

SAINT AMBROSE OF MILAN

ON CAIN AND ABEL

De Cain et Abel

SABBATISMUS

Saint Ambrose of Milan (340–397)
De Cain et Abel · On Cain and Abel

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[DE CAIN ET ABEL.]

IN LIBROS DE CAIN ET ABEL ADMONITIO.

Ambrosius in ipso exordio libri de Incarnatione Dominica loquens de duobus Gratiani cubiculariis, Arianæ sectae hominibus, qui ejus concioni fecte polliciti sese adfuturos, obligatam fidem non liberabant, sermonem ad institutam Caini et Abelis historiam se convertere profitetur. Itaque dum illi, inquit, forsitan veniunt, ad istos qui propositi sunt, deflectamus agricolas, quorum alter, hoc est, Cain, etc. Ex quibus sane non levis suspicio injici potest commentationem de Cain et Abel haud prius editam fuisse, quam illa pronuntiarentur ab Ambrosio. Et huic conjecturae inde fortassis nonnihil videatur accedere confirmationis, quod et eadem fides, quam vir sanctus in libro de Incarnatione Arianis explicato, etiam in opere de quo agimus, plurimum commendetur, et in utroque eadem Geneseos verba non absimili ratione exponantur. Cum autem memorata disputatio de Incarnatione Dominica vix ante annum 382, ut suo loco dicetur, habita fuerit, hinc forsitan possit aliquis colligere eidem quoque tempori tractatum de Cain et Abel esse tribuendum. Verumtamen ut hunc antiquiorem existimemus, ut pote operi de Paradiso supparem, primis ejusdem verbis adducimur. Ibi siquidem ita S. Doctor: De Paradiso, inquit, in superioribus. . . . digessimus. . . . Nunc sequentem adoriamur historiam et ea quae secundum Scripturas annexa sunt divinas, nostro opere prosequamur. Haec certe dubitare neutiquam sinunt, quin opellam hanc quae in mss. duobus post librum de Paradiso exarata, inscribitur de Cain et Abel liber secundus, eidem libro subjunxerit; quam proinde circiter an. 375, scriptam fuisse crediderimus. Praeter conjecturas a nobis in superiori admonitione propositas, huc etiam facit utriusque operis character, qui dubio procul non tantam, quantam aliorum, maturitatem praefert, sed quodam modo, ut voce utamur Ambrosii, juvenulescit. Itaque quod ille in loco e commentatione de Incarnatione Dominica superius laudato se ad Cainum atque Abelem deflectere significat, autumamus ideo dictum, quia forte amborum fratrum historia, cujus lectio quotannis certo tempore in Ecclesia recurrebat, tunc ad populum fuerat recitata.

Quidnam tractetur in hoc opere, tum ipsa ejus inscriptio, tum quae a nobis supra dicta sunt, satis declarant. Quod vero ad tractandi rationem attinet, argumentum suum ubique fere mysticis interpretationibus exponit et illustrat. Immoratur praesertim in explicandis Caini et Abelis sacrificiis, qua in re multo majorem totius commentationis partem insumit.

[ON CAIN AND ABEL.]

ADMONITION ON THE BOOKS OF CAIN AND ABEL.

Ambrose, speaking at the very beginning of the book **On the Incarnation of the Lord** about two chamberlains of Gratian, men of the Arian sect, who had falsely promised to be present at his assembly but did not fulfill their pledged faith, professes that he is turning his discourse to the established history of Cain and Abel. "Therefore, while they, perhaps, are coming," he says, "let us turn aside to those farmers who have been set before us, one of whom, that is, Cain, etc." From these words, a not slight suspicion can be raised that the commentary on Cain and Abel was not published before those words were pronounced by Ambrose. And to this conjecture, perhaps some confirmation may seem to be added from the fact that the same faith, which the holy man explained to the Arians in the book **On the Incarnation**, is also greatly commended in the work we are dealing with, and in both, the same words of Genesis are explained in a not dissimilar manner. Since, however, the mentioned dispute **On the Incarnation of the Lord** was held scarcely before the year 382, as will be said in its place, one might perhaps gather from this that the treatise on Cain and Abel is to be attributed to the same time. Nevertheless, that we should consider this work to be older, as being nearly contemporary with the work **On Paradise**, we are led by its first words. For there the Holy Doctor says: "Concerning Paradise," he says, "we have discussed in the preceding pages. . . . Now let us approach the following history and pursue in our work those things which are annexed according to the divine Scriptures." These words certainly allow no doubt that he subjoined this little work—which in two manuscripts is written after the book **On Paradise** and is inscribed as the **Second Book on Cain and Abel**—to that same book; which we would therefore believe to have been written around the year 375. Besides the conjectures proposed by us in the preceding admonition, the character of both works also points to this, which undoubtedly does not display as much maturity as that of others, but in a certain way, to use Ambrose's word, "is youthful" (**juvenculescit**). Therefore, as for what he signifies in the place from the commentary **On the Incarnation of the Lord** praised above, that he is turning aside to Cain and Abel, we think it was said because perhaps the history of both brothers, the reading of which recurred in the Church at a certain time every year, had then been recited to the people.

What is treated in this work, both its inscription itself and what has been said by us above, sufficiently declare. As for what pertains to the method of treatment, he explains and illustrates his argument almost everywhere with mystical interpretations. He dwells especially on explaining the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, in which matter he spends a much greater part of the entire commentary.

Quamvis autem hic non tam multus sit in exagitandis confutandisque haereticis, quam in libro de Paradiso; sed liberius oratorio stylo indulgeat: interdum tamen nonnulla catholicae fidei dogmata, quae imbuendis fidelium animis putabat utiliora, satis subtiliter insinuat. Ea vero quae ad fingendos mores conducunt, fusius accuratiusque prosequitur.

Hinc quidem non temere fecisse nobis videbitur, qui prius opus hoc publice peroratum, ac postea in eam, qua nunc habetur, formam redactum esse existimabit. Tametsi non sit dissimulandum id in aliis Ambrosianis operibus, in quibus oratorii dicendi modi etiamnum exstant, facilius anidmadverti.

Fatendum porro Sanctum hunc nostrum plurima e Philone in lucubrationem suam transtulisse. Confer, si vacat, quae dicit in haec Geneseos verba: Possedi hominem per Deum, cum Judaei illius libro de Cherubim, et hinc ea desumpta esse nullo negotio deprehendes. Similiter etiam a medio primo capite prioris libri ad caput octavum posterioris, non minimam partem libro ejusdem auctoris de Sacrificiis Abel et Cain, deberi manifestum est. Attamen in tribus ultimis libri secundi capitibus, ubi Ambrosius reliqua ad illam ipsam historiam pertinentia paucis expedit, e libro, cui titulus: De eo quod deterius potiori insidiari soleat, in quo eadem a Philone fusius pertractantur, tres omnino locos imitatus est. Verum et istic et ubicumque aliquid ex hoc auctore mutuatur, summa semper utitur libertate; ita ut, cum lubet, philonianis sentiis adjiciat, detrahat et contrarias quoque nonnumquam anteponat.

Caeterum a nobis impetrare non possumus, ut hujus operis divisionem ab Ambrosio profectam arbitremur. Malumus illam tribuere Sciolo cuiquam, qui cum pleraque omnia, de quibus apud Philonem libris duobus agitur, in hoc tractatu contineri adverteret, eum quoque bifariam dividendum esse judicavit: sed adeo praepostere illud praestitit, ut ibi posuerit secundi libri initium, ubi ne caput quidem incipere oporteret. Longe sane commodius ab eo loco, ubi vir sanctus ad agendum de secundo sacrificii Caini vitio aggreditur, initium duceret secundus liber. Cum autem divisio illa etsi absurda ab antiquissimi aevi manuscriptis ad editionum tempora pervenerit, nos quoque eam, ne qua in citationibus confusio oriatur, censuimus esse retinendam.

Although, however, he is not as frequent here in attacking and refuting heretics as in the book **On Paradise**, but indulges more freely in an oratorical style, he nevertheless occasionally insinuates certain dogmas of the Catholic faith, which he thought more useful for imbuing the minds of the faithful, with sufficient subtlety. Those things, however, which lead to the formation of morals, he pursues more extensively and accurately.

Hence, indeed, it will seem to us that he who thinks this work was first delivered publicly and afterwards reduced into the form in which it is now held, has not acted rashly. Although it must not be concealed that this is more easily noticed in other Ambrosian works, in which the oratorical modes of speaking still exist.

It must further be admitted that our Saint transferred very many things from Philo into his own work. Compare, if you have the time, what he says on these words of Genesis: **I have possessed a man through God**, with that Jew's book **On the Cherubim**, and you will easily perceive that they were taken from there. Similarly also, from the middle of the first chapter of the first book to the eighth chapter of the second book, it is manifest that a not insignificant part is owed to the same author's book **On the Sacrifices of Abel and Cain**. Nevertheless, in the last three chapters of the second book, where Ambrose dispatches in a few words the remaining matters pertaining to that very history, he imitated exactly three passages from the book entitled: **That the Worse is Accustomed to Plot against the Better**, in which the same matters are treated more extensively by Philo. But both there and wherever he borrows anything from this author, he always uses the greatest liberty; so that, when it pleases him, he adds to Philo's sentiments, takes away from them, and sometimes also prefers contrary ones.

For the rest, we cannot bring ourselves to believe that the division of this work proceeded from Ambrose. We prefer to attribute it to some over-busy scholar, who, when he noticed that almost everything treated in two books by Philo was contained in this treatise, judged that it also should be divided into two parts: but he performed this so preposterously that he placed the beginning of the second book where not even a chapter ought to begin. Far more suitably would the second book take its beginning from that place where the holy man proceeds to act concerning the second fault of Cain's sacrifice. Since, however, that division, although absurd, has come down from the manuscripts of the most ancient age to the times of the editions, we also have decided that it must be retained, lest any confusion should arise in citations.

SANCTI AMBROSII MEDIOLANENSIS EPISCOPI DE
CAIN ET ABEL LIBRI DUO. (C)

LIBER PRIMUS.

CAPUT PRIMUM.

Post brevem a libro superiori ad huncce transitionem agitur de ortu Cain et Abel; ac per hos sicut et per Esau et Jacob, duas hominum sectas sibi invicem oppositas praesignari ostenditur.

1. De paradiso in superioribus pro captu nostro, ut potuimus, quod Dominus infudit, sensus invenit, digessimus, in quibus Adam atque Evae lapsus est comprehensus. Nunc quoniam illa penes auctores non stetit culpa: sed quod pejus est, deteriorem invenit haerodem, sequentem adoriamur historiam, et ea quae secundum Scripturas annexa sunt divinas, nostro opere prosequamur.

2. Adam autem cognovit Evam mulierem suam, quae concepit et peperit Cain, et dixit: Acquisivi hominem per Deum (Gen. IV, 1). Quae acquirimus, ex quo, et a quo, et per quid acquiramus, considerari solet: ex quo, tanquam ex materia: a quo, quis auctor: per quid, tanquam per aliquod instrumentum. Numquid hic sic dicit: Acquisivi hominem per Deum; ut Deum intelligas instrumentum? Non utique: sed ut intelligas auctorem et operatorem Deum. Unde magis Deo detulit, quia dixit: Acquisivi hominem per Deum, ut et nos cum aliquid acquirimus, vel omnes eventus secundos Deo magis deferre, quam nobis arrogare debemus.

3. Et adjecit parere Abet (Ibid. 2). Cum adjicitur aliquid, quod prius erat tollitur. Idque colligitur ex arithmeticae portionibus, aut animae cogitationibus: addito enim numero, fit alius numerus, aboletur superior: et cogitatio accedens nova excludit superiorem. Ergo cum adjicitur Abel, aufertur Cain. Quod nominum interpretatione plenius deprehenditur. Cain etenim dictus, est acquisitio, quod omnia sibi acquireret: Abel qui omnia referret ad Deum pia devotus mentis attentione, nihil sibi arrogans, ut superior frater, sed totum tribuens conditori quod accepisset ab eo.

ST. AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN: TWO BOOKS ON CAIN AND ABEL.

BOOK ONE.

CHAPTER ONE.

After a brief transition from the preceding book to this one, the birth of Cain and Abel is treated; and through them, as also through Esau and Jacob, two opposing schools of men are shown to be prefigured.

1. Concerning Paradise, we have discussed in the preceding pages according to our capacity, as we were able, whatever the Lord inspired and our perception found, in which the fall of Adam and Eve was included. Now, since that fault did not stop with its authors, but, what is worse, found a worse heir, let us approach the following history, and pursue in our work those things which are annexed according to the divine Scriptures.

2. *And Adam knew Eve his wife, who conceived and bore Cain, and said: I have acquired a man through God* (Gen. 4:1). What we acquire, from what, and from whom, and through what we acquire it, is accustomed to be considered: from what, as if from matter; from whom, who is the author; through what, as if through some instrument. Does he say here: *I have acquired a man through God*, in such a way that you should understand God as an instrument? Certainly not: but that you should understand God as the author and worker. Whence he rather deferred to God, because he said: *I have acquired a man through God*, so that we also, when we acquire anything, or in all favorable events, ought to defer more to God than to arrogate it to ourselves.

3. *And she added to bear Abel* (Ibid. 2). When something is added, that which was before is taken away. And this is gathered from the portions of arithmetic, or from the thoughts of the soul: for when a number is added, another number is made, and the former is abolished; and a new incoming thought excludes the former. Therefore, when Abel is added, Cain is taken away. Which is more fully perceived by the interpretation of the names. For Cain was so named as "acquisition," because he acquired all things for himself; Abel as one who referred all things to God with the pious attention of a devoted mind, arrogating nothing to himself, like the elder brother, but attributing entirely to the Creator what he had received from Him.

4. Duae itaque sectae sunt sub duorum fratrum nomine compugnantes invicem, et contrariae sibi. Una quae totum menti suae deputat tamquam principali, et quasi cuidam cogitationis, et sensus, et motus omnis auctori; hoc est, quae omnes inventiones humano ascribit ingenio. Altera quae tamquam operatori et creatori omnium Deo defert, et ejus tamquam parentis atque rectoris subdit omnia gubernaculo. Illa prior, Cain significatur: haec posterior, Abel dicitur. Has duas sectas una anima parturit; et ideo germanae habentur, quod uno fundantur utero: sed contrariae sunt; quia oportet eas cum quodam animae partu editae fuerint, dividi ac separari. Compugnantibus enim hospitium unum perpetuo esse non potest. Denique Rebecca cum duas naturas humani ingenii parturiret, unam mali, alteram boni, easque exsilire intra uterum sentiret suum (Esau enim typus erat malitiae, Jacob figuram bonitatis gerebat), mirata quidnam illud esset quod discordiam quamdam concepti cerneret fetus, consuluit Deum, ut passionem proderet, medelam daret. Itaque precanti est responsum redditum: Duae gentes in utero tuo sunt, et duo populi de ventre tuo exhibunt (Gen. XXV, 23). Quod si ad animam referas, eandem generatricem boni et mali intelliges, quia ex eodem fonte animae utrumque dimanat, sed hoc sobrii solet esse verique iudicii; ut repudiato malo enutriet quod bonum est, atque confirmet. Prius ergo quam pariat bonum, hoc est, reverentiam Deo debitam; ut ipsi totum deferat, sua non praeferat: cum vero genuerit confessionem quae defertur Deo, deponit cordis sui tumorem. Adjiciens ergo Deus bonum animae dogma Abel, abstulit improbum dogma Cain.

CAPUT II.

In Cain Judaeorum figuram esse, Christianorum in Abel. Hujus occasione quaedam attexuntur de patribus, sed praesertim de sepultura Isaac per quem Christi incarnatione, et Moysis per quem ejusdem doctoratus exprimitur. Denique eorundem Moysis et Christi comparantur inter se sepulturae.

4. There are, therefore, two schools (*sectae*) fighting against each other under the names of the two brothers, and contrary to each other. One which attributes everything to its own mind as to a principal, and as to a certain author of every thought, and sense, and motion; that is, which ascribes all inventions to human genius. The other which defers to God as to the worker and creator of all things, and subjects all things to His governance as to a parent and ruler. That former one is signified by Cain; this latter one is called Abel. One soul brings forth these two schools; and therefore they are considered siblings, because they are established in one womb: but they are contrary; because it is necessary that, when they have been brought forth with a certain birth of the soul, they should be divided and separated. For there cannot be one perpetual lodging for those who are fighting. Finally, when Rebecca was bringing forth the two natures of human genius, one of evil, the other of good, and felt them leaping within her womb (for Esau was a type of malice, and Jacob bore the figure of goodness), wondering what that was, that she perceived a certain discord in the conceived offspring, she consulted God, that He might reveal the passion and give a remedy. Therefore, to her prayer an answer was returned: *Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall go forth from your belly* (Gen. 25:23). But if you refer this to the soul, you will understand her to be the same mother of good and evil, because from the same source of the soul both flow; but this is accustomed to be of a sober and true judgment, so that, having repudiated the evil, it may nourish and confirm what is good. Before, therefore, it brings forth the good, that is, the reverence due to God, so that it may defer everything to Him and not prefer its own; when it has brought forth the confession which is deferred to God, it lays down the tumor of its heart. Therefore, God, by adding the good dogma of the soul, Abel, took away the wicked dogma, Cain.

CHAPTER II.

That in Cain there is a figure of the Jews, in Abel of the Christians. On the occasion of the latter, certain things are added concerning the fathers, but especially concerning the burial of Isaac, through whom the incarnation of Christ is expressed, and of Moses, through whom the teaching of the same is expressed. Finally, the burials of Moses and Christ are compared with each other.

5. Ego tamen hoc loco secundum Scripturam mysterium magis duorum populorum intelligo, quod Deus adjiciendo Ecclesiae suae fidem piae plebis, abstulit perfidiam populi praevaricantis, quandoquidem verba ipsa hoc significare videantur, dicente Deo: Duae gentes in utero tuo sunt, et duo populi de ventre tuo exhibunt (Gen. XXV, 23). Haec figura Synagogae et Ecclesiae in his duobus fratribus ante praecessit Cain et Abel. Per Cain parricidialis populus intelligitur Judaeorum, qui Domini et auctoris sui et secundum Mariae virginis partum fratris, ut ita dicam, sanguinem persecutus est. Per Abel autem intelligitur Christianus adhaerens Deo, sicut et David ait: Mihi autem adhaerere Deo bonum est (Ps. LXXII, 28); ut coelestibus se attexeret, et a terrenis separaret.

Alibi: Defecit, inquit, anima mea in verbum tuum (Ps. CXVIII, 81); eo quod ordinem vivendi atque usum non in terrenis voluptatibus, sed in verbi agnitione posuisset. Ex quo cognoscitur nec illud otiose scriptum esse, sed perperse atque examine, quod legimus in Regnorum libris: Et appositus est ad patres suos (III Reg. II, 11 et 21). Intelligi enim datur quod patrum similis fuerit fide. Unde claret non ad sepulturam corporis, sed ad consortium vitae relatum.

6. Denique de Isaac non perfunctorie scriptum putatur (Gen. XXXV, 29), quod requirens corporis istius speciem quae animae suae attexebatur, appositus sit ad genus suum; eo quod patris sui moribus adhaeserit. Pulchre autem ad genus ait, non ad populum, sicut alibi. Nam legimus aliis locis appositos fuisse ad populum suum, sed isti non tam praestantes: praestantior autem qui paucorum similis fuerit, et non plurimorum: plures in populo suo quam in genere; et praestantius ducitur paucorum similem esse, quam plurimorum. Qui ergo Dei erat generatus promissione, qui ad sacrificium probandae pietatis electus, qui unius uxoris, hoc est, solius sapientiae societate contentus superni illius generis quod est unum sibi semper conveniens, non plebeiae vilitatis imitator astruendus fuit Scripturae divinae testimonio. Etenim ubi labor, doctrina, meditatio, illic cum pluribus commune collegium, et quoddam populare consortium est. Audiendo enim plerique proficiunt, quos nominavit populum. Ubi autem non humana traditione, sed ingeniosa collectione sine usu laboris disciplina percipitur, illic sublimis generis incorrupta sinceritas est. Et ideo Isaac tamquam Dei munus ad genus suum magis, quam ad populum appositus legitur, ut divinorum potius quam humanorum imitorem esse sedulum recognoscas.

5. I, however, understand in this place according to the Scripture rather the mystery of the two peoples, because God, by adding to His Church the faith of a pious people, took away the perfidy of the prevaricating people, since the words themselves seem to signify this, as God says: **Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall go forth from your belly** (Gen. 25:23). This figure of the Synagogue and the Church preceded in these two brothers, Cain and Abel. By Cain is understood the parricidal people of the Jews, who pursued the blood of their Lord and Author and, so to speak, of their brother according to the birth of the Virgin Mary. By Abel, however, is understood the Christian adhering to God, as David also says: **But it is good for me to adhere to God** (Ps. 72:28); so that he might attach himself to heavenly things and separate himself from earthly ones.

Elsewhere he says: **My soul has failed for your word** (Ps. 118:81); because he had placed his order and use of living not in earthly pleasures, but in the recognition of the Word. From which it is known that it was not written idly, but deliberately and after consideration, what we read in the books of Kings: **And he was added to his fathers** (3 Kings 2:11 and 21). For it is given to be understood that he was like the fathers in faith. Whence it is clear that this refers not to the burial of the body, but to the fellowship of life.

6. Finally, concerning Isaac, it is thought to be written not cursorily (Gen. 35:29) that, seeking the appearance of this body which was attached to his soul, he was added to his kind (**genus**); because he adhered to the character of his father. Beautifully, however, he says "to his kind," not "to his people," as elsewhere. For we read in other places that they were added to their people, but those were not as excellent: for he is more excellent who is like the few, and not like the many; there are more in the people than in the kind; and it is considered more excellent to be like the few than like the many. He, therefore, who was generated by the promise of God, who was chosen for the sacrifice of proven piety, who was content with the society of one wife, that is, of wisdom alone, was to be asserted by the testimony of divine Scripture as an imitator of that sublime kind which is one and always consistent with itself, not an imitator of plebeian vileness. For where there is labor, doctrine, meditation, there is a common college with more people, and a certain popular fellowship. For many profit by hearing, whom he called "the people." But where, not by human tradition, but by ingenious gathering, discipline is perceived without the use of labor, there is the incorrupt sincerity of a sublime kind. And therefore Isaac is read to have been added to his kind rather than to his people, as a gift of God, so that you may recognize him as a diligent imitator of divine rather than human things.

7. Beata et illa mens quae species et ipsum genus supergrediens meretur audire quod dictum est ad Moysen, cum separaretur a populo: Tu autem sta mecum (Deut. V, 31)! Nam sicut in Isaac Dominicae incarnationis typus humanae generationis supergressus consuetudinem, vicit priores; ita ut in eo non vulgaris popularisque gratia, sed specialis praerogativa praecelleret, sicut lectio docet: Abrahæ enim dictæ sunt promissiones et semini ejus: non dicit et seminibus tamquam in multis, sed sicut uni, hoc est, semini tuo, quod est Christus (Galat. III, 16): ita etiam in Moyse venturi Doctoris figura, qui legem doceret, Evangelium prædicaret, impleret Testamentum vetus, novum conderet, coeleste populis alimentum daret, humanae dignitatem conditionis excessit eo usque, ut Dei donaretur nomine, sicut habemus scriptum, dicente Domino: Posui te in Deum Pharaoni (Exod. VII, 1). Etenim victor passionum omnium, nec ullis captus saeculi illecebris, qui omnem istam secundum corpus habitationem coelestis puritate conversationis obduxerat, mentem regens, carnem subiciens, et regia quadam auctoritate castigans, nomine Dei vocatus est, ad cujus similitudinem se perfectæ virtutis ubertate formaverat.

8. Et ideo non legimus de eo sicut de caeteris, quia deficiens mortuus est: sed per verbum Dei mortuus est (Deut. XXXIV, 5). Deus enim neque defectionem aut diminutionem patitur, neque adjectionem capit. Unde et addidit Scriptura: Quia nemo scit sepulturam ejus usque in hodiernum diem (Ibid. 6), ut translationem magis, quam interitum ejus intelligas. Mors enim secessio quaedam est animæ et corporis. Mortuus igitur est per verbum Dei, ut ait Scriptura, non secundum verbum; ut advertas non nuntium mortis, sed gratiæ munus expressum, qui translatus magis, quam derelictus est, cujus nemo novit sepulturam. Quis enim in terrenis reliquias ejus potuit deprehendere, quem secum esse Dei Filius in Evangelio demonstravit (Matth. XVII, 3)? Denique et Elias simul est visus, qui translatus curru est, non sepultus nec mortuus legitur (IV Reg. II, 11)? Vivit enim qui cum Dei Filio est. Moyses autem mortuus quidem legitur, sed per verbum Dei mortuus, per quod facta sunt omnia. Verbo autem Dei coeli firmati sunt. Per verbum igitur Dei non lapsus operis, sed firmamentum est. Non ergo tamquam relapsus in terram deprehenditur corporis solutione, sed tamquam verbi coelestis operatione donatus et munere; ut quietem magis caro ejus, quam bustum acceperit.

