virtutis excitantur. Sed jam qui in uno internorum praelio triumphos aspeximus, in altero jam pacis tempora mirabili aequitate decursa videamus.

CAPUT II.

(I Reg. XII, 1-3.) Dixit autem Samuel ad universum Israel: Ecce audivi vocem vestram juxta omnia, quae locuti estis ad me, et constitui super vos regem: et nunc rex gradiatur ante vos. Ego autem senui, et incanui. Porro filii mei vobiscum sunt. Itaque conversatus coram vobis ab adolescentia mea usque ad diem hanc, ecce praesto sum. Loquimini de me coram Domino et coram Christo ejus, utrum bovem cujusquam tulerim, aut asinum. Si quempiam calumniatus sum, si oppressi aliquem, si de manu cujusquam munus accepi, contemnam illud hodie, restituamque vobis.

1. Cum reprobi pastores praesunt, principale eis propositum est in rapina subditorum. Quia enim aeternorum bonorum abundantiam aspicere nesciunt, quo praesentia ardentius concupiscunt, eo avidius oblata recipiunt, non oblata violenter tollunt. Innocentibus insidiantur, debiles opprimunt, munera accipiunt, juraque pervertunt. De his pastoribus per prophetam Dominus Judaeae improperat, dicens: Pastores tui lupi vespere, non relinquentes in mane (Soph. III, 3).

First therefore Saul is said to be chosen by the people, at the last constituted king in Gilgal before the Lord: because although a shepherd may be chosen in the holy Church with much gravity of counsel, whether it be by merit, which is by order, is not known except when it is declared by the strength of works. Let it be said therefore not of another, but of him [Perhaps alio is superfluous] who shone with a great victory: All the people proceeded to Gilgal, and they made Saul king there before the Lord, so that the dignity of the high priest may not consist in the ambition of the height, but in the highest virtue. And indeed one goes into Gilgal, so that he may not dare to judge of the highest place, to whom the hidden precepts of the holy Scripture are closed. And he is constituted king before the Lord: because then the teacher is cultivated by the devotion of his subjects when they acknowledge his life as accepted by the Almighty Lord. But of that very knowledge of the life and doctrine of their shepherd: because often one believes not in oneself but in the better, well is the people said to have constituted the king before the Lord in Gilgal: but the same people to have proceeded to Gilgal at the warning of Samuel. Let us go, he says, into Gilgal, and let us renew the kingdom there. For the kingdom is renewed: because while the chosen preacher is seen in great virtue, the hearts of the hearers are submitted to him with new and recent devotion. Whence as it were with the victory of the king shown the kingdom is renewed, when having known the great life of the teacher, the very hearts of the subjects receive the splendor of new devotion, and through his example are excited to the purpose of great virtue. But now let us who have seen the triumphs in one battle of internal things, see already the times of peace run through with wonderful equity in another.

CHAPTER II.

(1 Sam. 12:1-3) And Samuel said to all Israel: Behold, I have hearkened to your voice in all that you said to me, and have made a king over you. And now the king goeth before you: but I am old and greyheaded: and my sons are with you. I have lived before you from my youth until this day. Behold, here I am. Speak of me before the Lord, and before his anointed, whether I have taken any man's ox, or if I have taken any man's ass: if I have calumniated any man, if I have oppressed any man, if I have taken a gift at any man's hand: and I will despise it this day, and will restore it to you.

1. When reprobate pastors are in charge, their principal purpose is in the rapine of their subjects. Because they know not how to look upon the abundance of eternal goods, the more ardently they concupisce present things, the more greedily they receive what is offered, and violently take away what is not offered. They lay snares for the innocent, they oppress the weak, they receive gifts, and pervert rights. Concerning these pastors the Lord reproaches Judea through the prophet, saying: Thy princes are like wolves in the evening, not leaving until the morning (Zeph. 3:3).

Calumniatores innocentium pariter et oppressores debilium item percutit, dicens: Si quis non dederit in ore eorum quippiam, sanctificant super illum bellum. Quapropter nox eis pro visione erit, et tenebrae pro divinatione (Mich. III, 5, 6). Nam dum iniquitatem cognoscunt quam faciunt, per audaciam nequissimi operis, cadunt in caecitatem cordis, ut per amorem, lucem veritatis ultra non videant, per quam a pravitate resipiscant. Item munerum acceptionem reprehendit Isaias, dicens: Omnes diligunt munera, sequuntur retributiones (Isa. I, 23). Sanctus ergo vir, dum innocentiae suae simplicitatem ostendit, qua meritorum altitudine fuerit, sublimis apparuit. Quod quidem virtutis praeconium in eo uno ostenditur, ut omnibus electis doctoribus eadem bonitatis conformitas ostendatur.

2. Vitae quidem innocentiam pro nobis habemus, sed praelationis culmen pro aliis, non pro nobis ascendimus. Per innocentiae bonum ad aeternam patriam tendimus, per altitudinem praelationis in aliorum custodia vigilamus. In illa virtute securi sumus, istam vero celsitudinem cum magno metu possidemus: quia qui nostrorum operum rationem reddere vehementer expavescimus, de eo quod aliis praesusumus, Deo reddere rationem debemus. Si ergo electi viri, volente Deo, etiam praelationis culmen inviti conscendunt, volente Deo, idem culmen devotionis deserunt. Sanctus ergo vir dicit: Ecce audivi vocem vestram, et constitui super vos regem; et nunc rex graditur ante vos. Ego autem senui, et incanui. Porro filii mei vobiscum sunt. Quasi aliis vocibus dicat: Quia non pro me, sed pro vobis praefui, dignitatem quam tenui, libenter alii dedi. In eadem dignitate jam senui, et tamen longus usus praeeminendi, quem tenui, obligatum me in sui ambitione non tenuit. Quid ergo est quod ait: Filii mei vobiscum sunt, nisi quia in sanctis viris magna vis spiritualis amoris est, qua filiis ad culmen nascentibus, jus auferunt successionis? Sed qui summam ordinis tam quietus deserit, 271 qualis in eodem culmine manserit, ostendit. Quia enim rapinae violentiam non exercuit, dicit: Loquimini de me coram Domino et coram Christo ejus, utrum bovem cujusquam tulerim, aut asinum. Item quia nulli nocendi occasionem quaesivit, subjunxit, dicens: Si quempiam calumniatus sum. Item quia debilibus gravis non fuit, dicit: Si oppressi aliquem. Item quia de praelatione sua non terrena, sed coelestia quaesivit, dicit: Si de manu cujusquam munus accepi, et contemnam illud hodie, restituamque vobis.

The calumniators of the innocent likewise and the oppressors of the weak he strikes also, saying: He that putteth not into their mouths, they prepare war against him. Therefore night shall be to you instead of a vision, and darkness instead of divination (Micah 3:5, 6). For while they know the iniquity which they do, through the audacity of the most wicked work, they fall into blindness of heart, so that through love they may no longer see the light of truth, through which they might repent of their depravity. Likewise Isaiah reproves the acceptance of gifts, saying: All love bribes, they run after rewards (Isa. 1:23). The holy man, therefore, while he shows the simplicity of his innocence, appeared sublime in that height of merits. Which indeed of virtue praise is shown in that one thing, so that the same conformity of goodness may be shown to all elected teachers.

2. We have indeed the innocence of life for ourselves, but we ascend the height of prelacy for others, not for ourselves. Through the good of innocence we tend towards the eternal fatherland, through the height of prelacy we watch in the custody of others. In that virtue we are secure, but this loftiness we possess with great fear: because we who vehemently dread to render an account of our own works, must render an account to God of that which we presided over others. If therefore elected men, God willing, ascend even the height of prelacy unwillingly, God willing, they desert the same height of devotion. The holy man therefore says: Behold, I have hearkened to your voice, and have made a king over you; and now the king goeth before you. But I am old and greyheaded. And my sons are with you. As if he should say in other words: Because I was in charge not for myself, but for you, I have freely given to another the dignity which I held. In the same dignity I have now grown old, and yet the long use of pre-eminence, which I held, did not hold me bound in its ambition. What is it therefore that he says: My sons are with you, unless because in holy men there is a great force of spiritual love, by which, when sons are born to the height, they take away the right of succession? But he who so quietly deserts the sum of order shows 271 what kind of man he remained in the same height. Because indeed he did not exercise the violence of rapine, he says: Speak of me before the Lord and before his anointed, whether I have taken any man's ox, or ass. Likewise because he sought an occasion of harming no one, he subjoined, saying: If I have calumniated anyone. Likewise because he was not heavy to the weak, he says: If I have oppressed anyone. Likewise because he sought not earthly but heavenly things from his prelacy, he says: If I have taken a gift at any man's hand, and I will despise it today, and restore it to you.

(Vers. 4-6.) Et dixerunt: Non es calumniatus nos, neque oppressisti, neque tulisti de manu alicujus quippiam. Dixitque ad eos: Testis mihi Dominus adversus vos, et testis Christus ejus in die hac, quia non invenietis in manu mea quippiam. Et dixerunt: Testis. Ipse vero adhuc subdit, dicens: Dominus, qui fecit Moysen et Aaron, et eduxit patres nostros de terra Aegypti, ipse testis est.

3. Quo in loco notandum est, quia bona quae fecit vir sanctus, non dixit: mala vero, quae non fecit, exposuit; ut silendo ad aeterna lucra bona servaret, et loquendo odorem bonae opinionis non perderet. Paulus vero loquitur, dicens: Christi bonus odor sumus in omni loco (II Cor. II, 15). Ipse etiam quosdam redarguens, ait: Nomen Dei per vos blasphematur inter gentes (Rom. II, 24). Hinc item discipulum admonet, dicens: Oportet etiam Episcopum bonum testimonium habere ab iis qui foris sunt (I Tim. III, 7). Dum ergo mala se tam caute vitasse asseruit, et ingentia bona, quae fecit, siluit: aperte vir beatus ostendit, in quanto culmine virtutum stetit, dum mala reprobando, ad electorum exemplum odorem servavit bonae opinionis: et occultando virtutum opera, praemia custodivit aeternae retributionis. Sed notandum, quia cum Dominum testem suae innocentiae assereret, ipsum Dominum fecisse Moysen et Aaron dixit. Quid est hoc aliud, nisi quia et virtutis suae culmen ostendit, sed in tanto culmine solus apparere noluit? Quasi latentibus sensibus dicat: In tanta animi virtute mirandus non sum: quia in ea solus non sum. Contemptum rerum in munere virtutis habeo, sed hunc in intentione vanae laudis non habeo: in quo valde meliores atque sublimiores cerno. Et quia ipsum Moysen et Aaron Dominum fecisse asseruit, tale est item ac si dicat: Quod mala tam fortiter cavere potui, illius debet gratiae ascribi, qui Moysen et Aaron tales fecit. Sed ad quid sanctus vir ista praemiserit, ostendit: quia subintulit, dicens: (Vers. 7.) Nunc ergo state, et judicio contendam adversus vos coram Domino de omnibus misericordiis quas fecit vobiscum et cum patribus vestris

4. Ordo summae rationis est, ut qui bona agere non curat, mala in aliis nequaquam reprehendat. Sanctus ergo vir prius mala se vitasse caute asseruit, deinde ad reprehensionem aliorum prosiliit; ut electi praedicatoris mores insinuet, qui praedicationis fructum bene ferre non praevalet, nisi cum id, quod de aeternitate lucidum praedicat, splendida etiam conversatione demonstrat. Dicit ergo: Nunc state, et judicio contendam adversus vos de omnibus misericordiis Domini. Stare quidem auditoribus, est intentionem mentis ad verbum praedicatoris erigere.

(Verses 4-6) And they said: Thou hast not calumniated us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken anything at any man's hand. And he said to them: The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand. And they said: He is witness. But he himself still subjoins, saying: The Lord, who made Moses and Aaron, and brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt, he is witness.

3. In which place it must be noted that the holy man did not speak the good things which he did, but he set forth the evil things which he did not do; so that by being silent he might preserve the good things for eternal gains, and by speaking he might not lose the odor of a good opinion. For Paul speaks, saying: We are the good odor of Christ in every place (2 Cor. 2:15). He himself also rebuking some, says: The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you (Rom. 2:24). Hence likewise he admonishes the disciple, saying: It behooveth also a Bishop to have a good testimony from those who are without (1 Tim. 3:7). While therefore he asserted that he had so cautiously avoided evil, and was silent about the great good things which he did, the blessed man openly showed in how great a height of virtues he stood, while by reprobating evil things, he preserved the odor of a good opinion for the example of the elect; and by hiding the works of virtues, he guarded the rewards of eternal retribution. But it must be noted that when he asserted the Lord as a witness of his innocence, he said that the Lord himself made Moses and Aaron. What else is this, but that he also showed the height of his own virtue, but wished not to appear alone in such a height? As if he should say with latent senses: I am not to be wondered at in such virtue of mind: because I am not alone in it. I have the contempt of things in a gift of virtue, but I have this not in the intention of vain praise: in which I perceive others far better and more sublime. And because he asserted that the Lord made Moses and Aaron themselves, it is such as if he should say: That I was able so strongly to beware of evil things, ought to be ascribed to his grace, who made Moses and Aaron such. But to what end the holy man premissed these things, he shows: because he subjoined, saying: (Verse 7) Now therefore stand, and I will contend with you in judgment before the Lord of all the mercies which he hath done with you and with your fathers.

4. It is an order of the highest reason that he who does not care to do good things, by no means reproves evil things in others. The holy man therefore first cautiously asserted that he had avoided evil things, then he leapt forward to the reproof of others; so that he might insinuate the mores of the elected preacher, who is not strong enough to bear the fruit of preaching well, unless when he demonstrates by a splendid conversation that which he preaches as lucid from eternity. He says therefore: Now stand, and I will contend with you in judgment concerning all the mercies of the Lord. To stand, for the hearers, is to erect the intention of the mind to the word of the preacher.

Merito ergo stare praecipiuntur: quia doctor nihil exhortando proficit, si auditor mentem ad ea, quae loquitur, non intendit. Easdem misericordias enumerans, ait: 272 (Vers. 8-11.) Quomodo ingressus est Jacob in Aegyptum, et exclamaverunt patres nostri ad Dominum, et misit Dominus Moysen et Aaron: et eduxit patres nostros ex Aegypto, et collocavit eos in loco hoc. Et quia obliti sunt Domini Dei sui, tradidit eos in manu Sisarae magistri militiae Assur, et in manus Philisthinorum, et regis Moab: et pugnaverunt adversus vos. Postea clamavere ad Dominum, et dixere: Peccavimus, quia dereliquimus Dominum, et servivimus Baalim, et Astaroth: nunc ergo erue nos de manu Philisthinorum, et serviemus tibi. Et dimisit Dominus Jerobaal, et Barach, et Jepte, et Samuel; et eruit vos de manu inimicorum vestrorum per circuitum, et habitastis confidenter.

5. Has quidem misericordias factas secundum historiam idcirco commemorat, ut in eo, quod regem petiit, reum se coram Domino populus agnoscat. Nam qui ad omnia pericula submovenda Dominum praesentem habuit, hominem super se regem necessarium non habuit. Ipsam autem praesentiam Domini per impensas misericordias ostendit, dum de manu Aegyptiorum per Moysen et Aaron, et de manu Sisarae et Philistinorum, et de manu regis Moab per Jerobaal, Barach, et Jepte, et a Samuele eos liberatos asseruit. Quo in loco valde quaerendum est, cur petitio, qua rex petitur, tam districte et reprehenditur, et ipsa divinae misericordiae auxilia populo Dei per praelatos homines impensa esse doceantur. Qua in re quid respondendum est, nisi quia valde diversa est praelatio regum a praelatione judicum? Isti quidem ut pares praesunt, illi vero in potestate praeeminendi arrogantiam exhibent dominationis. Isti innocentiae suae testimonium coram Domino et omni populo commendant: quia nec aliquem opprimunt, nec alienum aliquid in suis usibus tollunt: illi vero non solum propria subditis auferunt, sed etiam ipsas subditorum personas onere servitutis premunt. Subdens ergo ait:

(Vers. 12.) Videntes autem, quod Naas ascenderet, et pugnaret adversus vos: Nequaquam, dixistis: sed rex erit super nos; cum Dominus regnaret in vobis.

Merito therefore are they commanded to stand: because the teacher profits nothing by exhorting, if the hearer does not intend the mind to those things which he speaks. Enumerating the same mercies, he says: 272 (Verses 8-11) When Jacob was entered into Egypt, and our fathers cried to the Lord, and the Lord sent Moses and Aaron: and brought our fathers out of Egypt, and placed them in this place. And because they forgot the Lord their God, he delivered them into the hand of Sisera, the captain of the army of Hazor, and into the hands of the Philistines, and of the king of Moab: and they fought against you. Afterwards they cried to the Lord, and said: We have sinned, because we have forsaken the Lord, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: now therefore deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee. And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Barak, and Jephthah, and Samuel; and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and you dwelt confidently.

5. He indeed commemorates these mercies done according to history for this reason, so that in that which they sought a king, the people might acknowledge themselves guilty before the Lord. For he who had the Lord present to remove all dangers, had no need of a man as a king over him. But he showed the very presence of the Lord through the bestowed mercies, while he asserted them to have been delivered from the hand of the Egyptians by Moses and Aaron, and from the hand of Sisera and the Philistines, and from the hand of the king of Moab by Jerubbaal, Barak, and Jephthah, and by Samuel. In which place it is greatly to be sought why the petition by which a king is sought is so strictly both reproved, and the very helps of the divine mercy are taught to have been bestowed on the people of God through prelated men. In which matter what is to be responded, unless that the prelacy of kings is very different from the prelacy of judges? Those indeed presided as equals, but these exhibit the arrogance of domination in the power of pre-eminence. Those commended the testimony of their innocence before the Lord and all the people: because they neither oppressed anyone, nor took away anything alien for their own uses: but these not only take away their own things from their subjects, but even press the very persons of their subjects with the burden of servitude. Subjoining therefore he says:

(Verse 12) But seeing that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, you said: Nay, but a king shall reign over us: whereas the Lord your God was your king.

6. Quasi dicat: Ad hoc vobis hominem elegistis, ad quod Deum habere solebatis. Quem nimirum locum si spiritualiter discutere volumus, hoc ex eo colligitur: quia qui carnalem sibi praeesse expetunt, divinam gratiam a se repellunt. Nam dum humilium doctorum exemplo vivunt, velut ab Aegypto liberantur: quia caliginem mundani amoris toto desiderio fugiunt. Quia etiam omnium vitiorum tyrannidem eorum doctrina evadunt, velut de manu Sisarae, Philistinorum, et regis Moab, missis ducibus, liberantur. In quibus Deus jam solus omnipotens regnat: quia dum humiles pastores foris imitantur, regnantis inter se divinitatis amorem gratanter excipiunt. Dicat ergo propheta: Dixistis mihi: Nequaquam, sed rex erit super nos; cum Dominus regnaret in vobis: ut ostendat quia qui carnalibus se imitando subjiciunt, divinae gratiae dignitatem perdunt. Notandum etiam, quia propheta Samuel per virtutum humilitatis ubique se electis ostendit in norma rectitudinis. Nam cum Israeliticae plebis liberationem assereret, non ait: Misit Dominus Jepte et me; sed: Jepte et Samuel, et eruit vos de manu inimicorum vestrorum. Se quidem quasi alium nominavit, ut virtus liberationis non ascriberetur personae missi: sed gratiae mittentis Dei. Misit, inquit, Dominus Samuel, et eruit vos. Quasi dicat: Quem voluit, misit; et per quem 273 voluit, fecit. Et fortasse de se quasi de alio loquitur: quia non ipse est, qui per seipsum loquitur: sed Spiritus sanctus. Et quia permissione Dei, jam rege constituto, vir Domini ista loquebatur; ad hoc profecto loquebatur, ut regem et populum ad Dei cultum dirigeret, non ut ipsam dignitatem regiam evacuaret. Unde et subjungens, ait:

(Vers. 13-15.) Nunc praesto est rex vester, quem elegistis, et petistis. Ecce dedit Deus vester vobis regem. Si timueritis Deum, et servieritis ei, et audieritis vocem ejus, et non exasperaveritis os Domini, eritis et vos, et rex vester qui imperat vobis, sequentes Dominum Deum vestrum. Si autem non exaudieritis vocem Domini, sed exasperaveritis sermones ejus, erit manus Domini super vos, et super patres vestros.

6. As if he should say: For this you chose for yourselves a man, for which you were accustomed to have God. Which place certainly if we wish to discuss spiritually, this is gathered from it: because those who desire a carnal man to preside over them, repel divine grace from themselves. For while they live by the example of humble teachers, they are as it were delivered from Egypt: because they flee the darkness of worldly love with all desire. Because also they escape the tyranny of all vices by their doctrine, they are as it were delivered from the hand of Sisera, the Philistines, and the king of Moab, leaders being sent. In whom God already alone omnipotent reigns: because while they imitate humble pastors without, they gratefully receive the love of the divinity reigning among them. Let the prophet therefore say: You said to me: Nay, but a king shall reign over us; whereas the Lord was reigning in you: so that he may show that those who subject themselves to carnal men by imitating them, lose the dignity of divine grace. It must also be noted that the prophet Samuel through the virtue of humility everywhere shows himself to the elect in the norm of rectitude. For when he asserted the liberation of the Israelite people, he did not say: The Lord sent Jephthah and me; but: Jephthah and Samuel, and delivered you from the hand of your enemies. He indeed named himself as if another, so that the virtue of liberation should not be ascribed to the person of the one sent: but to the grace of God the sender. The Lord, he says, sent Samuel, and delivered you. As if he should say: Whom he willed, he sent; and through whom 273 he willed, he did. And perhaps he speaks of himself as of another because it is not he himself who speaks through himself, but the Holy Spirit. And because by the permission of God, the king being now constituted, the man of the Lord was speaking these things; he was certainly speaking to this end, that he might direct the king and the people to the worship of God, not that he might evacuate the royal dignity itself. Whence also subjoining, he says:

(Verses 13-15) Now therefore behold your king, whom you have chosen and desired. Behold, your God hath given you a king. If you will fear the Lord, and serve him, and hearken to his voice, and not provoke the mouth of the Lord: then shall both you, and the king who reigneth over you, be followers of the Lord your God. But if you will not hearken to the voice of the Lord, but will rebel against his words, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, and against your fathers.