7. Blessed also is that mind which, transcending species and the very kind (*genus*), deserves to hear what was said to Moses, when he was separated from the people: *But you, stand with me* (Deut. 5:31)! For just as in Isaac the type of the Lord's incarnation, transcending the custom of human generation, conquered those who came before; so that in him there excelled not a vulgar and popular grace, but a special prerogative, as the reading teaches: *For the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed: he does not say "and to seeds" as of many, but as of one, that is, "to your seed," which is Christ* (Gal. 3:16): so also in Moses the figure of the future Teacher, who would teach the law, preach the Gospel, fulfill the Old Testament, establish the New, and give heavenly food to the peoples, exceeded the dignity of the human condition to such an extent that he was endowed with the name of God, as we have written, the Lord saying: *I have placed you as a god to Pharaoh* (Exod. 7:1). For, a victor over all passions, and captured by no allurements of the world, who had obscured all this habitation according to the body with the purity of a heavenly conversation, ruling the mind, subjecting the flesh, and chastising it with a certain royal authority, he was called by the name of God, into whose likeness he had formed himself by the abundance of perfect virtue.

8. And therefore we do not read of him as of the others, that he died by failing: but *he died through the word of God* (Deut. 34:5). For God neither suffers failing or diminution, nor receives addition. Whence the Scripture also added: *For no one knows his burial place even unto this day* (Ibid. 6), so that you should understand his translation rather than his destruction. For death is a certain separation of soul and body. He died, therefore, through the word of God, as the Scripture says, not "according to the word"; so that you may notice that a gift of grace was expressed, not a message of death, who was translated rather than left behind, whose burial no one knows. For who among earthly things could find the remains of him whom the Son of God showed in the Gospel to be with Him (Matt. 17:3)? Finally, Elijah also was seen at the same time, who was translated in a chariot, and is not read to have been buried or dead (4 Kings 2:11)? For he lives who is with the Son of God. Moses, however, is read to be dead, but dead through the word of God, through which all things were made. For by the word of God the heavens were established. Through the word of God, therefore, there is not a lapse of work, but a firmament. He is not, therefore, found as if relapsed into the earth by the dissolution of the body, but as if endowed by the operation and gift of the heavenly Word; so that his flesh received rest rather than a tomb.

9. Bene autem inter dominum et servum servatur distantia. Ut praerogativam domini intelligas, servi gratiam, de Moyse legitur, quia sepulturam ejus nemo scit: de Christo autem, sepultura ejus de terra sublata est (Esai. LIII, 8); quia ille secundum mysterium legis exspectabat redemptionem, ut resurgeret: hic secundum Evangelii donum redemptionem non exspectabat, sed donabat. Et ideo sepultura ejus ignorata non est, sed elevata, quam diutius creatura tenere non potuit; quia per ipsum omnis creatura properavit a corruptionis servitiis elevari. Nemo ergo scit sepulturam Moysi, quia vitam ejus omnes noverunt: Christi autem sepulturam vidimus; sed nunc jam non novimus, qui resurrectionem ejus agnovimus. Debuit enim cognosci tumulus ejus, ut resurrectio manifestaretur; et ideo in Evangelio (Matth. XXVII, 60 et seq.) tumulus summa expressione describitur: in lege non quaeritur; quia licet resurrectionem ejus lex annuntiaverit (Esai. XI, 10), nobis tamen Evangelii series plenissime comprobavit.

CAPUT III.

Per Abel et Cain sapientiae humanae processus, qui in Christo solo inventus non est, designari; per ordinem quo uterque fratrum nominantur, nec non per eorundem officia significari Abelem etsi juniorem, fratre tamen esse praestantiorum. 10.

Ergo ut quod proposuimus, compleamus: Adjecit, inquit, parere Abel, hoc est, meliorem Eva quae graviter ante peccaverat, ex se generavit sententiam ut superioris sententiae aboleret errorem. Mentior nisi hoc in universis comprobatur. Ita enim nascimur, ut ante infirmus infantiae sensus in nobis sit, postea pueritiae corporis tantummodo curam sciens, nullum cultum, nullam habens observantiam divinorum. Unde et evidenti naturae novitate ortum Jesum Christum ex virgine ut probaret propheta, ait: Ecce Virgo in utero accipiet, et pariet filium, et vocabitur nomen ejus Emanuel: butyrum et mel manducabit, quoniam priusquam sciat malum aut bonum: non credet malitiae, ut eligat quod bonum est (Esai. Et infra: Priusquam sciat puer vocare patrem ac matrem, accipiet virtutem Damasci et spolia Samariae contra regem Assyriorum (Esai.

Well, however, is the distance maintained between the Lord and the servant. So that you may understand the prerogative of the Lord and the grace of the servant, it is read of Moses that no one knows his burial: but of Christ, *His burial was taken away from the earth* (Isa. 53:8); because the former, according to the mystery of the law, was awaiting redemption so that he might rise again: the latter, according to the gift of the Gospel, was not awaiting redemption, but was giving it. And therefore His burial was not ignored, but elevated, which the creature could not hold any longer; because through Him every creature hastened to be elevated from the services of corruption. No one, therefore, knows the burial of Moses, because all knew his life: but we have seen the burial of Christ; yet now we know it no longer, we who have recognized His resurrection. For His tomb ought to have been known, so that the resurrection might be manifested; and therefore in the Gospel (Matt. 27:60 et seq.) the tomb is described with the greatest expression: in the law it is not sought; because although the law announced His resurrection (Isa. 11:10), the sequence of the Gospel has most fully proved it to us.

CHAPTER III.

That by Abel and Cain the process of human wisdom is designated, which was not found in Christ alone; that by the order in which both brothers are named, as well as by their duties, it is signified that Abel, although younger, is nevertheless more excellent than his brother.

10. Therefore, to complete what we proposed: *She added*, it says, *to bring forth Abel*; that is, Eve, who had previously sinned grievously, brought forth from herself a better sentiment, so that she might abolish the error of the previous sentiment. I lie if this is not proved in all things. For we are born in such a way that first there is in us the weak sense of infancy, afterwards that of childhood, knowing only the care of the body, having no worship, no observance of divine things. Whence also the prophet, that he might prove the birth of Jesus Christ from a virgin by an evident novelty of nature, says: *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel: butter and honey shall he eat, because before he knows evil or good: he will not believe in malice, that he may choose what is good* (Isa. 7:14 et seq.). And below: *Before the child knows how to call his father and mother, he shall receive the strength of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria against the king of the Assyrians* (Isa. 8:4).

Solus enim fuit qui non est captus saeculi hujus vanitate et carnali tumore; ut pote qui se humiliavit factus obediens usque ad mortem, longe uniuscujusque nostrum dissimilis, quia nos frustra extollimur mente carnis inflati. Unde et nemo sine peccato, nec unius diei infans: ille autem peccatum non fecit. Et ideo in nobis ante nascitur Cain seipsum praeferens: postea Abel generatur, in quo sit reverentia divinitatis. Prius ergo irrepit quod malum est, postea agnoscitur quod bonum est. Ubi autem bonum, ibi justum; ubi justitia, ibi sanctitas, hoc est, Abel qui adhaeret Deo. 11.

Et factus est, inquit, Abel pastor ovium, Cain autem operabatur terram (Gen. Non est otiosum quod cum ante generatus sit Cain, ut lectio docet, praelatus sit hoc loco Abel; nec idem sit ordo nominum, qui est ordo naturae. Quid sibi vult mutatio ordinis; ut prius junioris meminerit, ubi describitur vitae status operisque usus? Officiorum interrogemus distantiam, ut colligamus causam praelationis. Operari terram usu prius est, gratia inferius, quam oves pascere. Hoc enim instar est cujusdam doctoris et principis, meritoque senior a vetustioribus inchoavit, junior recentiora praetulit, quae nullas spinas, 188 nullos tribulos germinarent, nulli sententiae essent obnoxia. Denique peccati reus Adam de paradiso dimissus est voluptatis, ut operaretur terram. Recte ergo ubi nascuntur hi fratres, servatur etiam in praedicando ordo naturae: ubi vero exprimitur disciplina vivendi, seniori junior antefertur; quia etsi tempore junior, virtute praestantior est. Innocentia enim tempore posterior est, quam malitia, et quadam suppar aetate, sed meritorum nobilitate antiquior. Senectus enim venerabilis est, non annis incana, sed moribus. Et aetas, inquit, senectutis vita immaculata (Sap. Ubi ergo generatio exprimitur, praeveniat Cain: ubi disciplinarum fit praedicatio, praecurrat Abel. Adolescentiam igitur, et ipsam in exordiis juventutem variarum illecebris passionum fervere quis abnuat: sed ubi maturior aetas successerit, tamquam pubescentis lasciviae tempestate discussa, tranquillitatem refundi, et in quosdam portus quietos lassae animae navigium subducere? Itaque graves motus nostrae adolescentiae fida senectutis statione placidantur.

CAPUT IV.

Malitiam tempore priorem esse, virtutem dignitate: Hoc ipsum per Esau et Jacob designari, sicut et per duas Scripturae mulieres; quarum altera virtutis, altera voluptatis imago est. Denique hujus ultimae artes describuntur.

For He alone was one who was not captured by the vanity and carnal pride of this world; inasmuch as He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, far unlike each one of us, because we are vainly extolled, puffed up by the mind of the flesh. Whence also no one is without sin, not even an infant of one day: but He committed no sin. And therefore in us Cain is born first, preferring himself: afterwards Abel is generated, in whom there is reverence for divinity. First, therefore, that which is evil creeps in, afterwards that which is good is recognized. But where there is good, there is justice; where there is justice, there is holiness, that is, Abel, who adheres to God.

11. *And Abel*, it says, *became a shepherd of sheep, but Cain worked the ground* (Gen. 4:2). It is not idle that although Cain was generated first, as the reading teaches, Abel is preferred in this place; nor is the order of names the same as the order of nature. What does the change of order mean; that he first mentioned the younger, where the state of life and the use of work are described? Let us examine the distance of duties, that we may gather the cause of the preference. To work the ground is first in use, but lower in grace than to pasture sheep. For this is like a certain teacher and leader, and deservedly the elder began with older things, the younger preferred more recent things, which would germinate no thorns, no thistles, and would be subject to no sentence. Finally, Adam, guilty of sin, was dismissed from the paradise of pleasure, that he might work the ground. Correctly, therefore, where these brothers are born, the order of nature is also preserved in the proclamation: but where the discipline of living is expressed, the younger is preferred to the elder; because although younger in time, he is more excellent in virtue. For innocence is later in time than malice, and in a certain sense equal in age, but older in the nobility of merits. For old age is venerable, not hoary with years, but with morals. *And the age of old age*, it says, *is an immaculate life* (Wis. 4:8). Where, therefore, generation is expressed, let Cain come first: where the proclamation of disciplines occurs, let Abel run ahead. Who would deny that adolescence, and youth itself in its beginnings, boils with the allurements of various passions: but when a more mature age has succeeded, as if the tempest of adolescent lasciviousness has been dispersed, tranquility is poured back, and the ship of the weary soul is withdrawn into certain quiet ports? Thus the heavy movements of our adolescence are calmed by the faithful station of old age.

CHAPTER IV.

That malice is prior in time, virtue in dignity: that this same thing is designated through Esau and Jacob, as also through two women of Scripture; of whom one is the image of virtue, the other of pleasure. Finally, the arts of this latter one are described.

12. Ne ergo dubites talibus naturae admonitus exemplis, quod malitia praecedat tempore, sed juvenculescat infirmitate. Habet illa aetatis stipendium: virtus autem praeerogativam gloriae, qua plerumque justo cedit iniquus. Cujus rei testis est fidelis divina Scriptura, quae docet Esau cognomine stultitiae virum cessisse patienter primatus suos fratri suo Jacob; ita ut diceret: Ut quid mihi primatus (Gen. XXV, 32)? Sed quos iste posthabuit, hos vir cognomento exercitationis praeditus quaesivit mereri. Nonne tibi videtur Esau tamquam in agone victus, et propriae mentis infirmitate imparem se existimans cessisse victori coronam, quem videbat nullis passionum illecebris inflecti, quarum ipse pulverem sustinere non poterat? Ut quid mihi, inquit, primatus? Apud ignavos enim nulla sunt insignia virtutis, apud sapientes prima habentur; studia enim virtutis quaedam instrumenta sunt. Itaque sicut bellator sine armis esse non potest, ita nec sine exercitatione virtus. Unde et Dominus in Evangelio ait: A diebus Joannis Baptistae regnum coelorum cogitur, et cogentes diripiunt illud (Matth. XI, 12). Et alibi: Quaerite regnum Dei, et ecce omnia praesto sunt vobis (Matth. VI, 33). Non dormientibus, neque otiantibus, sed vigilantibus et laborantibus pollicentur praemia: et labori merces parata est, qui licet non sit suavis ad gratiam, tamen fructuosus ad praemium est.

13. Docet hoc sermo legis, sicut scriptum invenimus: Si fuerint, inquit, uni homini duae uxores, una earum dilecta, et altera odibilis, et pepererint ei ambae filios dilecta et odibilis, et primitivus fuerit filius mulieris odibilis; qua die haeredes reliquerit filios in substantia sua, non poterit primatum dare filio mulieris dilectae, omittens filium odibilis: sed primitivum filium odibilis cognoscet dare illi dotem ex omnibus quae inveniuntur ei; quia ipse initium filiorum ejus est, et ipsi debentur primitiae (Deut. XXI, 15 et seq.). Quam profunda latent mysteriorum secreta in litteris! Recognosce, anima, partus tuos, et odibilis istius mulieris quaere mysterium. Intra te ea invenies, si requiras. Repete cogitationes, relege sensus tuos, et cui primitiae debeantur, agnosces. Duae enim mulieres unicuique nostrum cohabitant, inimicitias ac discordias dissidentes, velut quibusdam zelotypiae contentionibus nostrae replentes animae domum. Una earum nobis suavitati et amori est, blanda conciliatrix gratiae, quae vocatur voluptas. Hanc nobis opinamur sociam ac domesticam: illam alteram immitem, asperam, feram credimus, cui nomen virtus est.

12. Do not, therefore, doubt, warned by such examples of nature, that malice precedes in time, but is youthful in weakness. Malice has the stipend of age: but virtue has the prerogative of glory, by which for the most part the unjust yields to the just. A witness of this matter is the faithful divine Scripture, which teaches that Esau, a man surnamed for folly, yielded his birthright patiently to his brother Jacob; so that he said: **What good is this birthright to me?** (Gen. 25:32). But those things which the former postponed, the man surnamed for exercise sought to merit. Does it not seem to you that Esau, as if defeated in a contest and considering himself unequal through the weakness of his own mind, yielded the crown to the victor, whom he saw was not bent by any allurements of passions, whose dust he himself could not endure? **What good to me**, he says, **is the birthright?** For among the cowardly there are no insignia of virtue; among the wise they are held first; for the studies of virtue are certain instruments. Thus, just as a warrior cannot be without arms, so neither can virtue be without exercise. Whence also the Lord says in the Gospel: **From the days of John the Baptist the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and those using violence take it by force** (Matt. 11:12). And elsewhere: **Seek the kingdom of God, and behold all things are ready for you** (Matt. 6:33). Rewards are promised not to those sleeping, nor to those idling, but to those watching and laboring: and the wage is prepared for labor, which although it may not be sweet for grace, nevertheless is fruitful for reward.

13. The word of the law teaches this, as we find written: **If a man**, it says, **has two wives, one of them loved and the other hated, and both the loved and the hated have borne him sons, and the son of the hated woman is the firstborn; on the day he leaves his sons as heirs of his substance, he cannot give the birthright to the son of the loved woman, omitting the son of the hated one: but he shall recognize the firstborn son of the hated woman to give him a portion of all that is found with him; for he is the beginning of his sons, and to him the firstfruits are due** (Deut. 21:15 et seq.). What deep secrets of mysteries lie hidden in the letters! Recognize, O soul, your offspring, and seek the mystery of that hated woman. You will find these things within you, if you seek. Recall your thoughts, reread your senses, and you will recognize to whom the firstfruits are due. For two women cohabit with each one of us, dissenting with enmities and discords, filling the house of our soul as if with certain contentions of jealousy. One of them is for our sweetness and love, a charming conciliatrix of grace, who is called pleasure (**voluptas**). This one we consider a companion and a domestic: that other one we believe to be harsh, rough, wild, whose name is virtue.

14. Illa igitur meretricio procax motu, infracto per delicias incessu, nutantibus oculis, et ludentibus jaculans palpebris retia, quibus pretiosas juvenum animas capit (oculus enim meretricis (Prov. VII, 10 et seq.) laqueus peccatoris), quemcumque viderit dubio sensu praetereuntem in angulo transitus domus suae sermonibus adorat gratiosis, faciens juvenum volare corda, domi inquieta, in plateis vaga, osculis prodiga, pudore vilis, amictu dives, genas picta. Etenim quia verum decorem naturae habere non potest, adulterinis fucis affectatae pulchritudinis lenocinatur speciem, non veritatem. Vitiorum succincta comitatu et quodam nequitiarum choro circumfusa, dux criminum, talibus verborum machinis murum mentis aggreditur humanae: Sacrificium pacis est mihi, hodie reddo vota mea: hac ex causa progressa sum obviam tibi, desiderans faciem tuam invenire. Institis texui lectum meum, et tapetis ab Aegypto stravi. Aspersi lectum meum croco, domum autem meam cinnamomo. Veni, fruamur amicitia usque in diluculum: veni, et colluctemur cupidine (Prov. VII, 14 et seq.). Hanc enim per os Salomonis speciem fornicariae videmus expressam. Nam quid tam meretricium, quam saecularis voluptas quae a fenestra domus suae intrat, oculis prima tentamenta praeludens; et penetrat cito si tu in plateam prospiciens, id est, in publicas transeuntium vias, non in legis interna mysteria obtutum tuae mentis intendas. Ea profecto est quae validioribus vinculis velut cubile quoddam consociatae nobis communis intexit, ut qui reclinaverit se, ligetur; et opprobriosae fraudis velamine operit corporis sui stratum, ad sollicitandos juvenum animos absentiam viri, hoc est, incuriam legis obtexens. Lex enim absens peccantibus est, nam si adesset, non delinqueretur; et ideo ait: Non enim adest vir meus in domo: abiit autem viam longissimam involucro pecuniae accepto in manu (Ibid., 19, 20). Quid hoc esse dicam, nisi forte quia divites putant nihil esse quod non cedat suae pecuniae, et in gratiam sui legem velint esse venalem? Spargit odores suos voluptas, quia Christi odorem non habet, thesauros demonstrat, regna promittit, amores spondet continuos, inexploratos concubitus pollicetur, sine paedagogo disciplinas, sine monitore sermones, vitam sine sollicitudine, mollem somnum, inexplebilem cupiditatem. Seducens, inquit, eum multo blandimento sermonum, et laqueis labiorum suorum alligans, domum adusque attraxit. At ille secutus eam circumvenitur (Ibid., 21). Nitebat aula regio luxu splendida caelatis parietibus, et humida natabant pavimenta vino.

14. That one, therefore, bold with a meretricious movement, with a gait softened by delights, with nodding eyes, and casting nets with playing eyelids, with which she captures the precious souls of young men (for the eye of a harlot [Prov. 7:10 et seq.] is the snare of a sinner), addresses with gracious words whomever she sees passing by in the corner of the crossing of her house with a doubtful sense, making the hearts of young men fly, restless at home, wandering in the streets, prodigal with kisses, cheap in shame, rich in clothing, painted on the cheeks. For because she cannot have the true beauty of nature, she pampers the appearance, not the truth, with the adulterous dyes of affected beauty. Girded with a company of vices and surrounded by a certain chorus of wickednesses, the leader of crimes, she attacks the wall of the human mind with such machines of words: *"I have a peace offering, today I pay my vows: for this reason I have come out to meet you, desiring to find your face."* I have woven my bed with cords, and spread it with tapestries from Egypt. I have sprinkled my bed with saffron, and my house with cinnamon. Come, let us enjoy friendship until the morning: come, and let us struggle with desire (Prov. 7:14 et seq.). For we see this image of the fornicatress expressed through the mouth of Solomon. For what is so meretricious as secular pleasure, which enters through the window of its house, playing the first temptations before the eyes; and it penetrates quickly if you, looking out into the street, that is, into the public ways of those passing by, do not intend the gaze of your mind on the internal mysteries of the law. She indeed is the one who weaves with stronger bonds as if a certain couch of our associated community, so that he who reclines himself may be bound; and she covers the bed of her body with a veil of disgraceful fraud, weaving the absence of the husband, that is, the neglect of the law, to solicit the minds of young men. For the law is absent to those sinning, for if it were present, one would not transgress; and therefore she says: *"For my husband is not at home: he has gone a very long way, having taken a bag of money in his hand"* (Ibid., 19, 20). What shall I say this is, unless perhaps because the rich think there is nothing that does not yield to their money, and they wish the law to be venal for their own sake? Pleasure scatters its odors, because it does not have the odor of Christ; it shows treasures, promises kingdoms, pledges continuous loves, promises unexplored intercourses, disciplines without a pedagogue, discourses without a monitor, a life without anxiety, soft sleep, insatiable desire. *"Seducing him"*, it says, *"with much flattery of words, and binding him with the snares of her lips, she drew him even to her house."* But he, following her, is circumvented (Ibid., 21). The hall was shining, splendid with royal luxury and carved walls, and the floors swam, moist with wine.

Flagrabat unguento humus, spinis cooperta piscium, et marcentibus jam floribus lubrica. Illic comessantium tumultus, concertantium clamor, litigantium caedes, concentus coenantium, saltantium strepitus, ridentium cachinnus, lascivientium plausus, confusa omnia, nihil naturae ordine. Saltatrices tonsae, et crispantes pueri coma, epulantium cruditas, edentium ructus, ebriorum sitis, hesterna crapula, hodierna temulentia, repleta vomitu bibentium pocula majore odore ebrietatis, quam si recentia tantum vina flagrarent. Ipsa in medio stans: Bibite, inquit, et inebriamini, ut cadat unusquisque, et non resurgat. Ille apud me primus, qui omnium perditissimus. Ille meus est, qui suus non est. Ille mihi gravior, qui sibi nequior. Calix aureus Babylonis in manu mea inebrians omnem terram, a vino meo biberunt omnes gentes. Qui est ergo insipientior divertat ad me, et indigentibus sapientia praecipio dicens: Panibus absconditis suaviter utimini, et aquam furtim dulciorem bibite. Manducemus et bibamus; cras enim moriemur. Transiet vita nostra tamquam vestigia nubis, et tamquam nebula dissipabitur (Prov. IX, 17). Venite ergo, fruamur bonis quae sunt, et utamur creatura tamquam in juventute celeriter. Vino pretioso et unguentis nos impleamus, et non praetereat nos flos temporis. Coronemus nos rosis antequam marcescant. Nullum pratum sit quod non pertranseat luxuria nostra: ubique relinquamus signa laetitiae (Sap. II, 8 et seq.). Haec omnia relinquuntur, nihil secum quis feret, nisi quod corporis voluptate perceperit. Denique ego istam institui Philosophiam; nec est alia verior, nisi ea quae bonum asserit quod suave atque jucundum sit. Ergo vel Philosophiae vel sapientiae Salomonis credite.

CAPUT V.

Sollicitato a voluptate virtus saniora consulit; quomodo diabolicis tentationibus resistendum, et a quo etiam temporalia expetenda, quamque illa improbis noxia sint, docet; invitat ad convivium sapientiae, et quid ejus ebrietas a vinolentia discrepet, aperit; ac tandem avaritiae mala declarat.

The ground was fragrant with ointment, covered with the bones of fish, and slippery with flowers already withering. There was the tumult of those feasting, the clamor of those contending, the slaughter of those litigating, the concert of those dining, the noise of those dancing, the laughter of those laughing, the applause of those behaving lasciviously, all things confused, nothing according to the order of nature. Shorn dancing girls, and boys with curling hair, the indigestion of those feasting, the belching of those eating, the thirst of those drunk, yesterday's hangover, today's intoxication, the cups of those drinking filled with vomit with a greater odor of drunkenness than if only fresh wines were fragrant. She herself, standing in the midst: **Drink**, she says, **and be inebriated, that each one may fall and not rise again.** He is first with me who is the most lost of all. He is mine who is not his own. He is more pleasing to me who is more wicked to himself. The golden cup of Babylon is in my hand, inebriating all the earth; all nations have drunk of my wine. Whoever, therefore, is more foolish, let him turn aside to me; and to those lacking wisdom I command, saying: **Use hidden breads with sweetness, and drink stolen water more sweetly.** **Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.** **Our life shall pass away like the traces of a cloud, and shall be dispersed like a mist** (Prov. 9:17). **Come, therefore, let us enjoy the goods that are, and let us use the creature quickly as in youth.** **Let us fill ourselves with precious wine and ointments, and let not the flower of the time pass us by.** **Let us crown ourselves with roses before they wither.** **Let there be no meadow which our luxury does not pass through: everywhere let us leave signs of joy** (Wis. 2:8 et seq.). All these things are left behind; no one shall carry anything with him, except what he has perceived by the pleasure of the body. Finally, I have established that Philosophy; nor is there another more true, except that which asserts that good which is sweet and pleasant. Therefore, believe either the Philosophy or the wisdom of Solomon.

CHAPTER V.

To the one solicited by pleasure, virtue counsels healthier things; she teaches how to resist diabolical temptations, and from whom even temporal things are to be sought, and how harmful those are to the wicked; she invites to the banquet of wisdom, and reveals how its drunkenness differs from vinolence; and finally declares the evils of avarice.

15. His auditis, velut cervus sagittatus in jecore haeret saucius. Quem miserans virtus, et casurum cito videns, improvise occurrit, verita ne inter moras illecebris demulcentibus mens capiatur humana. Palam, inquit, apparui tibi non quaerenti me. Ne fallat imprudentem, et circumveniat te mulier effrenata et luxuriosa quae non novit pudorem: sedet in foribus domus in sella, palam in plateis advocans praetereuntes (Prov. IX, 14 et 15). Nunc igitur, fili, audi me, intende verbis oris mei. Non declinet in vias ejus cor tuum. Multos enim vulnerando dejecit, et sunt innumerabiles quos trucidavit. Viae inferorum domus ejus, deducentes in secessum mortis (Prov. VII, 24 et seq.). Aufer igitur tibi pravum os et injusta labia longe a te propelle. Oculi tui recta videant (Prov. IV, 24 et 25): noli intendere fallaci mulieri (Prov. V, 2). Mella enim distillabunt a labiis mulieris fornicariae, quae ad tempus impinguat fauces tuas, postea vero amariorem felle invenies. Dies me citius defecerit quam vitia ejus exponam, quae tamen in Proverbiis ore sapientiae descripta atque expressa sunt (Prov. VI, 24 et seq.). Non te vincat formae concupiscentia. Adulterina est, fucis illita, nequaquam vero ac sincero fulgens decore. Neque capiaris oculis; circumfusa enim retia sunt (Cant. II, 8 et 9). Esto magis similis illius et sequere eum qui salit super montes, et transilit super colles, prospiciens per fenestras, eminens super retia. Mala sunt voluptatis vincula. Oculos delectat, demulcet aures, sed mentem inquinat: multa mentitur, falsa adjungit, vera subducit, spondet pecuniam, aurum offert; sed aufert disciplinam (Prov. VIII, 10). Tu autem accipe potius disciplinam, quam pecuniam, et scientiam super aurum probatum. Melior est enim lapidibus pretiosis (Prov. III, 10 et seq.). Non te celabo quae summa ejus feruntur, ne videar deoperire quae displiceant in voluptate, et obumbrare quae placeant. Elevat enim et extollit mentem suasoriis verbis, ostendit omnia regna terrae, dicens: haec omnia tibi dabo, si procidens adoraveris me. Ibi tu cave ne rapiaris a praeterlabentibus et non manentibus, in quibus magna tentatio est.

15. Having heard these things, as a deer shot in the liver, he sticks there wounded. Virtue, pitying him and seeing that he would fall quickly, meets him unexpectedly, fearing lest between delays the human mind be captured by soothing allurements. *Openly*, she says, *I appeared to you when you were not seeking me.* Let not the unrestrained and luxurious woman who knows no shame deceive the imprudent one and circumvent you: *she sits at the doors of her house in a chair, openly calling to those passing by in the streets* (Prov. 9:14 and 15). *Now therefore, my son, hear me, attend to the words of my mouth.* *Let not your heart decline into her ways.* *For she has cast down many wounded, and there are innumerable ones whom she has slaughtered.* *Her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death* (Prov. 7:24 et seq.). *Take away therefore from yourself a crooked mouth and drive far from you unjust lips.* *Let your eyes look on right things* (Prov. 4:24 and 25): *do not attend to a deceitful woman* (Prov. 5:2). *For honey shall drip from the lips of a fornicating woman, which for a time fattens your throat, but afterwards you shall find it more bitter than gall.* The day would fail me sooner than I could expose her vices, which nevertheless are described and expressed by the mouth of wisdom in the Proverbs (Prov. 6:24 et seq.). Let not the concupiscence of beauty overcome you. It is adulterous, smeared with dyes, by no means shining with true and sincere decorum. Nor let yourself be caught by the eyes; for nets are spread around (Cant. 2:8 and 9). Be more like Him and follow Him who leaps over the mountains and skips over the hills, looking through the windows, standing above the nets. The bonds of pleasure are evil. It delights the eyes, soothes the ears, but pollutes the mind: it lies much, joins false things, withdraws true things, promises money, offers gold; but takes away discipline (Prov. 8:10). But receive you discipline rather than money, and knowledge above tested gold. For it is better than precious stones (Prov. 3:10 et seq.). I will not hide from you what are reported as her highest points, lest I seem to uncover what may displease in pleasure, and overshadow what may please. For she elevates and extols the mind with persuasive words, shows all the kingdoms of the earth, saying: *All these things I will give to you, if falling down you will adore me.* There you must beware lest you be snatched away by things that pass by and do not remain, in which there is great temptation.

16. Docuit te certe Dominus Jesus quemadmodum adversus hujusmodi tentationes resistas. Tetenderat diabolus primum laqueum gulae dicens: Si filius Dei es, dic huic lapidi, ut panis fiat (Matth. IV, 3 et 4). Respondit Dominus: Non in pane solo vivit homo, sed in omni verbo Dei. Laqueum solvit hoc dicto. Posuit iterum diabolus secundum jactantiae laqueum, qui etiam bonam mentem prosperis currentem semitis solet strangulare: Et duxit illum, inquit, in Hierusalem, et statuit eum super pinnam templi, et dixit illi: Si Filius Dei es, mitte te hinc. Scriptum est enim quod angelis suis mandavit de te, ut conservent te, quia in manibus tollent te, ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum (Ibid. 5 et 6). Itaque cum posset sine ullo periculo mittere se Dominus Jesus, cui suppetere spiritalis volatus; tamen ne jactantiae genus esset, respondit diabolo: Non tentabis Dominum Deum tuum (Ibid., 7). Simul docuit nos cavere ne faciamus voluntatem diaboli. Si ergo vere jactantia declinanda est, quanto magis nemo debet falsa jactare pro veris? Tertius superest laqueus avaritiae atque ambitionis. Ostendit in monte posito omnia regna orbis terrae in momento temporis (Ibid., 8, et seq.). Bene in momento, quia diuturna esse nequeunt. Paululum exspecta, et cito transeunt. Itaque qui sequuntur ea, in monte sibi esse videntur: sed non sunt perpetui, sicut habes scriptum: Vidi impium superexaltatum et elevatum super cedros Libani, et transivi, et ecce non erat (Ps. XXXVI, 35). Sed qui ea maximi facit, adorare videtur diabolus, cujus Deus venter est, et in pudendis gloria. Tu autem in Deo gloriam quaere, qui tibi ait: Dominum Deum tuum adorabis, et illi soli servies (Matth. IV, 10), a quo aeterna accipias, non temporalia.

17. Tamen si quem etiam ista delectent, ab eo moderatius petantur qui verus omnium fons est. Nam et ipsa peculiaria quae possidere sibi videtur diabolus, aliena sunt, sicut ipse dixit: Tibi dabo potestatem hanc universam et gloriam eorum, quia mihi tradita sunt (Ibid., 9). Ab eo ergo spera, licet brevis vitae non sit longum viaticum requirendum; tamen ab eo spera qui universam creaturam condidit, qui diabolo ea ad tempus tradidit, non ut possideat, sed ut tentet. Non enim poterat corona esse sine certamine. Probandi erant dubii, ut justii coronarentur.

16. Certainly the Lord Jesus taught you how you should resist temptations of this kind. The devil had stretched the first snare of gluttony, saying: *If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread* (Matt. 4:3 and 4). The Lord answered: *Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.* He loosed the snare with this saying. Again the devil set the second snare of boasting, which is also accustomed to strangle a good mind running in prosperous paths: *And he led Him*, it says, *to Jerusalem, and set Him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him: If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down from here.* For it is written that he has commanded his angels concerning you, to keep you, because they shall bear you up in their hands, lest perhaps you dash your foot against a stone (Ibid. 5 and 6). Thus, although the Lord Jesus could have cast Himself down without any danger, for whom spiritual flights were available; nevertheless, lest it should be a kind of boasting, He answered the devil: *You shall not tempt the Lord your God* (Ibid., 7). At the same time He taught us to beware lest we do the will of the devil. If, therefore, boasting is truly to be avoided, how much more ought no one to boast false things for true? There remains the third snare of avarice and ambition. He showed Him from a high mountain all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time (Ibid., 8, et seq.). Well *in a moment*, because they cannot be lasting. Wait a little, and they quickly pass away. Thus those who follow them seem to themselves to be on a mountain: but they are not perpetual, as you have it written: *I have seen the wicked highly exalted and lifted up above the cedars of Lebanon, and I passed by, and behold, he was not* (Ps. 36:35). But he who makes much of these things seems to adore the devil, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in shameful things. But seek you glory in God, who says to you: *You shall adore the Lord your God, and Him alone shall you serve* (Matt. 4:10), from whom you may receive eternal things, not temporal.

17. Nevertheless, if these things also delight someone, let them be sought more moderately from Him who is the true source of all things. For even those peculiar things which the devil seems to himself to possess are foreign, as he himself said: *I will give you all this power and their glory, because they have been delivered to me* (Ibid., 9). Hope, therefore, in Him, although for a short life a long provision is not to be required; nevertheless, hope in Him who founded the entire creature, who delivered those things to the devil for a time, not that he might possess them, but that he might tempt. For there could not be a crown without a contest. The doubtful were to be proved, so that the just might be crowned.

18. Dedit itaque diabolo ea, quia in his ipsis poena accipientis est, si uti nesciat. Quid est enim thesaurus luxurioso, nisi sumptus luxuriae? Unde non luxuriosus, sed frugi probatur. Et ideo utere quasi frugi iis quae tibi apponuntur, ut non cum manducas multum, odibilis fias: Vigiliae enim et tormenta viro edaci (Eccli. XXXI, 23). Et infra: Si coactus fueris in edendo, surge et vome, et refrigerabit te, et non adduces corpori tuo infirmitatem (Ibid., 25). Plurimos itaque gula sua occidit, nullum frugalitas: innumeris vina nocuerunt, nulli parcimonia. Plerique inter epulas fudere animas, et mensas proprio replevere sanguine. Aliis cruditas vocem simul rapuit et sensum: et si aliquibus cruditas noxia non fuit, his ruinam fecit ebrietas. Alios enim in crimen egit ebrietas; etsi ipsa crimen sit, alios ad egestatem redegit. Postremo audi quos Christus excludat: Cum intraverit, inquit, paterfamilias, et clauserit ostium, incipietis foris stare, et pulsare ostium dicentes: Aperi nobis. Et respondens dicit: Nescio vos unde estis, recedite a me, omnes operarii iniquitatis. Tunc incipietis dicere: Manducavimus coram te, et bibimus, et in plateis nostris docuisti. Et dicit vobis: Nescio unde estis (Luc. XIII, 25 et seq.). Audisti quid de manducantibus dixerit. Audi nunc quid de jejnantibus dicat: Beati qui nunc esuriunt et sitiunt, quia saturabuntur (Luc. VI, 21). Et infra; Vae vobis qui saturati estis, quoniam esurietis (Ibid., 25).

19. Sed vis manducare, vis bibere? Veni ad convivium sapientiae quae invitat omnes cum magna praedicatione dicens: Venite et edite panes meos, et bibite vinum quod miscui vobis (Prov. IX, 5). Delectant cantica quae epulantem demulceant? Audi hortantem, audi cantantem Ecclesiam, non solum in canticis, sed etiam in Canticis canticorum: Manducate, proximi mei, et bibite, et inebriamini, patres mei (Cant. V, 1). Sed haec ebrietas sobrios facit; haec ebrietas gratiae, non temulentiae est. Laetitiam generat, non titubantiam. Nec verearis ne in convivio Ecclesiae aut grati odores tibi, aut dulces cibi, aut diversi potus, aut convivae nobiles desint, aut decentes ministri. Quid Christo nobilius, qui in convivio Ecclesiae et ministrat et ministratur? Istius convivae recumbentis annecte te lateri, ac te Deo conjunge; non fastidias mensam quam Christus elegit dicens: Introivi in hortum meum, soror mea sponsa, vindemiavi myrrham cum aromatibus meis: manducavi panem meum cum melle meo, et bibi vinum cum lacte meo (Ibid.).

18. He gave them, therefore, to the devil, because in these very things is the punishment of the recipient, if he does not know how to use them. For what is a treasure to a luxurious man, but the expense of luxury? Whence he is proved not luxurious, but frugal. And therefore use as a frugal man those things which are set before you, lest when you eat much, you become hateful: *For watchings and torments are to an edacious man* (Ecclus. 31:23). And below: *If you have been forced in eating, arise and vomit, and it shall refresh you, and you shall not bring infirmity to your body* (Ibid., 25). Thus gluttony has killed many, frugality none: wines have harmed innumerable ones, parsimony none. Many have poured out their souls in the midst of feasts, and filled the tables with their own blood. In others indigestion has snatched away both voice and sense: and if in some indigestion was not harmful, in these drunkenness caused ruin. For drunkenness has driven some into crime; even if it itself be a crime, it has reduced others to poverty. Finally, hear those whom Christ excludes: *When the master of the house has entered*, He says, *and has shut the door, you shall begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying: Open to us.* And answering he shall say: *I know you not whence you are, depart from me, all you workers of iniquity.* Then you shall begin to say: *We have eaten in your presence, and have drunk, and you have taught in our streets.* And he shall say to you: *I know you not whence you are* (Luke 13:25 et seq.). You have heard what He said of those eating. Hear now what He says of those fasting: *Blessed are you that hunger and thirst now, for you shall be filled* (Luke 6:21). And below: *Woe to you that are filled, for you shall hunger* (Ibid., 25).

19. But do you wish to eat, do you wish to drink? Come to the banquet of wisdom which invites all with a great proclamation, saying: *Come and eat my breads, and drink the wine which I have mixed for you* (Prov. 9:5). Do songs delight you which may soothe the one feasting? Hear the Church exhorting, hear her singing, not only in songs, but also in the Song of Songs: *Eat, my neighbors, and drink, and be inebriated, my fathers* (Cant. 5:1). But this drunkenness makes one sober; this is a drunkenness of grace, not of intoxication. It generates joy, not staggering. Nor should you fear lest in the banquet of the Church either pleasant odors, or sweet foods, or diverse drinks, or noble guests, or decent ministers be lacking to you. What is more noble than Christ, who in the banquet of the Church both ministers and is ministered to? Annex yourself to the side of that guest reclining, and join yourself to God; do not disdain the table which Christ chose, saying: *I have entered into my garden, my sister, my spouse, I have gathered my myrrh with my aromatics: I have eaten my bread with my honey, and I have drunk my wine with my milk* (Ibid.).

In horto, hoc est, in paradiso est convivium Ecclesiae, ubi erat prius Adam, quam peccatum committeret. Ibi recumbebat Eva priusquam culpam crearet et pareret. Ibi vindemiabis myrrham, hoc est, Christi sepulturam; ut consepultus cum illo per baptismum in mortem, quemadmodum ille surrexit ex mortuis, et tu resurgas. Ibi manducabis panem qui confirmat cor hominis. Mel gustabis, quo tuorum dulcescat meatus faucium. Vinum bibes cum lacte, hoc est, cum splendore et sinceritate: sive quod pura simplicitas sit; sive quod immaculata gratia, quae in remissionem sumitur peccatorum; sive quod parvulos consolationis suae lactet uberibus, ut ablactati in deliciis, in plenitudinem perfectae aetatis adolescant. Succede ergo in hoc convivium. An metuis ne angustior domus et brevis convivii locus te comprimant? O Israel, quam magna est domus Domini, et ingens locus possessionis ejus! Magnus, et non habet finem, altus, et immensus (Baruch. III, 24). Ibi fuerunt gigantes illi, qui ab initio fuerunt statura magna scientes praelium. Non hos elegit Dominus. Et merito non elegit, quia praelium, non pacem sciebant. Et ideo tu pacem disce, ut eligaris a Deo. Sed ne forte incomptam domus magnitudinem putes, et diversoria te columnata delectent: sapientia aedificavit sibi domum, et fulsit columnas septem. Ipse etiam Dominus Jesus multas mansiones apud Patrem suum esse commemorat (Joan. XIV, 2). In hac ergo domo epulaberis animae cibos, potusque mentis; ut postea non esurias, neque sitias umquam. Qui enim manducat, manducat usque ad satietatem; et qui bibit, usque ad ebrietatem bibit.

20. Sed haec ebrietas pudicitiae custos est: illa vini ebrietas fomes libidinis, quo per carnes vaporantur interna viscera, animus ignescit, anima exurit. Saevus criminum stimulus libido est, quae numquam manere quietum patitur affectum. Nocte fervet, die anhelat, de somno excitat, a negotio abducit, a ratione revocat, aufert consilium, amantes inquietat, lapsos inclinat, castis insidiatur, potiundo inflamat, usuque accenditur. Nullus peccandi modus, et inextinguibilis scelerum sitis, nisi morte amantis exstingui non potest. Et ideo ait Apostolus: Fugite fornicationem (I Cor. VI, 18); ut veloci fuga tamquam furiosae dominae declinare saevitiam, et tetro servitio exire possimus.

CAPUT VI.

Virtutem studio et labore comparari. Hoc Jacobi qui primatum in fratrem adeptus est, probatur exemplo; et mystica de Abraham, Moyse, ac iisdem duobus fratribus exponuntur.

In the garden, that is, in paradise, is the banquet of the Church, where Adam was before he committed sin. There Eve reclined before she created fault and brought forth. There you shall gather myrrh, that is, the burial of Christ; so that buried with Him through baptism into death, just as He rose from the dead, you also may rise. There you shall eat the bread which confirms the heart of man. You shall taste honey, by which the passage of your throat may be sweetened. You shall drink wine with milk, that is, with splendor and sincerity: whether because it is pure simplicity; or because it is immaculate grace, which is taken for the remission of sins; or because she milks the little ones with the breasts of her consolation, so that weaned in delights, they may grow up into the fullness of perfect age. Enter, therefore, into this banquet. Or do you fear lest a narrower house and a short place of feasting compress you? *O Israel, how great is the house of the Lord, and how vast the place of His possession!* *Great, and has no end, high, and immense* (Baruch 3:24). There were those giants, who from the beginning were of great stature, knowing battle. These the Lord did not choose. And deservedly He did not choose them, because they knew battle, not peace. And therefore you learn peace, so that you may be chosen by God. But lest perhaps you think the magnitude of the house unadorned, and columned lodgings delight you: *wisdom has built herself a house, and has polished seven pillars.* The Lord Jesus Himself also mentions that there are many mansions with His Father (John 14:2). In this house, therefore, you shall feast on foods of the soul, and drinks of the mind; so that afterwards you shall neither hunger nor thirst ever. For he who eats, eats even unto satiety; and he who drinks, drinks even unto drunkenness.

20. But this drunkenness is the guardian of modesty: that drunkenness of wine is the fuel of lust, by which the internal organs are steamed through the flesh, the mind takes fire, the soul is parched. Lust is a savage stimulus of crimes, which never allows the affection to remain quiet. It boils by night, pants by day, excites from sleep, leads away from business, recalls from reason, takes away counsel, disquiets lovers, inclines the fallen, lies in wait for the chaste, inflames by possessing, and is kindled by use. There is no limit to sinning, and an insatiable thirst for crimes, which cannot be extinguished except by the death of the lover. And therefore the Apostle says: *Flee fornication* (1 Cor. 6:18); so that by swift flight we may decline the cruelty of a furious mistress, as it were, and go out from a foul service.

CHAPTER VI.

Virtue to be acquired by study and labor. This is proven by the example of Jacob, who obtained the birthright over his brother; and mystical things concerning Abraham, Moses, and those same two brothers are explained.

22. Audisti voluptatis mysteria, audisti etiam copiarum nostrarum munera, quas ego non suppellectili operiendas, sed Scripturae nudis sermonibus demonstrandas putavi; ut sua ipsa luce fulgerent, et ex se ipsae vocem emitterent sui invicem. Neque enim sol et luna interprete indigent. Habent interpretem fulgorem sui luminis, quo totus repletus orbis est. Illis illuminatio est fides sine indice, quaedam, ut ita dicam, intestata testis quae alieno non indiget testimonio, ut subito se universorum oculis effundit. Non ergo nuntiantur opera nostra, sed clamant, et se ipsa nuntiant. Sane ut et hoc quod laboriosum in nostris ducitur, non praeteream, fides exigitur, studium desideratur, facta quaeruntur. His enim tribus Dominus Jesus devotionis humanae officia definivit dicens: Petite, et dabitur vobis: quaerite, et invenietis: pulsate, et aperietur vobis (Matth. VII, 7). Et infra: Omnis ergo qui audit verba mea haec, et facit ea, similis est viro sapienti (Ibid., 24).

23. Haec qui studiose fuerit persecutus, primatus benedictionis accipiet, sicut patriarcha Jacob qui continentia et fide humanarum supplantavit vestigia passionum. Iste ait: Misericordiam mei habuit Deus, et sunt mihi omnia (Gen. XXXIII, 11). Hanc itaque misericordiam nos fide, studio, operibusque mereamur, quibus disciplinis invenit Israel gratiam Dei, et per ipsam omnia. Non enim mundi hujus copias, sed virtutum disciplinas sibi suppetere gaudebat. Has nobis substituamus haeredes, quas sanctus Abraham in Isaac filio suo substituit sibi, omnem operum suorum deputans haereditatem sapienti et justo viro, nec ullum jus haereditarium ancillis vel ancillarum filiis derelinquens, sed tantummodo donationis munera. Perfectae enim virtutes totum accipiunt gloriae patrimonium, usitatis et mediocribus vile aliquid aspergitur. Et ideo Agar quae advena Latine dicitur atque accola, et Cethura quae odorifera significatur, haeredes non sunt. Qui enim mediis utitur disciplinis, accola, non inhabitator est sapientiae. Odore aspersus, non fructu expletur. Sanitatem autem cibus, non odor invehit, quia odor fructuum nuntius est. Principales itaque disciplinas sequentibus, et indigenas accolis agnoscimus praeferendas.

24. Hoc secundum ingenium. At vero secundum mysterium Abraham pater gentium semini suo legitimo, quod est Christus, haereditatem omnem fidei suae detulit, qui in hac terra velut advena fuit; ut vitae hujus odorem magis quam fructum referret.

22. You have heard the mysteries of pleasure, you have also heard the gifts of our resources, which I thought should not be covered with furniture, but demonstrated with the bare words of Scripture; so that they might shine by their own light, and emit a voice of themselves in turn. For neither the sun nor the moon need an interpreter. They have as an interpreter the brightness of their own light, with which the whole world is filled. Their illumination is a faith without an index, a certain, so to speak, intestate witness which needs no outside testimony, as it suddenly pours itself out to the eyes of all. Therefore our works are not announced, but they cry out, and announce themselves. Surely, so that I may not pass over this also which is considered laborious in our affairs, faith is required, study is desired, deeds are sought. For by these three the Lord Jesus defined the duties of human devotion, saying: *Ask, and it shall be given to you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you* (Matt. 7:7). And below: *Everyone therefore who hears these words of mine, and does them, is like a wise man* (ibid., 24).

23. He who has followed these things studiously will receive the primacy of blessing, just as the patriarch Jacob, who by continence and faith supplanted the footsteps of human passions. He said: *God has had mercy on me, and I have all things* (Gen. 33:11). Let us therefore deserve this mercy by faith, study, and works, by which disciplines Israel found the grace of God, and through it all things. For he did not rejoice that the resources of this world were at his disposal, but the disciplines of virtues. Let us substitute these for ourselves as heirs, which holy Abraham substituted for himself in his son Isaac, assigning the whole inheritance of his works to a wise and just man, and leaving no hereditary right to the handmaids or the sons of the handmaids, but only gifts of donation. For perfect virtues receive the whole patrimony of glory, while something cheap is sprinkled upon the usual and mediocre. And therefore Hagar, who is called a stranger (*advena*) in Latin and a dweller (*accola*), and Keturah, who is signified as fragrant, are not heirs. For he who uses middle disciplines is a dweller, not an inhabitant of wisdom. Sprinkled with the odor, he is not filled with the fruit. But food, not odor, brings health, because odor is the messenger of fruits. Therefore we recognize that principal disciplines are to be preferred to those that follow, and the native (*indigenas*) to the dwellers.

24. This is according to the intellect. But according to the mystery, Abraham, the father of nations, brought the whole inheritance of his faith to his legitimate seed, which is Christ, who was as a stranger in this land; so that he might bring back the odor rather than the fruit of this life.