7. Haec profecto non mystica, sed historica sunt in omnibus. Nam ubi praelati et subditi reprobam vitam ducunt, divinae ultionis poenam pariter subeunt. Sed quia separatim ducuntur bona, separatim mala; illa, pro quibus manus Domini super eos futura praedicitur, subtilius consideranda sunt. Quid ergo, quod ait: Si timueritis Dominum, et servieritis ei: nisi quia plerique divinae districtionis judicia metuunt, et tamen prava agere non desistunt? Paventi quidem corde futura judicia cogitant, sed praesenti voluptate devicti, mala committere nequaquam vitant. Bene ergo post timorem Domini ejus servitia memorantur: quia ille solus timor probabilis est, qui dum mentem concutit, ad boni operis studium trahit. Item quia nonnulli sunt qui per timorem Domini quaedam mala respuunt, aliqua bona agunt; et tamen nec mala plene deserunt, nec bona sufficienter operantur, adjungitur: Et audieritis vocem ejus. Qui vocem Domini audit, et bona plene agit, et mala penitus deserit. Eadem vero bona opera in delectatione suavitatis habenda sunt, non in aestimatione asperitatis. Nam quibus semper dura et aspera videntur quae a Domino praecipiuntur, paulatim decidunt et deficiunt. Hinc enim per semetipsam Veritas dicit: Jugum enim meum suave est, et onus meum leve (Matth. XI, 30). Hinc Joannes ait: Mandata ejus gravia non sunt (I Joan. V, 3). Gravia quippe non sunt electis: quia dum aeternae vitae gloriam magno desiderio appetunt, praecepta Evangelica gratanter ferunt. Potest et os Domini praedicatio perfectae charitatis intelligi. Quasi enim oris sui blandimenta volebat ostendere, cum dicebat: Hoc est praeceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem sicut dilexi vos (Joan. XV, 12). Hoc quippe praeceptum Domini, hoc jugum est divinae suavitatis. Quid enim levius, aut unquam gratius, quam amor fertur? Quid praeterea grave non leviter tolerat, qui amat? Quidquid enim diligitur, cum magna devotione portatur. Quia ergo vinculum perfectionis est charitas Dei et proximi, bene in...

8. Sed quia infirmis et carnalibus loquebatur, subsequenter denuntians ait: Si non audieritis vocem Domini, sed exasperaveritis sermonem ejus, erit manus Domini super vos, et super patres vestros. 274 Manus Domini divinae est severitas ultionis. Quae profecto manus super filios et patres extenditur, cum divini contemptus merito, et reprobi praelati et subditi puniuntur. Eadem quoque manus ad ultionem extenditur, cum vox Domini non auditur, cum ejus sermones exasperantur: quia ii, qui divina mandata quasi dura et importabilia respuunt, intolerabili poenae onere in futuro deprimuntur.

7. These things are certainly not mystical, but historical in all. For where prelates and subjects lead a reprobate life, they likewise undergo the penalty of divine vengeance. But because good things are led separately, and evil things separately; those for which the hand of the Lord is predicted to be upon them in the future must be considered more subtly. What therefore is it that he says: If you will fear the Lord, and serve him: unless because many fear the judgments of divine severity, and yet do not desist from doing perverse things? With a trembling heart they indeed think of the future judgments, but overcome by present pleasure, they by no means avoid committing evils. Well, therefore, after the fear of the Lord his services are mentioned: because that fear alone is probable which, while it shakes the mind, draws it to the study of a good work. Likewise because there are some who through the fear of the Lord reject certain evils, and do some good things; and yet neither fully desert evils, nor sufficiently work good things, it is added: And hearken to his voice. He who hears the voice of the Lord both fully does good things and inwardly deserts evils. Those same good works indeed are to be held in the delight of sweetness, not in the estimation of roughness. For those to whom the things which are commanded by the Lord always seem hard and rough, little by little they fall away and fail. For hence Truth itself says through itself: For my yoke is sweet, and my burden light (Matt. 11:30). Hence John says: His commandments are not heavy (1 John 5:3). They are indeed not heavy to the elect: because while they desire the glory of eternal life with great desire, they gratefully bear the Evangelical precepts. Also the mouth of the Lord can be understood as the preaching of perfect charity. For as it were he wished to show the blandishments of his mouth when he said: This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you (John 15:12). This indeed is the commandment of the Lord, this is the yoke of divine sweetness. For what is more light, or ever more grateful, than love is carried? What besides, being heavy, does he not lightly tolerate who loves? For whatever is loved, is carried with great devotion. Because therefore the bond of perfection is the charity of God and neighbor, well...

8. But because he was speaking to the weak and carnal, subsequently denouncing he says: But if you will not hearken to the voice of the Lord, but will rebel against his words, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, and against your fathers. 274 The hand of the Lord is the severity of divine vengeance. Which hand indeed is extended over sons and fathers when, by the merit of divine contempt, both reprobate prelates and subjects are punished. The same hand is also extended to vengeance when the voice of the Lord is not heard, when his words are provoked: because those who reject the divine commands as hard and unsupportable are depressed in the future by an intolerable burden of penalty.

Stulta quippe audacia hominis, unde ad modicum subire ea, quae sibi videntur aspera, refugit; inde se asperioribus in aeternum subdit. Nam si sapienter saperet, hoc sibi quod displicet suaderet: ut per dura et aspera hujus brevissimi temporis, dura et aspera evaderet futurae damnationis. Haec profecto dura corda carnalium velociter audiunt, sed per salubre consilium facile molliri non possunt. Bene ergo subjungitur:

(Vers. 16, 17.) Sed et nunc state, et videte rem istam grandem, quam facturus est Dominus, in conspectu vestro. Nunquid non messis tritici est hodie? Invocabo Dominum, et dabit voces et pluvias; et scietis et videbitis, quia grande malum feceritis vobis in conspectu Domini, petentes super vos regem.

9. Quia tam attente, et toties ista petitio regis reprehenditur, hoc electis insinuat: quia qui ad culmen sanctae Ecclesiae carnales provehunt, gravissima peccati obligatione retinentur. Nam peccata reliqua singularis poenae meritum obtinent, qui vero carnalem praepositum constituit, tot incurrit poenarum merita, quot ille fidelibus subditis praebet pravitatis exempla. Sed grave pondus criminis deponi non potest, nisi austeritate magnae compunctionis. Compunctionis autem gratia menti non infunditur, nisi prius ipsa ei peccati magnitudo monstretur. Propheta ergo Domini, ut ad congruae poenitentiae fructum peccantem populum provocaret, per mirabilem motum aeris, ei insinuat magnum peccatum transgressionis. In messe autem tritici, pluviae et tonitrua in illa regione non fiunt. Bene autem subsequenter adjunctum est:

(Vers. 18, 19.) Clamavit Samuel ad Dominum, et dedit Dominus voces, et pluvias in die illa: et timuit omnis populus nimis Dominum, et Samuelem. Dixitque universus populus ad Samuelem: Ora pro servis tuis ad Dominum Deum tuum, ut non moriamur. Addidimus enim universis malis nostris, ut peteremus nobis regem.

10. Quod sane, si ad nostra tempora deducimus, ut populus ad cognitionem peccatorum veniat, praedicatores pro eis ad Deum clamant: quia fidelium salutem magnis desideriis flagitant. Clamare quidem praedicatoribus, est electorum salutem magna devotione postulare. Ad quorum clamorem Dominus vocem dat: quia peccatorum corda excitat, ut pravitatis suae nequitiam recognoscant. Dat pluvias: quia excitata corda per infusionem supernae gratiae adjuvat; ut non solum deserat mala quisque quae fecit, sed etiam bona fortiter agat, quae appetit.

For the foolish audacity of man, whence he refuges to undergo for a little while those things which seem rough to him, thence he subjects himself to rougher things for eternity. For if he were wisely wise, he would persuade himself of this which is displeasing: so that through the hard and rough things of this most brief time, he might escape the hard and rough things of future damnation. These things indeed the hard hearts of the carnal quickly hear, but they cannot easily be softened through wholesome counsel. Well therefore is subjoined:

(Verses 16, 17) Now therefore stand, and see this great thing which the Lord will do in your sight. Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call upon the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain: and you shall know and see that you have done a great evil in the sight of the Lord, in asking a king over you.

9. Because this request for a king is so attentively and so often reproved, it suggests this to the elect: that those who promote carnal men to the summit of the holy Church are held by a most grave obligation of sin. For other sins obtain the merit of a single penalty, but he who constitutes a carnal prelate incurs as many merits of penalties as that man provides examples of depravity to the faithful subjects. But the heavy weight of the crime cannot be laid down, except by the austerity of great compunction. Moreover, the grace of compunction is not infused into the mind, unless the magnitude of the sin itself is first shown to it. The Prophet of the Lord, therefore, so that he might provoke the sinning people to the fruit of congruent repentance, suggests to them by a miraculous movement of the air the great sin of transgression. Moreover, in the harvest of wheat, rains and thunders do not occur in that region. Well, however, is subsequently added:

(Verses 18, 19) Samuel cried unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel: Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.

10. Which surely, if we deduce it to our times, so that the people may come to the knowledge of sins, the preachers cry out to God for them: because they demand the salvation of the faithful with great desires. For the preachers to cry out is to request the salvation of the elect with great devotion. To whose cry the Lord gives a voice: because he excites the hearts of sinners, so that they may recognize the wickedness of their depravity. He gives rains: because he helps the excited hearts through the infusion of supernal grace; so that each one may not only desert the evils which he has done, but also strongly do the good things which he desires.

Sed hoc in die messis tritici fieri dicitur, ut virtus miraculi designetur. Non est quidem minus miraculum immutatio cordis, quam perturbatio aeris. Non minus miraculum est arentia corda reviviscere, quam aestivis ardoribus inusitato more pluvias inundare. Majus quippe miraculum est, intimo sonitu insensibilem mentem concutere, quam, collisis per ventum nubibus, tonitruum insonare. Sed rectus ordo conversionis ostenditur in ordinata positione verborum. Nam dicit: Dedit Dominus voces et pluvias: et timuit omnis populus nimis Dominum 275 et Samuelem. Ordinatissima quippe conversione cum malum deseritur, bonum in mente propagatur; cum conversi mens quasi per pluviam bonum semen nutrit, et se Deo et hominibus per obedientiae virtutem subdit. Bene ergo dicitur: Timuit omnis populus Dominum et Samuelem, quia qui summi Spiritus adventum suscipit, et mala deserit, et bona apprehendit, et sic Deo subditur, ut pro Deo etiam hominibus substernatur. Et quia praesumptionem in ipsa obedientiae virtute non habent, dicunt: Ora pro servis tuis ad Dominum, ut non moriamur. Cum spiritus vitae se menti infundit, protinus eam ad mortis pavorem erigit: quia magisterium ejusdem spiritus est, ut timendo mens agat, ne quod timet inveniat: sed sancti viri pro eis orantes exaudiri possunt, qui et occulta peccata cordis per humilitatem revelant confessionis. Unde et subditur: Addidimus enim universis malis nostris, ut peteremus nobis regem. Quia vero haec satis ...

(Vers. 20.) Dixit autem Samuel: Nolite timere. Vos fecistis universum malum hoc. Verumtamen nolite recedere a tergo Domini.

11. Poenitentis mens tunc bene dirigitur, si divina judicia metuat, et de Dei omnipotentis miseratione confidat. Timor quidem sine spe in desperationem praecipitat, sed cum spei conjungitur, salutem mentis operatur. Quare et summo studio invigilare optimus doctor debet, ut peccantem terreat, et territum ad veniae spem reducat: quatenus per metum peccare desinat, et per spem impetrandae indulgentiae, divinae misericordiae portum quaerat. Territos ergo subditos ad spei virtutem Samuel erigens, dicit: Vos fecistis universum malum hoc, verumtamen nolite recedere a tergo Domini.

But this is said to be done in the day of the wheat harvest, so that the power of the miracle may be designated. Indeed, the change of the heart is not a lesser miracle than the perturbation of the air. It is not a lesser miracle for dry hearts to revive, than for rains to flood in an unusual manner in the summer heats. For it is a greater miracle to shake the insensible mind with an inward sound, than for thunder to sound forth from clouds collided by the wind. But the right order of conversion is shown in the ordered positioning of the words. For he says: The Lord gave thunder and rain: and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. For in a most ordered conversion, when evil is deserted, good is propagated in the mind; when the mind of the convert nourishes the good seed as if through rain, and subjects itself to God and men through the virtue of obedience. Well, therefore, is it said: All the people feared the Lord and Samuel, because he who receives the advent of the Highest Spirit both deserts evils and apprehends good things, and is so subjected to God that he is even prostrated for God before men. And because they do not have presumption in the virtue of obedience itself, they say: Pray for thy servants unto the Lord, that we die not. When the spirit of life infuses itself into the mind, it immediately raises it to the fear of death: because it is the teaching of the same spirit that the mind should act by fearing, lest it find what it fears: but holy men praying for them can be heard, who also reveal the hidden sins of the heart through the humility of confession. Whence also is subjoined: For we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king. Because truly these things...

(Verse 20) And Samuel said: Fear not. Ye have done all this wickedness. Yet turn not aside from following the Lord.

11. The mind of the penitent is then well directed, if it fears the divine judgments and trusts in the mercy of Almighty God. Fear indeed without hope precipitates into despair, but when it is joined to hope, it works the salvation of the mind. Wherefore the best teacher ought to watch with the greatest study, so that he may terrify the sinner and lead back the terrified one to the hope of pardon: in order that through fear he may cease to sin, and through the hope of obtaining indulgence, he may seek the port of divine mercy. Samuel, therefore, raising the terrified subjects to the virtue of hope, says: Ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the Lord.

Quasi dicat: Si peccare desinitis, ad obtinendam commissorum veniam pervenire citius potestis. Nolite ergo recedere a tergo Domini. De justi laude promittitur. Praeibis enim ante faciem Domini parare vias ejus (Luc, I, 76). Hinc Elias ait: Vivit Dominus, in cujus conspectu sto (III Reg. XVII, 1). Hinc Psalmista dicit: Exsultent justi in conspectu Dei (Psal. LXVII, 4). In conspectu quidem Domini, vel ante Dominum stare, est testimonio bonae conscientiae de amore Conditoris praesumere. Stant quidem in conspectu ejus, qui ex merito magnae actionis, de superna Conditoris sui gratia securi sunt. Peccatores autem cum mala committunt, a facie Domini fugiunt, sed cum redire poenitendo deliberant, quasi post tergum Domini sunt: quia et discedere longius nolunt, et tamen praesumere de Deo quasi amici non possunt. Hinc est, quod peccatrix mulier retro stetisse dicitur, ut pedes Domini deosculari mereretur (Luc. VII, 38). Retro etiam illa stetit, quae fimbrias ejus tetigit, et a fluxu sanguinis sui curari meruit (Matth. IX, 20). Retro quidem stat pro verecundia peccati, sed tangit per virtutem spei. Quia ergo pro commissis iniquitatibus semper erubescere debemus, et in quibus confundimur devitare, Samuel peccatoribus imperat, ut a tergo Domini non recedant. Sed quia non sufficit conversio peccatori, ut peccata non agat, subsequenter adjunxit:

(Vers. 20.) Et servite Domino in omni corde vestro.

12. Tunc namque promereri veniam possumus, si peccare desinimus, et bonis operibus inhaeremus. In omni etenim corde Domino servire, est peccandi nullam in corde intentionem retinere. Omne quidem cor ad servitium Conditoris inflectitur, 276 quando sic bona agimus, ut mala per propositum nulla teneamus. Quod et propheta Domini Samuel aperte insinuat, cum subjungit:

(Vers. 21.) Et nolite declinare post vana, quae non proderunt vobis, neque eruent vos: quia vana sunt.

13. Ad litteram vana, simulacra daemonum appellat. Nobis autem vana illa hic accipienda sunt, quae concionator ostendit, dicens: Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas. In comparatione etenim aeternorum bonorum, vana sunt omnia, etiam bona temporalia. Quidquid enim in hoc saeculo laetum, delectabile, sublime, aut prosperum cernitur, vanum profecto est: quia difficile habetur, et cito amittitur. Repente quidem alta saeculi corruunt, pulchra transeunt, laeta et prospera evanescunt.

As if he were to say: If you cease to sin, you can more quickly reach the obtaining of pardon for the things committed. Therefore turn not aside from following the Lord. It is promised from the praise of the just. For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways (Luke 1:76). Hence Elijah says: The Lord liveth, in whose sight I stand (1 Kings 17:1). Hence the Psalmist says: Let the just exult in the sight of God (Psalm 67:4). To stand in the sight of the Lord, or before the Lord, is to presume upon the love of the Creator from the testimony of a good conscience. Indeed, they stand in his sight who, from the merit of a great action, are secure concerning the supernal grace of their Creator. But sinners, when they commit evils, flee from the face of the Lord, but when they deliberate to return by repenting, they are as it were behind the back of the Lord: because they neither wish to depart further, and yet they cannot presume upon God as friends. Hence it is that the sinning woman is said to have stood behind, so that she might merit to kiss the feet of the Lord (Luke 7:38). She also stood behind who touched his hem, and merited to be cured from her flow of blood (Matt. 9:20). Indeed, she stands behind for the shame of sin, but touches through the virtue of hope. Because, therefore, we ought always to blush for the iniquities committed, and to avoid those things in which we are confounded, Samuel commands sinners not to turn aside from following the Lord. But because it is not enough for the sinner to convert so that he does not commit sins, he subsequently added:

(Verse 20) And serve the Lord with all your heart.

12. For then we can deserve pardon, if we cease to sin and adhere to good works. For to serve the Lord in all the heart is to retain no intention of sinning in the heart. Every heart is indeed turned to the service of the Creator when we so do good things that we hold no evil things through purpose. Which also the Prophet of the Lord, Samuel, openly suggests when he subjoins:

(Verse 21) And turn ye not aside after vain things, which cannot profit you nor deliver you; for they are vain.

13. Literally he calls the idols of demons "vain things". But to us those vain things are to be accepted here which the Preacher shows, saying: Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity (Eccl. 1:2). For in comparison of eternal goods, all things are vain, even temporal goods. For whatever in this world is seen as joyful, delectable, sublime, or prosperous, is surely vain: because it is difficultly held, and quickly lost. Indeed, suddenly the high things of the world collapse, beautiful things pass away, joyful and prosperous things vanish.

Nam cum stare in his floribus suis mundus blandiens cernitur, repentina fortuna turbatur, aut festina, et omnia deturbante morte, concluditur. Vana ergo sunt gaudia saeculi, quae quasi manentia blandiuntur: sed amatores suos, cito transeundo, decipiunt. Dicat ergo propheta Samuel: Nolite declinare post vana, quae non proderunt vobis. Quasi dicat: Stulte appetuntur bona saeculi, quae ab appetitoribus suis non poterunt diutius teneri. Et notandum, quia de futuro dicitur: Non proderunt vobis: quia nimirum nunc prodesse cernuntur; sed cum in futuro pro eis puniri coeperint nequaquam prosunt. Unde et apte subditur: Neque eruent vos, quia vana sunt. Quasi dicat: Idcirco vos tunc non adjuvant, quia cum mundo deficiunt, et post saeculum non habentur. Multum quidem saeculi bona durant, si cum amatore usque ad extremum vitae perveniunt. Post saeculum ergo non prosunt, quae finem vitae transire non possunt. In hac quidem vita suos amatores peccatis obligant; sed tunc non eruent, ubi quidem per meritum sunt, sed per auxilium non sunt. Qua in re caute notandum est: quia eis temporalia bona non proderunt, qui post haec declinare perhibentur. Post bona etenim temporis declinare, est in eorum appetitum defluere, amorem illorum divino amori praeferre. Merito ergo his vana non proderunt: quia ea eo ordine, quo condita sunt, habere noluere. Sed quo fructu vana despiciantur, insinuatur, dum subditur:

(Vers. 22.) Et non derelinquet Dominus populum suum propter nomen suum magnum: quia juravit Dominus facere sibi populum.

14. Magnum malum haec vana post se declinantibus ingerunt: quia dum inordinate terrena appetunt, a summo et omnipotenti Deo ad sustinenda futura tormenta deseruntur. His ergo, qui declinare post vana prohibentur, merito propheta repromittit, dicens: Non derelinquet Dominus populum suum propter nomen suum magnum. Quia qui pro ejus amore vana despiciunt, a veris malis eruuntur, et ex fide promissionis mercedem accipiunt aeternae haereditatis. Populum quippe suum Dominus facit, quem ad aeternae beatitudinis gaudia sustollit. Ibi quippe revelata majestatis suae gloria illi praesidet, quem in mundo ab amore vanitatis per occultam gratiam assumptum tenet. Jurare quidem Domino, repromittere est eumque populum suum facere, Dominus jurat, qui non declinat post vana: quia terrena despicienda sunt, ut aeternae haereditatis adipisci bona mereamur. Nec tamen ad ea posse his meritis se perduci aliquis credat; quia hic districte expressum est: Propter nomen suum magnum. Non enim bonitate nostra, sed Dei fit, 277 ut homo terrenus bonis coelestibus perfruatur. Donum quippe Dei est, non ex nobis. Sequitur:

For when the world is seen flattering while standing in these flowers of its own, the sudden fortune is disturbed, or by a hasty death, and one that overturns all things, it is concluded. Vain therefore are the joys of the world, which flatter as if remaining: but by passing away quickly, they deceive their lovers. Let the Prophet Samuel say therefore: And turn ye not aside after vain things, which cannot profit you. As if he were to say: Foolishly are the goods of the world desired, which cannot be held longer by their desirers. And it is to be noted, because it is said of the future: Which cannot profit you: because certainly they are seen to profit now; but when in the future they shall have begun to be punished for them, they by no means profit. Whence also is aptly subjoined: Nor deliver you; for they are vain. As if he were to say: Therefore they do not help you then, because they fail with the world, and after the world they are not had. Much indeed do the goods of the world last if they reach with the lover even to the extreme of life. After the world, therefore, they do not profit, which cannot pass the end of life. In this life indeed they bind their lovers with sins; but then they shall not deliver, where indeed they are through merit, but they are not through help. In which matter it is to be carefully noted: because temporal goods will not profit those who are said to turn aside after these things. For to turn aside after the goods of time is to flow into the desire of them, to prefer the love of them to the divine love. Meritly, therefore, for these men vain things shall not profit: because they would not have them in that order in which they were created. But with what fruit vain things should be despised is suggested, while it is subjoined:

(Verse 22) For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.