Haec cum audit mens, avertit se a voluptate, virtutique adjungit, veri decoris admirans gratiam, purum affectum, simplicem sententiam, mediocrem vestem, hoc est, non in persuasione sermonis, sed in ostensione Spiritus (I Cor. II, 4), qualis est apostolicae forma sententiae, amictum sapientiae atque pietatis omni pretiosiore auro refulgens, tunc chorum prudentiae, temperantiae, fortitudinis, ac justitiae suscipiens quae flagrabant odorem disciplinarum, incutiens reverentiam, infundens gratiam. Itaque talibus mota elegit studia virtutis, quibus Jacob vir plenus exercitationis mentem intendit suam. Et ideo ovium pastor inducitur (Gen. XXX, 31 et seq.); eo quod imperitare corpori et sensibus ejus ac voluptatibus, votique modum tenere, ne velut ovis vagetur incerta, praestantius aestimatur, quam regere populos, vel praeesse urbibus. Difficilius enim quispiam se, quam alterum regit. Animum vincere, iracundiam cohibere, compugnantesque leges carnis et mentis in unum cogere immortalis cujusdam est viri quem inferni porta non ceperit. Denique ipse sibi Legislator vindicavit hoc munus; ut oves pasceret Jetro (Exod. III, 1), qui dicitur superfluum, et ageret in desertum: eo quod irrationabilem et superflui vulgarisque sermonis loquacitatem indiscreta quaedam sobriae doctrinae coegit mysteria. Ideoque Aegyptiis abominationi erant pastores ovium. Omnes enim qui corporis dediti passionibus hujusmodi, et voluptatibus indulgent suis, disceptatorem verbi, doctoremque virtutis quadam exsecratione declinant. Et ideo per aenigmata haec docuit Moyses (Gen. IV, 4) apta Deo esse sacrificia, quae refugit omnis insipiens, hoc est, opera et praecepta virtutis. Ideoque pastor Abel, Cain autem operator terrae legitur, qui in fratre suo vir insipiens formam speciemque virtutis expressam ferre non potuit.

CAPUT VII.

Indicato duplici defectu sacrificii Cain, ostendit tria vitia in nostris oblationibus obrepere posse; nec non divina testimonia quibus eadem vitia proscribuntur, adducit.

25. Et factum est, post dies obtulit Cain ex fructibus terrae munus Domino (Gen. IV, 3). Duplex culpa: una quod post dies obtulit, altera quod ex fructibus, non ex primis fructibus. Sacrificium autem et celeritate commendatur et gratia. Unde praeceptum est: Si voveris votum, non facias moram reddere illud. Melius est enim non vovere votum, quam vovere, et non reddere (Eccle. V, 3, 4). Cum enim moram facis, non reddis. Votum est autem postulatio bonorum a Deo cum solvendi muneris promissione. Et ideo cum impetraveris quod petisti, ingrati est tardare promissum.

When the mind hears these things, it turns itself from pleasure, and joins itself to virtue, admiring the grace of true beauty, the pure affection, the simple sentiment, the mediocre garment, that is, not in the persuasion of speech, but in the showing of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:4), such as is the form of the apostolic sentiment, shining with the garment of wisdom and piety more precious than all gold, then receiving the chorus of prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, which were fragrant with the odor of disciplines, striking reverence, infusing grace. Therefore, moved by such things, it chose the studies of virtue, to which Jacob, a man full of exercise, intended his mind. And therefore he is brought in as a shepherd of sheep (Gen. 30:31 et seq.); because it is considered more excellent to command the body and its senses and pleasures, and to hold the measure of the vow, lest he wander uncertainly like a sheep, than to rule peoples, or to preside over cities. For anyone rules himself with more difficulty than another. To conquer the mind, to restrain anger, and to force the fighting laws of the flesh and the mind into one is the work of a certain immortal man whom the gate of hell shall not have taken. Finally, the Legislator himself claimed this office for himself; so that he might feed the sheep of Jethro (Exod. 3:1), who is called superfluous, and lead them into the desert: because he forced the irrational loquacity of superfluous and common speech by certain discrete mysteries of sober doctrine. And therefore the shepherds of sheep were an abomination to the Egyptians. For all who are given to the passions of the body and indulge in their own pleasures in this way, decline the disputer of the word and the teacher of virtue with a certain execration. And therefore through these enigmas Moses taught (Gen. 4:4) that sacrifices are fit for God, which every foolish man flees, that is, the works and precepts of virtue. And therefore Abel is read as a shepherd, but Cain as a tiller of the earth, who in his brother could not bear the foolish man's form and expressed appearance of virtue.

CHAPTER VII.

Having indicated the double defect of Cain's sacrifice, it shows that three vices can creep into our offerings; and it also brings forward the divine testimonies by which the same vices are proscribed.

25. *And it came to pass, after days, that Cain offered of the fruits of the earth a gift to the Lord* (Gen. 4:3). A double fault: one that he offered after days, the other that it was of the fruits, not of the first fruits. But a sacrifice is commended both by speed and by grace. Whence it is commanded: *If you have vowed a vow, do not delay to pay it.* *For it is better not to vow a vow, than to vow and not to pay* (Eccl. 5:3, 4). For when you make a delay, you do not pay. But a vow is a petition for good things from God with a promise of a gift to be paid. And therefore when you have obtained what you asked, it is the part of an ungrateful man to delay the promise.

Sed interdum aut negligentibus irrepit oblivio impetratorum, aut tumidis et elatis. Arrogare eventus sibi hebetis cordis est, et bonum quod agit vel quod a Deo consequitur, propriis virtutibus vindicare, nec auctoris deputare gratiae, sed ipsum se suorum bonorum auctorem ducere. Tertium genus est peccati quidem minoris, sed supparis arrogantiae eorum scilicet qui datorem bonorum Deum non negant: sed quae acciderint, ea sibi propter prudentiam suam, caeterarumque merita virtutum jure delata arbitrantur. Propterea etiam divina dignos habitos gratia, quod nequaquam videntur indigni quibus talia divinis beneficiis provenirent.

26. Ne quid ergo hujusmodi accidat, unde votum tuum tibi in peccatum fiat, lex te informavit atque instruxit, dicente Domino qui legem dedit: Attende tibi, ne obliviscaris beneficia Domini Dei tui, et non custodias mandata et judicia, et justitias illius quae ego praecipio tibi hodie; ne cum manducaveris, et repletus fueris, et cum domos bonas aedificaveris, et habitare coeperis in eis, et oves tuae et boves tui cum repleti fuerint, et cum aere, argento et auro completus fueris, et omnia possidere coeperis, et plena fuerint horrea tua, exaltes cor tuum, et obliviscaris Dominum Deum tuum (Deut. VIII, 11 et seq.). Tunc ergo oblivisceris Dominum, cum oblitus fueris tui. Si autem cognoscas infirmum te esse, cognosces Deum esse supra omnia, et immemor esse non poteris, ut ei reverentiam debitam solvas.

27. Disce nunc quemadmodum unusquisque moneatur, ne se ipse auctorem suorum putet bonorum. Ne dicas, inquit, in corde tuo: Virtus mea et potentia mea fecit mihi virtutem hanc magnam: sed in mente tua habebis Dominum Deum tuum; quoniam ipse dat vires, ut facias virtutes (Ibid. 17 et 18). Unde bene Apostolus (I Cor. XV, 9) quasi legis interpres non gloriabatur in virtute sua: sed minimum Apostolorum se esse dicebat, et quidquid esset, gratiae divinae esse non meriti sui, nihilque nos habere quod non acceperimus. Quid enim, inquit, habes quod non accepisti? Si autem accepisti, quid gloriaris quasi non acceperis (I Cor. IV, 7)? Didicisti ergo humilitatem magis sequi, quam arrogantiam; sedulitatem affectare, quam potestatem. Accepisti salutaria praecepta, noli negligere utilia instrumenta medicinae, quibus fibra omnis lethalis vulneris exsecatur.

28. Ille quoque qui se justificat, ne inpletur cordis sui tumore; et ipse accepit salubre mandatum, in hujusmodi sententiam resultante oraculo: Ne dicas in corde tuo, cum consumere coeperit Dominus Deus tuus gentes illas a conspectu tuo, dicens: Propter justitiam meam induxit me Dominus possidere terram istam: sed propter iniquitates gentium istarum exstirpavit illos Dominus a facie tua (Deut. IX, 4 et 5).

But sometimes either oblivion of the things obtained creeps upon the negligent, or upon the swollen and elated. To arrogate events to oneself is the part of a dull heart, and to claim the good that one does or that one obtains from God as one's own virtues, nor to depute it to the grace of the Author, but to consider oneself the author of one's own goods. The third kind of sin is indeed lesser, but nearly equal to the arrogance of those who do not deny that God is the giver of goods: but what has happened, they think has been justly brought to them on account of their own prudence and the merits of other virtues. On that account they are also considered worthy of divine grace, because they would by no means seem unworthy to whom such things would come by divine benefits.

26. Lest anything of this kind happen, therefore, whence your vow may become a sin to you, the law has informed and instructed you, the Lord who gave the law saying: **Attend to yourself, lest you forget the benefits of the Lord your God, and do not keep his commandments and judgments and his justices which I command you today; *lest when you have eaten and are filled, and when you have built good houses and begun to dwell in them, and your sheep and your oxen are filled, and when you are filled with brass, silver, and gold, and have begun to possess all things, and your barns are full, *you exalt your heart and forget the Lord your God** (Deut. 8:11 et seq.). Then therefore you forget the Lord, when you have forgotten yourself. But if you know that you are weak, you will know that God is above all, and you will not be able to be unmindful, so that you may pay him the due reverence.

27. Learn now how each one is warned, lest he consider himself the author of his own goods. **Do not say,** he says, **in your heart: My virtue and my power made me this great virtue: but you shall have in your mind the Lord your God; since he himself gives strengths, that you may perform virtues** (ibid. 17 and 18). Whence well the Apostle (1 Cor. 15:9), as it were an interpreter of the law, did not glory in his own virtue: but said that he was the least of the Apostles, and whatever he was, it was of divine grace, not of his own merit, and that we have nothing which we have not received. **For what,** he says, **have you that you have not received? But if you have received, why do you glory as if you had not received** (1 Cor. 4:7)? You have learned therefore to follow humility rather than arrogance; to affect diligence rather than power. You have received salutary precepts, do not neglect the useful instruments of medicine, with which every fiber of a lethal wound is cut out.

28. He also who justifies himself, let him not be inflated with the swelling of his heart; and he has received a salutary command, the oracle resulting in a sentiment of this kind: **Do not say in your heart, when the Lord your God shall begin to consume those nations from your sight, saying: Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land: but because of the iniquities of those nations the Lord has rooted them out from before your face** (Deut. 9:4 and 5).

Non propter justitiam tuam, non propter bonitatem tuam, nec propter aequitatem cordis tui intras possidere terram istam: sed propter iniquitatem gentium disperdet eos Dominus a conspectu tuo, et restituet Testamentum tuum quod juravit patribus vestris. Testamentum perfecta Dei gratia est; nihil enim imperfectum dat Deus: perfecta autem virtus est, et opera virtutis. Testamentum autem dicitur, quo defertur bonorum haereditas. Merito et testamentum dicitur, et divinum, cum ea quae vere bona sunt, attestatione mandatorum coelestium conferuntur. Et Testamentum dicitur, quoniam sanguine dedicatum est: vetus in typo, novum in veritate. Quo Testamento divinae gratiae pignus tenemus; quia sic dilexit Deus hunc mundum, ut unigenitum Filium suum pro nobis omnibus daret. Unde perfectionem gratiae praedicans Apostolus ait: Quomodo non etiam cum illo omnia nobis donavit (Rom. VIII, 32)?

CAPUT VIII.

Exemplo sacrificii Abraham qualitates quae Deo grata fit oblatio, exprimuntur, nempe celeritas, continuatio et fides. Celeritatem Deus in utroque Testamento praecipit; quam et ipse exhibet, cum non tantum cito largiatur, sed etiam nos praeveniat.

29. Prima igitur voti gratia est celeritas solutionis. Denique Abraham filium suum ad holocaustum jussus offerre, non post dies, ut Cain obtulit: sed exurgens mane stravit asinam suam, et adhibuit secum duos pueros, et Isaac filium suum; et concidens ligna ad holocaustum, surgens abiit, et venit ad locum quem dixerat ei Deus, die tertia (Gen. XXII, 3). Primo adverte immolaturi studium maturum atque festinum; ut mora expectationis non esset, nisi donec audiretur oraculum: deinde ut sterneret asinam suam, obsequium omne ipse susciperet, et sacrificio necessaria praepararet, duabus quoque fide et spe virtutibus comitantibus, hostiam suam duceret, de potestate Dei certus, et de bonitate securus.

30. Quod autem ait, die tertia; vel quod continua esse debeat et perpetua devotio. Tripartitum est enim tempus, praeteritum, praesens et futurum. Quo admonemur quod nec praeteritorum beneficiorum Dei, vel praesentium, vel futurorum irrepere debeat ulla oblivio, sed tenax gratiae memoria perseverare, et obedientia non deesse. Vel quia is qui sacrificat, in unum splendorem, in unam lucem debeat credere Trinitatis. Ei enim qui fideliter sacrificat, dies lucet, nox nulla est. Sic et in Exodo Moyses ait: Viam trium dierum ibimus, et immolabimus Domino Deo nostro (Exod. III, 18).

Not because of your righteousness, not because of your goodness, nor because of the equity of your heart do you enter to possess this land: but because of the iniquity of the nations the Lord will destroy them from your sight, and will restore your Testament which he swore to your fathers. A Testament is the perfect grace of God; for God gives nothing imperfect: but it is perfect virtue, and the works of virtue. But it is called a Testament, by which the inheritance of goods is brought. Merely it is also called a testament, and divine, when those things which are truly good are conferred by the attestation of celestial commands. And it is called a Testament, because it is dedicated with blood: the old in type, the new in truth. By which Testament we hold the pledge of divine grace; because God so loved this world, that he gave his only-begotten Son for us all. Whence the Apostle, preaching the perfection of grace, says: *How has he not also with him given us all things* (Rom. 8:32)?

CHAPTER VIII.

The qualities by which an offering becomes pleasing to God are expressed by the example of Abraham's sacrifice, namely speed, continuation, and faith. God commands speed in both Testaments; which he himself also exhibits, since he not only bestows quickly, but also prevents us.

29. Therefore the first grace of a vow is the speed of payment. Finally, Abraham, commanded to offer his son for a holocaust, not after days, as Cain offered: but *rising in the morning he saddled his ass, and took with him two young men, and Isaac his son; and cutting wood for the holocaust, rising he went away, and came to the place which God had told him, on the third day* (Gen. 22:3). First, observe the mature and hasty zeal of the one about to sacrifice; so that there might be no delay of expectation, except until the oracle should be heard: then that he should saddle his ass, undertake all service himself, and prepare the things necessary for the sacrifice, his host leading him with the two virtues of faith and hope accompanying, certain of the power of God, and secure of his goodness.

30. But as for what he says, *on the third day*; it is either because devotion ought to be continuous and perpetual. For time is tripartite, past, present, and future. By which we are warned that no oblivion of past benefits of God, or present, or future, ought to creep in, but a tenacious memory of grace should persevere, and obedience should not be lacking. Or because he who sacrifices ought to believe in one brightness, in one light of the Trinity. For to him who sacrifices faithfully, the day shines, there is no night. So also in Exodus Moses says: *We will go a three days' journey, and will sacrifice to the Lord our God* (Exod. 3:18).

Sed etiam alibi cum visus esset Deus Abrahae ad ilicem Mambre: Respiciens, inquit, Abraham oculis suis vidit, et ecce tres viri stabant super eum. Et videns occurrit obviam illis ad ostium tabernaculi sui, et adoravit super terram, et dixit: Domine, si inveni gratiam ante te (Gen. XVIII, 2 et 3). Tres videt, unum adorat. Tres mensuras offert similaginis (Ibid., 6). Nam etsi immensus Deus, tamen mensuram omnium tenet, sicut scriptum est: Quis mensus est manu aquam, et coelum palmo, et universam terram clausa manu (Esai. XL, 12)? Perfectae igitur in personis singulis Trinitati, interiore mentis arcano, hoc est, similaginis spiritalis sanctus Patriarcha sacrificium deferbat. Haec est similago, quam in Evangelio molet mulier illa, quae assumetur: Una enim, inquit, assumetur, altera relinquetur (Matth. XXIV, 41). Assumetur Ecclesia, relinquetur Synagoga. Vel mens bona assumitur, improba derelinquitur. Ut scias autem quia et Abraham in Christum credidit: Abraham, inquit, diem meum vidit, et gavisus est (Joan. VIII, 56). Et qui credit in Christum, credit et in Patrem. Et qui perfecte credit in Patrem, credit in Filium et Spiritum sanctum. Tres ergo mensurae, una similago, hoc est, unum erat sacrificium quod venerabili Trinitati, pari quadam mensura devotionis, et congrua plenitudine pietatis oblatum est.

31. Adhuc cognosce celeris studia devotionis: Cucurrit, inquit, et accepit vitulum unum tenerum et bonum, et dedit puero, et festinavit facere eum (Gen. XVIII, 7). Ubique impigra devotio, et ideo Deo fuit munus ejus acceptum. Habes et alibi, ut solis ortum oratione praevenias: Occurre, inquit, ad solis ortum (Sap. XVI, 28). Habes in Evangelio dicentem Dominum Jesum: Zacchae, festinans descende (Luc. XIX, 5). Et ille quia impetraverat quod volebat, ut Christum videret; et amplius impetraverat, ut videretur et vocaretur a Christo, festinans descendit, et excepit illum gaudens; et ideo probavit Dominus ejus affectum, et eum celeri remuneratione donavit dicens: Quia hodie salus domui huic facta est (Ibid., 9). Festinavit enim et Dominus ad beneficium; et ideo non exspectavit, ut promitteret, et postea impleteret; sed antea fecit, et postea declaravit. Dixit enim: Facta est salus: quod utique praeventientis fuit, non promittentis. Justus igitur votum suum celeritate commendat. Et patres nostri festinantes manducabant pascha, succincti lumbos, et pedes suos calceamentorum induti vinculis, et tamquam corporeum onus deponentes, ut essent parati ad transitum; pascha enim Domini transitus est a passionibus ad exercitia virtutis. Et ideo pascha Domini dicitur; quoniam et tunc in typo illo agni veritas Dominicae passionis annuntiabatur, et nunc ejus celebratur gratia.

But also elsewhere when God appeared to Abraham at the oak of Mamre: *Looking up,* he says, *Abraham with his eyes saw, and behold three men stood above him. And seeing them he ran to meet them at the door of his tabernacle, and adored upon the earth, and said: Lord, if I have found grace before you* (Gen. 18:2 and 3). He sees three, he adores one. He offers three measures of fine flour (*ibid.*, 6). For even if God is immense, yet he holds the measure of all things, as it is written: *Who has measured the water in his hand, and the heavens with his palm, and the whole earth in his closed hand* (Isa. 40:12)? Therefore the holy Patriarch brought a sacrifice to the perfect Trinity in individual persons, in the interior secret of the mind, that is, of spiritual fine flour. This is the fine flour which that woman in the Gospel will grind, who shall be taken: *For one,* he says, *shall be taken, the other shall be left* (Matt. 24:41). The Church shall be taken, the Synagogue shall be left. Or the good mind is taken, the wicked is abandoned. But that you may know that Abraham also believed in Christ: *Abraham,* he says, *saw my day, and rejoiced* (John 8:56). And he who believes in Christ, believes also in the Father. And he who perfectly believes in the Father, believes in the Son and the Holy Spirit. Therefore three measures, one fine flour, that is, it was one sacrifice which was offered to the venerable Trinity, by a certain equal measure of devotion, and a suitable fullness of piety.

31. Furthermore, know the zeal of swift devotion: *He ran,* he says, *and took one calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, and he hastened to make it* (Gen. 18:7). Everywhere is unwearied devotion, and therefore his gift was accepted by God. You have it also elsewhere, that you may prevent the rising of the sun with prayer: *Meet,* he says, *the rising of the sun* (Wis. 16:28). You have in the Gospel the Lord Jesus saying: *Zacchaeus, descending in haste* (Luke 19:5). And he, because he had obtained what he wanted, to see Christ; and had obtained more, to be seen and called by Christ, descending in haste, received him rejoicing; and therefore the Lord proved his affection, and gave him a swift remuneration saying: *Because today salvation has been made to this house* (*ibid.*, 9). For the Lord also hastened to the benefit; and therefore he did not wait to promise, and afterwards fulfill; but before he did, and afterwards declared. For he said: *Salvation has been made:* which certainly was of one preventing, not of one promising. Therefore the just man commends his vow by speed. And our fathers ate the pascha in haste, their loins girt, and their feet shod with the bonds of sandals, and laying down as it were the corporeal burden, that they might be ready for the transition; for the pascha of the Lord is a transition from passions to the exercises of virtue. And therefore it is called the pascha of the Lord; since both then in that type the truth of the Lord's passion was announced by the lamb, and now his grace is celebrated.

32. Cito ergo hoc quaere anima; ut cito etiam audias, sicut audivit et Jacob: Quid est hoc quod tam cito invenisti, fili (Gen. XXVII, 20)? Et ille secundum dogma respondit: Quod tradidit Dominus Deus tuus in manus meas. Cito dat Deus; quia dixit, et facta sunt: mandavit, et creata sunt. Verbum enim Dei non sicut quidam ait, opus est, sed operans, sicut habes scriptum: Pater meus usque modo operatur, et ego operor (Joan. V, 17). Praevenit omnia; est enim ante omnia sicut Pater, et in omnibus sicut idem Pater, penetrans omnia. Validum enim et acutum, et omni gladio acutius est, penetrans usque ad divisionem animae et spiritus, artuumque et medullarum. Praeueniens omnium cogitationes, de quo ait Pater Deus: Jam videbis si comprehendit te Verbum meum, aut non (Num. XI, 23). Ubi enim Deus, et Verbum est, sicut dixit: Veniemus et mansionem apud eum faciemus (Joan. XIV, 23). Et sicut habes in aliis de Deo lectum: Ego steti hic priusquam tu (Exod., XVII, 6): ita et Verbum dicit: Priusquam stares sub arbore fici, vidi te (Joan. I, 48). Et de ipso dictum est Verbo, hoc est, Filio Dei: Medius autem vestrum stat quem vos nescitis (Ibid., 26). Ubicumque enim sancti, ibi in eorum medio Dei Verbum in singulorum praecordiis complens maria et terras. Et cum hic est, etiam alibi est; non mutato loco, sed repleto utique sui praesentia. Ubique enim est, qui per omnia, et in omnibus, nullum locum immunem sui relinquens. Et ubi adest, erat: et ubi erat, adest. Et ideo qui novit velox esse Verbum Dei, cito petit, et cito impetrat.

CAPUT IX.

Pharao propter moram in obediendo arguitur. Commendatur in oratione humilitas, secretum ac brevitās, cum reprehensione verborum. Quomodo orandi formam Dominus docuerit; ac tandem pro quibus praecipue orandum?

33. At vero Pharao qui opinionibus et vanis inanibus studium impendebat suum (ranis repleta Aegypto, sonum inanem rerum et strepitum vanum reddentibus) dicenti Moysi: Constitue mihi quando pro te orem, et pro famulis tuis, et pro populo tuo, ut exterminet Dominus ranas (Exod. VIII, 9); cum debuerit in tanta positus necessitate rogare, ut jam oraret nec differret, respondit: Crastina die; otiosus et negligens, morae poenam Aegypti soluturus excidio. Itaque iste ubi impetraravat, immemor fiebat gratiae; et exaltatus mente carnis suae, obliviscebatur Deum.

32. Quickly therefore seek this, O soul; so that quickly you may also hear, as Jacob also heard: *What is this that you have found so quickly, my son* (Gen. 27:20)? And he answered according to the dogma: *What the Lord your God delivered into my hands.* God gives quickly; because he spoke, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created. For the Word of God is not, as a certain one says, a work, but an operator, as you have it written: *My Father works even until now, and I work* (John 5:17). He prevents all things; for he is before all things as the Father, and in all things as the same Father, penetrating all things. For it is powerful and sharp, and sharper than any sword, penetrating even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow. Preventing the thoughts of all, of whom God the Father says: *Now you shall see if my Word comprehends you, or not* (Num. 11:23). For where God is, the Word is also, as he said: *We will come and make a mansion with him* (John 14:23). And as you have read in others concerning God: *I stood here before you* (Exod. 17:6): so also the Word says: *Before you stood under the fig tree, I saw you* (John 1:48). And of the Word itself it is said, that is, of the Son of God: *But in the midst of you stands one whom you know not* (ibid., 26). For wherever the saints are, there in their midst is the Word of God in the hearts of each one, filling the seas and the lands. And when he is here, he is also elsewhere; not the place being changed, but certainly filled with his presence. For he is everywhere, who is through all things, and in all things, leaving no place immune from himself. And where he is present, he was: and where he was, he is present. And therefore he who knows the Word of God to be swift, quickly asks, and quickly obtains.

CHAPTER IX.

Pharaoh is rebuked on account of delay in obeying. Humility, secrecy, and brevity in prayer are commended, with a reprehension of verbosity. How the Lord taught the form of praying; and finally for whom one ought chiefly to pray.

33. But indeed Pharaoh, who was expending his study on opinions and empty, vain things (Egypt being filled with frogs, giving back an empty sound of things and a vain noise), to Moses saying: *Appoint for me when I shall pray for you, and for your servants, and for your people, that the Lord may exterminate the frogs* (Exod. 8:9); when placed in such necessity he ought to have asked that he pray already and not delay, answered: *Tomorrow;* idle and negligent, about to pay the penalty of delay by the destruction of Egypt. And so he, where he obtained his request, became unmindful of grace; and exalted in the mind of his flesh, forgot God.

34. Humilitas autem commendat orationem. Siquidem et Phariseus ille reprehensus est qui jejunia sua velut beneficia enumerabat, et tamquam objectabat Deo, et se criminum memorabat exsortem. Publicanus autem praedicatus est, qui a longe stans nolebat oculos ad coelum levare, sed percutiebat pectus suum dicens: Domine Deus, propitius esto mihi peccatori (Luc. XVIII, 13). Et ideo divina eum sententia praetulit dicens: Quia descendit hic publicanus justificatus magis, quam phariseus (Ibid., 14). Ille enim justificatur qui peccatum proprium confitetur, sicut locutus est ipse Dominus: Dic iniquitates tuas, ut justifieris (Esai. XLIII, 26). David ait: Sacrificium Deo, spiritus contribulatus (Ps. L, 19). Et iterum: Cor contritum et humiliatum Deus non spernit (Ibid.). Hieremias quoque ait: Anima in angustiis, et spiritus anxius clamat ad te (Baruch. III, 1). Ergo et Pharao (Exod. V, 2), et rex Assyrius qui dicebat: Quis deorum gentium istarum liberabit terram suam de manu mea; quoniam liberabit Dominus Deus tuus Hierusalem de manu mea (IV Reg. XVIII, 35)? exaltatione sua dejecti sunt. Justus autem, sicut Jacob, ad auctorem Deum refert quaecumque fuerit bona consecutus, dicens de omnibus quaecumque sibi prosperare cognoverit: Quoniam tradidit ea Dominus Deus in manus meas (Gen. XXVII, 20). Haec igitur melior votorum suorum solutio est, sicut et David ait: Immola Deo sacrificium laudis, et redde Altissimo vota tua (Ps. LXI, 14). Laudare Deum, commendare est votum, et solvere. Unde et Samaritanus ille aliis antefertur, qui cum leprosis aliis novem secundum praeceptum Domini, mundatus a lepra, solus regressus ad Christum amplificabat Deum, et agebat gratias. De quo Jesus ait: Non fuit ex illis qui rediret, et gratias ageret Deo, nisi hic alienigena Et ait illi: Surge, et vade; quia fides tua te salvum fecit (Luc. XVII, 18).

35. Est etiam illa commendandae orationis et voti disciplina; ut non divulgemus orationem, sed abscondita teneamus mysteria, sicut tenuit Abraham, qui subcinericias fecit (Gen. XVIII, 6). Tenuerunt et patres qui coxere conspersum quod extulerant de Aegypto, subcinericia facientes azyma, quae Graece ἐγκρύφια dicuntur, eo quod abscondantur in cinere; significantes fermentum illud quod abscondit mulier illa Evangelica (Luc. XIII, 21) in farinae mensuris tribus, donec fermentaretur totum, mysteriorum quoque innuentes premendam esse doctrinam. Quod apertius Dominus in Evangelio docuit dicens: Tu autem cum orabis, intra in cubiculum tuum, et clauso ostio Patrem tuum ora in abscondito, et Pater tuus qui videt in abscondito, reddet tibi: orantes autem nolite multum loqui (Matth. VI, 5). Et infra: Scit enim Pater vester quid vobis opus sit, antequam petatis ab eo (Ibid., 8). Cubiculum tuum, mentis arcanum, animique secretum est. In hoc cubiculum tuum intra, hoc est, intra in alta praecordia, totus ingredere de corporis tui exteriori vestibulo, et claude ostium tuum.

34. But humility commends prayer. Indeed that Pharisee was rebuked who enumerated his fasts as it were benefits, and as it were objected them to God, and mentioned that he was free from crimes. But the Publican was preached, *who standing afar off would not lift up his eyes to heaven, but struck his breast saying: Lord God, be merciful to me a sinner* (Luke 18:13). And therefore the divine sentence preferred him saying: *Because this publican went down justified more than the pharisee* (ibid., 14). For he is justified who confesses his own sin, as the Lord himself spoke: *Speak your iniquities, that you may be justified* (Isa. 43:26). And David says: *A sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit* (Ps. 50:19). And again: *A contrite and humbled heart God does not despise* (ibid.). Jeremiah also says: *A soul in anguishes, and an anxious spirit cries to you* (Baruch 3:1). Therefore both Pharaoh (Exod. 5:2), and the Assyrian king who said: *Who of the gods of those nations shall deliver his land from my hand; since the Lord your God shall deliver Jerusalem from my hand* (4 Kings 18:35)? were cast down by their exaltation. But the just man, as Jacob, refers to the Author God whatever good things he has obtained, saying of all things whatever he has known to prosper for him: *Because the Lord God delivered them into my hands* (Gen. 27:20). This therefore is the better payment of his vows, as David also says: *Offer to God a sacrifice of praise, and pay your vows to the Most High* (Ps. 49:14). To praise God is to commend a vow, and to pay it. Whence also that Samaritan is preferred to the other nine lepers, who with the others according to the command of the Lord, cleansed from leprosy, alone returned to Christ and amplified God, and gave thanks. Concerning whom Jesus says: *There was not of them who would return and give thanks to God, except this stranger. . . . And he said to him: Rise, and go; because your faith has saved you* (Luke 17:18).

35. There is also that discipline of commending prayer and a vow; that we do not divulge prayer, but keep hidden mysteries, as Abraham did, who made cakes baked in ashes (Gen. 18:6). The fathers also who cooked the dough which they had brought out of Egypt, making unleavened cakes baked in ashes, which in Greek are called *encryphia*, because they are hidden in the ashes; signifying that leaven which that Evangelical woman hid (Luke 13:21) in three measures of flour, until the whole was leavened, also hinting that the doctrine of mysteries must be pressed. Which the Lord taught more openly in the Gospel saying: *But you when you shall pray, enter into your chamber, and the door being closed pray to your Father in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you: but praying do not speak much* (Matt. 6:5). And below: *For your Father knows what is necessary for you, before you ask him* (ibid., 8). Your chamber is the secret of the mind, and the secret of the soul. Enter into this your chamber, that is, enter into the deep hearts, enter totally from the exterior vestibule of your body, and close your door.

36. Quod sit ostium tuum, disce: Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, et ostium circuitus labiis meis (Ps. CXL, 3). Et Paulus petit orari pro se: Ut aperiatur mihi, inquit, ostium verbi, ad loquendum mysterium Christi (Coloss. IV, 3). Sed ille ut pote electus ad Evangelii praedicationem, recte sibi ostium verbi optabat aperiri; quia de ore ejus exibat salus gentium, de ore ejus prodibat vita populorum. Nos autem claudamus ostium, ne culpa intret, ne lapsus aliquis sermonis exeat. Intrat culpa, si lapsus exierit. Audi quomodo intret culpa. In multiloquio, inquit, non effugies peccatum (Prov. X, 19). Exivit multiloquium, peccatum intravit; quia in multiloquio nequaquam qui exeat sermo, trutinatur. imprudenter labitur, licet ipsum ultra mensuram aliquid loqui grande peccatum sit.

37. Et ideo cave ne imprudenter loquaris; labia enim imprudentis inducunt eum ad mala. Cave ne in oratione te extollas; oratio enim humiliantis se nubes penetrabit. Cave ne incaute Symboli vel Dominicae orationis divulges mysteria. An nescis quam grave sit in oratione contrahere peccatum, ubi speras remedium? Certe Dominus per Prophetam docuit hoc grave esse maledictum dicens: Et oratio ejus fiat in peccatum (Ps. CVIII, 7); nisi forte mediocre id tibi putas esse. Diffidere est enim de potentia Dei, aestimare quod non audiaris, nisi clamaveris. Clament opera tua, clament fides, clament affectus, clament passionibus tuae, clament sanguis tuus, sicut sancti Abel, de quo dixit Deus ad Cain: Vox sanguinis fratris tui ad me clamat (Gen. IV, 10). Audit enim te in occultis, qui mundat in occultis. Nos nisi loquentem aliquem audire non possumus: apud Deum loquuntur non verba, sed cogitationes. Et ut hoc verum scias, dicebat Dominus Jesus ad Judaeos: Quid cogitatis mala in cordibus vestris (Matth. IX, 4)? Non interrogantis vox ista est, sed scientis. Quod tibi manifestat Evangelista dicens: Jesus autem sciebat cogitationes eorum (Luc. VI, 8). Sicut ergo Filius novit, novit et Pater. Filium nosse cognovisti, Patrem nosse, audi consiliarium et testem Patris dicentem: Scit enim Pater vester quid vobis opus sit, antequam petatis ab eo (Matth. VI, 5). Coque ergo subcinericiam tuam vapore Spiritus sancti; coque etiam animi passionibus verbi calore. Et si crudiores sunt passionibus tuae nuper fortasse de Aegypto egredientes, operito eas, et lento calore excoque; ne fortiorem ignem ferre non possint, et semiustulentur potius quam coquantur. Sunt enim plurima quae cruda displiceant, cocta delectent. Fove igitur pectore tuo alta mysteria; ne praemature sermone et infidis auribus vel infirmis quasi incotta committas, atque auditor avertatur et cum horrore fastidiat, qui si coctiora gustaret, spiritalis cibi perciperet suavitatem.

36. Learn what your door is: *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door of circuit to my lips* (Ps. 140:3). And Paul asks to be prayed for: *That a door of speech may be opened to me,* he says, *to speak the mystery of Christ* (Col. 4:3). But he, as one chosen for the preaching of the Gospel, rightly desired the door of speech to be opened to him; because from his mouth went out the salvation of nations, from his mouth came forth the life of peoples. But let us close the door, lest fault enter, lest any slip of speech go out. Fault enters, if a slip goes out. Hear how fault enters. *In much speaking,* it says, *you shall not escape sin* (Prov. 10:19). Much speaking went out, sin entered; because in much speaking the word which goes out is by no means weighed. It slips imprudently, although to speak anything great beyond measure is itself a great sin.

37. And therefore beware lest you speak imprudently; for the lips of the imprudent lead him to evils. Beware lest you extol yourself in prayer; for the prayer of him who humbles himself will penetrate the clouds. Beware lest you incautiously divulge the mysteries of the Creed or the Lord's Prayer. Or do you not know how grave it is to contract sin in prayer, where you hope for a remedy? Certainly the Lord through the Prophet taught that this is a grave curse, saying: *And let his prayer become sin* (Ps. 108:7); unless perhaps you think that is mediocre. For it is to distrust the power of God, to estimate that you are not heard, unless you have cried out. Let your works cry out, let faith cry out, let affection cry out, let your passions cry out, let your blood cry out, as that of holy Abel, of whom God said to Cain: *The voice of your brother's blood cries to me* (Gen. 4:10). For he hears you in occult things, who cleanses in occult things. We cannot hear anyone unless he is speaking; with God not words, but thoughts speak. And that you may know this is true, the Lord Jesus said to the Jews: *Why do you think evil things in your hearts* (Matt. 9:4)? This is not the voice of one questioning, but of one knowing. Which the Evangelist manifests to you saying: *But Jesus knew their thoughts* (Luke 6:8). As therefore the Son knows, the Father also knows. You have known that the Son knows, hear the counselor and witness of the Father saying: *For your Father knows what is necessary for you, before you ask him* (Matt. 6:5). Cook therefore your cake baked in ashes with the vapor of the Holy Spirit; cook also the passions of the mind with the heat of the word. And if your passions are somewhat raw, having perhaps recently gone out from Egypt, cover them, and cook them with slow heat; lest they cannot bear a stronger fire, and be half-burned rather than cooked. For there are very many things which raw displease, cooked delight. Cherish therefore deep mysteries in your breast; lest by premature speech and to unfaithful or weak ears you commit them as it were uncooked, and the hearer be turned away and loathe them with horror, who if he tasted them more cooked, would perceive the sweetness of spiritual food.

38. Divine autem Dominus Jesus et bonitatem te docuit Patris, qui bona noverit dare (Luc. XI, 13); ut quae bona sunt a bono poscas: et impense et frequenter monuit orandum; non ut fastidiosa continetur oratio, sed ut assidua frequenter effundatur (Ibid., 9). Plerumque enim inanis gloria longae precationi, intermissae autem prorsus obrepat incuria. Deinde monet (Matt. XVIII, 15) ut cum ipse veniam tibi poscis, tum maxime largiendam aliis noveris, quo precem tuam operis tui voce commendes. Apostolus quoque docet (I Tim. II, 8) orandum sine ira et disceptatione, ut non turbetur, non interpoletur oratio tua. Docet etiam orandum in omni loco, cum Salvator dicat: Intra in cubiculum tuum (Matt. VI, 6). Sed intellige non cubiculum conclusum parietibus, quo tua membra claudantur: sed cubiculum quod in te est, in quo includuntur cogitationes tuae, in quo versantur sensus tui. Hoc orationis tuae cubiculum ubique tecum est, et ubique secretum est, cujus arbiter nullus est nisi solus Deus.

39. Orandum autem praecipue et pro populo doceris (I Tim. II, 1), hoc est, pro toto corpore, pro membris omnibus matris tuae, in quo mutuae charitatis est insigne. Si enim pro te roges tantum, solus pro te rogabis. Et si pro se tantum singuli orent, minor peccatoris quam intercedentis est gratia. Nunc autem quia singuli orant pro omnibus, etiam omnes orant pro singulis. Ergo ut concludamus, si pro te roges tantum, solus, ut diximus, pro te rogabis. Si autem pro omnibus roges, omnes pro te rogabunt. Siquidem et tu in omnibus es. Ita magna remuneratio est, ut orationibus singulorum acquirantur singulis totius plebis suffragia. In quo arrogantia nulla, sed humilitas major est, et fructus uberior.

CAPUT X.

Exposito primo sacrificii, Cain defectu transitur ad alterum, quod scilicet non obtulerit de primitiis. Primitias animae praecipue offerendas, et quae illae sint. Eisdem Abelem obtulisse, ac legem offerendas praecepisse. Ibidem quinam dicantur Chanaei: item cur Deus jurassemoretur: non posse sine illius ope animi motus pacari. Denique hos partus offerri debere ad quos sexus distinctio nihil conferat.

38. But divinely the Lord Jesus taught you both the goodness of the Father, who knows how to give good things (Luke 11:13); so that you may ask for those things which are good from the Good: and he frequently and urgently warned that one must pray; not that a fastidious prayer be continued, but that an assiduous one be frequently poured out (*ibid.*, 9). For for the most part empty glory creeps into a long prayer, but negligence into one altogether intermitted. Then he warns (Matt. 18:15) that when you ask pardon for yourself, then you should know that it is especially to be granted to others, that you may commend your prayer by the voice of your work. The Apostle also teaches (1 Tim. 2:8) that one must pray without anger and disputation, so that your prayer be not troubled, nor interpolated. He also teaches that one must pray in every place, since the Savior says: **Enter into your chamber** (Matt. 6:6). But understand not a chamber closed with walls, in which your members are closed: but the chamber which is in you, in which your thoughts are included, in which your senses are occupied. This chamber of your prayer is everywhere with you, and everywhere is secret, whose arbiter is no one except God alone.

39. But you are taught that one must pray especially for the people (1 Tim. 2:1), that is, for the whole body, for all the members of your mother, in which is the sign of mutual charity. For if you pray for yourself only, you only will pray for yourself. And if each one prays for himself only, the grace of the sinner is less than that of the interceder. But now because each one prays for all, also all pray for each one. Therefore that we may conclude, if you pray for yourself only, you alone, as we have said, will pray for yourself. But if you pray for all, all will pray for you. For indeed you are in all. So great is the remuneration, that by the prayers of each one the suffrages of the whole people are acquired for each one. In which there is no arrogance, but humility is greater, and the fruit more abundant.

CHAPTER X.

The first flaw of the sacrifice having been explained, Cain's second is passed to, namely that he did not offer of the first fruits. The first fruits of the soul are especially to be offered, and what those are. Abel offered the same, and the law commanded them to be offered. There also who are called Canaanites: likewise why God is mentioned to have sworn: that the movements of the mind cannot be pacified without his help. Finally that these births ought to be offered to which the distinction of sex contributes nothing.

40. Sed jam est tempus alio transire, quoniam de eo quod post dies obtulit Cain plene diximus. Factus est indicium resupini, cum ipsa postulatio voti matura esse debeat; ne videamur de humanis artibus, hoc est, medendi peritia, herbarumque succis sperasse magis remedium, quam de Deo subsidium poposcisse. Ad ipsum enim prius est confugiendum, qui nostrae curare possit animae passiones. Verum homines quidam praepostero ordine ante sibi ab hominibus opem arcessunt: ubi autem humana subsidia defecerint, tunc opinantur divini postulandam favoris, gratiam.

41. Concluso ergo illo et convicto Cain crimine, aliud oblationis vitium discutiamus. Obtulit, inquit, ex fructibus terrae, non a primis fructibus primitias Deo. Hoc est primitias sibi prius vindicare: Deo autem sequentia deferre. Itaque cum vere anima corpori tamquam servo domina sit praeferenda, utique primitias ejus, hoc est, animae prius quam corporis offerre debemus. Primitiae animae primatus sunt bonarum disciplinarum. Quae licet tempore posteriores sint, quam corporis primitiae, quae sunt esca, incrementum, visus, auditus, et tactus, odor, vox (mens autem et sensus pars animae) pars corporis est, tamen priores sunt disciplinis. Quarum primitiva est puro corde et simplici sermone oblata Deo gratiarum actio.

42. Haec munera obtulit Abel, et ideo respexit Deus in munera ejus, quoniam e primitivis obtulit. Accedit ergo quia de primitivis ovium, et de adipibus earum. Considera quia non de insensibilibus, sed de animantibus obtulit. Plus est enim animalis, quam terrenus; siquidem animalis proximus spiritali est. Non enim prius quod spiritale est, sed quod animale, deinde quod spiritale. Quod animale spirat, habet vitalem spiritum: non ita quod de terrarum est fructibus. Deinde obtulit non secunda, sed prima; non exigua, sed pingua: talia enim lex probavit, et jussit offerri, sicut scriptum est: Et erit, inquit, cum inducet te Deus in terram Chananaeorum, sicut juravit patribus tuis, et dabit tibi; tolles omne quod aperit vulvam masculinum Domino. Omne quod aperit vulvam de armentis et pecoribus tuis, quaecumque nata fuerint tibi masculina, sanctifica Domino. Omne quod aperit vulvam asinae, mutabis illud ove: si autem non mutabis, redimes illud (Exod. XIII, 11 et seq.). Quid tam profundi mysterii, tam altae secretaeque sapientiae, quam ut in venis quibusdam verborum simplicium deprehendas atque haurias ubertatem gratiae spiritalis? Chananaei enim mobiles et inquieti sunt. Cum igitur in eorum terram fueris ingressus, quos advertis propter levitatem, inquietudinem, et instabilitatem morum, possessione dejectos, tu teneto constantiam.

40. But now it is time to pass to another thing, since we have spoken fully concerning that Cain offered after days. It was made an indication of one lying back, when the very petition of the vow ought to be mature; lest we seem to have hoped for a remedy more from human arts, that is, the skill of healing, and the juices of herbs, than to have asked for help from God. For to him first one must fly, who can cure the passions of our soul. But certain men in a preposterous order first summon help to themselves from men: but where human helps have failed, then they think that the grace of divine favor is to be asked.

41. That crime of Cain being therefore concluded and convicted, let us discuss another vice of the offering. *He offered,* he says, *of the fruits of the earth,* not from the first fruits the firstlings to God. This is to claim the first fruits for oneself first: but to defer the following to God. And so when truly the soul is to be preferred to the body as a mistress to a servant, certainly we ought to offer the first fruits of it, that is, of the soul, before those of the body. The first fruits of the soul are the primacies of good disciplines. Which although they are later in time than the first fruits of the body, which are food, increase, sight, hearing, and touch, odor, voice (but the mind and sense is a part of the soul) part of the body, yet they are prior to the disciplines. Of which the primitive is the giving of thanks offered to God with a pure heart and simple speech.

42. These gifts Abel offered, and therefore God looked upon his gifts, since he offered from the primitives. Accession therefore comes because from the firstlings of the sheep, and from their fats. Consider that he did not offer from insensible things, but from living beings. For more is of the animal, than the earthly; since the animal is next to the spiritual. For not first that which is spiritual, but that which is animal, then that which is spiritual. That which is animal breathes, it has the vital spirit: not so that which is from the fruits of the lands. Then he offered not the second, but the first; not the small, but the fat: for such things the law proved, and commanded to be offered, as it is written: *And it shall be,* he says, *when God shall bring you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to your fathers, and shall give it to you; you shall take all that opens the womb, the male for the Lord.* All that opens the womb of the herds and your flocks, whatever shall be born to you males, sanctify to the Lord. All that opens the womb of an ass, you shall change with a sheep: but if you will not change, you shall redeem it* (Exod. 13:11 et seq.). What of such profound mystery, of such high and secret wisdom, than that in certain veins of simple words you may detect and draw the abundance of spiritual grace? For the Canaanites are mobile and restless. When therefore you shall have entered into their land, whom you notice to be cast out from possession on account of levity, restlessness, and instability of manners, you hold constancy.

Non te vilis ratio, non levis sermo perturbet; hoc est enim Chananaeus, mobilis sermo, affectus instabilis, et inquieta contentio: sed magis tranquillitatem cordis, et animi serenitatem placidus servato; ut tamquam in salo maris tutam navibus stationem, portu quodam tuae mentis exhibeas.

43. Hanc possessionem tibi Dominus pollicetur, et quodam sacramenti promittit vinculo, ut constantiam tuam firmet. Neque enim ideo Deus jurat, quod fide credentis indigeat, aut testimoniorum astipulationibus destitutus suffragium sacramenti requirat, sicut homines qui fidem nobis adsciscimus sacramento, et ideo juramus, ut credamur vera dixisse. Deus autem et cum loquitur fidelis est, cujus sermo sacramentum est. Non enim propter sacramentum fidelis omnipotens Deus, sed propter Deum etiam sacramentum fidele est. Qua ratione igitur Moyses jurantem Deum inducit? Quia nos usu quodam mortalium claudimur, et velut echini cortice quodam nos vulgaris opinionis involvimus, aut velut cochleae quae nisi intra testae operimentum sint, spirare non possunt, nec aerem liberum carpere aut sustinere: sic nos non nisi intra quaedam humanae consuetudinis latibula terrena versamur. Unde quia illud verius solemus credere, quod jurejurando firmatur; ne nostra claudicet fides, jurare describitur Deus qui ipse non jurat, sed jurantium iudex, et ultor est pejerantium. Denique scriptum est: Juravit Dominus, et non poenitebit eum: Tu es sacerdos in aeternum (Ps. CIX, 4). Servavit utique quod juravit, dedit nobis aeternum principem sacerdotum: ut et tu quod juraveris, ita noveris esse servandum; ut quia per eum juras qui non mentitur, scias eum futurum, si mentiaris, ultorem.

44. Expulsis igitur inquietis et mobilibus cogitationibus, dabit tibi Deus vacuum possessionem cordis et mentis; ut eam cultu quodam tranquillitatis exerceas, et fructum ex ea capias, nec sustineas in ea Chananaeos, hoc est, turbidos sensus recurrere; eradices gentilium vitiorum omnem conceptum; lucos eorum diruas quibus obumbratur veritas, et quidam coelestis liber visus cogitationis horrore tenebrosae discepcionis absconditur.

45. Sed hoc nisi divino donatus munere efficere non potes; ideo ait: Dabit tibi Deus (Exod. XIII, 11), hoc est, cogitationes optimas, placida consilia, tranquillas inventiones. Cum dederit haec, tolles omne quod aperit vulvam masculinum, et sanctificabis Domino. Non totum exigit a te Deus, qui totum donavit. Multa enim ad usum substantiae largitur humanae, et hoc non potest esse divinum sacrificium, ubi est usus naturae. Edere, bibere, dormire, aliaque etiam ministeria corporis dono sunt tibi collata, non a te relata Deo munera.

Let not a cheap reason, nor a light speech perturb you; for this is the Canaanite, mobile speech, unstable affection, and restless contention: but rather keep the tranquillity of the heart, and the serenity of the mind placid; so that as it were in the salt of the sea you may exhibit a safe station for ships, in a certain port of your mind.