14. Vain things bring a great evil upon those turning aside after them: because while they inordinately desire earthly things, they are forsaken by the highest and almighty God to sustain future torments. To these, therefore, who are prohibited from turning aside after vain things, the Prophet meritly promises back, saying: For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake. Because they who for his love despise vain things are delivered from true evils, and from the faith of the promise they receive the reward of the eternal inheritance. For the Lord makes his people whom he raises up to the joys of eternal beatitude. There indeed the revealed glory of his majesty presides over him, whom in the world he holds assumed from the love of vanity through hidden grace. To swear indeed to the Lord is to promise back; and that he makes them his people, the Lord swears, who does not turn aside after vain things: because earthly things are to be despised so that we may merit to obtain the goods of the eternal inheritance. Nor yet let anyone believe that he can be led to these things by these merits; because here it is strictly expressed: For his great name's sake. For it is not by our goodness, but of God it is done, that an earthly man should enjoy celestial goods. For it is the gift of God, not of ourselves. It follows:

(Vers. 23.) Absit autem a me hoc peccatum in Domino, ut cessem orare pro vobis.

15. Ille ista loquitur, cui superius de iis, quibus loquitur, Dominus ait: Non te abjecerunt, sed me, ne regnem super eos. Ecce abjicitur propheta, et abjicientibus se loquitur dicens: Absit a me hoc peccatum in Domino, ut cessem orare pro vobis. Equidem, si secundum Legis praeceptum hoc discutitur, peccatum non esset, si pro abjicientibus se non oraret. Nam Lex Moysi praecipit, dicens: Diliges proximum tuum, et odio habebis inimicum tuum (Levit. XIX, 18). Sed et qui prophetam abjiciebant, non amici, sed inimici exstiterant. Quid est ergo, quod dicit: Absit a me hoc peccatum, nisi quia vir sanctus ad charitatis verticem sublimatus, non solum diligebat amicos, sed ipsos etiam amplectebatur inimicos? Legis quidem veteris mandato instructus, sed novae gratiae fulgoribus illustratus, licentiam vetustatis Evangelica perfectione reprehendit. Quo nimirum in facto, nos nobiscum facere rationes cogimur. Hinc enim per Evangelium jubetur: Diligite inimicos vestros, benefacite iis, qui oderunt vos (Matth. V, 44). Quantum ergo nunc inimici diligendi sunt, cum praecipimur (Praefat. num. 6), si tunc amari potuere cum odio haberi jubebantur? Et quia non solum orare pro eis, sed eos erudire conabatur, subjungens, ait:

(Vers. 23.) Et docebo vos viam bonam, et rectam.

16. Cur enim viam divini obsequii bonam dicit, et rectam: cum bona non sit, si non sit recta; nec recta, si non sit bona? Sed bona fuit via, quia populus ab Aegypto ad terram promissionis ascendit, et tamen dum per eremum circuivit, recta non fuit. Bona ergo via est, qua ad supernam patriam tenditur: recta, qua facile pervenitur. Via ergo bona et recta est, cum ad religiosam vitam convertimur, divina obsequia cum instanti fervore magnae devotionis exercemus. Unde et bene eamdem viam Samuel exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 24.) Igitur timete Dominum, et servite ei in veritate, et ex toto corde vestro.

17. Haec quidem via bona et recta est: quia ad aeternam vitam tendit, et velociter pervenit. Per timorem quippe Domini devitantur mala; serviendo ei, ejus mandata complentur. Cui nimirum in veritate servimus, quando ejus praecepta pro sola superna retributione perficimus. Nam qui de bono opere temporalem mercedem expetit, Deo in veritate non servit, quem falso proposito in sua operatione non diligit. Qui autem in veritate Deo servire cupiunt, totum cor in divinis obsequiis ponere jubentur, ut sic quae Dei sunt agant, ut in mente aliquid quod contra Deum sit, non retineant.

(Verse 23) Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.

15. He speaks these things to whom the Lord above said concerning those to whom he speaks: They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. Behold the prophet is rejected, and to those rejecting him he speaks saying: God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you. Equally, if this is discussed according to the precept of the Law, it would not be a sin if he did not pray for those rejecting him. For the Law of Moses commands, saying: Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy (Lev. 19:18). But even those who rejected the prophet had stood forth not as friends, but as enemies. What is it therefore that he says: God forbid that I should sin, except because the holy man, sublimated to the summit of charity, not only loved friends, but even embraced those same enemies? Indeed, instructed by the mandate of the old Law, but illustrated by the splendors of the new grace, he reproves the license of antiquity with Evangelical perfection. In which fact, surely, we are compelled to make accounts with ourselves. For hence it is commanded through the Gospel: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you (Matt. 5:44). How much therefore are enemies to be loved now, when we are commanded (Preface num. 6), if they could be loved then when they were commanded to be held in hatred? And because he endeavored not only to pray for them, but to erudite them, subjoining, he says:

(Verse 23) And I will teach you the good and the right way.

Why therefore does he call the way of divine service good and right: since it would not be good if it were not right; nor right, if it were not good? But the way was good by which the people ascended from Egypt to the land of promise, and yet while it circled through the desert, it was not right. Therefore the way is good by which it is tended to the supernal country: right, by which it is easily reached. Therefore the way is good and right when we are converted to the religious life, we exercise divine services with the instant fervor of great devotion. Whence also Samuel well expounds the same way, saying:

(Verse 24) Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart.

17. This indeed is the good and right way: because it tends to eternal life, and quickly reaches it. For through the fear of the Lord evils are avoided; by serving him, his mandates are fulfilled. Whom surely we serve in truth when we perform his precepts for the sake of supernal retribution alone. For he who expects a temporal reward for a good work does not serve God in truth, whom he does not love with a false purpose in his operation. But those who desire to serve God in truth are commanded to put the whole heart in divine services, so that they may so do the things that are of God, that they retain nothing in the mind that is against God.

Haec profecto via non solum bona, sed recta est: quia ad salutem tendit, et victorem suum ad perfectionem velociter deducit. Velut enim altera via terrae repromissionis ostenditur bona, quae perducat; recta, quae diverticulum caveat. Per hanc quippe unusquisque tanto melius ad culmen virtutum pervenit, quanto per negligentiarum circuitus non divertit. Haec quidem via recta in illa exprimitur, per quam Dominus filios Israel ducere ad terram promissionis voluisse perhibetur. Voluit quippe illis labores deserti committere, ut nobis post unigeniti sui vestigia gradientibus cursum tanti itineris levigaret. Non enim adhuc audire poterant: Si vis 278 perfectus esse, vende quae habes, et da pauperibus, et sequere me; et habebis thesaurum in coelo (Matth. XIX, 21). Dum enim licentia rerum temporalium vetus populus per diversa discurreret, quasi per circuitum laboris ad terram promissionis cito duci non potuit. Ut ergo nobis novae vitae viam propheta insinuet, viam bonam et rectam esse dicit, et Deum metuere, et ei in veritate, et ex toto corde servire: quia ad sublimitatem divinae gratiae cito perveniunt, qui omnipotentem Deum et bono opere, et ferventibus desideriis inquirere non desistunt. Et quia eumdem populum ad audienda praedicationis verba per miraculum attentum fecerat, subdit:

(Vers. 24.) Vidistis enim magnifica, quae in nobis gesserit Dominus.

18. Quasi dicat: Ex iis, quae vidistis, colligite omnipotentem Deum quam terribiliter metuere, et quam devote ei semper servire debeatis. Quae profecto verba, si ad nos trahere volumus, tanto nobis est et venerabilius metuendum, et devotius Deo serviendum, quanto in Redemptore nostro mirabiliora perspeximus. Sed quia quod boni audiunt, audacter mali contemnunt, subjunxit, dicens: Quod si perseveraveritis in malitia, et vos et rex vester pariter peribitis.

CAPUT III.

(I Reg. XIII, 1.) Filius unius anni erat Saul, cum regnare coepisset: duobus autem annis regnavit super Israel.

1. Superius cum ordinandi regis negotium tractaretur, de eo, qui divino judicio praeferendus erat caeteris, dictum est, Quia erat electus, et bonus. Item de eo jam electo in regnum, et in medio populi statuto Samuel ait: Certe videtis, quem elegit Dominus, quoniam non est ei similis in omni populo (I Reg. IX, 24). De eodem item rege nunc dicitur: Filius unius anni erat Saul; ut dum attente laudatur, a Domino bonus electus fuisse sentiatur. Cur ergo unius anni esse dicitur, cum regnare coepisset, nisi ut ejus innocentia praedicetur?

This surely is a way not only good, but right: because it tends to salvation, and quickly leads its victor to perfection. For just as another way of the land of promise is shown good, which leads through; right, which avoids a bypass. For through this each one reaches the summit of virtues so much the better as he does not turn aside through the circuits of negligences. Indeed, this right way is expressed in that through which the Lord is said to have wished to lead the children of Israel to the land of promise. He wished surely to commit to them the labors of the desert, so that he might lighten for us, stepping after the footsteps of his only-begotten, the course of so great a journey. For they could not yet hear: If thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me (Matt. 19:21). For while the old people discoursed through diverse things by the license of temporal things, they could not be led quickly as if through a circuit of labor to the land of promise. So that the Prophet may suggest to us the way of the new life, he says that the way is good and right, and to fear God, and to serve him in truth and from the whole heart: because they quickly reach the sublimity of divine grace who do not cease to seek Almighty God both by good work and by fervent desires. And because he had made the same people attentive to hear the words of preaching through a miracle, he subjoins:

(Verse 24) For consider how great things he hath done for you.

18. As if he were to say: From these things which you have seen, gather how terribly you ought to fear Almighty God, and how devotedly you ought always to serve him. Which words surely, if we wish to draw them to ourselves, so much more is God to be feared venerably by us, and served more devotedly, as we have perceived more wonderful things in our Redeemer. But because what the good hear, the wicked boldly despise, he subjoined, saying: But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

CHAPTER III.

(1 Samuel 13:1) Saul was a son of one year when he began to reign; and when he had reigned two years over Israel.

1. Above, when the business of ordaining a king was treated, it was said of him who was to be preferred to the others by divine judgment: Because he was choice and good. Likewise concerning him already elected into the kingdom, and set in the midst of the people, Samuel says: Behold, see ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people (1 Sam. 10:24). Concerning the same king it is now said: Saul was a son of one year; so that while he is attentively praised, he may be perceived to have been elected good by the Lord. Why therefore is he said to be of one year when he began to reign, unless that his innocence may be preached?

Nam ad litteram, unius anni quomodo esse filius potuit, qui universo populo ab humero et sursum eminebat? Quod ergo secundum litteram intelligi non potest, intelligi per internae intelligentiae rationem debet. Unius itaque anni rex esse describitur, ut donum pueritiae in persona regis innocentiae bonum signet. Unde et aeterni regni filiis jubetur: Nolite pueri effici sensibus, sed malitia parvuli estote (I Cor. XIV, 20). Quod certe et Ecclesiarum pastoribus ipsa Veritas comminatur, dicens: Nisi conversi fueritis et efficiamini sicut parvuli, non intrabitis in regnum coelorum (Matth. XVIII, 3). De rege ergo, qui prius bonus, postea malus exstitit, dicitur: quia unius anni fuit, cum coepit regnare, et duobus annis regnavit. Licet enim multis annis regnaverit, illis solis regnare dicitur, in quibus innocens et humilis fuisse perhibetur. Nam postea superbus et inobediens audivit: Quia projecisti sermonem Domini, projecit te Dominus, ne sis rex (I Reg. XV, 26). Se quidem a regno projectum cognovit, et tamen projectus regnare non timuit. Quanta postea fortiter egit? Sed ecce omnia illa tempora ad regnum ei deputata non sunt. Illo ergo solum tempore nos vixisse gaudeamus, quo innocenter et humiliter viximus. Nam illa tempora, quae in saeculi vanitate, et fluxa carnis vita consumpsimus, quasi perdita minime memorantur. Sunt adhuc quoque, qui ad rapiendum culmen sanctae Ecclesiae ingeruntur: de quibus per prophetam 279 Dominus queritur, dicens:

(Vers. 2.) Et elegit Saul tria millia de Israel, et erant cum Saul duo millia in Magmas, et in monte Bethel; mille autem cum Jonatha in Gabaa Benjamin.

2. Millenarius numerus, qui a centenario decies collecto perficitur, summam perfectionis insinuat. Qui profecto cum ter repetitur, in eo electorum perfectiones variae designantur. Saul ergo tria millia virorum de Israel elegit: quia praedicator veritatis ad defensionem sanctae Ecclesiae non infirmos et debiles, sed robustos et validos bellatores ducit. Tria quippe millia esse perhibentur: quia in summa perfectionis facie, virgines proferunt: juxta quos et continentes, et veritatis defensores ponunt. Dum enim exemplo virginum ad summam incorruptionis alios accendunt, dum continentium vita alios a saeculi corruptionibus auferunt, dum humilium debilitatem per auxilia potentium defendunt, contra hostes sanctae Ecclesiae boni doctores quasi cum tribus electorum virorum millibus veniunt.

For literally, how could he be a son of one year, who stood out from the shoulder and upward above all the people? What therefore cannot be understood according to the letter, ought to be understood through the reason of internal intelligence. Thus he is described as a king of one year, so that the gift of childhood in the person of the king may sign the good of innocence. Whence also it is commanded to the children of the eternal kingdom: Be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children (1 Cor. 14:20). Which certainly Truth itself threatens even to the pastors of the Churches, saying: Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:3). Concerning the king, therefore, who was first good and afterwards stood forth as evil, it is said: that he was of one year when he began to reign, and reigned for two years. For although he reigned for many years, he is said to reign in those alone in which he is recorded to have been innocent and humble. For afterwards, being proud and disobedient, he heard: Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord hath also rejected thee from being king (1 Sam. 15:26). He indeed knew himself rejected from the kingdom, and yet being rejected he did not fear to reign. How many things did he afterwards act strongly? But behold, all those times are not deputed to him for the kingdom. Let us therefore rejoice to have lived in that time alone in which we lived innocently and humbly. For those times which we consumed in the vanity of the world, and the fleeting life of the flesh, are by no means remembered, as if lost. There are also still those who are thrust in to seize the summit of the holy Church: concerning whom the Lord complains through the Prophet, saying: ...

Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin.

2. The number one thousand, which is completed by collecting a hundred ten times, suggests the height of perfection. When this is indeed repeated three times, various perfections of the elect are designated in it. Saul, therefore, chose three thousand men of Israel: because the preacher of truth leads not the weak and feeble to the defense of the holy Church, but robust and strong warriors. Indeed, they are said to be three thousand: because in the peak of the state of perfection, they bring forth virgins: next to whom they place both the continent and the defenders of truth. For while by the example of virgins they inflame others to the height of incorruption, while by the life of the continent they take others away from the corruptions of the world, while they defend the weakness of the humble through the aids of the powerful, good teachers come against the enemies of the holy Church as if with three thousand chosen men.

Viri autem dicuntur pro fortitudine, de Israel esse referuntur pro divina contemplatione. In summo enim defectionis numero contineri non potest, qui aut virtute caret magni operis, aut notitia internae visionis. Quid est quod alii cum Saul, alii cum Jonatha ex electis viris esse perhibentur? Sed et ipsa locorum nomina, in quibus esse dicuntur, mysteriis vacua credenda non sunt. Jonathas, qui filius regis esse describitur, et partem bellatorum habet, eos profecto insinuat, qui in praedicationis ministerio doctorum adjutores sunt. Filii quippe eorum sunt: quia vehementer eos diligunt, quorum ministerio Deo generantur. Sed parti bellatorum praesunt: quia sanctae Ecclesiae curam gerunt, et exemplo alios, alios vero exhortationibus ad amorem virtutum provehunt. Quasi enim magnus rex filium in exercitum miserat, qui Corinthiis loquebatur, dicens: Ideo misi ad vos Timotheum, qui est filius meus charissimus, et fidelis, in Domino: qui vos commonefaciat vias meas, quae sunt in Christo Jesu, sicut in omnibus Ecclesiis sanctorum doceo (I Cor. IV, 17). Hinc item dicit: Cum venerit Timotheus, videte ut sine timore sit apud vos: opus enim Domini operatur, sicut ego (I Cor. XVI, 10).

3. Jonathas vero cum mille viris in Gabaa Benjamin esse dicitur, Saul autem cum duobus millibus in Magmas, et in monte Bethel. Gabaa, ut saepe jam diximus, sublimis interpretatur: Magmas, humilitas; Bethel, domus Dei; Saul, petitio; Jonathas, columbae donum dicitur. Tria vero millia virorum electorum de Israel, ad virgines, et continentes, et veritatis defensores retulimus. Dum ergo columbae donum Jonathas dicitur, et in Gabaa, id est sublimi, mille cum eo esse viri perhibentur: quid aliud, quam illos insinuat, qui lucidissimo virginitatis exemplo, aliis praebent ejusdem normam pudoris? Bene autem columbae donum, institutor virginum dicitur: quia incomparabili gratia Spiritus sancti efficitur, ut a manentibus in carne, carnis corruptio nesciatur. Bene et in sublimi esse virgines dicuntur: quia quod naturam humanam supergreditur, in altissimo virtutum culmine situm est. Unde et virgo ille dilectus Jesu locum virginum insinuans, ait: Vidi supra montem Sion agnum stantem, et cum eo centum quadraginta quatuor millia, habentia nomen ejus, et nomen patris ejus scriptum in frontibus suis (Apoc. XIV, 1). Quos etiam ex luce propriae conversationis insinuat, dicens: Hi sunt, qui cum mulieribus non sunt coinquinati, virgines enim sunt, et sequuntur agnum quocumque ierit (Ibid., 4). In monte quidem esse cum agno dicuntur; quia per meritum incorruptionis, quo a terrenis et carnalibus delectationibus se dividunt, in superna Redemptoris gloria sublimantur.

Moreover, they are called men for their fortitude, and are related to be of Israel for their divine contemplation. For one cannot be contained in the highest number of perfection who lacks either the virtue of great work or the knowledge of internal vision. Why is it that some are said to be with Saul, and others with Jonathan from the chosen men? But even the names of the places themselves in which they are said to be must not be believed to be empty of mysteries. Jonathan, who is described as being the son of the king and has a portion of the warriors, indeed suggests those who are assistants to the teachers in the ministry of preaching. They are certainly their children: because they love them vehemently, by whose ministry they are begotten for God. But they preside over a part of the warriors: because they take care of the holy Church, and by example to some, and by exhortations to others, they promote them to the love of virtues. For it is as if the great king had sent his son into the army, who spoke to the Corinthians, saying: Therefore I sent to you Timothy, who is my most dear and faithful son in the Lord: who may remind you of my ways which are in Christ Jesus, as I teach in all the Churches of the saints (1 Cor. 4:17). Hence he likewise says: When Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear: for he works the work of the Lord, as I do (1 Cor. 16:10).

3. Now Jonathan is said to be with a thousand men in Gibeah of Benjamin, but Saul with two thousand in Michmash and in mount Bethel. Gibeah, as we have often said already, is interpreted as "lofty"; Michmash, "humility"; Bethel, "house of God"; Saul is called "petition"; Jonathan, "gift of the dove". Indeed, we related the three thousand chosen men of Israel to the virgins, the continent, and the defenders of truth. Therefore, while Jonathan is called the gift of the dove, and a thousand men are said to be with him in Gibeah, that is, the lofty place: what else does he suggest than those who, by the most clear example of virginity, offer to others the norm of the same modesty? Well is he called the gift of the dove, the institutor of virgins: because it is brought about by the incomparable grace of the Holy Spirit that the corruption of the flesh is unknown by those remaining in the flesh. Well also are the virgins said to be in a lofty place: because that which surpasses human nature is situated at the highest peak of virtues. Whence also that beloved virgin of Jesus, suggesting the place of virgins, says: I saw upon mount Sion a lamb standing, and with him a hundred forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his father written in their foreheads (Apoc. 14:1). Whom he also suggests from the light of their own conversation, saying: These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins, and they follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth (ibid., 4). They are indeed said to be with the lamb on the mountain; because through the merit of incorruption, by which they separate themselves from earthly and carnal delights, they are sublimated in the supernal glory of the Redeemer.

Cum Saul vero duo millia esse dicuntur in Magmas, et in monte Bethel. Magmas quae humilitas interpretatur, quid aliud, quam continentium ruborem significat? Nam dum praeterita carnis oblectamenta recolunt, erubescunt. Sed quia viri fortes sunt, cum Saul esse referuntur; et dum experta saeculi blandimenta despiciunt, exemplo suae virtutis innumeros alios ad ejusdem saeculi contemptum trahunt. Sed tamen Magmas inhabitant: quia dum recolunt, quales fuerunt in saeculo, superbire non possunt, de eo, quod magnos se vident esse in Deo. Qui bene cum Saul esse referuntur, qui petitio dicitur. Praedicator etenim veritatis tantae charitatis esse debet, ut instanti desiderio non petitor, sed petitio esse sentiatur. Salutem quippe fidelium tam instantius debet appetere, ut ex usu interni gustus, omnem motum cordis in affectum ducat supplicationis. Cum quo mille viri sunt: quia perfectiores auditores cum electis doctoribus in charitate conveniunt, et pro salute fidelium omnipotentem Dominum communiter deprecantur. In Magmas ergo cum rege sunt: quia humilitatem pro se incolunt; ut exaudiri pro aliis mereantur. Sed dum electus doctor omnibus subditis utiliter praeest, omnium virtutes ad victoriae coronas promovet. Nam cum humilibus supplicat, cum fortibus pugnat, cum remotis viris, orationibus insistit, cum expositis Ecclesiae defensoribus, debiles et infirmos protegit. Bene ergo non solum in Magmas, sed in monte Bethel esse cum Saul in bellatorum millibus dicuntur: quia praedicator Ecclesiae sicut diversis ordinibus electorum praeeminet, ita eorum esse cooperator debet. Bethel quippe, id est Dei domum custodiunt, qui verbi auctoritate sanctam defendunt Ecclesiam. Cum quibusque tyrannis voce liberae auctoritatis obviant, cum contra hujus saeculi potentes se erigunt, cum pro defensione humilium, saeculi hujus potestatibus contradicunt, Bethel domum Dei quasi regis bellatores custodiunt. Qui certe cum Saul esse referuntur: quia in defensione Ecclesiae magnorum doctorum coadjutores sunt.