43. This possession the Lord promises to you, and promises with a certain bond of a sacrament, that he may firm your constancy. For neither does God swear for this reason, that he needs the faith of the one believing, or destitute of the stipulations of testimonies requires the suffrage of a sacrament, as men who take faith to ourselves by a sacrament, and therefore we swear, that we may be believed to have said true things. But God even when he speaks is faithful, whose speech is a sacrament. For not on account of the sacrament is the almighty God faithful, but on account of God even the sacrament is faithful. By what reason therefore does Moses bring in God swearing? Because we are closed by a certain use of mortals, and as it were by the bark of sea urchins we involve ourselves in a certain vulgar opinion, or as it were snails which unless they be within the covering of the shell, cannot breathe, nor pluck or sustain the free air: so we do not dwell except within certain earthly hiding places of human custom. Whence because we are accustomed to believe that more truly, which is firmed by an oath; lest our faith limp, God is described swearing who himself does not swear, but is the judge of those swearing, and the avenger of those perjuring. Finally it is written: **The Lord has sworn, and he will not repent him: You are a priest forever** (Ps. 109:4). He kept certainly what he swore, he gave us an eternal prince of priests: so that you also may know that what you shall have sworn is thus to be kept; so that because you swear by him who does not lie, you may know that he will be, if you should lie, the avenger.

44. Restless and mobile thoughts being therefore expelled, God will give to you the empty possession of the heart and mind; so that you may exercise it with a certain cultivation of tranquillity, and take fruit from it, nor sustain in it the Canaanites, that is, turbid senses to run back; you should eradicate every concept of gentile vices; destroy their groves by which the truth is overshadowed, and a certain celestial free sight of the mind is hidden by the horror of dark disputation.

45. But you cannot achieve this unless you are gifted with a divine favor; therefore he says: **God will give to you** (Exod. 13:11), that is, the best thoughts, placid counsels, tranquil inventions. When he shall have given these, you shall take all that opens the womb as masculine, and you shall sanctify it to the Lord. God does not demand everything from you, who gave everything. For he bestows many things for the use of human substance, and that cannot be a divine sacrifice, where there is the use of nature. Eating, drinking, sleeping, and also other ministries of the body are conferred on you as a gift, not gifts returned by you to God.

Quidquid autem sanctum cogitaveris, hoc Dei munus est, Dei inspiratio, Dei gratia: sicut e contrario illa quae cum in usu naturae humanae sint, non coinquinant hominem; sed quod exit de ore, furta, falsa testimonia, sacrilegia, haec sunt quae coinquinant hominem.

46. Interiora ergo nostra mundemus, ut possit oblatio non displicere. Ibi quaeramus omne quod aperit vulvam masculinum, hoc est, justum et principale, quod sanctificare Domino debeamus. Neque enim hi nos corporei coitus, conceptus partusque sanctificant, quibus vulva feminea deflorato pudore virginitatis aperitur. Nam etsi mulier sanctificat virum, et vir mulierem; tamen plerumque contingit virginis vulvam etiam sine conjugii sanctitate reserari. Neque rursus sola virilis est gratia, mulier autem sanctificationis aliena est, aut utriusque sexus confusa natura est, ut uterque corporeos fundatur in partus. Habent sua munia viri, habent mulieres sexus sui officia discreta. Generatio ista successionis humanae mulierem decet, impossibilis eadem viro.

47. Ergo si carnis usui non quadrat hic sensus, officia animae discutiamus. Istam sane invenio, quae nullo discreta sit sexu: et cum sexum non habeat, utriusque sexus munera repraesentat, nubet, concipit, parit. Et sicut feminis dedit vulvam naturam, in qua uniuscujusque animantis generatio per menstruas formatur aetates: ita est quaedam virtus animae quae velut quodam vulvae genitalis secreto cogitationum nostrarum suscipere semina, conceptus fovere, partus solet edere. Neque enim aliter diceret Esaias: In utero accepimus, et parturivimus spiritum salutis (Esai. XXVI 18); nisi vulvam animae novisset. Harum generationum quaedam femineae sunt, malitia, petulantia, luxuries, intemperantia, impudicitia, aliaque hujusmodi vitia, quibus animi nostri quaedam enervatur virilitas. Masculinae sunt, castitas, patientia, prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo, justitia, quibus mens nostra, et caro ipsa firmatur, et ad obeunda impigre munia virtutis erigitur. Hos partus alvus ille propheticus parturivit. Et ideo ait: In utero accepimus et parturivimus spiritum salutis. Masculum igitur et parturivit, et peperit, qui spiritum salutis effudit.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

CAPUT I.

Animae partus mature producendos: eorum quae forma sit? Plebeios sensus mentis imperio domitari posse; duplex enim esse sensuum nostrorum genus; et in ultro consistent primitiva Deo offerenda? Postremo de commixtione qua constamus, ejusque primitiis disputatur.

But whatever holy thing you shall have thought, this is God's gift, God's inspiration, God's grace: just as, on the contrary, those things which, although they are in the use of human nature, do not defile a man; but what comes out of the mouth, thefts, false testimonies, sacrileges, these are the things that defile a man.

46. Therefore let us cleanse our interior parts, so that the offering may not be displeasing. There let us seek everything that opens the womb as masculine, that is, just and principal, which we ought to sanctify to the Lord. For these corporeal intercourses, conceptions, and births do not sanctify us, by which the female womb is opened with the modesty of virginity deflowered. For although the woman sanctifies the man, and the man the woman; yet it often happens that the womb of a virgin is opened even without the sanctity of marriage. Nor again is the grace only virile, and the woman foreign to sanctification, or the nature of each sex confused, so that each is poured out into corporeal births. Men have their duties, women have the distinct offices of their sex. That generation of human succession befits the woman, the same is impossible for the man.

47. Therefore if this sense does not fit the use of the flesh, let us discuss the offices of the soul. Certainly I find that soul, which is distinguished by no sex: and since it has no sex, it represents the duties of both sexes, it marries, conceives, gives birth. And just as nature gave the womb to females, in which the generation of each living thing is formed through the monthly ages: so there is a certain virtue of the soul which, as if in a certain secret of a genital womb, is accustomed to receive the seeds of our thoughts, to foster conceptions, to give birth to offspring. For otherwise Isaiah would not say: **In the womb we have conceived, and we have brought forth the spirit of salvation** (Is. 26:18); unless he had known the womb of the soul. Of these generations some are feminine: malice, petulance, luxury, intemperance, impudicity, and other vices of this kind, by which a certain virility of our mind is enervated. Masculine are chastity, patience, prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice, by which our mind and the flesh itself are firmed, and are raised to perform the duties of virtue without sluggishness. That prophetic womb brought forth these births. And therefore he says: **In the womb we have conceived and we have brought forth the spirit of salvation.** He both labored for and brought forth a masculine child, therefore, who poured forth the spirit of salvation.

BOOK TWO.

CHAPTER I.

The offspring of the soul must be produced maturely: what is their form? The plebeian senses can be tamed by the command of the mind; for there are two kinds of our senses; and in what do the first fruits to be offered to God consist? Finally, the mixture of which we consist, and its first fruits, are discussed.

1. Hos partus anima nostra parturiat, nec solum parturiat, sed etiam pariat, et diebus pariat impletis; ne immaturos partus dies iudicii deprehendat. De his enim partubus dixit Dominus Jesus: Vae praegnantibus et nutrientibus in illis diebus (Luc. XXI, 23)? Maturius igitur absolvatur hic partus, et cogitation thoughts nostrae bonorum operum processibus explicentur; ut nihil imperfectum finis noster inveniat, nihil inexplicatum terminus vitae nostrae offendant, nihil tamquam in incude positum usus nostri operis derelinquat. Festina igitur anima formare partus tuos, properantius absolvere, celerius quos genueris enutrire.

2. Quae tanti forma sit partus, demonstrat Apostolus dicens: Filioli mei quos iterum parturio, donec formetur Christus in vobis (Galat. IV, 19). In hanc formam tota mentis nostrae coalescant viscera, et in illo genitali alvo animae nostrae Christus refulgeat. Partus noster fides sit, nutrimenta nostra praecepta doctrinae sint. His quaedam cordis nostri imbuatur infantia, instituatur pueritia, juvenculescat adolescentia, senecta canescat. Aetas enim senectutis vita est immaculata. Itaque ea demum bona est animae senectus, quam nulla perfidiae inquinamenta maculaverint. Et ideo partus suos ab hac macula Paulus defendit: Ego vos, inquit, genui in Evangelio (I Cor. IV, 15); ne cujus saeva insusurratio rudis fidei tentaret infantiam. Masculina igitur generabat, qui in virum perfectum populos quos docebat, fidei gestiebat unitate concurrere, et in agnitione Filii Dei perfectam plenitudinis Christi tenere mensuram (Ephes. IV, 13). Hoc enim sacrificium acceptabile Deo noverat, de quo scriptum est: Separabis omne quod aperit vulvam masculinum, Domino (Exod. XIII, 11). Et qui addidit: Omne quod aperit vulvam de armentis et de pecoribus quae sunt tibi, masculinum sanctifica Domino (Ibid., 12); ne quid obscuritatis habeat, consideremus.

3. Dixerat de principalibus generationibus, hoc est, plenis capacibusque rationis: addidit et de gregalibus, hoc est, reliquis velut plebeiis sensibus, qui irrationalibus comparantur jumentis. Quae tamen cum a rectore aliquo gubernantur, facile mansuescunt; et imperata exsequi, et jugum subire, et ad vocem magistri accelerare gradum, aut sistere, aut deflectere, aut aliqua munia sui operis quae jubentur, humano quodam famulatu obire consueverunt. Tantum valet institutio, ut vincat naturam!

1. Let our soul be in labor with these births, and not only be in labor, but also give birth, and give birth when the days are fulfilled; lest the day of judgment find the births immature. For concerning these births the Lord Jesus said: *Woe to those pregnant and nursing in those days* (Luke 21:23)? Therefore let this birth be released more maturely, and let our thoughts be unfolded by the processes of good works; so that our end may find nothing imperfect, the term of our life may meet nothing unexplained, the use of our work may leave nothing as if placed on the anvil. Hasten therefore, O soul, to form your births, to release them more hurriedly, to nourish more quickly those whom you have begotten.

2. What the form of such a great birth is, the Apostle demonstrates saying: *My little children, for whom I am again in labor, until Christ be formed in you* (Gal. 4:19). Into this form let all the vitals of our mind coalesce, and in that genital womb of our soul let Christ shine back. Let our birth be faith, let our nourishments be the precepts of doctrine. With these let a certain infancy of our heart be imbued, childhood be instructed, youth grow young, old age grow gray. For the age of old age is a life immaculate. And therefore that old age of the soul is finally good, which no stains of perfidy shall have defiled. And therefore Paul defends his births from this stain: *I have begotten you,* he says, *in the Gospel* (1 Cor. 4:15); lest anyone's savage whispering should tempt the infancy of a raw faith. He was therefore begetting masculine things, who was eager for the peoples whom he taught to run together in the unity of faith into a perfect man, and to hold the perfect measure of the fullness of Christ in the knowledge of the Son of God (Eph. 4:13). For he knew this sacrifice acceptable to God, concerning which it is written: *You shall separate everything that opens the womb as masculine, to the Lord* (Exod. 13:11). And what he added: *Every masculine that opens the womb of the herds and of the flocks which are yours, sanctify to the Lord* (ibid., 12); lest it should have anything of obscurity, let us consider.

3. He had spoken of the principal generations, that is, those full and capable of reason: he added also concerning the gregarious ones, that is, the remaining or as it were plebeian senses, which are compared to irrational beasts. Which nevertheless, when they are governed by some ruler, easily become tame; and they have been accustomed to execute commands, and to undergo the yoke, and to hasten their step at the master's voice, or to stop, or to turn aside, or to perform some duties of their work which are ordered, with a certain human service. So much does instruction avail, that it overcomes nature!

Itaque illa quae consortium nostrae substantiae non habent, agnoscunt tamen nostrae vocis imperium: et cum suae naturae nullam rationem habeant, nostrae rationem capessunt, et quodammodo transfusam acquirunt. Equos videmus popularibus incitari studiis, gaudere plausibus, blanditiis delectari magistri. Torvos leones cernimus naturalem feritatem imperata mutare mansuetudine, suam rabiem deponere, nostros mores sumere; et cum sint ipsi terribiles, discunt timere. Caeditur canis, ut pavescat leo: et qui sua injuria exasperatur, coercetur aliena, alteriusque exemplo frangitur. Quoties parata praeda et cibo obvio famem perpeti malunt, dum offensam magistri verentur? Quoties repentino impulsu motu aperta ad morsus ora jussi resolvunt? Ita dum nostrae voluntati obsequuntur, suae obliviscuntur. Non ita illae ferae, vel illa armenta equorum, vel genus omne pecudum, quae sine rectore vagantur ullo, et omni domitoris gubernaculo destituta exasperantur. Et ideo appositi sunt armentarii, opiliones, caeterique pastores, quidam magistri gregum officia sua singulis animantium sibi commissorum conditione formantes.

4. Videtur ergo et sensuum nostrorum quoddam genus aliud domitum et mansuetum: aliud indomitum quod armentario quodam motu mentis velut deside atque resolutio proruat ad irrationabiles delectationes corporis: mansuetum autem quod velut duci cuidam moderationi mentis se subjiciat et subdat. Quaecumque ergo ejus naturae reguntur, ea sunt masculina atque perfecta: quaecumque autem sine duce ullo plebeia praesumptione quadam dominantur, velut civitatis alicujus quae regis optimatumque consilio privata sit, ita corporis sui omnem statum et virilem vigorem muliebri quadam dissolutione effeminant. Ex his illa lex carnis est, quae legem Apostolicae mentis impugnans, captivam trahebat eam quadam lege peccati. Et ideo ut de illo mortis corpore liberaretur, spem suam Paulus omnem non in sua virtute, sed in Christi gratia reponebat (Rom. VII, 25). Unde liquet quod hae commotiones quae secundum legem mentis sunt, ex divino favore procedunt, alii autem sensus ex voluptate corporea.

5. Illa igitur quae sancta sunt, primitiva sunt nostrorum sensuum: ista velut de quodam grege sunt, et vilitate plebeia: quae varia videtur Moyses nominibus significasse diversis. Hoc enim declarat etiam illa area legis mystica, de qua ait: Initia areae tuae et lacus tui non novissima facies. Primitiva filiorum tuorum dabis mihi (Exod. XXII, 29). Sanctae commotiones sensuum nostrorum, quae secundum virtutes sunt, ipsae sunt primitiae areae spiritalis: propterea etiam rurali areae comparantur, in qua ventilantur frumenta.

Therefore those things which do not have the consortium of our substance, nevertheless acknowledge the command of our voice: and since they have no reason of their own nature, they take up ours, and in a certain way acquire it transfused. We see horses incited by popular studies, rejoice in applauses, be delighted by the flatteries of the master. We discern grim lions change their natural ferocity for ordered tameness, lay aside their rage, take up our manners; and since they are themselves terrible, they learn to fear. The dog is beaten, that the lion may be terrified: and he who is exasperated by his own injury, is coerced by another's, and is broken by the example of the other. How often, with prey prepared and food at hand, do they prefer to endure hunger, while they fear the master's offense? How often, impelled by a sudden motion, do they loosen their mouths open for bites when ordered? Thus while they obey our will, they forget their own. Not so those wild beasts, or those herds of horses, or every kind of cattle, which wander without any ruler, and destitute of every governor's rudder are exasperated. And therefore herdsmen, shepherds, and other pastors are appointed, certain masters of flocks forming their duties for each of the living things committed to them by their condition.

4. There seems therefore to be one kind of our senses tamed and mild: another untamed which, with a certain herdsman-like motion of the mind, as if idle and relaxed, rushes forth to the irrational delights of the body: but the mild, which subjects and submits itself to a certain moderation of the mind as its leader. Whatever things therefore of that nature are ruled, those are masculine and perfect: but whatever things dominate with a certain plebeian presumption without any leader, as if of some city which is deprived of the counsel of a king and of the best men, thus they effeminate the whole state of their body and their virile vigor with a certain feminine dissolution. From these is that law of the flesh, which, impugning the law of the Apostolic mind, was dragging it captive by a certain law of sin. And therefore that he might be delivered from that body of death, Paul reposed all his hope not in his own virtue, but in the grace of Christ (Rom. 7:25). Whence it is clear that these commotions which are according to the law of the mind, proceed from divine favor, but other senses from corporeal pleasure.

5. Those things therefore which are holy, are the first fruits of our senses: these are as if from a certain flock, and of plebeian vileness: which Moses seems to have signified by various different names. For this also that mystical threshing floor of the law declares, concerning which he says: *You shall not delay the first fruits of your threshing floor and of your winepress. You shall give the first-born of your sons to me* (Exod. 22:29). The holy commotions of our senses, which are according to virtues, are themselves the first fruits of the spiritual threshing floor: on that account they are also compared to a rural threshing floor, in which the grains are winnowed.

Sicut enim in hac rurali area excutitur triticum atque hordeum, et dum saepius ventilatur, separatur a paleis; quia paleae caeteraque purgamenta messis in diversum levis aerae spiramine dissipantur; illa vero quae solidiora sunt, in locum eundem excusso pulvere relabuntur: ita cogitationum nostrarum fruges quae sunt solidae atque optimae, puram atque sinceram exhibent virtutis alimoniam, sicut scriptum est: Quia non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbo Dei (Luc. IV, 4): quae autem inutiles sunt et vacuae, disperguntur ut fumus ac nebulae; quia sicut fumus oculis, sic iniquitas utentibus ea. Et recte fumo iniquitas comparatur, quae velut quadam saeculari caligine aciem mentis obducit.

6. Et ideo Dominus dicit: Cum intraveritis in terram in quam induco vos, et cum manducare coeperitis de panibus terrae illius, offeretis oblationem separatam Domino, primitias conspersiois vestrae, panem sicut oblationem de area: sic offeretis primitias confusionum vestrarum, et dabitis Domino (Num. XV, 2 et seq.). Confusio nos sumus, diversorum elementorum quadam commixtione compositi. Siquidem frigidum calido, et humidum sicco miscetur in nobis. Haec conspersio multas habet carnis illecebras, et plurimas delectationes: sed non sunt hi primitivi hujus corporis sensus, quia ex anima et corpore constamus et spiritu. Haec est conspersio principalis, in qua sanctificari nos Apostolus cupit, sicut ait: Ipse autem Deus pacis sanctificet vos per omnia; ut integer spiritus vester et anima et corpus sine querela in die Domini nostri Jesu Christi servetur (I Thess. V, 23). Cujus conspersiois primitiae spirituales sunt, hoc est, inventiones et generationes sensuum qui ex vigore animae procedunt. Sed non omnes primitivi sensus, nisi qui malitiae et improbitatis, atque omnis erroris exsortes sunt. Sunt autem necessariae corporis delectationes, ut dormiendi, edendi, bibendi, deambulandi, et caeteri sensus hujusmodi; sed non in his primitiae. Et ideo non in his, sed in illis Domini sacramentum, ubi castitas, pietas, ubi fides atque devotio. Cujus rei manifestum et evidens exemplum est oblatio patriarchae Isaac, quem sacrificii modo obtulit pater nullius motu passionis inflexus humanae, mundam offerens Deo hostiam, vacuumque formidinis, et corporeae cupiditatis immunem, cum ipsa pietas patris devotioni cederet immolantis.

CAPUT II.

Primitias non tempore, sed sanctitate aestimari: cum fide quae imprimis necessaria est, conjungenda ad verum sacrificium bona opera: fructu mutandum laborem, atque animam ab inutilibus liberandam esse.

For just as in this rural threshing floor the wheat and the barley are shaken out, and while they are more often winnowed, they are separated from the chaff; because the chaff and the rest of the refuse of the harvest are dissipated into different directions by the breathing of a light breeze; but those things which are more solid, the dust having been shaken out, fall back into the same place: so the fruits of our thoughts which are solid and best, exhibit the pure and sincere nourishment of virtue, as it is written: *Because not in bread alone does man live, but in every word of God* (Luke 4:4): those however which are useless and empty, are dispersed like smoke and mists; because as smoke is to the eyes, so is iniquity to those using it. And rightly is iniquity compared to smoke, which as if with a certain worldly darkness covers the sight of the mind.

6. And therefore the Lord says: *When you shall have entered into the land into which I lead you, and when you shall have begun to eat of the breads of that land, you shall offer a separate oblation to the Lord, the first fruits of your dough, bread as an oblation from the threshing floor: thus you shall offer the first fruits of your confusions, and you shall give them to the Lord* (Num. 15:18-21). We are a confusion, composed by a certain mixture of different elements. Inasmuch as the cold is mixed with the hot, and the humid with the dry in us. This dough has many allurements of the flesh, and very many delights: but these are not the first fruits of this body's senses, because we consist of soul and body and spirit. This is the principal dough, in which the Apostle desires us to be sanctified, as he says: *And may the God of peace himself sanctify you through all things; that your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved without complaint in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Thess. 5:23). The first fruits of this dough are spiritual, that is, the inventions and generations of the senses which proceed from the vigor of the soul. But not all are first fruits, except those which are free from malice and wickedness, and all error. But the delights of the body are necessary, such as of sleeping, eating, drinking, walking, and other senses of this kind; but the first fruits are not in these. And therefore not in these, but in those is the Lord's sacrament, where there is chastity, piety, where there is faith and devotion. Of which thing a manifest and evident example is the offering of the patriarch Isaac, whom the father offered in the manner of a sacrifice, bent by no motion of human passion, offering a clean victim to God, and void of fear, and immune from corporeal desire, while the very piety of the father yielded to the devotion of the one sacrificing.

CHAPTER II.

First fruits are to be estimated not by time, but by holiness: good works are to be joined with faith, which is especially necessary, for a true sacrifice: labor is to be changed for fruit, and the soul is to be delivered from useless things.

7. Nunc consideremus quae sit vis primitiarum, et utrum tempore aestimentur primitiae, an sanctitate, hoc est, utrum omnia primogenita sanctificationem habeant primitiarum. Primitiae etenim fructuum sanctae secundum legem (Num. XVIII, 8); quia in his optimum festinae fidei sacrificium est: sed fiunt sanctae devotione, non tempore; quia non proventus sanctificat, sed devotio. Denique ubi celer proventus est, si devotio moretur, offensa contrahitur. Non ergo omnia primogenita sancta: sed omnia quae sancta sunt, sunt etiam primogenita. Denique Cain primogenitus, sed non sanctus. Sanctus quoque Israel Dei populus, sed non primus aetate; et tamen primogenitus appellatur, sicut scriptum est in prophetis: Primogenitus meus Israel (Exod. IV, 22). Et Levi sanctus, sed non primogenitus; nam tertius Liae filius legitur (Gen. XXIX, 34): et tamen levitae primogeniti nuncupati, quibus ab eo nomen est derivatum. Scriptum est enim in Numeris: Ecce tuli levitas de medio filiorum Israel pro omni primogenito qui aperit vulvam a filiis Israel, et erunt mihi levitae; mihi enim omne primitivum. In qua die percussi omne primogenitum Aegypti, sanctificavi omne primogenitum Israel (Num. III, 12 et 13). Ergo levitae primogeniti nuncupati, qui sanctificatione utique caeteris filiis Israel antelati sunt. Qua ratione primogeniti sint, audi Apostolum dicentem: Sed appropinquastis Sion monti, et civitati Dei vivi Hierusalem quae in coelo est, et decem millibus laetantium Angelorum, et Ecclesiarum primitivarum, quae scriptae sunt in coelo (Hebr. XII, 22). Quatuor ordines fecit, montis Sion, civitatis Hierusalem, celebritatis angelorum, et Ecclesiarum primitivarum. Tulit ergo Dominus Deus de medio populi Israel levitas; quia non humanarum eos consortes voluit esse curarum, sed divinae religionis ministros. Et primogenitos sibi fecit qui vulvam aperiunt spiritalem; et ideo non erant ab utero naturae, sicut diversorum criminum peccatores: sed destructis cultoribus saecularibus eliguntur. Unde non habent cum plebeia possessione consortium, nec in medio populi computantur; quia verbum Dei in medio sui possident, sicut scriptum est in Evangelio: Ubi sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo, ibi ego sum in medio eorum (Matt. XVIII, 20). Et alibi: Medius vestrum stat quem vos nescitis (Joan. I, 26).

8. Hinc ergo cognoscimus quod ante omnia fides nos commendare Deo debeat. Cum fidem habuerimus, elaboramus ut opera nostra perfecta sint. Siquidem hoc plenum est et perfectum sacrificium, sicut ipse Dominus docet nos dicens: De donis et datis tuis observabitis offerre mihi in diebus festis meis, nihil detrahentes, neque dispertientes; sed plena et integra et perfecta offerentes. Festus autem dies Domini est, ubi perfectarum virtutum gratia est.