Bene autem de reliquis dicitur: (Vers. 2.) Porro caeterum populum remisit unumquemque in tabernacula sua.

4. Caeterum populum dicit, quem millenarius numerus non concludit. In tabernacula quisque sua remittitur, quia ad summa et fortia opera infirmi, et imperfecti producendi non sunt. Nam nec continentes, nec virgines, nec martyres fieri debiles possunt. Illis quidem, ut ad eos praeterita carnis oblectamenta non redeant: istis, ut inexperta carnis blandimenta contemnant; illis, ut adversa mundi non metuant, maxima fortitudo necessaria est.

But two thousand are said to be with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel. Michmash, which is interpreted as humility, what else does it signify than the blush of the continent? For while they recall past delights of the flesh, they blush. But because they are strong men, they are related to be with Saul; and while they despise the experienced allurements of the world, by the example of their virtue they draw countless others to the contempt of the same world. But nevertheless they inhabit Michmash: because while they recall what they were like in the world, they cannot be proud of that which they see themselves to be great in God. Who are well related to be with Saul, who is called "petition". For the preacher of truth ought to be of such great charity that by instant desire he is felt to be not a petitioner, but a petition. Indeed, he ought to desire the salvation of the faithful so instantly that, from the habit of internal taste, he leads every movement of the heart into the affect of supplication. With whom there are a thousand men: because more perfect hearers agree in charity with chosen teachers, and commonly pray to the Almighty Lord for the salvation of the faithful. They are therefore in Michmash with the king: because they inhabit humility for themselves, so that they may merit to be heard for others. But while the chosen teacher profitably presides over all subjects, he promotes the virtues of all to the crowns of victory. For he supplicates with the humble, he fights with the strong, he persists in prayers with secluded men, and he protects the weak and feeble with the exposed defenders of the Church. Well, therefore, are they said to be with Saul among the thousands of warriors not only in Michmash but in mount Bethel: because the preacher of the Church, just as he excels the diverse orders of the elect, so he ought to be their cooperator. For they guard Bethel, that is, the house of God, who defend the holy Church by the authority of the word. When they encounter any tyrants with the voice of free authority, when they raise themselves against the powerful of this world, when for the defense of the humble they contradict the powers of this world, they guard Bethel, the house of God, like the king's warriors. These certainly are related to be with Saul: because they are the co-helpers of great teachers in the defense of the Church.

But of the rest it is well said: (Verse 2) But the rest of the people he sent away, every man to his tent.

4. He speaks of the rest of the people, whom the number of a thousand does not include. Every man is sent back to his own tent, because the weak and the imperfect are not to be brought forth to the highest and strong works. For neither the continent, nor virgins, nor martyrs can be made from the feeble. To the former indeed, so that past delights of the flesh may not return to them; to the latter, so that they may despise the unexperienced allurements of the flesh; to the former, so that they may not fear the adversities of the world, the greatest fortitude is necessary.

In tabernacula ergo sua caetera plebs remittitur, ne de altioris vitae temeritate damnetur, et velut debilis et infirma in bello pereat, dum altae conversationis fidem spondet, quae altae virtutis robur non habet. Quasi enim unumquemque in tabernacula sua dimittebat beatus Paulus apostolus, cum dicebat: Propter fornicationem unusquisque uxorem suam habeat, et unaquaeque suum virum (I Cor. VII, 2). Velut enim peritus magister internae militiae, et coronas victoriae, et pugnae considerans gravitatem, militum vires in belli pondere librabat, optimum judicans infirmis, ut in urbibus viverent, ne acerbo marte perirent. Quare et item eos a castris fortium segregans, ait: Revertimini in idipsum, ne tentet vos Satanas propter incontinentiam vestram (Ibid., 5). Sed remotis debilibus, quid in fortissima virginum acie agatur, exponitur, cum subjungitur: (Vers. 3.) Et percussit Jonathas stationem Philistinorum, quae erat in Gabaa.

5. Sicut excellit ordine sponsi acies, ita et victoriae titulos prima suscepit. Jonathas quippe stationem Philistinorum percutit: quia electa virginitas de carne, continentiae arce sublimata, motus turpes exstinguit. Bene autem statio Philistinorum dicitur: quia in corpore virginali, carnales motus non habent requiem delectationis, sed statum certaminis. Stant quippe: quia impugnant, sed requiescere non possunt: quia mentem sanctam minime oblectant. Statio ergo Philistinorum in Gabaa percutitur, quando ab electis virginibus carnis desideria penitus enervantur, et pacem triumphi obtinent, dum solita bella non habent. Ad quam profecto victoriam, quia majorum exhortatione saepe proficiunt, mille viri in Gabaa cum Jonatha sunt: sed Jonathas percutere Philistinorum castra perhibetur. Et quia exemplo aliorum, saepe alii ad aemulationem virtutis excitantur, sequitur: (Vers. 3, 4.) Et percussit Jonathas stationem Philistinorum, quae erat in Gabaa. Quod cum audissent Philistaei, Saul cecinit buccina in omni terra, dicens: Audiant Hebraei. Et universus Israel audivit hujuscemodi famam. Percussit Saul stationem Philistinorum, et erexit se Israel adversus Philistaeos. Clamavit ergo populus post Saul in Galgala.

7. Superius rex Saul tria millia virorum sibi elegisse describitur. Si ergo partes utriusque exercitus conferre volumus, contra unumquemque virum Saul, decem currus Philistinorum, et duo equites deputantur. Decies enim tria millia, triginta millia sunt. In senario quoque numero ternarius geminatur. Quo nimirum bello occultorum hostium tam multitudo, quam feritas designatur. In curribus quidem et equis contra nos veniunt: quia modo malas cogitationes electorum cordibus, modo eorum corporeis sensibus rerum visibilium blandimenta noxia offerre moliuntur.

Therefore the rest of the common people are sent back to their own tents, lest they be condemned for the rashness of a higher life, and like the weak and feeble perish in war, while they pledge the faith of a high conversation which does not have the strength of high virtue. For the blessed Apostle Paul was sending away every man to his own tent, as it were, when he said: Because of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband (1 Cor. 7:2). For like a skilled master of internal warfare, considering both the crowns of victory and the gravity of the fight, he weighed the strength of the soldiers in the weight of war, judging it best for the weak to live in cities, lest they perish in bitter Mars. Wherefore also segregating them from the camps of the strong, he says: Return together again, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency (ibid., 5). But with the feeble removed, what is done in the most strong battle line of virgins is explained, when there is added: (Verse 3) And Jonathan struck the garrison of the Philistines, which was in Gibeah.

5. Just as the bridegroom's battle line excels in order, so it first received the titles of victory. For Jonathan strikes the garrison of the Philistines: because chosen virginity of the flesh, sublimated from the citadel of continence, extinguishes shameful movements. Well, moreover, is it called a garrison of the Philistines: because in the virginal body, carnal movements do not have the rest of delight, but the state of a struggle. For they stand: because they attack, but they cannot rest: because they please the holy mind least of all. Therefore the garrison of the Philistines in Gibeah is struck when the desires of the flesh are inwardly weakened by chosen virgins, and they obtain the peace of triumph, while they do not have the usual wars. To which victory indeed, because they often profit by the exhortation of their elders, a thousand men are in Gibeah with Jonathan: but Jonathan is said to strike the camps of the Philistines. And because by the example of some, others are often excited to the emulation of virtue, there follows: (Verses 3, 4) And Jonathan struck the garrison of the Philistines, which was in Gibeah. Which when the Philistines had heard, Saul sounded the trumpet in all the land, saying: Let the Hebrews hear. And all Israel heard such a report as this. Saul struck the garrison of the Philistines, and Israel raised itself against the Philistines. Therefore the people cried after Saul in Gilgal.

7. Above, King Saul is described as having chosen three thousand men for himself. If, therefore, we wish to compare the parts of each army, ten chariots of the Philistines and two horsemen are assigned against each man of Saul. For ten times three thousand are thirty thousand. In the number six also the number three is doubled. By which war, indeed, both the multitude and the ferocity of the hidden enemies are designated. They come against us in chariots and horses: because at one time they strive to offer evil thoughts to the hearts of the elect, at another time harmful allurements of visible things to their bodily senses.

Equi namque ad cursum celeres sunt, ad impetum fortes. Quibus nimirum cogitationes malae apte comparantur, quae ad cor velociter veniunt, et fortiter pungunt. Equites contra nos in praelium veniunt, quando maligni spiritus nobis malas cogitationes et celeriter excitant, et nos per eas fortiter impugnant. Sed contra unumquemque fidelium duo equites veniunt: quia si occultas reproborum spirituum insidias in considerationis summam colligimus, illud eorum speciale propositum est: ut videlicet nobis principalem virtutem feriant, et charitatem Dei et proximi penitus exstinguant. Equus vero unus saevire cernitur, quando reproba cogitatione nobis malignus spiritus suggerit, ut proximus odio habeatur. Sed equus, qui solus cernitur, solus non est: quia Deum nemo diligit, qui fratrem odit (I Joan. IV, 20). Quia item divina charitas cum nullo principali vitio in mente convenit, quoties spirituale vitium nobis daemonum fraude suggeritur, equitum saevientium cavere debemus velocitatem nimiam et ferocitatem violentam.

In comparatione quidem equitis, sagittari aut peditis ictus omnimodo debilis est. Impetus vero equitis, equi viribus violentus est: quia nimirum virtus maligni spiritus nulla est in electorum certamine, si ipse residere non permittitur in mala cogitatione. Quia ergo valde fortes in bello hostes nostri sunt, quando insidere internis cogitationibus permittuntur, in Philistinorum exercitu equitum turba numeratur. Currus vero decem unicuique electo in praelium deputantur. Quinque enim nobis sunt sensus corporis, quibus experimentum accipimus delectationis. Sed spiritus maligni, quando per blandimenta carnis mentem decipere gestiunt, corporeis sensibus rerum species ostendunt quas caro appetat, et per earumdem rerum species suggerit, ut mens oblata concupiscat. Quasi enim in rotis suis currum adversarius erigit, dum hinc rerum blandimenta offert, inde cogitationes retinet; ista porrigit, illas immittit, et quasi volvendo se sublimem ad animam invehit, dum contra electos se malignus spiritus erigit, et per blandimenta rerum et per artem suggestionum. Decem ergo currus sunt: quia contra singulos sensus corporis nostri habent species blandimentorum visibilium, habent contra totidem sensus animae, et deceptorias artes suasionum.

8. Quid est autem quod reliquum vulgus sicut arena, quae est in littore maris, esse plurima memoratur, nisi quia ad ducatum malorum spirituum, innumerabilis saevit contra nos turba vitiorum? Velut enim subjectum vulgus, currus et equites sequitur, quando daemonum insidiae mentem impugnando praeveniunt: ut a subsequentibus vitiis, quasi ab irrationabilis vulgi multitudine, devastetur.

For horses are swift for running and strong for onset. To which, indeed, evil thoughts are aptly compared, which come swiftly to the heart and prick strongly. Horsemen come into battle against us when evil spirits both swiftly excite evil thoughts in us and strongly attack us through them. But two horsemen come against each of the faithful: because if we collect the hidden snares of the reprobate spirits into the sum of consideration, that special purpose of theirs is: namely, that they may strike the principal virtue in us, and utterly extinguish the charity of God and neighbor. Indeed, one horse is seen to rage when by a reprobate thought an evil spirit suggests to us that our neighbor should be hated. But the horse which is seen alone is not alone: because no one loves God who hates his brother (1 John 4:20). Because likewise divine charity does not agree with any principal vice in the mind, as often as a spiritual vice is suggested to us by the fraud of demons, we ought to beware of the excessive speed and violent ferocity of the raging horsemen.

In comparison with a horseman, indeed, the blow of an archer or a footman is in every way weak. But the onset of a horseman is violent with the strength of the horse: because, indeed, the virtue of the evil spirit is nothing in the contest of the elect if he himself is not permitted to reside in an evil thought. Because, therefore, our enemies are very strong in war when they are permitted to sit upon internal thoughts, a crowd of horsemen is numbered in the army of the Philistines. But ten chariots are assigned to each chosen one in battle. For we have five senses of the body by which we receive the experience of delight. But evil spirits, when they desire to deceive the mind through the allurements of the flesh, show to the bodily senses the species of things which the flesh may desire, and through the species of the same things suggest that the mind should covet what is offered. For the adversary raises a chariot on its wheels, as it were, while on one side he offers the allurements of things, on the other he holds the thoughts; he offers these, he sends in those, and as if by rolling he carries himself lofty to the soul, while the evil spirit raises himself against the elect both through the allurements of things and through the art of suggestions. Therefore there are ten chariots: because against each of our bodily senses they have species of visible allurements, and they have against as many senses of the soul both deceptive arts of persuasions.

8. But what is it that the rest of the people are mentioned to be very many, like the sand which is on the seashore, unless because, under the leadership of evil spirits, an innumerable crowd of vices rages against us? For just as the subject common people follow the chariots and horsemen, when the snares of demons precede by attacking the mind: so that it may be devastated by the subsequent vices, as if by a multitude of irrational common people.

Bene autem prius currus et equites, deinde vulgi numerositas in spirituali sanctorum pugna describitur: quia nimirum nulla est numerositas, nulla fortitudo vitiorum, si excitando et immittendo non praecedat hanc malignorum turba spirituum. Quibus etiam verbis innuitur, quam cauta et circumspecta semper esse debeat vita sanctorum. Nam si vulgus reliquum arenae maris plurimae comparatur, innumerabilis et fere inevitabilis est multitudo jaculorum. Quamvis enim peritis fidelibus omnia nota sint vitia, quantis tamen cor motibus pulsent, quibus modis, aut quibus causis semper ad cor veniant, omnino scire non possunt. Apertas quidem tentationum tenebras potenter abjiciunt; sed saepe caliginem ignorantiae in rebus levioribus quasi arenae minutias non evadunt. Semper fortitudinem ostendunt boni operis, sed qui magnos exercitus equitum magna virtute superant, linguam penitus ab omni superflua locutione non refrenant. Continuo usu corpus in Dei omnipotentis servitio dirigunt; sed eorum mens, quae foris membra perfecte ordinat, cogitationes superfluas aliquando nequaquam vitat. Quid enim aliud tunc, quam vulgi importunam multitudinem sentiunt, qui currus et equites magna virtute prostraverunt?

9. Sed doctor egregius dicit: Diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum (Rom. VIII, 28). Permittit quidem Deus electos suos magnis tentationibus impeti, ut magnificentissime in coelesti regno debeant coronari: sed magna praelia permittit, quae vincant; levia excitat, in quibus cadant: ut victoria fortium magna sit, casus innoxius; ut cadentes se facile erigant, et eos fortia, in quibus victores steterant, non extollant. Nam si currus, et equites vincimus, extolli de victoria non debemus: quia innumerabilia sunt, quae cogitando, loquendo, vivendo, gustando, et audiendo, et operando committimus. Hujus namque vulgi innumerabilis tela, etiam ille vitare non poterat, qui dicebat: In multis offendimus omnes (Jac. III, 2). Hinc item dilectus Jesu loquitur, dicens: Si dixerimus, quia peccatum non habemus, ipsi nos seducimus, et veritas in nobis non est (I Joan. I, 8). Quis ergo jam quasi victor extolli audeat, si tanti viri peccatorum tela se omnino evadere non posse manifestant?

Sed quia haec in spirtuali bello describuntur, non debemus nunc aestimare, quid patimur, sed qualiter hostium nostrorum impetum infirmare valeamus. Vulgus Philistinorum arenae comparatur, quae est in littore maris plurima: quia omnis virtus vitiorum et numerus ex saeculi perturbationibus augetur. Mare quippe hoc saeculum designat: quia dum magna rerum et temporum varietate impellitur, quasi ventis furentibus perturbatur. In littore autem, quando impulsa maris aqua refunditur, innumerabiles arenae minutiae glomerantur.

But well are first the chariots and horsemen, and then the numerosity of the common people described in the spiritual fight of the saints: because, indeed, there is no numerosity, no strength of vices, if this crowd of evil spirits does not precede by exciting and sending them in. By which words also it is hinted how cautious and circumspect the life of the saints ought always to be. For if the rest of the common people are compared to the very many sand of the sea, the multitude of darts is innumerable and almost inevitable. For although all vices may be known to the skilled faithful, yet with how many movements they strike the heart, in what ways, or for what causes they always come to the heart, they cannot entirely know. They indeed powerfully cast away the open darkness of temptations; but often they do not escape the mist of ignorance in lighter things, as if the particles of sand. They always show the fortitude of good work, but those who overcome great armies of horsemen with great virtue, do not inwardly restrain their tongue from every superfluous speech. By continual use they direct the body in the service of Almighty God; but their mind, which perfectly orders the members without, sometimes by no means avoids superfluous thoughts. For what else do they then feel than the importunate multitude of the common people, who have prostrated chariots and horsemen with great virtue?

9. But the excellent teacher says: To them that love God, all things work together unto good (Rom. 8:28). God indeed permits his elect to be attacked by great temptations, so that they may be most magnificently crowned in the heavenly kingdom: but he permits great battles, which they may win; he excites light ones, in which they may fall: so that the victory of the strong may be great, and the fall harmless; so that when falling they may easily raise themselves, and those strong things in which they had stood as victors may not extol them. For if we overcome chariots and horsemen, we ought not to be extolled by the victory: because there are innumerable things which we commit by thinking, speaking, living, tasting, and hearing, and working. For even he could not avoid the darts of this innumerable common people who said: In many things we all offend (James 3:2). Hence also the beloved of Jesus speaks, saying: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). Who then would now dare to be extolled as a victor, if such great men manifest that they cannot entirely escape the darts of sins?

But because these are described in a spiritual war, we ought not now to estimate what we suffer, but how we may be able to weaken the onset of our enemies. The common people of the Philistines are compared to the sand, which is very much on the seashore: because every power and number of vices is increased from the perturbations of the world. For the sea designates this world: because while it is driven by a great variety of things and times, it is perturbed as if by raging winds. But on the shore, when the driven water of the sea is poured back, innumerable particles of sand are gathered.

Quid est ergo littus maris, nisi cor uniuscujusque in spirituali conversatione negligentis? Per ordinem quippe religionis, quasi in solido stare cernitur; sed dum saeculares cogitationes non reprimit, quasi frangentes in se maris fluctus excipit, et cumulos arenarum: et inde quidem impelli fluctibus, et obrui arena potest, unde mari appropinquare non timet: quia si saeculi cogitationes spiritualium rerum contemplatione reprimeret, vitia mentis et corporis, quae saeculi occupatio velut arenas et fluctus invehit, non sentiret. Cur ergo vulgus hostium arenae simile esse dicitur, nisi quia maligni spiritus eisdem vitiis electos Christi athletas impugnant, quibus negligentes superant? Cum turba quidem saecularis strepitus contra eos veniunt, qui saeculum in suis delectationibus spernere tota mente didicerunt. Pompas rerum visibilium formant, contemptum jam saeculi amorem fingendo renovant: ut corda superno amore flammantia, ad noxias delectationes trahant. Sed sancti viri, quia innumerabilem hanc nequam cogitationum turbam de saeculi pelago prodire considerant, saeculum tota mente fugiendo, fieri littora maris vitant, et tantum vulgus hostium jam non timent: quia dum in intima contemplatione se retinent, vitiorum turba ad eos accessum habere non potest.

Sequitur: (Vers. 5.) Et ascendentes, castrametati sunt in Magmas ad orientem Bethaven.

10. Malignis spiritibus ascendere, est ad decipienda sanctorum corda, per coeleste desiderium alta conari. Bene autem dicitur: Castrametati sunt in Magmas: quia in illis cordibus resident, quae in alto amore coelestium sublimata non vident. Magmas quippe humilitas interpretatur. Humiliari vero in sacro eloquio pro defectu saepe virtutis accipitur. Unde et in hac eadem regum historia Thamar David regis filia, quam violasse Amon brater ejus legitur, humiliata perhibetur. Corrupta quidem humiliata est: quia sublimis steterat virgo, et dum altum honoris virginei culmen perdidit, velut de sublimi ad planum et humilem locum venit (II Reg. XIII). De futura etiam superborum depressione dicitur: Omnis, qui se exaltat, humiliabitur (Luc. XIV, 11): quia in examine superni judicis corruunt, qui vane de hujus saeculi sublimitate gloriantur.

Bene ergo in Magmas castra ponere Philistaei perhibentur: quia per iniqua consilia in eis daemonia habitant, qui alta virtutum culmina tenere non curant. Nam dum terrena quaerunt, velut plana et humilia incolunt, ubi invisibiles hostes castra ponere leviter possunt. De quibus nimirum hostibus per prophetam dicitur: Qui dicunt animae tuae: Incurvare, ut transeamus (Isai. LI, 23).

What then is the seashore, but the heart of each one negligent in spiritual conversation? Indeed, by the order of religion, he is seen to stand as if on solid ground; but while he does not restrain secular thoughts, he receives the waves of the sea breaking upon him, as it were, and heaps of sands: and he can indeed be driven by the waves and overwhelmed by the sand from where he does not fear to approach the sea: because if he restrained the thoughts of the world by the contemplation of spiritual things, he would not feel the vices of mind and body, which the occupation of the world carries in like sands and waves. Why then is the crowd of enemies said to be like sand, unless because evil spirits attack the chosen athletes of Christ with the same vices by which they overcome the negligent? They come with a crowd of secular noise against those who have learned to despise the world in its delights with their whole mind. They form pomps of visible things, they renew the already despised love of the world by feigning: so that they may draw hearts flaming with supernal love to harmful delights. But holy men, because they consider that this innumerable crowd of wicked thoughts comes forth from the abyss of the world, by fleeing the world with their whole mind, avoid becoming seashores, and no longer fear such a crowd of enemies: because while they restrain themselves in internal contemplation, the crowd of vices cannot have access to them.

There follows: (Verse 5) And they went up and encamped in Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven.

10. For evil spirits to ascend is to attempt high things through heavenly desire for the purpose of deceiving the hearts of the saints. But it is well said: They encamped in Michmash: because they reside in those hearts which they do not see sublimated in the high love of heavenly things. For Michmash is interpreted as humility. But to be humbled in holy eloquence is often taken for a defect of virtue. Whence also in this same history of the kings, Tamar the daughter of King David, whom her brother Amnon is read to have violated, is said to have been humbled. Being corrupted, she was indeed humbled: because she had stood a lofty virgin, and when she lost the high summit of virginal honor, she came as it were from a lofty to a flat and humble place (2 Sam. 13). Concerning the future depression of the proud it is also said: Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled (Luke 14:11): because they fall in the examination of the supernal Judge who glory vainly in the loftiness of this world.

Well therefore are the Philistines said to pitch their camps in Michmash: because through wicked counsels demons inhabit those who do not care to hold the high summits of virtues. For while they seek earthly things, they inhabit flat and humble places, as it were, where the invisible enemies can easily pitch their camps. Concerning which enemies indeed it is said through the Prophet: Who say to thy soul: Bow down, that we may pass over (Isa. 51:23).

Erecta quidem sublimis est anima, incurvata humilis: quia per virtutum celsitudinem, est per coeleste desiderium in alta sustollitur: sed quando ad vitia, vel ad saeculi amorem defluit, illuc quidem cadit, ubi hanc hostis irruens leviter atterit. Dicunt ergo animae tuae: incurvare, ut transeamus: quia si hanc ad agenda, vel cogitanda terrena non humiliant, nec malignis persuasionibus penetrant, nec vitiorum bello perturbant.

11. Hinc ergo colligere possumus, quantum a saeculo actu, verbo et cogitatione longe fieri debeamus. Verba quippe nostra, cogitationes, et opera plana et humilia sunt, quando saecularia. Per haec quidem ibi sumus, ubi occultorum hostium castra libere ponuntur, ubi tanto facilius capi possumus, quanto nulla munitionis arce sublevamur. Quis enim jam fidelis nesciat: quia culpas verborum, cogitationum, et operum nostrorum colligant, et ad accusationem nostram in adventu venturi judicis servent? Unde et hunc humilem atque despectum locum Magmas fugiendum nobis esse Dominus insinuans, dicit: Omne verbum otiosum, quod locuti fuerint homines, reddent rationem in die judicii (Matth. XII, 36). Locus ergo hostium humilis dicitur; ut profecto nobis insinuet, quia verbo, cogitatione et opere semper sublimes esse debeamus.

Et quia dum in humili remissioris vitae suae loco reprobi capiuntur, exempla pravitatis ostendunt, quae aliis imitanda proponantur: ab oriente Bethaven Magmas esse dicitur. Ab oriente quidem solis lucem oriri cernimus. Reproborum autem vita, quamquam veritatem obscuritatis habeat; qui hanc tamen pro vana saeculi delectatione semper appetunt, nimirum velut falsae lucis splendore falluntur. Unde et per beatum Job dicitur: Auferetur ab impiis lux sua (Job. XXXVIII, 15). Modo quidem velut lucidum eis placet blandimentum saeculi; sed dum de saeculo exeunt, perpetuas subibunt tenebras, quas lucem esse crediderunt. Tunc videbunt quia lux non fuit, quando in adversitatem prosperitas, lux in tenebras, risus in moerorem, dulcedo in vermem, decor in deformitatem, honor in dedecus, blandimenta in poenas et aeterna tormenta commutantur.

Haec profecto, quia nunc impiorum corda non sentiunt, bonorum mores imitari refugiunt; et exemplo perditorum, quidquid de saeculo eis placet, sumere nequaquam timent: quia illos imitantur, qui per vitam reprobam habitacula daemonum facti sunt. Unde et merito domus inutilis dicuntur: quia saepe sanctorum praedicationem suscipiunt, sed verbum quod ab eorum ore audiunt, in se habitare per amorem nequaquam patiuntur. Inutilis ergo domus sunt: quia aptam in se Deo habitationem non faciunt.

An upright soul is indeed lofty, a bowed one is humble: because through the loftiness of virtues and through heavenly desire it is raised up into high things: but when it flows down to vices or to the love of the world, it falls indeed to that place where the rushing enemy easily treads it down. Therefore they say to thy soul: Bow down, that we may pass over: because if they do not humble it to earthly actions or thoughts, they neither penetrate it with evil persuasions, nor perturb it with the war of vices.

11. Hence, therefore, we can gather how far we ought to be from the world in act, word, and thought. For our words, thoughts, and works are flat and humble when they are secular. Through these, indeed, we are in that place where the camps of hidden enemies are freely pitched, where we can be captured so much more easily as we are not raised up by any citadel of fortification. For what faithful person does not already know that they collect the faults of our words, thoughts, and works, and keep them for our accusation at the coming of the future Judge? Whence also the Lord, suggesting that this humble and despised place Michmash is to be fled by us, says: Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment (Matt. 12:36). Therefore the place of the enemies is called humble, so that indeed it may suggest to us that we ought always to be lofty in word, thought, and work.

And because while the reprobate are captured in the humble place of their more remiss life, they show examples of depravity which may be proposed to others to be imitated: Michmash is said to be to the east of Beth-aven. From the east indeed we see the light of the sun arise. But the life of the reprobate, although it has the truth of obscurity, yet those who always seek it for the vain delight of the world are indeed deceived as if by the splendor of a false light. Whence also it is said through blessed Job: Their light shall be taken away from the wicked (Job 38:15). Now indeed the allurement of the world pleases them as something bright; but when they depart from the world, they shall undergo perpetual darkness, which they believed to be light. Then they shall see that it was not light, when prosperity is changed into adversity, light into darkness, laughter into mourning, sweetness into the worm, beauty into deformity, honor into disgrace, allurements into punishments and eternal torments.

These things indeed, because the hearts of the impious do not feel now, they refuse to imitate the manners of the good; and by the example of the lost, they do not fear at all to take whatever pleases them from the world: because they imitate those who through a reprobate life have become habitations of demons. Whence also they are deservedly called a useless house: because they often receive the preaching of the saints, but the word which they hear from their mouth, they by no means allow to dwell in them through love. They are therefore a useless house: because they do not make a fit habitation for God in themselves.

Hanc inutilem domum per semetipsam Veritas in Evangelio designat, dicens: Vulpes foveas habent, et volucres coeli nidos: Filius autem hominis non habet ubi caput suum reclinet (Matth. VIII, 20). Hinc iterum scriptum est: Spiritus sanctus disciplinae effugit fictum, et non habitat in corpore subdito peccatis (Sap. I, 5). Bene ergo inutilis domus habere in orientis parte Magmas dicitur: quia, qui sanctorum praedicationem spernunt, in reproborum exemplo ima et terrena quaerentium, velut in magnae lucis exortu gratulantur. Sed dum, loquentibus sacrae historiae mysteriis, malorum conversatio demonstratur, quam sit cauta sanctorum vita, subsequenter ostenditur.

Nam sequitur: (Vers. 6.) Quod cum viaissent viri Israel, se in arcto sitos, afflictus est populus, et absconderunt se in speluncis, et in abditis, in petris quoque, et in antris, et cisternis.

12. In arcto quidem sumus, quando ab immundis spiritibus intus tentamur, et foris malorum hominum exempla conspicimus. Contra internam ergo malorum spirituum tentationem bene dictum est: Afflictus est populus, et contra exteriora exempla impiorum hominum, Absconderunt se. Quia blanda et laeta nobis appetenda callidus adversarius suggerit, qui nunquam melius vincitur quam si tentati ad devotae orationis lamenta curramus. Et exempla pravorum vitare citius possumus, si ea etiam respicienda non esse judicemus. Abscondi ergo sanctorum, est reproba videre dedignari. Et quia quinque sensus corporis a reproborum imitatione custodiunt, quinque etiam latibulorum genera describuntur: speluncae scilicet, abdita, petrae, antra, et cisternae. Speluncae vero montium occulta sunt: quia vero alta in coelesti desiderio sunt corda sanctorum, et malignis spiritibus clausa et inaccessibilia sunt. Speluncas ergo ingredimur, quando ad mentium secreta recurrimus, ne vagantibus oculis foris concupiscenda videamus. In abditis abscondimur, quando clausi oris silentia occulta servamus. Petras ascendimus, quando actum corporis in robusta operatione locamus. Unde et de his absconditis per prophetam dicitur sub unius assignatione: Qui claudit oculos suos, ne videat malum, et obturat aures suas, ne audiat sanguinem, et excutit manus ab omni munere: in excelsis habitabit, munimenta saxorum sublimitas ejus (Isa. XXXIII, 15). Antra et cisternas intramus, quando et olfactum ab obscoenitatibus mundi, et aures ab audiendis vaniloquiis custodimus. Cisternae namque aquarum sanctarum Scripturarum verba sunt. In cisternis ergo abscondimur, quando ad sacri eloquii aquas ingredimur, ut per aurium officium mentium prata rigemus.

The Truth Himself designates this useless house in the Gospel, saying: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests: but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (Matt. 8:20). Hence again it is written: The Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful, and will not dwell in a body subject to sins (Wisd. 1:5). Well therefore is the useless house said to have Michmash in the part of the east: because those who despise the preaching of the saints, in the example of the reprobate seeking the lowest and earthly things, rejoice as if in the rising of a great light. But while, through the mysteries of the sacred history speaking, the conversation of the evil is demonstrated, how cautious the life of the saints is, is subsequently shown.

For there follows: (Verse 6) Which when the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, the people were afflicted, and they hid themselves in caves, and in secret places, and in rocks also, and in dens, and in cisterns.

12. We are indeed in a strait when we are tempted within by unclean spirits and behold without the examples of evil men. Therefore, against the internal temptation of evil spirits, it is well said: 'The people were afflicted,' and against the exterior examples of impious men: 'They hid themselves.' For the cunning adversary suggests smooth and joyful things for us to desire, who is never better conquered than if, being tempted, we run to the lamentations of devoted prayer. And we can more quickly avoid the examples of the depraved if we judge that they are not even to be looked back upon. Therefore, for the saints to be hidden is to disdain to see the reprobate things. And because they guard the five senses of the body from the imitation of the reprobate, five kinds of hiding places are also described: namely, caves, secret places, rocks, dens, and cisterns. For the caves of the mountains are hidden things: because the hearts of the saints are high in heavenly desire, and are closed and inaccessible to malignant spirits. Therefore we enter the caves when we return to the secrets of our minds, lest with wandering eyes we see things to be desired without. We are hidden in secret places when we keep the hidden silences of a closed mouth. We ascend the rocks when we place the act of the body in robust operation. Whence also it is said of these hidden things through the prophet under the assignment of one: 'He that shutteth his eyes that he may not see evil, and stoppeth his ears that he may not hear blood, and shaketh his hands from every bribe: he shall dwell on high, the fortifications of rocks shall be his highness' (Isa. 33:15). We enter dens and cisterns when we guard both the sense of smell from the obscenities of the world and the ears from hearing vain talk. For the cisterns of the waters are the words of the holy Scriptures. Therefore we are hidden in cisterns when we enter into the waters of the sacred eloquence, so that through the office of the ears we may water the meadows of our minds.

Bene autem in electorum typo Israelis latibula memorantur: quia qui sensus corporis a delectationum carnalium inquinamento non protegit, occultorum hostium gladium non evadit. Dicat ergo occultae illius congressionis victoriam, dicat: Afflictus est populus. Dicat aperte objecti extra certaminis triumphos: Absconderunt se. Afflictio quippe electae mentis, omnis diabolicae tentationis peremptorius mucro est. Nam dum profunde compungitur, in superni gaudii amorem sublevatur; et tanto jam fortius oblata mundi oblectamenta respuit, quanto jam coelestia ferventius diligit, ad quae flendo conscendit. Doctor namque egregius dicit: Per multas tribulationes oportet nos introire in regnum Dei (Act. XIV, 21). Qui certe regni coelestis introitus sic speratur in fine temporum, ut in quotidiana sanctorum vita sentiatur. Tribulatio igitur nostra superni gaudii introitus est. Merito ergo quoties electa mens in afflictionis suae lamento compungitur, se tribulando, hoc obtinet, ut intret in contemplationem illius superni regni, in quo ineffabiliter gratuletur. Et dum sancti viri amatores mundi in flore transeuntis laetitiae videre refugiunt, dum corporeos sensus suos ab eorum imitatione abscondunt, eorum, quae cernitur non est fuga, sed gloriosa victoria. Actus quidem terrenos fugiunt, sed coelestes assequuntur; mundo delitescere videntur, sed coelesti gloriae revelantur. Fugiendo igitur noxia, hostes suos validius insequuntur, et valde nobilius triumphant, cum sic ad coelestia properant, ut eos adversariorum polluta saevitia non contingant. Sequitur:

(Vers. 7.) Hebraei autem transiere Jordonem ad terram Gad, et Galaad.

13. Hoc profecto si prius juxta litteram scire volumus, Hebraei isti et timore perterriti, et ad hostes suos confugisse sentiuntur. Nam non multo post in aperta Jonathae victoria scribitur: Hebraei, qui fuerant cum Philistiim heri et nudiustertius ascenderuntque cum eis in castra, reversi sunt ut essent cum Israel, qui erant cum Saul et Jonatha (I Reg. XIV, 21). Quid vero in hoc facto signatur, nisi quod quotidie in sancta Ecclesia fieri cernimus, bonorum esse tutam et cautissimam vitam, negligentium praecipitem impatientiam?

But well are the hiding places of Israel recorded in a type of the elect: because he who does not protect the senses of the body from the defilement of carnal delights does not escape the sword of the hidden enemies. Therefore let him speak the victory of that hidden encounter, let him say: 'The people were afflicted.' Let him speak openly of the triumphs of the contest set before him: 'They hid themselves.' For the affliction of the elect mind is the peremptory edge of every diabolical temptation. For while it is profoundly pricked by compunction, it is raised up into the love of supernal joy; and it now more strongly rejects the offered delights of the world as it now more fervently loves the heavenly things, to which it ascends by weeping. For the excellent teacher says: 'Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God' (Acts 14:21). Which entrance of the heavenly kingdom is certainly so hoped for in the end of times that it may be felt in the daily life of the saints. Therefore our tribulation is the entrance of supernal joy. Deservedly, therefore, as often as the elect mind is pricked in the lamentation of its affliction, by troubling itself it obtains this, that it may enter into the contemplation of that supernal kingdom, in which it may ineffably rejoice. And while holy men refuse to see the lovers of the world in the flower of passing joy, while they hide their bodily senses from their imitation, it is not a flight from that which is seen, but a glorious victory. They indeed flee earthly acts, but they follow after heavenly ones; they seem to be hidden to the world, but they are revealed to heavenly glory. Therefore, by fleeing harmful things, they follow their enemies more strongly, and triumph much more nobly, when they so hasten to heavenly things that the polluted ferocity of their adversaries does not touch them. There follows:

(Verse 7) But the Hebrews passed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead.

13. If we wish to know this first according to the letter, these Hebrews are felt both to have been terrified by fear and to have fled to their enemies. For not long after, in the open victory of Jonathan, it is written: 'The Hebrews also that had been with the Philistines yesterday and the day before, and went up with them into the camp, returned to be with Israel, who were with Saul and Jonathan' (1 Kings 14:21). But what is signified in this deed, except what we see daily happening in the holy Church, that the life of the good is safe and most cautious, but the headlong impatience of the negligent?

Infirmi quidem et audaces sunt curiosi ad actiones saeculi; debiles ad tolerandum bellum tentationis. Et si in his nostra discutimus, in monasteriis plerique tales inveniuntur. Intra portus quidem tranquilla inhabitant, sed aperti pelagi procellas, et tempestatum turbines nequaquam pensant. Cumque foris quasi fortes agere se magna aestimant, ad gravissima tentationum praelia faciles exeunt; ad fortes adversarios, impotentes. Ratione quidem improvidi, robore infirmi, sicut astutae tentationis fraudes non intelligunt, ita et apertas blandimentorum decipulas non evadunt. Jordanem ergo transeunt, quia ad perpetranda carnis flagitia incurvantur. Jordanis quidem, descensus eorum interpretatur. Qui ergo justitiam deserunt, ab alto monte virtutum cadunt. Quia ergo infirmi quique libenter appetunt mundi blandimenta quae cernunt, in eorum typo Hebraei non trans Jordanem perlati, sed Jordanem transire perhibentur. Transire quidem volentis est. Jordanem itaque transeunt, qui ad carnales delectationes voluntaria et festina deliberatione flectuntur. Possunt autem intelligi Jordanem transire, qui noviter peccare incipiunt, sed aliorum peccatorum hominum nequitias peccando transcendunt. Ad descensum quippe eorum desinendo, non transeundo pertingerent, si aliis aequalia mala facerent, et non ea audendo superarent. Et quia in nequiori etiam vita pares suos inveniunt, bene ad terram Gad et Galaad, trans Jordanem pervenire memorantur. Velut enim trans Jordanem habitant, qui per peccandi usum malis pejores fiunt. Ab hoc descensu culpae erigere peccatores venerat ille, de quo scriptum est: Venit in omnem regionem Jordanis, praedicans baptismum poenitentiae in remissionem peccatorum (Luc. III, 3). Qui de omnibus culpis praedicare poenitentiam venerat, in omnes utique descensus regiones venisse praedicatur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 7-9.) Cumque adhuc esset Saul in Galgala, universus populus perterritus est, qui sequebatur eum. Exspectavit autem septem diebus juxta placitum Samuelis, et non venit Samuel in Galgala, dilapsusque est populus ab eo. Ait ergo Saul: Afferte mihi holocaustum et pacifica: et obtulit holocaustum.

14. Hucusque quia de Saul, ut superius dictum est, electo et bono divinus sermo locutus est; rationabile visum est, ut quae de eo dicebantur, tam per historiam quam per moralitatem, in bonam partem acciperemus. Nunc vero, quia ad locum transgressionis ejus pervenimus, nimirum necesse est, ut in eo etiam, quae sunt vitanda, videamus. Sed quid unquam studiosius vitandum electis omnibus, quam superbiae et inobedientiae malum videri debuit? Haec quippe primi angeli sublimitatem deposuit, haec perditorum spirituum gloriam stravit.

For the weak and the audacious are curious towards the actions of the world; they are feeble for enduring the war of temptation. And if we discuss our own affairs in these, many such are found in monasteries. Within the harbors indeed they inhabit tranquil things, but they by no means weigh the storms of the open sea and the whirlwinds of tempests. And when they think that they act as if strong without, they easily go out to the most heavy battles of temptations; against strong adversaries, they are powerless. Improvident indeed in reason, weak in strength, just as they do not understand the frauds of cunning temptation, so also they do not escape the open snares of allurements. Therefore they pass over the Jordan, because they are bowed down to perpetrate the shames of the flesh. For Jordan is interpreted as their descent. Those, therefore, who desert justice fall from the high mountain of virtues. Because, therefore, the weak all willingly desire the allurements of the world which they see, in their type the Hebrews are reported not to have been carried across the Jordan, but to pass over the Jordan. For to pass over belongs to one who is willing. And so those pass over the Jordan who are turned to carnal delights by a voluntary and hasty deliberation. But they can be understood to pass over the Jordan who begin to sin newly, but surpass the wickednesses of other sinful men by sinning. For they would reach their descent by ceasing, not by passing over, if they did equal evils to others and did not overcome them by daring. And because they find their equals even in a more wicked life, they are well recorded to arrive across the Jordan at the land of Gad and Gilead. For they dwell as if across the Jordan who through the use of sinning become worse than the evil. He had come to raise up sinners from this descent of fault, of whom it is written: 'He came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins' (Luke 3:3). He who had come to preach penance for all faults is preached to have come into all the regions of descent. There follows:

(Verses 7-9) And while Saul was yet in Gilgal, all the people that followed him were terrified. And he waited seven days according to the appointment of Samuel, and Samuel came not to Gilgal, and the people were slipped away from him. Saul therefore said: Bring me the holocaust and the peace offerings: and he offered the holocaust.

14. Thus far because the divine word has spoken of Saul, as was said above, as elect and good; it seemed reasonable that what was said of him, both through history and through morality, we should take in a good part. But now, because we have come to the place of his transgression, it is indeed necessary that we see in him also those things which are to be avoided. But what should ever have seemed more zealously to be avoided by all the elect than the evil of pride and disobedience? This indeed brought down the loftiness of the first angel, this laid low the glory of the lost spirits.

Haec primo homini felicitatem abstulit; haec captivitatis humanae perpetuas aerumnas invexit. Et ecce primo angelo, primo homini, electi populi per inobedientiam rex primus adjungitur, ut dum magna proruunt, minima erigantur. Bene quippe erigimur, si et illorum lapsus aspicimus, et vitamus. Ubi ergo Saul ceciderit, attente considerandum est. Superius namque ei dixerat Samuel: Descendas ante me in Galgala. Ego quidem descendam ad te, ut offeras holocaustum, et oblationem, et immoles victimas pacificas. Septem diebus exspectabis me, donec veniam ad te: et ostendam tibi, quae facias (I Reg. X, 20). Idcirco igitur per inobedientiam cecidit, quia integris septem diebus, sicut jussus fuerat, non exspectavit. Nam in eodem loco repente subjungitur:

(Vers. 10.) Cumque complesset offerens holocaustum, esse Samuel veniebat. 15. Quo in loco trementi corde considerandum est, quam brevissimi temporis exspectatione neglecta, repulsus sit. Cum complesset, inquit, holocaustum, ecce Samuel veniebat. Si ergo eum solo temporis brevissimo intervallo exspectaret, quo obtulit holocaustum, securus jam regni sui robur obtinere potuisset. Itaque si tanta poena est, quando propheta despicitur: quid putamus de pelago illo divinae animadversionis incurratur, cum ipsa divina praecepta dissipantur? Et quia in momento transit carnis delectatio, et omnis peccatorum commissio, et brevis quidem est hora transgressionis, non tamen brevis poena flagitii; quia dum ad momentum in nobis regnum peccati erigimus, illa regna perdimus omnium saeculorum. Statim enim post peccatum sermo propheticus venit, ut increpet: qui adesset, si non peccaremus, ut in bono roboraret. Polluta quidem conscientia habet jam divinum eloquium contra se; quae si pollui vitaret, ab eo adjuta, et relevata proprio vigore subsisteret. Quid enim nobis aliud spiritualiter designat, quod dicitur: Cumque complesset offerens holocaustum, ecce Samuel veniebat? Et si non obtulisset holocaustum, nihilominus et Samuel venisset. Sic nimirum et cum tentamur, divina gratia juxta est, quae sustinentes adjuvet: juxta et divina justitia, quae deficientes damnet. Unde sacra Scriptura nos exspectare cohortans, ait: Si spiritus potestatem habens ascenderit super te, locum tuum cito non deseras (Eccle. X, 4). Hinc propheta testificans, ait: Dominus auxiliator meus, et ideo non sum confusus (Isai. L, 7). Hinc Psalmista vicina eadem auxilia respiciens, ait: Providebam Dominum in conspectu meo semper, quoniam a dextris est mihi, ne commovear (Psal. XV, 8). Sed jam propheta quid non exspectanti dicat; quid is, qui exspectare noluit, respondeat, audiamus:

(Vers. 11.) Locutusque est ad eum Samuel: Quid fecisti?