7. Now let us consider what the force of first fruits is, and whether first fruits are estimated by time, or by holiness, that is, whether all first-born have the sanctification of first fruits. For the first fruits of fruits are holy according to the law (Num. 18:8); because in these is the best sacrifice of a hasty faith: but they become holy by devotion, not by time; because the harvest does not sanctify, but devotion. Finally, where the harvest is quick, if devotion tarries, an offense is contracted. Therefore not all first-born are holy: but all things that are holy, are also first-born. Finally Cain was first-born, but not holy. Holy also is Israel, the people of God, but not first in age; and yet he is called first-born, as it is written in the prophets: **Israel is my first-born** (Exod. 4:22). And Levi was holy, but not first-born; for he is read as the third son of Leah (Gen. 29:34): and yet the Levites were called first-born, to whom the name is derived from him. For it is written in Numbers: **Behold, I have taken the Levites from the midst of the children of Israel for every first-born that opens the womb from the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be mine; for every first fruit is mine.** **In the day that I struck every first-born of Egypt, I sanctified every first-born of Israel** (Num. 3:12-13). Therefore the Levites were called first-born, who certainly by sanctification were preferred to the other children of Israel. By what reason they are first-born, hear the Apostle saying: **But you have approached Mount Sion, and the city of the living God, the Jerusalem which is in heaven, and to ten thousands of rejoicing angels, and of the primitive Churches, which are written in heaven** (Heb. 12:22-23). He made four orders: of Mount Sion, of the city of Jerusalem, of the celebration of angels, and of the primitive Churches. Therefore the Lord God took the Levites from the midst of the people of Israel; because he did not want them to be sharers in human cares, but ministers of divine religion. And he made those first-born to himself who open the spiritual womb; and therefore they were not from the womb of nature, like the sinners of various crimes: but the secular cults being destroyed, they are chosen. Whence they have no consortium with plebeian possession, nor are they computed in the midst of the people; because they possess the Word of God in their midst, as it is written in the Gospel: **Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them** (Matt. 18:20). And elsewhere: **In the midst of you stands one whom you know not** (John 1:26).

8. Hence therefore we know that before all things faith ought to commend us to God. When we shall have had faith, let us labor that our works may be perfect. Inasmuch as this is a full and perfect sacrifice, as the Lord himself teaches us saying: **Of your gifts and givings you shall observe to offer to me in my feast days, detracting nothing, nor dispersing; but offering full and integral and perfect things.** For the feast day of the Lord is where there is the grace of perfect virtues.

Quae tunc perfectae sunt, si sollicitudinum saecularium, et corporalis illecebrae victor animus delinimenta voluptatis excludat, liber a saeculo, Deo deditus, nihil de tramite directae intentionis imminuens, nec affectus sui tempora nunc luxuriae dividens, nunc labori. Solus itaque sapiens hanc celebrat solemnitatem, nullus alius. Immunem enim huiusmodi passionum animam reperire difficile est. Divide ergo secundum rationem animae principalia et obedientia, et tunc quid masculinum, quidve femininum sit deprehendes. Nulla enim sine labore virtus, quia labor processus virtutis est. Quod etiam legis ipsius verba significant, quae dicit: Omne quod aperit vulvam asinae, mutabis ove (Exod. XIII, 13). Immunda enim animalia lex a sacrificio separavit, et pro his ad vicem munda iussit offerri. Asinae ergo partum, hoc est, immundum jubet mutari ove, quae munda et apta sacrificio est (Levit. XXVII, 27). Hoc est secundum litteram. Caeterum si quis sensum spiritalis legis altius persequatur, libet considerare quod asina laboriosum sit animal, ovis fructuosum. Fructu ergo dicit mutandum laborem, ut finis operis sui fructus sit. Vel certe hoc modo: omnem laborem tuum, omnem industriam puro et simplici commendabis affectu.

9. Si autem non mutabis, inquit, redimes (Exod., XIII, 13). Jubetur ergo secundum litteram, ut animal aliud pro immundo animali offeratur, aut pretium; ne inter decimas fructuum vel minus aliquid, vel immundum videatur offerri. Intellectus autem profundior liberandam animam tuam docet, ut desistat ab iis quae fructum non habent. Qui enim redimit se, liberat et quodam exuit debito. Relinquenda sunt opera quae verum fructum, bonosque processus habere non possunt; qualia sunt ista mundana quorum usus non potest esse diuturnus. In quibus ipse nudus et veri vacuus effectus est; et quamvis summo quaesitus fuerit labore, animam nihil juvat. Ea enim quae servitutem animae inferunt, inutilia sunt omnia, etsi non desit effectus. Magna videtur praeliantium victoria, triumphantium gloria: sed frequenter ipsos videmus qui vicerint, rursus bellorum subjacere incertis et transferri ad hostem eventu praelii, et eo ipso quo victores ante fuerint, fieri miseriores. Opus est ergo ut opera tua ad Deum dirigas, et ejus tibi aspires favor.

Which then are perfect, if the mind, victor over secular solicitations and corporeal allurements, should exclude the enticements of pleasure, free from the world, devoted to God, diminishing nothing from the path of direct intention, nor dividing the times of its affection now for luxury, now for labor. Therefore the wise man alone celebrates this solemnity, no one else. For it is difficult to find a soul immune from passions of this kind. Divide therefore according to reason the principal and obedient parts of the soul, and then you will detect what is masculine, and what feminine. For there is no virtue without labor, because labor is the process of virtue. Which also the words of the law itself signify, which says: *Everything that opens the womb of a female ass, you shall change for a sheep* (Exod. 13:13). For the law separated unclean animals from sacrifice, and instead of these commanded clean ones to be offered in turn. He commands therefore the offspring of an ass, that is, an unclean one, to be changed for a sheep, which is clean and fit for sacrifice (Lev. 27:27). This is according to the letter. But if anyone should follow the sense of the spiritual law more deeply, it is pleasing to consider that an ass is a laborious animal, a sheep a fruitful one. By fruit therefore he says labor is to be changed, so that the end of his work may be fruit. Or certainly in this way: all your labor, all your industry you shall commend with a pure and simple affection.

9. *But if you will not change,* he says, *you shall redeem* (Exod. 13:13). It is commanded therefore according to the letter, that another animal be offered for an unclean animal, or a price; lest among the tithes of fruits either anything less, or an unclean thing should seem to be offered. But the more profound understanding teaches that your soul is to be delivered, so that it may desist from those things which have no fruit. For he who redeems himself, also delivers and in a certain way divests himself of a debt. Those works are to be left which cannot have true fruit and good processes; such as are those worldly things whose use cannot be long-lasting. In which he himself is naked and void of true effect; and although it shall have been sought with the greatest labor, it helps the soul nothing. For those things which bring servitude to the soul, are all useless, even if effect is not lacking. Great seems the victory of those fighting, the glory of those triumphing: but frequently we see those very ones who have conquered, again subject to the uncertainties of wars and transferred to the enemy by the event of battle, and by that very thing by which they were victors before, become more miserable. There is need therefore that you direct your works to God, and his favor aspire to you.

Athleta ipse qui suis non alienis decernit viribus, quoties concreditur, dubios casus subire se credit. Et cum ad coronam pervenerit, intelligit citius hanc mundi gloriam tamquam coronae ipsius folia marcescere. Gubernator cum in portus navim subdu-xerit, vix finem impositum labori putat, et statim quaerit laboris exordium. Solvitur corpore anima, et post finem vitae hujus adhuc tamen futuri judicii ambiguo suspen-ditur. Ita finis nullus, ubi finis putatur. Unde votis et pura conscientia et spiritu charitatis adhaereamus Deo nostro, et divinum nobis conciliemus favorem: precantes ut a saecularibus curis tamquam ab immitibus et agrestibus dominis possimus absolvi atque exui, mundanoque exire servitio, in libertatem supernae cognitionis quae vera et sola est libertas, vocati.

CAPUT III.

Quod dixerat laborem fructu mutandum, exemplo Judaeorum in Aegypto ser-vientium, et Evangelii testimonio confirmat; quonam ex loco, et quo pacto liberanda sit anima, declarat; et Christum verum levitem, id est, liberatorem nostrum esse. Denique pulchra de utilitate quam affert justorum familiaritas, proponit.

10. Et ut praeceptum legis exemplo astruamus, cum deprimerent Aegyptii Judae-orum populorum in operibus variis, et luto ac lapide, ingemuerunt filii Israel, et Domini provocaverunt in se misericordiam. Et dixit ad Moysen: Ego exaudivi gemitum filiorum Israel, quomodo Aegyptii in servitute deprimunt eos, et memor factus sum Testamenti mei. Vade et dic filiis Israel, ego Dominus, et educam vos de potentia Aegyptiorum, et eruam vos de servitute eorum, et liberabo vos in brachio excelso, et judicio magno, et sumam vos mihi in plebem, et ero vester Deus, et scietis quoniam ego sum Dominus Deus vester qui educam vos de potentia Aegyptiorum, et inducam vos in terram in quam extendi manum meam (Exod. III, 7 et seq.). Ecce quomodo populus Hebraeorum fructu mutavit laborem, ut qui in luto operabatur, spe regni operaretur aeterni. Et ideo Dominus in Evangelio inanem populorum genti-lium miseratus laborem, qui lateres construerent lutulentae superstitioni, et voluptati corporis dediti, solidum fidei murum aedificare non possent, velut ad quosdam asinae fetus locutus ait: Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis, et ego vos reficiam. Tollite jugum meum super vos, et discite a me quia sum mitis et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris (Matt. XI, 28 et seq.)

The athlete himself who decides by his own, not another's strengths, as often as he engages, believes himself to undergo doubtful cases. And when he shall have arrived at the crown, he understands that this glory of the world withers more quickly than the leaves of that very crown. The pilot when he shall have brought the ship into ports, hardly thinks an end imposed on labor, and immediately seeks the beginning of labor. The soul is loosened from the body, and after the end of this life it is still suspended by the ambiguity of the future judgment. Thus there is no end, where an end is thought. Whence with vows and a pure conscience and a spirit of charity let us adhere to our God, and conciliate divine favor for ourselves: praying that we may be able to be absolved and divested of secular cares as if from unutilized and rustic masters, and go out from worldly service, called into the liberty of supernal knowledge which is true and the only liberty.

CHAPTER III.

That what he had said, that labor is to be changed for fruit, he confirms by the example of the Jews serving in Egypt, and by the testimony of the Gospel; from what place, and in what way the soul is to be delivered, he declares; and that Christ is the true Levite, that is, our deliverer. Finally, he proposes beautiful things concerning the utility which the familiarity of the just brings.

10. And that we may build up the precept of the law by an example, when the Egyptians were depressing the peoples of the Jews in various works, and in mud and stone, the children of Israel groaned, and provoked the mercy of the Lord upon themselves. And he said to Moses: *I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, how the Egyptians depress them into servitude, and I have been made mindful of my Testament.* *Go and say to the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will lead you out from the power of the Egyptians, and I will rescue you from their servitude, and I will deliver you with an exalted arm, and a great judgment, and I will take you to me into a people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God who will lead you out from the power of the Egyptians, and I will lead you into the land into which I stretched out my hand* (Exod. 6:5-8). Behold how the people of the Hebrews changed labor for fruit, so that he who was working in the mud, should work with the hope of an eternal kingdom. And therefore the Lord in the Gospel having pitied the empty labor of the gentile peoples, who were constructing bricks for a muddy superstition, and devoted to the pleasure of the body, could not build a solid wall of faith, as if having spoken to certain offspring of an ass, said: *Come to me, all you who labor, and I will refresh you.* *Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me that I am mild and humble in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls* (Matt. 11:28-29).

Qua vocatione plenius mihi videor verba legis et mysteria recognoscere: quia asinam aut commutandam ove docuit, aut redimendam pecunia; ut non solum asinae partum ove, hoc est, mundis immunda mutemus, sed etiam redimamus. Quod videtur exprimi, si prius sacrificio purificationis, et mysterio baptismatis delictorum nostrorum inquinamenta lavemus; crimina quoque nostra bonis operibus, fideique pretio, et miseratione redimamus.

11. Pretium nostrum sanguinis est Christi. Unde et apostolus Petrus ait: Non auro vel argento redempti estis, sed pretioso sanguine (I Pet. I, 18.) Et Paulus dicit: Pretio empti estis, nolite effici servi hominum (I Cor. VII, 23). Unde non otiose miramur in Evangelio quod super pullum asinae sederit Dominus Jesus (Marc. XI, 7); quia populus gentilis coepit esse Christi hostia, quia secundum legem habebatur immundus. Unde et de levitis scriptum est (Exod. XII, 13) quod sint redemptiones eorum; eo quod et sanctitate vitae suae et oratione peccata plebis lavarent. In quibus figura agni praecessitysteriis verum venturum levitem, qui proprii corporis passione toller peccatum mundi. Levites significatur susceptus pro me, vel ipse mihi levis; ipse enim perfectae virtutis habet impertiendae populo sanitatis indicium. Ipse ergo qui pro salute universorum expectatus advenit, pro me est utero editus virginali, pro me oblatus, pro me gustavit mortem, pro me resurrexit. In quo omnium hominum suscepta est redemptio, assumpta est resurrectio. Ipse est verus levites; ut nos levitas faceret adhaerere Deo, ipsi continuas preces fundere, de ipso salutem sperare, fugere terrena negotia, in Dei possessione numerari, sicut scriptum est: Domine, posside nos (Exod. XXXIV, 9.) Ea est enim sola possessio, quae nullis obnoxia tempestatibus perpetuae gratiae ferat fructus. Redemptor levites est, quia vir sapiens redemptio insipientis est. Qui tamquam medicus aegrum insipientis animum fovet, et quaedam aspergit solidiora menti prudentiae medicamina, imitatus illum medicum qui de coelo venit, ut demonstraret hominibus prudentiae vias, et sapientiae semitas parvulis revelaret. Videbat enim laborantes non posse sine remedio salvari, et ideo medicinam tribuebat aegris. Ideo omnibus opem sanitatis detulit; ut quicumque perierit, mortis suae causas sibi ascribat, qui curari noluit, cum remedium haberet, quo posset evadere: Christi autem manifesta in omnes praedicetur misericordia; eo quod ii qui pereunt, sua pereunt negligentia: qui autem salvantur, secundum Christi sententiam liberentur, qui omnes homines vult salvos fieri, et in agnitionem veritatis venire.

By which vocation I seem to me to recognize the words of the law and the mysteries more fully: because he taught that the ass was either to be changed for a sheep, or to be redeemed by money; so that we may not only change the offspring of the ass for a sheep, that is, unclean things for clean, but also redeem them. Which seems to be expressed, if first we wash the defilements of our sins by the sacrifice of purification and the mystery of baptism; and also redeem our crimes by good works, and the price of faith, and by commiseration.

11. Our price is the blood of Christ. Whence also the apostle Peter says: *You were not redeemed with gold or silver, but with precious blood* (1 Pet. 1:18). And Paul says: *You were bought with a price, do not become slaves of men* (1 Cor. 7:23). Whence not idly do we marvel in the Gospel that the Lord Jesus sat upon the foal of an ass (Mark 11:7); because the gentile people began to be Christ's victim, who according to the law was held unclean. Whence also concerning the Levites it is written (Exod. 12:13) that they are their redemptions; for the reason that by the sanctity of their life and by prayer they washed the sins of the people. In which mysteries the figure of the lamb preceded the true Levite to come, who by the passion of his own body should take away the sin of the world. Levite signifies *one taken up for me*, or *one light to me*; for he himself has the sign of perfect virtue of health to be imparted to the people. He therefore who for the salvation of all came as expected, was for me brought forth from the virginal womb, for me offered, for me tasted death, for me rose again. In whom the redemption of all men was taken up, the resurrection was assumed. He is the true Levite; that he might make us Levites to adhere to God, to pour out continuous prayers to him, to hope for salvation from him, to flee earthly businesses, to be numbered in the possession of God, as it is written: *Lord, possess us* (Exod. 34:9). For that is the only possession, which, subject to no tempests, should bring the fruits of perpetual grace. The Redeemer is a Levite, because a wise man is the redemption of an unwise one. Who like a physician cherishes the sick mind of the unwise, and sprinkles certain more solid medicines of prudence on the mind, having imitated that physician who came from heaven, so that he might demonstrate the ways of prudence to men, and reveal the paths of wisdom to little ones. For he saw that those laboring could not be saved without a remedy, and therefore he attributed medicine to the sick. Therefore he brought the help of health to all; so that whoever shall have perished, may ascribe the causes of his death to himself, who would not be cured when he had the remedy by which he could escape: but let the manifest mercy of Christ be preached unto all; for the reason that those who perish, perish by their own negligence: but those who are saved, are delivered according to the sentence of Christ, who wants all men to be saved, and to come into the knowledge of the truth.

Denique et Sodoma si habuisset quinquaginta justos, non esset eversa, et si decem habuisset, esset redempta; eo quod sermo remissionis peccatorum animam servitute exuat, et disciplinae plenitudo perfectae mentem non sinat edaci libidinum vapore consumi.

12. Plurimum tamen refert, et moralem aedificat affectum, si etiam numerum justorum simpliciter accipiamus prodesse populorum saluti. Comprimit et resecat invidiam, confundit improbitatem, virtutem incitat, auget gratiam. Nemo enim invidere debet alteri laudem quae sibi prosit: atque improbus quisque redemptorem suum dum suscipit, frequenter imitatur; certe veneratur, plerumque etiam diligit. Ipse etiam si aliis profuturum sciat, studiis augetur, eaque gratia connectit populos, accumulat charitatem civium, urbium gloriam. Quam beata civitas quae plurimos justos habet, quam celebrabilis ore omnium: quomodo benedicitur tota de parte, et beatus atque perpetuus ejus status aestimatur! Quam gaudeo cum aliquos mites ac sapientes diu vivere video, cum virgines castas, viduas graves aspicio longaevas, velut quamdam incanam Ecclesiae curiam quae praetendat ipso quodam vultu et specie gravitatis quod revereantur, quod imitentur, quo ad omnem morum gratiam colorentur! Non enim ipsis gaudeo, cum vivendo multa subeant taedia saeculi hujus, sed quia prosunt pluribus. Similiter dum aliquis hujusmodi decedit, quamvis longa senectute depositus, afficior; quia destituitur grex juvenum muro senili. Denique periturae urbis, aut malorum imminantium, vel futurae labis hoc primum indicium est, si decedant viri consultiores, vel etiam graviores feminae. Hinc primum ingruentium porta aperitur malorum. Sicut ergo urbs tota solidatur atque urgetur coetu sapientium, vel obitu labefactatur: ita sermo gravis, et quidem senilis plenus prudentiae stabilire uniuscujusque animam, et confirmare mentem solet. Jam si accedat multarum lectionum usus, plurimorum praeceptorum et consiliorum quidam senatus, velut perpetuum urbis ejus quae in singulorum est praecordiis, statum efficit.

CAPUT IV.

Quare Moyses levitas appellavit primogenitos et redemptores, eorumque urbes redemptrices designavit? Cur non sit absurdum piis cohabitare facinorosos? De duabus in Deo virtutibus, misericordia et justitia, atque earum ministris; deque eo quod malitiae egressus semper virtutis operetur ingressum, et contra; ut Evangelicis exemplis comprobatur.

Finally even Sodom, if it had had fifty just men, would not have been overturned, and if it had had ten, it would have been redeemed; for the reason that the word of remission of sins divests the soul of servitude, and the fullness of perfect discipline does not allow the mind to be consumed by the eating vapor of lusts.

12. Yet it matters very much, and builds up a moral affection, if we also simply accept that the number of the just profits the salvation of peoples. It compresses and cuts back envy, confounds wickedness, incites virtue, increases grace. For no one ought to envy another the praise which profits himself: and every wicked man, while he takes up his redeemer, frequently imitates him; certainly he venerates him, often even loves him. He himself also, if he knows he will profit others, is increased in studies, and by that grace connects peoples, accumulates the charity of citizens, and the glory of cities. How blessed the city that has very many just men, how celebrable in the mouth of all: how it is blessed in every part, and its state is estimated blessed and perpetual! How I rejoice when I see some mild and wise men live long, when I behold long-lived chaste virgins, grave widows, as if a certain gray-haired senate of the Church which should pretend by its very countenance and appearance of gravity that which they may revere, that which they may imitate, by which they may be colored unto every grace of manners! For I do not rejoice for them, since in living they undergo many wearinesses of this world, but because they profit many. Similarly when someone of this kind falls, although deposited by a long old age, I am affected; because the flock of youths is destitute of a senile wall. Finally, this is the first sign of a city about to perish, or of imminent evils, or of future ruin, if more consultative men, or even graver women, depart. From here the gate of rushing evils is first opened. Therefore as a whole city is solidified and urged by a gathering of wise men, or is weakened by their death: so a grave word, and indeed a senile one full of prudence, is accustomed to stabilize the soul of each one, and to confirm the mind. Now if the use of many readings should be added, a certain senate of very many precepts and counsels, it effects a perpetual state of that city which is in the hearts of each.

CHAPTER IV.

Why did Moses call the Levites first-born and redeemers, and designate their cities as redemptive? Why is it not absurd for the wicked to cohabit with the pious? Concerning two virtues in God, mercy and justice, and their ministers; and concerning that the departure of malice always works the entry of virtue, and vice-versa; as is proved by Gospel examples.

13. Ideo ergo primogenitos et redemptores caeterorum levitas Moyses appellavit (Num. III, 12); quod maturioris et utilis sententiae viri altero senectutem quamdam animae praeferant, altero redemptionem conferant. Unde et civitates levitarum in veteri Testamento redemptrices significavit Moyses (Num. XXXV, 6); quia is qui confugit ad eam animam, in qua habitat Dei Verbum, quae urbis modo munita atque vallata sit, perpetuam libertatem acquirit sibi. Sicut enim in civitatibus levitarum erat poenarum remissio; ut si quis ad eas confugeret, qui non voluntariam necem hominis admiserat, nulli eum occidere liceret intra urbes dumtaxat positum levitarum: ita quem peccati proprii poenitet, quod aut imprudenter aut invitus admisit, si levitarum adhaereat incolatui, et ab illis praeceptoribus qui Dei mandata dispensant, recedendum non putet, lex ipsa ab omni eum commissi flagitii poena supplicioque liberat.

14. Nec absurdum putes quod facinorosi cohabitant piis, ac maculosi sacratis. Opus enim habent purificari qui aliquo polluti sunt delictorum contagio. Et quodammodo diverso genere causa concurrit. Sicut enim levites mundanis voluptatibus abdicatus, exsul est culpa, ita sanguinis reus, fugitivus est patriae. Sed hoc interest, quod iste necessitate suos deserit propter metum legis: minister autem Dei humanarum consortiis renuntiat passionum, et quadam carnalis illecebrae se abdicat necessitudine propter studia virtutis. Etiam illud non abhorret a vero, quod et iste velut quasdam in se manus injicit; ut interficiat voluptates sui corporis, et quemdam suae carnis operetur interitum. Interfecit nempe Moyses Aegyptium, et fugax factus est de terra Aegypti, ut declinaret ejus terrae tyrannum. Sed non ante illum interfecisset Aegyptium hominem, nisi prius in se nequitiae spiritalis Aegyptium interemisset, et abdicasset se regalium luxu honorum, majus patrimonium aestimans thesauris Aegypti opprobrium Christi. Quod stultis quidem videtur opprobrium: nobis autem illud opprobrium Dominicae crucis virtus Dei est atque sapientia.

15. Accedit eo, quod duo quaedam in Deo principalia sunt genera virtutum, unum quo remittit, aliud quo vindicat. Remittuntur peccata per Dei verbum, cujus levites interpres et quidem exsecutor est: remittuntur etiam per officium sacerdotis, sacrumque ministerium: puniuntur quoque per homines, sicut per judices, qui potestate ad tempus utuntur, sicut Apostolus docet dicens: Vis autem non timere potestatem? Bonum fac, et habebis laudem ex illa; Dei enim minister est tibi in bonum. Si autem malum feceris, time.

13. Therefore Moses called the Levites first-born and redeemers of the others (Num. 3:12); because men of more mature and useful opinion prefer a certain old age of the soul on the one hand, and on the other hand confer redemption. Whence also Moses signified the cities of the Levites in the Old Testament as redemptive (Num. 35:6); because he who flees to that soul, in which the Word of God dwells, which may be fortified and walled in the manner of a city, acquires for himself perpetual liberty. For just as in the cities of the Levites there was remission of penalties; so that if anyone fled to them, who had not committed a voluntary death of a man, no one was allowed to kill him at least placed within the cities of the Levites: so he who repents of his own sin, which he committed either imprudently or unwillingly, if he adheres to the inhabitancy of the Levites, and does not think that he should recede from those teachers who dispense the mandates of God, the law itself delivers him from all penalty and punishment of the committed crime.

14. Nor should you think it absurd that the wicked cohabit with the pious, and the stained with the sacred. For those have need to be purified who are polluted by some contagion of sins. And in a certain way the cause concurs from a different kind. For just as a Levite, abdicated from worldly pleasures, is an exile of fault, so he who is guilty of blood, is a fugitive from his country. But this is the difference, that the latter deserts his own by necessity because of fear of the law: but the minister of God renounces the consortiums of human passions, and abdicates himself from a certain necessity of carnal allurements because of the studies of virtue. Even that does not abhor from the truth, that the latter also as it were casts certain hands upon himself; so that he may kill the pleasures of his body, and work a certain destruction of his flesh. Truly Moses killed the Egyptian, and was made a fugitive from the land of Egypt, so that he might decline the tyrant of that land. But he would not have killed that Egyptian man before, unless he had first killed the Egyptian of spiritual wickedness in himself, and had abdicated himself from the luxury of regal honors, estimating the reproach of Christ a greater patrimony than the treasures of Egypt. Which seems a reproach indeed to fools: but to us that reproach of the Lord's cross is the power of God and wisdom.