This took away happiness from the first man; this brought in the perpetual miseries of human captivity. And behold, to the first angel and the first man, the first king of the elect people is joined through disobedience, so that while the great fall, the small may be raised up. For we are well raised up if we both behold their falls and avoid them. Where therefore Saul fell must be attentively considered. For Samuel had said to him above: 'Thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal.' I indeed will come down to thee, that thou mayest offer a holocaust, and an oblation, and mayest immolate peace offerings. Seven days shalt thou wait for me, till I come to thee: and I will show thee what thou shalt do (1 Kings 10:20). Therefore he fell through disobedience because he did not wait for seven whole days, as he had been commanded. For in the same place it is suddenly added:

(Verse 10) And when he had made an end of offering the holocaust, behold Samuel came. 15. In which place it must be considered with a trembling heart how, by neglecting the expectation of a very short time, he was rejected. 'When he had made an end,' he says, 'of offering the holocaust, behold Samuel came.' If, therefore, he had waited for him for only the shortest interval of time, in which he offered the holocaust, he could have securely obtained the strength of his kingdom. Therefore, if there is such a penalty when a prophet is despised, what do we think is incurred from that sea of divine animadversion when the divine precepts themselves are broken? And because the delight of the flesh and every commission of sins passes in a moment, and the hour of transgression is indeed brief, yet the penalty of the shame is not brief; because while we set up the kingdom of sin in ourselves for a moment, we lose those kingdoms of all ages. For immediately after the sin the prophetic word comes to rebuke; which would be present if we did not sin, to strengthen us in good. For a polluted conscience already has the divine eloquence against itself; which if it avoided being polluted, helped and raised up by it, it would subsist in its own vigor. For what else does it spiritually designate to us, that which is said: 'And when he had made an end of offering the holocaust, behold Samuel came'? And if he had not offered the holocaust, Samuel would nevertheless have come. So indeed also when we are tempted, divine grace is near to help those who hold out: near also is divine justice to condemn those who fail. Whence sacred Scripture, exhorting us to wait, says: 'If the spirit of him that hath power ascend upon thee, leave not thy place' (Eccles. 10:4). Hence the prophet testifying says: 'The Lord is my helper, and therefore I am not confounded' (Isa. 50:7). Hence the Psalmist, beholding those same nearby helps, says: 'I set the Lord always in my sight, for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved' (Ps. 15:8). But now let us hear what the prophet says to him who does not wait; what he who would not wait answers:

(Verse 11) And Samuel said to him: What hast thou done?

16. Sciebat quidem propheta quid fecerat, sed interrogando, inobedientiae factum reprobabat. Unde et ad peccantem Adam in paradiso a Domino dicitur: Adam ubi es? (Gen. III, 9). Potest etiam per hanc interrogationem magnitudo reatus intimari. Ac si aperte dicat: Parum tibi videtur, quod inobediendo deliqueris, sed a sublimi gloriae tuae culmine delinquendo cecidisti. Nunc ergo plerique intra sanctam Ecclesiam se flagitiis obruunt, et quasi qui nulla aut minima perdant, securi sunt. Dicatur ergo lapso, dicatur: Quid fecisti? Parum tibi videtur, quod te peccati sorde pollueris, quia quam aeternitatis gloriam perdideris, quam gehennae poenam merueris, non attendis. Interrogatur quidem peccator quid fecerit, ut ad cor per lamenta perducatur, ut magna se incurrisse sciat, et parum non doleat. Sed quia ex radice superbiae ipsa culpa inobedientiae nascitur, solent inobedientes reatus sui magnitudinem objurgantibus doctoribus audire, sed non humiliter confitendo satisfacere. Nam cum sublimes videri appetunt, lapsus suos ostendere dedignantur; et ideo excusationes proferunt, justitiam praetendunt; quia apparere peccatores erubescunt. Bene ergo subjungitur:

(Vers. 11, 12.) Respondit Saul: Quia vidi, quod dilaberetur a me populus, et tu non veneras juxta placitos dies. Porro Philistiim congregati fuerant in Magmas. Dixique: Nunc descendent Philistiim ad me in Galgala, et faciem Domini non placavi. Necessitate compulsus obtuli holocaustum.

17. Ecce qui de magnae transgressionis temeritate arguitur, magnas causas justitiae asserere non veretur. Vidi, inquit, quod dilaberetur populus a me. Ecce hic asseritur destitutus a populo: Porro non veneras juxta placitos dies. Hic se ostendit prophetae promissione fraudatum. Porro Philistiim congregati fuerant in Magmas. Hic pariter objicit imminens periculum congressionis. Quare ex actione sua verbum subinferens, ait: Necessitate compulsus obtuli holocaustum. Quasi dicat: Tu me de magno reatu arguis, cum reatus tanto sit levior, quanto non temeritate constat, sed necessitate. Sed qualem eum cognoscat propheta, qui se cognoscere noluit, subjungens, ait:

(Vers. 13.) Stulte egisti, nec custodisti mandata Domini Dei tui.

16. The prophet indeed knew what he had done, but by questioning he reproved the deed of disobedience. Whence also it is said by the Lord to the sinning Adam in paradise: 'Adam, where art thou?' (Gen. 3:9). The magnitude of the guilt can also be intimated through this questioning. As if he should say openly: It seems a small thing to thee that thou hast offended by disobeying, but by offending thou hast fallen from the sublime height of thy glory. Now, therefore, many within the holy Church overwhelm themselves with shames, and are secure as if they lose nothing or very little. Therefore let it be said to the fallen one, let it be said: 'What hast thou done?' It seems a small thing to thee that thou hast polluted thyself with the filth of sin, because thou dost not attend to what glory of eternity thou hast lost, what penalty of Gehenna thou hast deserved. The sinner is indeed questioned as to what he has done, that he may be brought to the heart through lamentations, that he may know that he has incurred great things and may not grieve little. But because the fault of disobedience itself is born from the root of pride, the disobedient are accustomed to hear the magnitude of their guilt from rebuking teachers, but not to make satisfaction by humbly confessing. For when they desire to seem sublime, they disdain to show their falls; and therefore they bring forth excuses, they pretend justice, because they blush to appear as sinners. Well therefore it is added:

(Verses 11, 12) Saul answered: Because I saw that the people slipped from me, and thou wast not come according to the days appointed. Moreover the Philistines were gathered together in Michmash. And I said: Now will the Philistines come down upon me to Gilgal, and I have not appeased the face of the Lord. Forced by necessity, I offered the holocaust.

17. Behold, he who is accused of the temerity of a great transgression does not fear to assert great causes of justice. 'I saw,' he says, 'that the people slipped from me.' Behold, here he is asserted to be destitute of the people: 'Moreover, thou wast not come according to the days appointed.' Here he shows himself cheated of the prophet's promise. Moreover, the Philistines were gathered together in Michmash. Here likewise he objects the imminent danger of the encounter. Wherefore, bringing in a word from his action, he says: 'Forced by necessity, I offered the holocaust.' As if he should say: Thou accusest me of a great guilt, when the guilt is so much lighter as it does not consist in temerity, but in necessity. But let us see what the prophet, who would not know himself, knows him to be, adding:

(Verse 13) Thou hast acted foolishly, and hast not kept the commandments of the Lord thy God.

18. Superbi quique, quia per tumorem supra homines se esse arbitrantur, competenter arguuntur, cum eis divina voluntas objicitur, quam offendunt. Saul ergo superborum more arguitur, qui Domini Dei sui mandata contempsisse perhibetur. Quod tale est, ac si superbientem et contemnentem terreat, dicens: Et si homines despicis, nunc non consilium hominum, sed Domini Dei tui mandata dissipasti. Recte ergo tuum reatum pensas, si illum, quem contemnis, trementi corde consideras. Et notandum, quia non ait: Non custodisti mandata Dei tui, aut, mandata Domini tui, sed: Non custodisti mandata Domini Dei tui. Ac si aperte dicat: Ausus magnae transgressionis esset, si ille, cujus mandata despicis, tantum Dominus tuus, non etiam Deus existeret. Quantum ergo est quod committitur, cum Dei et Domini mandata negliguntur? Quia item non dixit: Domini Dei mei, aut Domini Dei nostri, divinae familiaritatis gratiam eum offendisse redarguit. Quasi dicat: Ejus praecepta contempsisti, qui dum te de imo extulit, dum super alios te constituit, dum regem fecit, per impositionem tantorum munerum, velut specialiter tuus fuit. Adhuc quoque subjungitur, unde transgressionis ejus audacia major esse doceatur:

(Vers. 13.) Quae, inquit, praecepit tibi.

19. Quaedam denique Dei praecepta sunt communia omnium, non specialia aliquorum. Ut ergo audacem reum temeritatis suae patenti objectione convincat, non eum praecepta communia, sed propria et singularia contempsisse demonstrat. Quae, ait, praecepit tibi. Ac si dicat: Illa Dei et Domini tui mandata contempsisti, quae non velut communia omnibus, sed velut propria, et soli tibi singulariter credita observare debuisti. Sed quid mereatur, exponit, dicens:

(Vers. 13, 14.) Quod si non fecisses, jam praeparasset Dominus regnum tuum super Israel usque in sempiternum, sed nequaquam ultra consurget.

20. Ecce quam magna perdidit, qui, ut putabat, nulla contempsit. Ecce septem diebus prophetam sustinuit; sed dum praestolari eum in fine diei desiit, gloriam tantae dignitatis amisit. Unde et per prophetam dicitur: Vae iis qui perdiderunt sustinentiam (Eccli. II, 16). Sustinentiam quidem perdunt, qui bona, quae inchoant, non consummant. Quibus nimirum vae esse dicitur: quia non solum incoepti laboris mercedem perdunt, sed etiam apostatatus sui poena feriuntur.

18. The proud, because through a swelling they think themselves to be above men, are competently rebuked when the divine will which they offend is objected to them. Saul, therefore, is rebuked in the manner of the proud, who is reported to have despised the commandments of the Lord his God. Which is such as if he should terrify the proud and contemning one, saying: Even if thou despisest men, now thou hast broken not the counsel of men, but the commandments of the Lord thy God. Rightly therefore thou weighest thy guilt, if thou considerest him whom thou despisest with a trembling heart. And it is to be noted that he did not say: Thou hast not kept the commandments of thy God, or, the commandments of thy Lord, but: 'Thou hast not kept the commandments of the Lord thy God.' As if he should say openly: It would be a daring of great transgression if he whose commandments thou despisest were only thy Lord, and did not also exist as God. How great therefore is that which is committed when the commandments of God and Lord are neglected? Because likewise he did not say: of my Lord God, or of our Lord God, he rebukes him for having offended the grace of divine familiarity. As if he should say: Thou hast despised the precepts of him who, while he raised thee from the lowest, while he set thee over others, while he made thee king, through the imposition of such great gifts, was as it were specially thine. Still also it is added, whence the audacity of his transgression is shown to be greater:

(Verse 13) Which, he says, he commanded thee.

19. Finally, some of God's precepts are common to all, not special to some. Therefore, that he may convince the audacious culprit of his temerity by an open objection, he demonstrates that he has despised not common precepts, but his own and singular ones. 'Which,' he says, 'he commanded thee.' As if he should say: Thou hast despised those commandments of thy God and Lord, which thou oughtest to have observed not as common to all, but as thy own, and singular things trusted to thee alone. But what he deserves, he explains, saying:

(Verses 13, 14) Which if thou hadst not done, the Lord would now have prepared thy kingdom over Israel forever, but it shall by no means rise further.

20. Behold how great things he lost, who, as he thought, despised nothing. Behold, he endured the prophet for seven days; but when he ceased to wait for him at the end of the day, he lost the glory of such great dignity. Whence also it is said through the prophet: 'Woe to them that have lost patience' (Ecclus. 2:16). They indeed lose patience who do not finish the good things which they begin. To whom indeed woe is said to be: because they not only lose the reward of the begun labor, but are also struck by the penalty of their apostasy.

Poena autem superbi et inobedientis regis declaratur, cum dicitur: Quod si non fecisses, praeparasset jam Dominus regnum tuum super Israel amodo et usque in sempiternum; sed non consurget. Amodo et usque in sempiternum electum regnum paratur: quia qui temporalia bene ordinant, aeternae gloriae sibi sublimitatem parant. Modo quidem electorum regnum paratur, cum per divinam gratiam recte eorum ministeria dispensantur. Quod amodo et usque in sempiternum proficit: quia de sublimi actione hujus temporis, sublimiorem illam aeternitatis gloriam promerentur in coelis. In finem itaque reprobo regi dicitur: Regnum tuum nequaquam ultra consurget. Quasi dicat: Dum a temporali rectitudine deficit, ad aeternitatis celsitudinem non pertingit. Vel idcirco ad litteram non consurgere dicitur: quia cum ipso corruit, et post ipsum in ejus filiis non remansit. Sed, ut livoris poena feriatur, non solum repulsionem suam, sed etiam electionem alienam audire compellitur. Nam subjungens propheta ait:

(Vers. 14.) Quaesivit sibi Dominus virum juxta cor suum, et praecepit ei, ut esset dux super populum suum Israel.

21. Per omnia verba haec superbus eliditur: Quaesivit, inquit, virum juxta cor suum. Quasi dicat: Ideo eum quaesivit, quia tu juxta cor suum esse noluisti. Quasi dicat: Talem virum populi sui ducem constituit, qui praeceptum divini consilii exsequatur virtute devotionis. Quia enim corde ea quae agere volumus, deliberare solemus: dum usu nostrae locutionis cor Dei in sacro eloquio ponitur, per eum voluntas ejus intima designatur, quae a nobis tunc foris agnoscitur, quando inobedientiae praecepta revelantur. Juxta eam vero sumus, quando hanc, et per intellectum agnoscimus, et per amorem custodimus. Bene ergo de Domino propheta Samuel dicit: Quaesivit sibi virum juxta cor suum, et praecepit, ut esset dux super populum suum. Quia illo aliis utiliter praecipit, qui obedire Deo perfecte jam novit; qui solum hoc praecipit, quod ex consilio procedit intimae veritatis.

22. Sed quid est, quod quasi de praeterito dicitur: Quaesivit sibi Dominus virum, et praecepit ei, ut esset dux, cum non fuerit quaesitus, nec ei, ut populo suo praeesset, injunctum? Nam postquam Saul percussit Amalech, eidem prophetae Dominus ait: Imple cornu tuum oleo, et veni, mittam te ad Isai Bethlehemitem (I Reg. XVI, 1). Sed haec quaestio facile solvitur, si omnipotentis Dei praescientia, et praedestinatio videatur. Ei quidem praedestinare, facere est, et apud ipsum jam facta sunt, quae ab ipso fieri praeordinata sunt. Unde et de eo scriptum est: Fecit, quae futuro sunt (Isa. XLV, 11, sec. LXX).

But the penalty of the proud and disobedient king is declared when it is said: 'Which if thou hadst not done, the Lord would now have prepared thy kingdom over Israel from henceforth and forever; but it shall not rise.' From henceforth and forever an elect kingdom is prepared: because those who order temporal things well, prepare for themselves the sublimity of eternal glory. Now indeed the kingdom of the elect is prepared, when their ministries are rightly dispensed through divine grace. Which profits from henceforth and forever: because from the sublime action of this time, they merit that more sublime glory of eternity in the heavens. And so in the end it is said to the reprobate king: 'Thy kingdom shall by no means rise further.' As if he should say: While he fails from temporal rectitude, he does not reach to the loftiness of eternity. Or for this reason it is said to not rise according to the letter: because it fell with him, and did not remain in his sons after him. But, that he may be struck by the penalty of envy, he is compelled to hear not only his own rejection, but also the election of another. For the prophet, adding, says:

(Verse 14) The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and hath commanded him to be captain over his people Israel.

21. Through all these words the proud one is crushed: 'The Lord,' he says, 'hath sought him a man after his own heart.' As if he should say: He sought him for this reason, because thou wouldst not be after his heart. As if he should say: He has constituted such a man as captain of his people, who may execute the precept of the divine counsel by the virtue of devotion. For because we are accustomed to deliberate in the heart those things which we wish to do: while by the use of our speech the heart of God is placed in the sacred eloquence, his intimate will is designated by it, which is then recognized by us without when the precepts of disobedience are revealed. We are near it indeed when we both recognize this through the understanding and guard it through love. Well therefore does the prophet Samuel say of the Lord: 'The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and hath commanded him to be captain over his people.' Because he commands others usefully who already knows how to obey God perfectly; who commands only this, which proceeds from the counsel of the intimate truth.

22. But what is it that is said as if of the past: 'The Lord hath sought him a man, and hath commanded him to be captain,' when he had not been sought, nor had it been enjoined upon him to be over his people? For after Saul struck Amalek, the Lord said to the same prophet: 'Fill thy horn with oil, and come, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite' (1 Kings 16:1). But this question is easily solved if the foreknowledge and predestination of Almighty God be seen. To Him indeed to predestine is to act, and with Him those things are already done which have been preordained by Him to be done. Whence also it is written of Him: 'He hath made the things that are to come' (Isa. 45:11, according to LXX).

Sed quaesisse virum Deus dicitur, ut eligendorum antistitum forma hominibus praebeatur. Quaerere enim solemus, quae aut praesentia non cognoscimus, aut absentia non videmus. Deus autem, cui nihil est absens, nihil latens, non dicitur quaesisse virum, ut absentem, aut absconditum: sed quaesisse dicitur, ut omnis, qui ad sanctae Ecclesiae culmen eligitur, discutiendus ab hominibus esse doceatur. Sed quaeri debet secundum cor Dei; ut videlicet non solum divinam voluntatem intelligat, sed bonis operibus ostendat. Quia item electi viri ad honorem primatus non ex ambitione veniunt, sed coacti perducuntur, bene dictum est: Et praecepit ei, ut esset dux: Quasi dicat: In honorem praelationis non per ambitionem subiit, sed coactus ascendit.

Potest etiam intelligi vir pro fortitudine; secundum cor Dei, pro interna charitate. Quando igitur necessitas exigit, ad curam sanctae Ecclesiae quaeratur vir, ut sit conversatione fortis; quaeratur secundum cor Dei, ut per effectum magni amoris, quasi unitus sit divinae voluntati: praecipiatur ei, ut sit dux; quatenus sublimitatis ordinem conscendere ex cupiditate non ambiat, sed ex humilitate pertimescat: sicque sibi humilis metuat, ut subdi praecepto Dei devotius agnoscat. Sed quia his verbis propheta lapsi regis vitam reprehenderat, sequitur:

(Vers. 15.) Surrexit autem Samuel, et ascendit de Galgalis in Gabaa Benjamin.

23. Quasi ab alto ad planum sanctae Ecclesiae doctor venit, quando peccatorum culpas redarguit, et status sui sublimitatem curvat, cum ad discutienda malorum crimina se per affectum charitatis humiliat. Bene ergo de eo, qui peccatorem arguerat, dicitur: Surrexit, et ascendit. Surgit quippe electus praedicator, quando ad altitudinem suae spiritualis conversationis se per intentionem erigit: ascendit autem, quando ad arduam ejusdem vitae suae celsitudinem per consuetum opus venit. Coelestia quidem desideria, spirituales virtutes, bona opera in sublimi sunt: affectus terreni, concupiscentiae saeculares, vitia et peccata in infimis. Doctor vero, ut lapsos bene corrigat, prius culpas discutiendo invenit, deinde inventas ferit. Ut ergo quae feriat, perspicue et aperte videat, mentis oculos ad videnda ima peccatorum vulnera curvat. Sed perspecta non ferit, si ad tangenda ea in infimis, non descendit.

But God is said to have sought a man, so that a model of prelates to be chosen may be provided to men. For we are accustomed to seek those things which either we do not know as present, or do not see as absent. But God, to whom nothing is absent, nothing hidden, is not said to have sought a man as one absent or hidden; but He is said to have sought so that everyone who is chosen to the summit of the holy Church may be taught to be examined by men. But he ought to be sought according to the heart of God; so that, namely, he may not only understand the divine will, but show it by good works. Because likewise elect men do not come to the honor of the primacy out of ambition, but are led when compelled, it is well said: 'And he commanded him to be captain': As if he should say: He did not enter into the honor of prelacy through ambition, but ascended being compelled.

'Man' can also be understood for fortitude; 'after the heart of God' for internal charity. When therefore necessity requires, let a man be sought for the care of the holy Church, that he may be strong in conduct; let him be sought according to the heart of God, so that through the effect of great love, he may be as if united to the divine will: let it be commanded to him that he be captain; in order that he may not ambitiously desire to ascend the order of sublimity out of greed, but may greatly fear it out of humility: and thus let him fear as one humble, that he may more devotedly acknowledge himself to be subject to the command of God. But because by these words the prophet had reprehended the life of the fallen king, it follows:

(Verse 15) And Samuel arose, and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.

23. As if from a height to the plain the doctor of the holy Church comes, when he rebukes the faults of sinners, and bends the sublimity of his status, when he humbles himself through the affect of charity to discuss the crimes of the wicked. Well therefore of him, who had rebuked the sinner, it is said: 'He arose, and went up.' For the elect preacher arises when he raises himself by intention to the height of his spiritual conduct: but he ascends when he comes to the arduous loftiness of that same life of his through customary work. Celestial desires indeed, spiritual virtues, good works are in the sublime: earthly affects, secular concupiscences, vices and sins are in the lowest parts. But the doctor, that he may well correct those who have fallen, first finds the faults by discussing them, then strikes them when found. Therefore, that he may clearly and openly see what he should strike, he bends the eyes of his mind to see the lowest wounds of sinners. But he does not strike the things perceived, if he does not descend to touch them in the lowest parts.

Surgere ergo et ascendere propheta dicitur, quia electi doctores sic ad ima nostra videnda et emendanda plerumque veniunt, ut redire statim ad alta conversationis suae nunquam obliviscantur. Quibus etiam verbis sacerdotalis animi libertas asseritur. Nam plerique alios increpant, qui semetipsos validissimo irae bello perturbant. Post increpatas vero culpas surgere et ascendere nequeunt: quia in semetipsis turbidi, ad alta intimae quietis progredi nequaquam permittuntur. Quidem coercendas aliorum turpitudines audiunt; sed cum ad cogitanda ima descenderint, noxia eorum delectatione sordidantur. Infirmi quidem et tanti ministerii impares, dum solvere inferius aliorum nodos gestiunt, illos non liberant, sed semetipsos ligant. Quid ergo significat, quod de Samuele dicitur: Surrexit, et ascendit, nisi quod in perfectioribus viris aspicimus, qui sic nostra inquinamenta respiciunt, ut ab eis nequaquam sordidentur: sic nobis irascuntur, ut quietis intus secreti sui alta conscendere velociter possint? Fortes namque et potentes sunt, et qui magna et fortia sua leviter ferunt, nostris infirmitatibus non gravantur. Et quia in correctione nostra sanctae Scripturae testimonia proferunt, a Galgalis surgere, et ascendere perhibentur. Galgala quidem, ut plerumque jam dixi, rota nominatur. Testimonia vero Scripturarum, quia per diversos sensus in nostra eruditione volvuntur, velut rotae sunt. Et quia cum sancti praedicatores subditorum sollicitudinem deserunt, in aeternae vitae contemplatione sublimantur, in Gabaa Benjamin Samuel ascendere dicitur. Gabaa denique Benjamin, collis filii dextrae interpretatur. Quis ergo est filius dextrae, nisi quem sancta Evangelia confitentur ad coelos ascendere, et ad dextram Dei Patris sedere? Collis igitur filii dextrae, aeterna est celsitudo Redemptoris. Quando enim ima nostra sancti praedicatores deserunt, in alta illa divina Redemptoris per intentionem surgunt, et per visionem conscendunt.

24. Potest et secundum historicum sensum simplicius intelligi hoc, quod dicitur: Surrexit, et ascendit: quia videlicet in rege, quem arguerat, humilitatem poenitentiae, qua manere cogeretur, minime cognovit. Idem tamen rex in ministerio relinquitur, ut ipsa prophetae separatione corrigatur; quia plerumque quos praedicatoris verba non corrigunt, dividi a praedicatorum familiaritate, vel a sanctae Ecclesiae unitate pertimescunt. Juxta praedicatores duri sunt, sed separati resipiscunt; et qui inobediendo peccaverunt, obedire Deo, jam humiliter parant.

Therefore the prophet is said to arise and ascend, because elect doctors usually come thus to see and emend our lowest things, so that they never forget to return immediately to the heights of their conduct. By which words also the liberty of the sacerdotal mind is asserted. For many rebuke others who perturb themselves with a most violent war of anger. But after the faults have been rebuked, they are unable to arise and ascend: because, being turbid in themselves, they are by no means permitted to proceed to the heights of intimate quiet. Some indeed hear the foulnesses of others to be coerced; but when they have descended to think upon the lowest things, they are defiled by their harmful delight. The weak indeed and unequal to such a great ministry, while they desire to loose the knots of others below, do not free them, but bind themselves. What therefore does it mean, that it is said of Samuel: 'He arose, and went up,' unless what we behold in more perfect men, who so look upon our defilements that they are by no means defiled by them: so are they angry with us, that they can swiftly ascend the heights of their secret quiet within? For they are strong and powerful, and they who bear their great and strong things lightly, are not burdened by our infirmities. And because in our correction they bring forth the testimonies of the holy Scripture, they are said to arise from Gilgal, and to ascend. Gilgal indeed, as I have already said many times, is named a wheel. But the testimonies of the Scriptures, because they are rolled in our erudition through various senses, are like wheels. And because when holy preachers desert the solicitude for subjects, they are sublimated in the contemplation of eternal life, Samuel is said to ascend into Gibeah of Benjamin. Finally, Gibeah of Benjamin is interpreted as the hill of the son of the right hand. Who therefore is the son of the right hand, unless He whom the holy Gospels confess to ascend to the heavens, and to sit at the right hand of God the Father? The hill of the son of the right hand, therefore, is the eternal loftiness of the Redeemer. For when holy preachers desert our lowest things, they arise by intention into those high divine things of the Redeemer, and ascend through vision.

24. This which is said: 'He arose, and went up,' can also be understood more simply according to the historical sense: because, namely, he recognized very little humility of penitence in the king whom he had rebuked, by which he might be compelled to remain. Nevertheless the same king is left in his ministry, that he may be corrected by that very separation from the prophet; because many whom the words of the preacher do not correct, greatly fear to be divided from the familiarity of preachers, or from the unity of the holy Church. Near the preachers they are hard, but being separated they come to their senses; and they who have sinned by disobeying, now humbly prepare to obey God.

Unde et rex Saul non multo post demoliri Amalechitas praecipitur: ut, si mandatum Domini ejusdem caede gentis perficeret, prioris inobedientiae nexus enodaret (I Reg. XV). Separatus quidem a propheta, ea agere visus est, ut ad agenda alia juberetur. Quare et subditur:

(Vers. 15.) Et reliqui populi ascenderunt post Saul obviam populo, qui expugnabat illos: venientes ex Galgala in Gabaa Benjamin.

25. Nonnulli sic in peccato corruunt, ut in nullo bono opere teneantur: nonnulli vero dum mala se perpetrasse recolunt, agere bona instantius conantur. Agendo quippe bona, mala quae relinquunt operiunt: ne ab aeterno judice detecta judicentur. Hoc nimirum si factum Saul in bonam partem deducimus, hoc invenimus; quia qui prius in sacrificio, metuens prophetae mandata contempsit, postea vero ad eos, quos metuerat, conterendos populi Dei adversarios festinavit. Quo in loco etiam hoc notandum est, quia quem propheta deseruit, ad experienda bella hostium de Galgalis ascendit. Plerosque etenim peccatores justa praedicatorum severitas projicit, quos tamen divina memoria non relinquit. Solatia et adhortationes rectorum propter culpas amittunt: sed sacras Scripturas consulunt, propositum resumunt; et qui inobedientiae malo velut lapsi jacuerant, erecti per obedientiae fervorem ad occultorum hostium bella procedunt.

Bene ergo de Galgalis, id est de rotis venire memorantur: quia de sanctis Scripturis accipiunt, unde adversae partis militiam comprimere fortiter possint. Quia vero perditae conversationis altitudinem recuperare vincendo satagunt, in Gabaa Benjamin ascendere dicuntur. Quia item alii in latibulis se clauserant, alii ad hostes confugerant, reliqui populi vocantur, qui nullo sunt timore perterriti, sed cum rege suo ad locum festinant congressionis. Quod etiam nunc in Ecclesia videmus: quia videlicet plerique quasi parvuli proficere per privatae vitae studium proponunt, plerique fortes in expositis quoque maligni hostis certaminibus audaces sunt; ut aperte videant saeculi blandimenta, quae appetant, sed appetere visa contemnunt. Hi quidem non in latibulis, sed in aperti certaminis campo consistunt, expositi ad praelium, fortes ad triumphum, qui pugnare possunt, et nequeunt superari. Unde et per perfectum numerum designantur, cum subditur:

(Vers. 15.) Et recensuit Saul populum qui inventus fuerat cum eo, quasi sexcentos viros.

Whence also King Saul not long after is commanded to demolish the Amalekites: so that, if he should fulfill the command of the Lord by the slaughter of the same nation, he might loose the knots of his former disobedience (1 Kings 15). Separated indeed from the prophet, he seemed to do those things, so that he might be commanded to do others. Wherefore it is also added:

(Verse 15) And the rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the people who were fighting them: coming from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.

25. Some so fall into sin that they are not held in any good work: but others, while they recall that they have committed evil things, strive more instantly to do good things. For by doing good things, they cover the evil things which they leave behind, lest they be judged as discovered by the eternal judge. This indeed, if we lead the deed of Saul into the good part, we find this: because he who previously, fearing in the sacrifice, despised the commands of the prophet, afterwards indeed hastened to crush those whom he had feared, the adversaries of the people of God. In which place also this is to be noted, that he whom the prophet deserted, ascended from Gilgal to experience the wars of the enemies. For the just severity of preachers casts out many sinners, whom nevertheless the divine memory does not leave. They lose the consolations and exhortations of the rectors on account of their faults: but they consult the sacred Scriptures, they resume their purpose; and they who had lain fallen as if by the evil of disobedience, proceed, being raised up through the fervor of obedience, to the wars of secret enemies.

Well therefore are they mentioned to come from Gilgal, that is from the wheels: because they receive from the holy Scriptures that from which they may be able to strongly suppress the military force of the adverse part. But because they busy themselves to recover by conquering the height of their lost conduct, they are said to ascend into Gibeah of Benjamin. Because likewise others had shut themselves in hiding places, others had fled to the enemies, those are called the 'rest of the people' who were terrified by no fear, but hasten with their king to the place of encounter. Which we see even now in the Church: because, namely, many as if little ones propose to profit through the study of private life, many strong ones are also bold in the exposed contests of the malignant enemy; so that they may openly see the allurements of the world which they might seek, but they despise what they are seen to seek. These indeed do not consist in hiding places, but in the field of open contest, exposed for battle, strong for triumph, who are able to fight, and cannot be overcome. Whence also they are designated through a perfect number, when it is added:

(Verse 15) And Saul numbered the people that were found with him, about six hundred men.

26. Septem quippe diebus hebdomada impletur, sed unus eorum ad operandum prohibitus est, sex vero in boni operis studio conceduntur. Centenarius autem numerus summam continet numerorum. In sexcentis ergo viris, qui alii designantur, nisi qui opere, et cordis deliberatione robusti sunt? Nam quidam fortia proponunt, sed quia quod proponunt, non faciunt, ad sexcentorum virorum numerum non pertingunt. In sexcentis ergo viris, fortes operarii sanctae Ecclesiae designantur, quia magna proponunt, et rigorem propositi, fortitudine complent bonae operationis. Qui bene cum rege inventi perhibentur, quia cum pastoribus sanctae Ecclesiae in bona voluntate, et pia actione conveniunt. Cum eis namque sunt, a quibus nec voluntate discrepant, nec operatione discordant. Qui sic convenire dicuntur, ut excellere praedicatorum dignitas sentiatur; quia etsi idem bonum subditi, quod praedicatores volunt, faciunt, illi tamen in eodem bono praecipui sunt, quorum, ut ordo est celsior, ita et ardentior virtus animi, et robustior nixus operationis. Quare et separatim de rege, et ejus filio dicitur:

(Vers. 16.) Et Saul, et Jonathas. Ut quid enim separatim rex, et ejus filius nominatur, nisi quia actio boni praesulis claret esse singularis? Et because omnium fidelium subditorum non est uniformis aequalitas, sequitur:

(Vers. 16.) Et populus, qui inventus in Gabaa Benjamin.

27. Satis replicatum est, quod Gabaa collis interpretatur. Collis vero non summitas, sed montium est altitudo summitati vicina. Quid vero in isto colle, nisi alta et perfecta vita intelligitur fidelium subditorum? Haec nimirum quamvis praedicatorum celsitudini aequa non sit, tamen ab aliorum meritis valde cernitur esse sublimis. Unde et de quibusdam praecipuis electis in Apocalypsi legitur: Nemo poterat dicere canticum, nisi illa centum quadraginta quatuor millia (Apoc. XIV, 3). Quos et clarius demonstrans, ait: Hi sunt, qui cum mulieribus non sunt coinquinati, virgines enim sunt, et sequuntur agnum, quocunque ierit. Dum ergo spiritualia praelia describuntur, populus inventus in Gabaa Benjamin specialiter recensetur, quia virginum chorus contra immundorum spirituum ferocitatem tanto violentior est, quanto nullo eorum vulnere saucius, nulla eorum suggestionis sorde pollutus. Liber quippe et integer, expeditus est ad occursum, fortis ad ictum.

26. For the week is completed by seven days, but one of them is prohibited for working, while six indeed are granted in the study of good work. But the hundredfold number contains the sum of numbers. In the six hundred men, who else are designated but those who are robust in work and in the deliberation of the heart? For some propose strong things, but because they do not do what they propose, they do not reach to the number of six hundred men. In the six hundred men, therefore, strong workers of the holy Church are designated, because they propose great things, and fulfill the rigor of their purpose by the fortitude of good operation. Who are well said to have been found with the king, because they agree with the pastors of the holy Church in good will and pious action. For they are with those from whom they neither disagree in will, nor discord in operation. Who are said to agree in such a way that the dignity of the preachers is felt to excel; because even if the subjects do the same good which the preachers wish, nevertheless those are pre-eminent in the same good whose virtue of mind is as much more ardent, and effort of operation more robust, as their order is more lofty. Wherefore also it is said separately of the king and his son:

(Verse 16) And Saul and Jonathan. For why are the king and his son named separately, unless because the action of the good prelate is clear to be singular? And because there is not a uniform equality of all the faithful subjects, it follows:

(Verse 16) And the people that were found in Gibeah of Benjamin.

27. It has been sufficiently repeated that Gibeah is interpreted as a hill. Now a hill is not the summit, but it is the altitude of the mountains near the summit. What indeed is understood in that hill but the high and perfect life of the faithful subjects? This, namely, although it may not be equal to the loftiness of the preachers, yet it is clearly seen to be sublime far above the merits of others. Whence also of certain principal elect it is read in the Apocalypse: 'No man could say the canticle, but those hundred and forty-four thousand' (Apoc. 14:3). Clearly demonstrating them, he says: 'These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins, and they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.' While therefore the spiritual battles are described, the people found in Gibeah of Benjamin are specifically numbered, because the choir of virgins is so much more violent against the ferocity of unclean spirits, as it is wounded by no wound of theirs, polluted by no filth of their suggestion. For free and whole, it is ready for the encounter, strong for the blow.

An non in colle filii dextrae sunt, quos integritatis suae merito dilectus Jesu respicit, dicens: Vidi supra montem Sion agnum stantem, et cum eo centum quadraginta quatuor millia? (Apoc. XIV, 1.) Sed et nisi valde fortes essent, ad tantam celsitudinem fatigati ascendere nequaquam possent. Item nisi omnium cogitationum liberi essent, post agnum ubique currere non valerent. Quia ergo in occulti certaminis triumpho virgo quisque mirabilis est, dum ordo congressionis describitur, sub typo populi Gabaa, virginitatis specialis dignitas memoratur. Sequitur:

(Vers. 16-18.) Porro Philistiim conscenderant in Magmas. Et egressi sunt ad praeliandum de castris Philistiim tres cunei: unus cuneus pergebat contra viam Ephraim, ad terram Saul; porro alius ingrediebatur per viam Bethoron; tertius autem vertit se ad viam termini in terra Sabaa, imminenti valli Seboim, contra desertum.

28. Quid est, quod Philistaei tres cuneos faciunt nisi quia maligni spiritus cordi nostro, linguae, et operi inserere perversa moliuntur? Quia enim cogitando, vel loquendo, sive faciendo omne peccatum committitur, tres sunt Philistinorum cunei: quia maligni spiritus impellere ad peccandum animas satagunt, negligentia cordis, effrenatione oris, audacia perversi operis. Unde et primus cuneus contra viam Ephraim pergere dicitur, quia expugnare innocentiam a corde incipiunt. Via quippe Ephraim, id est fructiferi cordis, bona est cogitatio. Contra viam ergo Ephraim primus Philistinorum cuneus pergit: quia occulti adversarii, si prius usum bonae cogitationis a mente non auferunt, ad eradicandos virtutum ejus fructus pervenire non possunt. Contra Ephraim igitur viam veniunt, quando bonae cogitationi insidiantur, qua via ad terram Saul tendere dicitur. Quid enim est aliud mens electi discipuli, nisi fructifera valde terra doctoris? Unde et Dominus in Evangelio parabolam seminum exponens, ait: Quod cecidit in terram bonam hi sunt, qui in corde bono et optimo verbum excipiunt, et fructum afferunt in patientia (Luc. VIII, 15). Dicitur ergo de primo cuneo Philistinorum: Pergebant contra viam Ephraim: ut dum litterae sensum spiritualem percipimus, cogitationis aditum malignis spiritibus obstruamus.

Are they not on the hill of the son of the right hand, whom the beloved Jesus looks upon by the merit of their integrity, saying: 'I saw a Lamb standing upon Mount Sion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand'? (Apoc. 14:1.) But also unless they were very strong, being fatigued they could by no means ascend to such great loftiness. Likewise unless they were free of all thoughts, they would not be able to run everywhere after the Lamb. Because therefore in the triumph of the secret contest every virgin is wonderful, while the order of the encounter is described, under the type of the people of Gibeah, the special dignity of virginity is mentioned. It follows:

(Verses 16-18) And the Philistines had gone up into Michmash. And three companies went out of the camp of the Philistines to fight: one company went toward the way that leadeth to Ophrah, unto the land of Shual; and another company went toward the way of Beth-horon; and the third company turned to the way of the border that looketh to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

28. Why is it that the Philistines form three companies, unless because the malignant spirits strive to insert perverse things into our heart, tongue, and work? For because every sin is committed by thinking, or speaking, or doing, there are three companies of the Philistines: because the malignant spirits busy themselves to impel souls to sinning by negligence of the heart, unbridling of the mouth, and audacity of perverse work. Whence also the first company is said to go against the way of Ephraim, because they begin to attack innocence from the heart. The way of Ephraim, indeed, that is of the fruitful heart, is good thought. Against the way of Ephraim, therefore, the first company of the Philistines goes: because the secret adversaries, if they do not first take away the use of good thought from the mind, cannot reach to the eradicating of the fruits of its virtues. Therefore they come against the way of Ephraim when they lie in wait for good thought, by which way it is said to tend toward the land of Shual. For what else is the mind of the elect disciple but the very fruitful land of the doctor? Whence also the Lord in the Gospel, explaining the parable of the seeds, says: 'That which fell on the good ground are they who in a good and very good heart receive the word, and bring forth fruit in patience' (Luke 8:15). It is said therefore of the first company of the Philistines: 'They went toward the way of Ephraim': so that while we perceive the spiritual sense of the letter, we may obstruct the entrance of thought to the malignant spirits.

Sed dum cor munimus, linguam pariter a superfluis locutionibus refrenare compellimur. Unde et secundus cuneus per viam Bethoron ingredi dicitur; Bethoron quippe, domus irae interpretatur. Domus vero irae, est mens usui serviens linguae litigiosae. Quam certe domum sapiens ille insinuat, qui ait: Ira requiescit in sinu stulti (Eccl. VII, 11). Per hanc quidem ad cor stulti hostes ingrediuntur, quia maligni spiritus, dum ad effrenata verba linguam solvunt, iras accendunt, et mutuam fidelium charitatem feriunt. Qui ergo cavere cogitationes noxias didicit, si oris custodiam tenere non novit, unius cunei impetum vicit, alterius non evasit. Tertius vero cuneus vertit se ad iter termini. Quis est terminus cogitationis et verbi, nisi consummatio boni operis? Nam idcirco bona cogitamus et loquimur, ut ea ad finem boni operis perducamus. Sed cum antiquus hostis verbis et cogitationibus nocere non praevalet, in finem laqueos tendit, et bonum opus fidelium evacuare, vel impedire appetit. Quod vero est iter termini, nisi studium bonae operationis? Quia ergo multis insidiis maligni spiritus nituntur, ut studium boni operis deseratur, ad iter termini tertius cuneus verti dicitur. Potest etiam in hoc termino, vitae nostrae finis intelligi. Ad iter vero termini cuneus vertitur, quia interrumpere hostis opus bonum nititur, ne usque ad vitae finem perducatur. Unde et Psalmista lapsorum fletus in se exprimens, ait: Funes extenderunt in laqueum pedibus meis, juxta iter scandalum posuerunt mihi (Psal. CXXXIX, 6). Juxta iter quidem scandalum ponitur, ut bona electorum opera ante hujus vitae consummationem deserantur.

29. Quid est autem quod ait: In terra Sabaa, imminenti valli Seboim contra desertum? Sed haec nomina locorum ad designandum situm termini, quem dixerat, posita sunt. Sabaa vero in lingua nostra, captiva dicitur: Seboim, capreae nuncupantur. Quae est autem ista captiva, nisi humana natura, quae in paradiso fuit posita, et nunc ad perferendas hujus mortalitatis aerumnas in hoc saeculum est ligata? Quae est autem terra captivae hujus, nisi peregrinatio vitae temporalis?

But while we fortify the heart, we are likewise compelled to restrain the tongue from superfluous locutions. Whence also the second company is said to enter by the way of Beth-horon; for Beth-horon is interpreted as the house of wrath. Now the house of wrath is the mind serving the use of a litigious tongue. Which house certainly that wise man suggests, who says: 'Anger resteth in the bosom of a fool' (Eccl. 7:11). By this indeed the enemies enter to the heart of the fool, because the malignant spirits, while they loose the tongue to unbridled words, kindle wraths, and strike the mutual charity of the faithful. He therefore who has learned to beware of harmful thoughts, if he does not know how to hold the guardianship of the mouth, has conquered the onset of one company, but has not escaped the other. But the third company turns itself to the way of the border. What is the border of thought and word, unless the consummation of good work? For we think and speak good things for this reason, that we may lead them to the end of good work. But when the ancient enemy does not prevail to harm by words and thoughts, he spreads snares at the end, and desires to evacuate or impede the good work of the faithful. But what is the way of the border, unless the study of good operation? Because therefore by many snares the malignant spirits strive that the study of good work be deserted, the third company is said to be turned to the way of the border. Also in this border, the end of our life can be understood. Indeed the company is turned to the way of the border, because the enemy strives to interrupt the good work, lest it be led through to the end of life. Whence also the Psalmist, expressing in himself the weeping of those who have fallen, says: 'They have stretched out cords for a snare for my feet, they have set a stumbling-block for me near the way' (Psal. 139:6). Near the way indeed the stumbling-block is set, so that the good works of the elect may be deserted before the consummation of this life.

29. But what is it that he says: 'In the land of Shual, overlooking the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness'? But these names of places are put to designate the location of the border which he had mentioned. Now 'Shual' (Sabaa) in our language is called 'captive'; 'Zeboim' are called 'wild goats.' Now what is that captive, unless human nature, which was placed in paradise, and now is bound in this world to endure the hardships of this mortality? And what is the land of this captive, unless the pilgrimage of temporal life?

Bene igitur, dum verti cuneus dicitur terra captivae memoratur: quia maligni spiritus in hac terra peregrinationis nostrae praelia contra nos movere possunt; in illa vero vita nostra non possunt. Sed electorum praesens conversatio quamvis in hoc captivitatis exsilio posita sit, si iter termini perfecte custodit, post termini hujus angustias, ad altitudinem immortalitatis pervenit. Unde et termini hujus terrae valli Seboim, id est caprearum imminere perhibentur. Vallis quippe caprearum, est mors pretiosa sanctorum: quia unde moriendo deponuntur, inde ad gaudia aeterna sublevantur. Capreas quidem velocia animalia esse, et magnos saltus dare quis nesciat? Recte ergo sanctarum animarum dignitatem capreae designant, quae in morte corpora deserunt, sed quasi magnos saltus dantes, per ingentia merita ad superna regna conscendunt. Dicat ergo, quia terminus terrae captivae imminet valli Seboim: quia etsi damnata est humana conditio, sic tamen est in Dei filio exaltata, ut cum ad vitae temporalis terminum ducitur, in morte datur, ut in aeternae vitae celsitudinem sublevetur. Dicat ergo: Quia tertius cuneus ad iter se vertit termini in terra captivae, quae imminet valli caprearum: ut malignos spiritus ad hoc electorum extrema bona pervertere conari asserat, ut ad superna gaudia non conscendant. Quae etiam vallis sita contra desertum dicitur. Quid deserti nomine hoc loco, nisi infernum accipitur? Desertum quidem recte intelligitur, ubi electorum nullus invenitur. Desertum etiam dicitur, in quo aerumnarum solatia nulla sentiuntur. Vallis ergo caprearum contra desertum sita perhibetur: quia sanctorum mors diversum omne ab inferni meritis habet, et conveniens aliquid, et dignum inferni poenis non habet. Sequitur:

(Vers. 20, 21.) Porro faber ferrarius non inveniebatur in omni terra Israel. Caverant enim Philistiim ne forte facerent Hebraei gladium aut lanceam. Descendebat ergo omnis Israel ad Philistiim, ut exacueret unusquisque vomerem, aut ligonem, et securim, et sarculum.

30. Haec profecto omnia describuntur, ut modus subsecuturae victoriae insinuetur. Armati quippe ab inermibus victi sunt, ut totum, quod vincitur, omnipotentis Dei laudibus tribuatur. Nos autem si more nostro spiritualiter ista prosequimur, mysteriis vacua non inveniemus. Quid est ergo, quod dicitur: Faber ferrarius non inveniebatur in Israel: nisi quia ad spiritualia bella non per saeculares litteras, sed per divinas instruimur. Faber quippe ferrarius in Israel non invenitur, quia fideles Domini videntes, arte saecularis scientiae contra malignos spiritus nequaquam praeliantur.

Well therefore, while the company is said to turn, the land of the captive is mentioned: because the malignant spirits can move battles against us in this land of our pilgrimage; but in that other life of ours they cannot. But the present conduct of the elect, although it may be placed in this exile of captivity, if it perfectly guards the way of the border, after the straits of this border, it reaches to the height of immortality. Whence also the borders of this land are mentioned to overlook the valley of Zeboim, that is, of the wild goats. For the valley of the wild goats is the precious death of the saints: because whence they are laid down by dying, thence they are raised up to eternal joys. Who does not know that wild goats are swift animals and give great leaps? Rightly therefore wild goats designate the dignity of holy souls, which desert their bodies in death, but as if giving great leaps, they ascend through vast merits to the supernal kingdoms. Let him say therefore, that the border of the land of the captive overlooks the valley of Zeboim: because even if human condition is condemned, yet it is so exalted in the Son of God, that when it is led to the end of temporal life, it is given in death, that it may be raised up to the loftiness of eternal life. Let him say therefore: 'Because the third company turned itself to the way of the border in the land of the captive, which overlooks the valley of the wild goats': that he may assert that the malignant spirits try to pervert the final good things of the elect for this purpose, that they may not ascend to supernal joys. Which valley also is said to be situated 'toward the wilderness.' What is accepted by the name of 'wilderness' in this place, unless hell? Wilderness is indeed rightly understood where none of the elect is found. It is also called a wilderness in which no solaces of hardships are felt. Therefore the valley of the wild goats is mentioned to be situated toward the wilderness: because the death of the saints has everything diverse from the merits of hell, and has nothing convenient or worthy of the punishments of hell. It follows:

(Verses 20, 21) Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel. For the Philistines said: 'Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears.' Therefore all Israel went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his spade, and his axe, and his hoe.

30. All these things indeed are described so that the manner of the subsequent victory may be suggested. For the armed were conquered by the unarmed, so that the whole of what is conquered may be attributed to the praises of Almighty God. But if we follow these things spiritually according to our custom, we shall not find them void of mysteries. What is it therefore that is said: 'A smith was not found in Israel,' unless because we are instructed for spiritual battles not by secular letters, but by divine? For a smith is not found in Israel because the faithful who see the Lord by no means fight against malignant spirits by the art of secular science.

Fabri namque arte adjuti vincerent, si saecularis eloquentiae jaculis, occultis hostibus praevalerent. Quae profecto saecularium librorum eruditio, et si per semetipsam ad spiritualem sanctorum conflictum non prodest, si divinae Scripturae conjungitur, ejusdem Scripturae scientia subtilius eruditur. Ad hoc quidem tantum liberales artes discendae sunt, ut per instructionem illarum divina eloquia subtilius intelligantur. A nonnullorum cordibus discendi desiderium maligni spiritus tollunt: ut et saecularia nesciant, et ad sublimitatem spiritalium non pertingant.

Bene ergo dicitur: Caverant Philistiim ne forte facerent Hebraei gladium, et lanceam. Aperte quidem daemones sciunt, quia dum saecularibus litteris instruimur, in spiritualibus adjuvamur. Cum ergo nos ea discere dissuadent, quid aliud, quam ne lanceam aut gladium faciamus praecavent? Dicat ergo historica, et studium electorum propheta insinuet, et exponat: Descendebat Israel ad Philistiim, ut exacueret unusquisque vomerem suum, aut ligonem. Ad Philistaeos descendimus, quando ad discendos saeculares libros animum inclinamus. Et descensus dicitur, quia Christiana simplicitas in alto est. Sed quid est, quod saeculares litterae dicuntur in plano esse, modus vero docendi sublimis? Quia cum coelestia nulla narrent, et miro dicendi ordine, quae proponuntur, explicant, et narrando sublimantur, et carnalia dicendo deponuntur. Quem profecto dicendi, sive intelligendi modum qui scire appetit, descendat ad Philistiim, vomerem et ligonem acuat, ut ad saecularium etiam carnalia audienda deponatur, qui eorum eloquentia instrui penitus nititur. Hanc quippe saecularem scientiam omnipotens Deus in plano anteposuit, ut nobis ascendendi gradum faceret, qui nos ad divinae Scripturae altitudinem levare debuisset. Idcirco eam praemittere voluit, ut in ipsa nos instrueret ad spiritualia transire. Unde et Moyses, qui nobis divinorum eloquiorum principia edidit, non prius divina didicit, sed ut capere, vel exprimere divina posset, in omni Aegyptiorum scientia rudem animum informavit. Isaias etiam prophetis aliis eloquentior extitit: quia nec, ut Jeremias Anathotites, nec, ut Amos armentarius, sed nobiliter instructus atque urbanus fuit. Paulus quoque vas electionis ante ad Gamalielis pedes instruitur, quam rapiatur in paradisum, vel ad coeli tertii altitudinem sublevetur (Act. XXII). Et ideo fortasse per doctrinam aliis apostolis excellit: quia futurus in coelestibus, terrena prius studiosus didicit.

For being aided by the art of the smith they would conquer, if by the darts of secular eloquence they should prevail against secret enemies. Which erudition of secular books indeed, even if by itself it does not profit for the spiritual conflict of the saints, yet if it is joined to divine Scripture, the science of that same Scripture is more subtly learned. To this end only are the liberal arts to be learned, that through their instruction divine oracles may be more subtly understood. From the hearts of some the malignant spirits take away the desire of learning: so that they may both be ignorant of secular things and not reach to the sublimity of spiritual things.

Well therefore is it said: 'The Philistines had taken care, lest perhaps the Hebrews should make sword or spear.' For the demons clearly know that while we are instructed in secular letters, we are aided in spiritual things. When therefore they dissuade us from learning them, what else do they take care against than that we should make spear or sword? Let the historical things speak, and let the prophet suggest and explain the study of the elect: 'Israel went down to the Philistines, that every man might sharpen his share or his spade.' We descend to the Philistines when we incline our mind to learn secular books. And it is called a descent, because Christian simplicity is on high. But why is it that secular letters are said to be on the plain, but the manner of teaching sublime? Because since they narrate no celestial things, they both explain those things which are proposed in a wonderful order of speaking, and are sublimated in narrating, and are laid down in speaking carnal things. Which manner of speaking or understanding, he who desires to know, let him descend to the Philistines, let him sharpen his share and spade, so that he may even be laid down to hear the carnal things of secular writers, who strives to be thoroughly instructed by their eloquence. Almighty God indeed placed this secular science before us on the plain, that He might make for us a step for ascending, which ought to lift us to the altitude of divine Scripture. Therefore He wished to send it before, that in it He might instruct us to pass over to spiritual things. Whence also Moses, who published for us the principles of the divine oracles, did not learn divine things first, but so that he might be able to grasp or express divine things, he formed his unpolished mind in all the science of the Egyptians. Isaiah also stood out as more eloquent than the other prophets: because he was neither as Jeremiah of Anathoth, nor as Amos the herdsman, but was nobly instructed and urbane. Paul also, the vessel of election, is instructed at the feet of Gamaliel before he is caught up into paradise, or raised up to the altitude of the third heaven (Acts 22). And therefore perhaps he excels the other apostles in doctrine: because being intended for celestial things, he first studiously learned earthly things.

Sed jam, ut arbitror, ruralium instrumentorum proprietates spiritualiter exquirendae sunt. Quid ergo in vomere, qui praeeuntibus bobus trahitur, nisi affectus geminae charitatis insinuatur? Et quid in ligone, quo solus quisque in agri cultura exercetur, nisi privatae vitae studium ostenditur? Quidam namque et dites et fortes ruricolae in bobus arant: quia et Dominum fortiter diligunt, et per fraternum amorem animarum lucris diligentius intendunt. Vomerem igitur apud Philistinorum fabros acuunt: quia sanctae praedicationis studium de saeculari eruditione componunt. Nonnulli vero, ut pauperes, ligone utuntur: quia qui ad lucrandas aliorum animas se non posse sufficere arbitrantur, sibi solis non desinunt praeparare de aeternitate quod possunt. Velut ligone quisque eorum utitur: quia agrum suae mentis divino cultui praeparare non desinunt. Et quia in hoc etiam privatae vitae studio valde sibi saecularis eruditio prodest, ligonem, dum docetur exacuit: quia in propriae vitae studio eruditus quaeque subtilius intendit. Securi autem non terram fodimus, sed ramos arborum detruncamus. Quid ergo aliud signat securis, nisi zelum bonae aemulationis? Nam quando ad imitanda meliorum exempla succendimur, velut ramos nobis incidimus, quibus ignem depellendis negligentiae nostrae frigoribus nutriamus. Hanc securem nos tenere Paulus apostolus praecipit, dicens: Bonum aemulamini in bono omnes (Gal. IV, 18). Quae nimirum securis acuitur: quia eruditi fideles, sicut melius agnoscunt exempla fidelium, ita et ferventius imitari concupiscunt. Sarculum sive tridens subtilius terram fodit; ita ut non tam fodere, quam scalpere, et glebas confringere cognoscatur. Quid per hoc tridens sarculum, nisi virtus discretionis exprimitur? Per quam certe dum acta, vel agenda subtili consideratione discutimus, velut serendae terrae nostrae glebas in tenuem pulverem complanamus. Quod profecto sarculum tridens asseritur, quia vis discretionis non solum agenda, sed etiam cogitanda, et loquenda componit.

(Vers. 21.) Retusae itaque erant acies vomerum, et ligonum, et securium, et tridentium, usque ad stimulum corrigendum.

Non dicuntur acies replicatae, aut attritae: sed retusae. Nam si replicatae essent, vel attritae, omnino nihil inciderent. Retusa vero acies, et si celeriter non incidit omnia, quaedam objecta in mora laboris secat. Sic nimirum sunt corda simplicium, quae si subtiliter spiritualia non intelligunt, dum tamen tarde quaedam intelligunt, acuitatem ingenii non acutam habent, sed retusam. Saepe enim discutere obscura volunt; sed dum vix diu cogitando ad ea etiam, quae sunt aperta, perveniunt, velut retusa acie morando incidunt.

But now, as I think, the properties of the rural instruments are to be sought spiritually. What, then, is suggested in the plowshare (vomer), which is drawn by oxen going before, but the affection of twin charity? And what in the mattock (ligo), in which each one is exercised alone in the cultivation of the field, but the study of private life is shown? For some wealthy and strong husbandmen plow with oxen: because they both love the Lord strongly, and through brotherly love they more diligently attend to the gains of souls. Therefore they sharpen the plowshare at the smiths of the Philistines: because they compose the study of holy preaching from secular erudition. But some, as the poor, use the mattock: because those who think they cannot be sufficient to gain the souls of others, do not cease to prepare for themselves alone what they can concerning eternity. Each of them uses as it were a mattock: because they do not cease to prepare the field of their own mind for divine cultivation. And because in this study of private life also secular erudition is very profitable to them, he sharpens the mattock while he is taught: because one instructed in the study of his own life attends more subtly to each thing. But with the axe (securis) we do not dig the earth, but we lop off the branches of trees. What else then does the axe signify, but the zeal of good emulation? For when we are kindled to imitate the examples of better men, we as it were cut off branches for ourselves, with which we may nourish the fire for dispelling the chills of our negligence. The apostle Paul commands us to hold this axe, saying: Be zealous for the good in the good, all of you (Gal. 4:18). Which axe is certainly sharpened: because the instructed faithful, as they better recognize the examples of the faithful, so also they desire more fervently to imitate them. The hoe (sarculum) or trident digs the earth more subtly; so that it is known not so much to dig as to scrape and break the clods. What is expressed by this trident hoe but the virtue of discretion? Through which certainly while we discuss things done or to be done with subtle consideration, we as it were level the clods of our land to be sown into fine dust. Which trident hoe is indeed asserted, because the power of discretion composes not only things to be done, but also things to be thought and spoken.

(Verse 21.) Therefore the edges of the plowshares, and of the mattocks, and of the axes, and of the tridents were blunt, even to the correction of the goad.

They are not said to be folded back or worn out edges, but blunt. For if they were folded back or worn out, they would cut nothing at all. But a blunt edge, even if it does not cut everything quickly, cuts some objects through the delay of labor. So indeed are the hearts of the simple, which if they do not subtly understand spiritual things, while yet they slowly understand some things, they have a sharpness of mind that is not acute, but blunt. For they often wish to discuss obscure things; but while they barely come to those things which are open, even by long thinking, they cut as it were with a blunt edge by delaying.

Quod certe non solum in occultis sacramentis Scripturarum ostenditur, sed etiam in latentibus suggestionibus daemonum. Depellere quippe a se hostem nequeunt, quem cognoscere cito non possunt. Dum ergo magna mora cogitationis, insidias malae suggestionis expellunt, velut retusa acie secant, quod per acuitatem ingenii abscindere velocius poterant. Quid est autem quod dicitur: Usque ad stimulum corrigendum? Stimulus dicitur increpatio praelatorum. Unde et scriptum est: Verba sapientum sunt quasi stimuli (Eccl. XII, 11). Stimulus quidem increpatio dicitur, quia dum culpas arguit, mentem pungit. Sed retusus est stimulus, quando praelati languet intellectus, ut subditorum culpas, nec cognoscendo reperiat, nec inveniendo reprehendat. Bene ergo increpatio rectoris stimulus asseritur, quia tumores vitiorum pungere non praevalet, si ejus mens erudita per scientiam, pungenda non videt. Unde et in typo eruditorum praelatorum bene subjungitur:

(Vers. 22.) Cumque venisset dies praelii, non est inventus ensis, et lancea in manu totius populi qui erat cum Saul et Jonatha, excepto Saul et Jonatha filio ejus.

33. Quid per lanceam, nisi sanctorum praedicatorum acuta providentia accipitur? Et quid per ensem, nisi eorum intelligentiae subtilitas demonstratur? Per lanceam quippe longe nobis ante objecta perfodimus. Per ensem vero vicini, et fere conjuncti nobis hostes trucidantur. Bene ergo in lancea, providentia electorum ostenditur, per quam occultos hostes percutiunt, antequam vicinum eorum impetum patiantur. Dum enim futuras daemonum insidias cavendo praeveniunt, velut a longe lancea feriunt, quorum vicinos excipere ictus nolunt. Unde et beatus Paulus apostolus dum a longe armatos fornicationis spiritus cerneret, conjugalem castimoniam quasi lanceam tenuit, et eos accedere propius non permisit, dicens: Propter fornicationem unusquisque uxorem suam habeat, et unaquaeque virum. Uxori vir debitum reddat, similiter autem uxor viro (I Cor. VII, 2). Et iterum: Revertimini in idipsum, ne tentet vos Satanas propter incontinentiam vestram (Ibid. 5). Hinc etiam de semetipso ait: Castigo corpus meum, et in servitutem redigo, ne praedicans aliis, reprobus efficiar (I Cor. IX, 27).

Which is certainly shown not only in the hidden sacraments of the Scriptures, but also in the latent suggestions of demons. For they cannot repel the enemy from themselves whom they cannot quickly recognize. While therefore with a great delay of thought they expel the snares of evil suggestion, they cut as it were with a blunt edge what they could have cut off more quickly through sharpness of mind. But what is it that is said: Even to the correction of the goad? The goad (stimulus) is said to be the rebuke of prelates. Whence also it is written: The words of the wise are as goads (Eccl. 12:11). A goad indeed is called a rebuke, because while it argues against faults, it pricks the mind. But the goad is blunt when the intellect of the prelate languishes, so that he neither finds the faults of the subjects by recognizing them, nor reproves them by finding them. Well therefore is the rebuke of the rector asserted to be a goad, because it does not prevail to prick the tumors of vices if his mind, instructed through knowledge, does not see what is to be pricked. Whence also, in the type of learned prelates, it is well added:

(Verse 22.) And when the day of battle was come, there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of all the people that were with Saul and Jonathan, except Saul and Jonathan his son.

33. What is received through the spear, but the sharp providence of the holy preachers? And what is demonstrated through the sword, but the subtlety of their understanding? For through the spear we pierce things objectified far before us. But through the sword the enemies near, and almost joined to us, are slaughtered. Well therefore in the spear, the providence of the chosen is shown, through which they strike hidden enemies before they suffer their near attack. For while they prevent the future snares of demons by taking care, they as it were strike from afar with the spear those whose near blows they do not wish to receive. Whence also the blessed Apostle Paul, while he discerned from afar the armed spirits of fornication, held conjugal chastity as it were a spear, and did not permit them to approach nearer, saying: Because of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render the debt to the wife, and likewise also the wife to the husband (1 Cor. 7:2). And again: Return together again, lest Satan tempt you because of your incontinency (Ibid. 5). Hence also of himself he says: I chastise my body, and bring it into servitude, lest preaching to others, I myself should become a reprobate (1 Cor. 9:27).

Qui enim ne reprobus fieret, corpus castigaverat, nimirum lancea hostes suos longiuscule positos ante se perfodiebat. Providentia ergo abstinentiae pro edomanda carnis libidine quasi lancea accipitur, per quam venturi hostes feriuntur. Bene etiam per ensem intellectus exprimitur: quia qui pravas maligni spiritus suggestiones in praesenti tempore cognoscit et abjicit, velut vicinum, et juxta se positum hostem ferit. Qui etiam velut ense utraque parte acuto incidit: quia tam falsa bona, quam vera mala reprehendit. Quid vero est, quod in manu Saul et Jonathae ensis esse perhibetur? Sed in manu non sunt eorum, qui acute vicina et praesentia intelligunt, et futura praevident, et ad exstinguenda ea fortia non exercent. Aperte sciunt, quia antiquus hostis maximam partem humani generis per robur carnis in fornicationem praecipitat, qui tamen carnem per abstinentiam castigare non curant. Sic etiam nonnulli praesentia mala aperte conspiciunt, sed haec vitare minime conantur. Hi nimirum ensem et lanceam habent, sed in manu non habent. Bene ergo in die praelii in manu Saul et Jonathae ensis et lancea invenitur: quia solum electi viri sunt, qui et praesentia et futura mala intelligant, et ea cordis intentione vincere ardentius concupiscant. Quod tamen hoc loco ideo dicitur, ut populus nihil in manu tenuisse doceatur, qui vomeres, ligones, secures, et sarculos tenere ostenditur. His enim verbis non electi distinguuntur a reprobis, sed hebetes a peritis. Sed quia jam armatos viros ostendimus, modum certaminis explicemus. Sequitur.

For he who, lest he should become a reprobate, had chastised his body, surely pierced his enemies placed somewhat far before him with the spear. Therefore the providence of abstinence for taming the lust of the flesh is received as it were a spear, through which the coming enemies are struck. Well also through the sword understanding is expressed: because he who acknowledges and rejects the perverse suggestions of the malignant spirit in the present time, as it were strikes a near enemy placed next to him. Who also as it were cuts with a sword sharp on both sides: because he reproves both false goods and true evils. But what is it that the sword is said to be in the hand of Saul and Jonathan? But they are not in the hand of those who sharply understand near and present things, and foresee future things, and do not exercise strong things for extinguishing them. They know openly that the ancient enemy precipitates the greatest part of the human race into fornication through the strength of the flesh, who nevertheless do not care to chastise the flesh through abstinence. Thus also some openly behold present evils, but by no means strive to avoid them. These surely have the sword and the spear, but they have them not in hand. Well therefore in the day of battle the sword and the spear are found in the hand of Saul and Jonathan: because those alone are chosen men who understand both present and future evils, and desire more ardently to overcome them with the intention of the heart. Which however is said in this place for this reason, that the people may be taught to have held nothing in hand, who are shown to hold plows, mattocks, axes, and hoes. For by these words the chosen are not distinguished from the reprobate, but the dull from the skilled. But because we have already shown the armed men, let us explain the mode of the contest. It follows.