15. To this is added, that there are two certain principal kinds of virtues in God, one by which he remits, the other by which he vindicates. Sins are remitted through the Word of God, of which the Levite is interpreter and indeed executor: sins are also remitted through the office of the priest, and the sacred ministry: they are also punished through men, as through judges, who use power for a time, as the Apostle teaches saying: **Do you want not to fear power?** Do good, and you shall have praise from it; for he is a minister of God to you for good. But if you shall have done evil, fear.

Non enim sine causa gladium portat; enim minister est, vindex in iram ei qui malum agit. (Rom. XIII, 4). Puniuntur peccata etiam per populos, sicut legimus (Esai. XIII, 17); quia saepe ab alienigenis Dei jussu excitatis propter divinae majestatis offensam subjectus factus est populus Judaeorum. Nec is quidem qui invitus aliquod fecerit homicidium, extra ministerium est. Siquidem lex ait de eo: Quia Deus dedit eum in manus ejus (Exod. XXI, 13). Manus ergo ejus instrumenti modo divinae ultioni ministerium praeberunt. Levites igitur minister remissionis est: percussor autem qui tamen non ex dispositione, sed praeter voluntatem fecerit homicidium, divinae minister est ultionis.

16. Illud quoque spectat, quia cum interficitur impius, Christus infunditur. Et ubi abominatio aboletur, sanctificatio congregatur; quia Dominus dixit: In ea die qua interfeci omne primogenitum Aegypti, sanctificavi mihi omne primogenitum Israel (Num. III, 13). Quod non ad unum diem afflictionis Aegypti referes, sed ad omne tempus. Cum enim renuntiatur improbitati, statim adsciscitur virtus. Egressus enim malitiae virtutis operatur ingressum: eodemque studio quo crimen excluditur, innocentia copulatur. Habes hoc in Evangelio (Joan. XIII, 2); quia ubi Satanias immisit se in cor Judae, Christus recessit ab eo, momentoque eo quo illum recepit, hunc amisit. Denique sic scriptum est: Et post buccellam introivit in eum Satanias (Ibid., 27). Dixit ergo illi Jesus: Quod facis, fac celerius. Quid illud? Ut quia introierat in illum Satanias, ipse abiret a Christo. Ejicitur itaque et excluditur, eo quod jam cum Domino Jesu esse non possit; quia coeperat esse cum diabolo: nulla enim communicatio Christi cum Belial. Unde statim imperio expulsus abcessit, sicut legimus, dicente Evangelista: Qui cum accepisset buccellam, exivit continuo (Ibid., 30); erat enim nox. Nec mirum si noctis tenebras habebat, qui Christum deserebat. Verum sicut ipse receptus a diabolo, exclusus a Christo est: ita Zachaeus renuntians avaritiae, Christum recepit. Meritoque videns studium ejus, quod in arborem ascendisset, ut transeuntem Jesum videret, dicit Dominus: Zachaeus, festinans descende, quia hodie in domo tua manere me oportet. Et descendit festinans, et excepit illum gaudens (Luc. XIX, 5 et 6). Sed excipiendo Christum, exclusit avaritiam, relegavit perfidiam, renuntiavit fraudibus. Aliter enim non ingreditur Christus, nisi ut vitia excludat; quia non cohabitat erroribus. Denique de templo ejiciebat nummularios, quia ipse volebat habitare. Unde Zachaeus hoc intelligens, quia Christum vetere suo suscipere affectu non poterat, superiora vitia exire suo jussit hospitio, ut Christus intraret.

For not without cause does he carry a sword; for he is a minister, a vindicator into wrath to him who does evil* (Rom. 13:4). Sins are also punished through peoples, as we read (Is. 13:17); because often because of the offense of divine majesty the people of the Jews was made subject by foreigners excited by God's command. Nor indeed is he who shall have committed some homicide unwillingly, outside the ministry. Inasmuch as the law says concerning him: *Because God gave him into his hands* (Exod. 21:13). His hands therefore in the manner of an instrument provided ministry to divine vengeance. The Levite therefore is a minister of remission: but the striker who nevertheless committed homicide not from disposition, but against his will, is a minister of divine vengeance.

16. Behold also this, because when the impious is killed, Christ is infused. And where the abomination is abolished, sanctification is gathered; because the Lord said: *In that day in which I killed every first-born of Egypt, I sanctified to me every first-born of Israel* (Num. 3:13). Which you shall not refer to one day of the affliction of Egypt, but to all time. For when wickedness is renounced, immediately virtue is associated. For the departure of malice works the entry of virtue: and by the same study by which crime is excluded, innocence is coupled. You have this in the Gospel (John 13:2); because where Satan sent himself into the heart of Judas, Christ receded from him, and in that moment in which he received the former, he lost the latter. Finally it is thus written: *And after the morsel Satan entered into him* (ibid., 27). Jesus therefore said to him: *What you do, do quickly.* What is that? That because Satan had entered into him, he himself should go away from Christ. He is therefore ejected and excluded, for the reason that he can no longer be with the Lord Jesus; because he had begun to be with the devil: for there is no communication of Christ with Belial. Whence immediately expelled by command he departed, as we read, the Evangelist saying: *Who when he had received the morsel, went out immediately* (ibid., 30); for it was night. Nor is it a wonder if he had the darkness of night, who was deserting Christ. But just as he himself received by the devil, was excluded from Christ: so Zacchaeus renouncing avarice, received Christ. And deservedly seeing his study, that he had ascended into a tree, so that he might see Jesus passing by, the Lord says: *Zacchaeus, making haste come down, because today I must remain in your house.* *And he came down making haste, and received him rejoicing* (Luke 19:5-6). But by receiving Christ, he excluded avarice, relegated perfidy, renounced frauds. For otherwise Christ does not enter, except so as to exclude vices; because he does not cohabit with errors. Finally he was ejecting the money-changers from the temple, because he himself wanted to dwell there. Whence Zacchaeus understanding this, because he could not receive Christ in his old affection, commanded the superior vices to go out from his hospitality, so that Christ might enter.

Merito igitur Phariseis obmurmurantibus quod Dominus Jesus ad hominem peccatorem divertisset manere, dixit ad Dominum: Ecce dimidium bonorum meorum, Domine, do pauperibus; et si cui aliquid fraude abstuli, reddo quadruplum (Ibid., 8). In quo illis respondit qui dicebant peccatorem Christo hospitium non debuisse praebere: Hoc est, jam non sum publicanus, non sum ille Zachaeus, non praedo, non fraudator. Reddo quae sustuli, reddo qui auferre consueveram. Jam dono pauperibus, quos ante nudabam: jam mea confero, qui aliena rapiebam. Fugerunt crimina postquam Christus intravit. Discussa est omnis carnalium caecitas passionum, ubi aeternae vitae lumen infusum est.

CAPUT V.

Adipes ac pinguedo sacrificiorum et hostiarum quid significant.

17. Diximus de primogenitis, dicamus etiam de adipibus, de quibus satis docet David dicens: Sicut adipe et pinguedine repleatur anima mea (Ps. LXII, 6). Et supra ait: Et holocaustum tuum pingue fiat (Ps. XIX, 4). Hoc docens acceptabile esse sacrificium, quod pingue, quod nitidum, et quodam pabulo fidei ac devotionis, verbique coelestis uberiore alimonia saginatum est. Frequenter pingue opus dicimus quod spissum et operosum intelligi velimus: et opima hostia praedicatur, quae non sit tenuis, non sit exilis. Unde et sacrificium pingue recte nuncupamus, quod opimum cupimus declarare. Sed etiam illud documento, est quod pingues vaccae prophetica interpretatione annis fertilibus comparatae sunt (Gen. XLI, 26).

CAPUT VI.

Quid sibi velit quod Dominus ait: Si recte offeras, non recte autem divides, peccasti, quiesce; et de quatuor generibus quibus sacrificia commendabantur, quorum si quid desit, sacrificium non probatur, cum pulcherrima istorum morali interpretatione.

18. Nunc consideremus quid sit quod ait Dominus: Si recte offeras, non autem recte divides, peccasti, quiesce. Quod indicium est Deum non muneribus oblatis placari, sed offerentis affectu. Denique condemnati oblato muneris Cain, quia pro conscientia insincerae oblationis intellexit Deo sacrificium suum non probatum, et tristis est factus. Quando enim mens sibi recti est conscia, gratulatur, et infusione quadam spiritali repletur animus gaudio, cum alicujus vel studia, vel opera a Deo probantur. Tristitia igitur Cain conscientiae testimonium, repulsae indicium est.

Deservedly therefore to the Pharisees murmuring that the Lord Jesus had turned aside to remain with a sinful man, he said to the Lord: *Behold half of my goods, Lord, I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by fraud, I restore fourfold* (ibid., 8). In which he answered those who were saying that Christ ought not to have provided hospitality to a sinner: That is, I am no longer a publican, I am not that Zacchaeus, not a robber, not a defrauder. I restore what I took away, I restore who was accustomed to take away. Now I give to the poor, whom before I was stripping; now I confer my own, who was snatching others'. Crimes fled after Christ entered. All blindness of carnal passions was discussed, where the light of eternal life was infused.

CHAPTER V.

What the fat and fatness of sacrifices and victims signify.

17. We have spoken of the first-born; let us speak also of the fat (*adipes*), concerning which David sufficiently teaches, saying: *As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled* (Ps. 62:6). And above he says: *And may your burnt offering be made fat* (Ps. 19:4). This teaches that the sacrifice is acceptable which is fat, which is shining, and is fattened with a certain fodder of faith and devotion, and with the richer nourishment of the heavenly word. Frequently we call a "fat work" that which we wish to be understood as thick and laborious; and a "rich victim" is proclaimed, which is not thin, not meager. Whence also we rightly call a sacrifice fat, which we desire to declare as rich. But also that is for a proof, that the fat cows in prophetic interpretation were compared to fertile years (Gen. 41:26).

CHAPTER VI.

What the Lord means by saying: *If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, you have sinned, be still;* and concerning the four kinds by which sacrifices were commended, of which if anything is lacking, the sacrifice is not approved, with a most beautiful moral interpretation of these.

18. Now let us consider what it is that the Lord says: *If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, you have sinned, be still.* Which is an indication that God is not placated by the gifts offered, but by the affection of the one offering. Finally Cain, the offerer of the gift, was condemned, because on account of the conscience of an insincere offering he understood that his sacrifice was not approved by God, and he became sad. For when the mind is conscious of right to itself, it congratulates itself, and the soul is filled with joy by a certain spiritual infusion, when either the studies or the works of someone are approved by God. Sadness therefore in Cain is the testimony of conscience, the indication of rejection.

Et quamvis obtulit munus; tamen quia non recte et jure divisit, culpam incidit.

19. Quatuor enim genera sunt quibus sacrificia commendabantur. Si aut nova novorum essent, aut frixa, aut divisa, aut continua. Nova novorum primo tempore anni, quae specie in primogenitis fructibus aestimabantur: nunc autem revelatum est eos significari, qui per baptismatis sacramenta renovantur. Hoc est enim vere sacrificium primitivum, quando unusquisque se offert hostiam, et a se incipit, ut postea munus suum possit offerre (Rom. XII, 1). Nova igitur fides renovatorum, valida, pubescens, incrementum virtutis acquirens, non remissa, non fessa, non senio quodam marcida, et vigore ignava, apta sacrificio est, quae pullulet quodam virenti germine sapientiae, et juveniti divinae cognitionis fervore pubescat; habeat tamen succum doctrinae veteris. Sicut enim novi, ita et veteris Testamenti debet doctrina concurrere, quia scriptum est: Manducate vetera veterum, et vetera a facie novorum auferte (Levit. XXVI, 10). Cibus nobis sit cognitio patriarcharum, epuletur animus in prophetarum oraculis: tali sagina mens pascatur interior. Sed jam non species agni sit, at veritas corporis Christi. Non umbra legis perstringat oculos: sed aperte Dominicae gratia passionis, et splendor resurrectionis aciem mentis illuminet.

20. Si autem offeres sacrificium de primitivis ovibus, frixum in igne, frixum pingue, offeres sacrificium primitivorum, sicut scriptum est (Levit. VII, 2): quod significat fidem tuam velut igni probatam esse debere, et sancto fervere spiritu. Denique coxit lentem Jacob, et fratri primatus benedictionis eripuit, quos utique solida consequeretur fides. Hic ergo robustus et vividus augebatur: ille autem qui cibum suum coquere nesciebat, fatigatus atque deficiens defluebat. Uratur igitur verbo Domini sicut igne virtus animae tuae. Vide ustum Joseph, sicut scriptum est: Eloquium Domini ussit eum (Ps. CIV, 19). Torreatur fides tua sicut spicae messium. Tunc enim maturitatem fructuum praeferunt, cum eas primo solis processu tempora aestiva torruerint. Sermo igitur plurimus Scripturarum animam confirmat, et quodam spiritualis gratiae colorat vapore; rationabilia quoque inventa corroborat, dissolvitque omnem vim irrationabilium passionum. Ideoque Esau laxatis virtutis suae nexibus dissolutus est.

And although he offered a gift; yet because he did not divide rightly and justly, he fell into fault.

19. For there are four kinds by which sacrifices were commended. If they were either new things of the new, or fried, or divided, or continuous. New things of the new in the first time of the year, which in appearance were estimated in the first-born fruits: but now it has been revealed that those are signified who are renewed through the sacraments (*sacramenta*) of baptism. For this is truly the primitive sacrifice, when each one offers himself as a victim, and begins from himself, so that afterwards he may be able to offer his gift (Rom. 12:1). The new faith therefore of the renewed, valid, becoming pubescent, acquiring the increase of virtue, not remiss, not weary, not withered by a certain old age, and sluggish in vigor, is fit for sacrifice, which sprouts with a certain green germ of wisdom, and becomes pubescent with the youthful fervor of divine cognition; yet it should have the juice of the old doctrine. For as of the New, so also the doctrine of the Old Testament ought to concur, because it is written: *Eat the old of the old, and take away the old from the face of the new* (Lev. 26:10). Let the cognition of the patriarchs be food for us, let the soul feast on the oracles of the prophets: with such fattening let the interior mind be fed. But now let it not be the appearance of the lamb, but the truth of the body of Christ. Let not the shadow of the law brush the eyes: but let the grace of the Lord's passion and the splendor of the resurrection openly illuminate the edge of the mind.

20. But if you shall offer a sacrifice of primitive sheep, fried in fire, fried fat, you shall offer a sacrifice of primitives, as it is written (Lev. 7:2): which signifies that your faith ought to be proved as if by fire, and to be fervent with the holy spirit. Finally Jacob cooked lentils, and snatched the primacies of blessing from his brother, which surely a solid faith would follow. Here therefore the robust and vivid one was increased: but he who did not know how to cook his food, being weary and failing, was flowing away. Let therefore the virtue of your soul be burned by the word of the Lord as by fire. See the burned Joseph, as it is written: *The word of the Lord burned him* (Ps. 104:19). Let your faith be parched like the ears of the harvests. For then they prefer the maturity of the fruits, when the summer times have parched them at the first proceeding of the sun. The most abundant word therefore of the Scriptures confirms the soul, and colors it with a certain vapor of spiritual grace; it also corroborates rational discoveries, and dissolves every force of irrational passions. And therefore Esau, the bonds of his virtue being loosened, was dissolved.

Illi autem qui succincti lumbos non crudum, neque coctum in aqua, sed assatum in igni caput agni edere jubebantur, sicut habes in Exodo, forti ac fideli animo, pedestri itinere maria transfretarunt (Exod. XII, 9). In Evangelio quoque assos pisces Dominus Jesus manducabat, sicut scriptum est (Luc. XXIV, 43), in quo plenitudo sancti Spiritus redundabat. Et fortasse ideo deficiebat Esau, quia coctum in aqua desiderabat cibum, quem Jacob quasi inhabilem sibi donavit infirmo.

21. Oblationem autem atque orationem oportet non confusam esse, sed competentī divisione distinctam. In omni enim re confusione melior est distinctio; multo magis in oratione atque oblatione, quae nisi certas divisiones habeat, fit obscurior. Ideoque hostiae plerumque membra lex dividi jubet, et holocausta offerri (Levit. I, 6); ut sine admixtione et operimento aliquo nudum sacrificium sit; eo quod nuda atque omnibus exuta involucris debeat fides nostra fervere; ne vagis et fallacibus opinionibus induatur, sed pura atque sincera simplicitas mentis appareat. Deinde in partes dividatur congruas. Virtus enim genus est, quae dividitur in plurimas species: sed principales quatuor sunt, prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo, justitia. Redoleat igitur oratio tua prudentiam erga cognitionem Dei, et veritatem fidei: redoleat temperantiam quam etiam a conjugibus exigendam putavit Apostolus dicens: Nolite fraudare invicem, nisi forte ex consensu ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi (I Cor. VII, 5). Et lex castificatos ante hesternum et nudiustertianum diem ad sacrificium accedere jubet (Exod., XIX, 10). Fortitudinem teneat oratio, ut nullo interpoletur metu, nulla lassitudine deficiat. Tunc enim debet esse intentio ad precandum robustior, cum urgemur adversis. Justitiam custodiat precatio, quam si tenuisset Judas, non in peccatum facta esset ejus oratio. Quando enim magis ab injustis operatis ac pravis studiis abstinere debemus, quam tunc quando Dei justitiam deprecamur? Et ideo Dominus, ut cordi nobis esset justitia: Beati, inquit, qui persecutionem patiuntur propter justitiam: quoniam ipsorum est regnum coelorum (Matth. V, 10). Haec enim defuit Judae; nam si adfuisset, non tradidisset Dominum, non prodidisset magistrum. Defuit sacrificio etiam Cain istius, qui si tenuisset justitiam, Domino debuit primitiva munera, non posteriora deferre. Defuit itaque ei divisio, ideoque responsum ait: Si recte offeras, non autem recte divides, peccasti, quiesce. Vides quantum sit vitii. Ubi deest divisio, ibi totum sacrificium refutatur.

But those who, girt in their loins, were commanded to eat the head of the lamb not raw, nor cooked in water, but roasted in fire, as you have in Exodus, with a strong and faithful soul, crossed the seas on a foot journey (Exod. 12:9). In the Gospel also the Lord Jesus was eating roasted fish, as it is written (Luke 24:43), in whom the fullness of the Holy Spirit was abounding. And perhaps for this reason Esau was failing, because he was desiring food cooked in water, which Jacob gave to him as to one infirm and unsuited for himself.

21. But it is necessary that an offering and prayer (*oratio*) be not confused, but distinct by a competent division. For in every matter distinction is better than confusion; much more in prayer and offering, which unless it has certain divisions, becomes more obscure. And therefore the law commands the members of the victim for the most part to be divided, and burnt offerings (*holocausta*) to be offered (Lev. 1:6); so that without admixture and any covering it may be a naked sacrifice; for the reason that our faith ought to be fervent, naked and stripped of all wrappings; lest it be clothed with wandering and fallacious opinions, but the pure and sincere simplicity of the mind may appear. Then let it be divided into congruous parts. For virtue is a kind (*genus*), which is divided into very many species (*species*); but the principal ones are four: prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice. Let your prayer therefore redolent of prudence towards the cognition of God and the truth of faith: let it redolent of temperance which the Apostle thought was to be required even from spouses, saying: *Do not defraud one another, except perhaps by consent for a time, so that you may be vacant for prayer* (1 Cor. 7:5). And the law commands those made chaste before yesterday and the day before yesterday to approach the sacrifice (Exod. 19:10). Let prayer hold fortitude, so that it be interpolated by no fear, and fail by no weariness. For then the intention for praying ought to be more robust, when we are urged by adversities. Let prayer keep justice, which if Judas had held, his prayer would not have been made into sin. For when ought we more to abstain from unjust works and depraved studies, than then when we deprecate the justice of God? And therefore the Lord, so that justice might be at our heart: *Blessed,* he says, *are they who suffer persecution for justice: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. 5:10). For this was lacking to Judas; for if it had been present, he would not have delivered the Lord, he would not have betrayed the master. It was lacking also to the sacrifice of that Cain, who if he had held justice, ought to have deferred the primitive gifts to the Lord, not the later ones. Division therefore was lacking to him, and for that reason the answer says: *If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, you have sinned, be still.* You see how much of a vice it is. Where division is lacking, there the whole sacrifice is refuted.

22. Superest ut de continua et jugi oratione dicamus, quod immorari nos et vacare orationi oportet. Pernoctabat Dominus in oratione, non ut sibimet prodesset, sed ut nos doceret. Frequentis enim oratio quamdam operatur disciplinam orandi; quia ipse usus docibiles Dei facit, indocibiles negligentia. Bona igitur exercitatio. Denique corporis virtus exercitatione augetur frequenti: at inexercitata minuitur et labitur. Plurimi enim exercitii dissuetudine etiam naturalem dissolvere virtutem. Similiter animae fortitudo exercitationis assiduitate solidatur; ut labor ipse disciplinae sit non oneri futurus, sed usui. Hunc cibum menti nostrae deferamus, qui multa attritus meditatione ac politus, cor hominis sicut illud coeleste manna confirmet. Quod non otiose tritum ac politum accipimus; eo quod coelestium scripturarum alloquia diu terere ac polire debemus, toto animo et corde versantes; ut succus ille spiritalis cibi in omnes se venas animae diffundat. Ergo si tamquam pubescens adolescat fides, quae defectum senescentis devotionis ableget, et spiritu ferveat, et congrua distinctione teneatur mensura legitimae divisionis, et assiduitas commendet gratiam; tunc fit illud pingue, et tamquam adipale precatationis genus, de quo dicit Propheta: Impinguasti in oleo caput meum (Ps. XXII, 5). Sicut enim agni multo lacte pinguescunt, et sicut oves bene pastae adipe nitent: ita apostolico succo pasta fidelium pinguescit oratio.

23. Horum si desit aliquid quae superius diximus, sacrificium non probatur. Ideoque dictum est ad Cain: Si recte offeras, non autem recte divides, peccasti. Namque mundus ipse distincte legitur factus, cum esset ante incomposita pars ejus; quia Terra erat invisibilis, et incomposita (Gen. I, 2). Nempe lux primum facta est, et vocavit Deus lucem, et separavit Deus inter lucem et tenebras, et vocatae sunt tenebrae nox. Et per ordinem singula quod facta sint legimus, coelum, terra, ligna fructifera, animalia diversa. Distributa autem sunt leviora superioribus, ut aer et ignis: graviora inferioribus, hoc est, terra et aqua. Utique simul omnia fieri jubere potuit Deus: sed distinctionem servare maluit, quam nos in omnibus imitemur negotiis, et maxime in vicissitudinibus gratiarum, in quibus non satis est reddere quod acceperis, sed commendare quod reddas. Nam si quis debitum solvat, et in referendo injuriam faciat creditori, intolerabilius est utique, quam non reddidisse quod debebat. Non ergo quantitas solutionis, sed animus reddentis, et qualitas consideratur, et affectus.

22. It remains that we speak concerning continuous and perpetual prayer (*oratio*), that it is necessary for us to dwell and be vacant for prayer. The Lord was passing the night in prayer, not so that he might profit himself, but so that he might teach us. For frequent prayer works a certain discipline (*disciplina*) of praying; because usage itself makes those teachable of God, whom negligence makes unteachable. Good therefore is the exercise. Finally the virtue of the body is increased by frequent exercise: but the unexercised is diminished and slips. For very many by the disuse of exercise dissolve even natural virtue. Similarly the fortitude of the soul is solidified by the assiduity of exercise; so that the labor itself may be of discipline, not about to be a burden, but for use. Let us defer this food to our mind, which, ground by much meditation and polished, may confirm the heart of man like that heavenly manna. Which we do not receive as ground and polished in vain; for the reason that we ought for a long time to grind and polish the addresses of the heavenly scriptures, turning them over with the whole soul and heart; so that that juice of spiritual food may diffuse itself into all the veins of the soul. Therefore if faith should grow as if becoming pubescent, which may banish the defect of senescent devotion, and be fervent in spirit, and if the measure of legitimate division be held with congruous distinction, and assiduitas should commend grace; then that fat and as if fatty kind of prayer comes to be, concerning which the Prophet says: *You have anointed my head with oil* (Ps. 22:5). For as lambs fatten with much milk, and as sheep well-fed shine with fat (*adipe*): so the prayer of the faithful, fed with apostolic juice, grows fat.

23. If anything should be lacking of these things which we said above, the sacrifice is not approved. And therefore it was said to Cain: *If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, you have sinned.* For the world itself is read to have been made distinctly, whereas before its part was unformed; because *the earth was invisible and unformed* (Gen. 1:2). Truly light was made first, and God called the light, and God separated between the light and the darkness, and the darkness was called night. And we read that each thing was made in order: heaven, earth, fruitful trees, diverse animals. But the lighter things were distributed to the superior parts, as air and fire: the heavier to the inferior, that is, earth and water. Surely God could have commanded all things to be made at once: but he preferred to preserve distinction, which we should imitate in all businesses, and especially in the vicissitudes of graces, in which it is not enough to return what you have received, but to commend what you return. For if someone should pay a debt, and in returning it should do an injury to the creditor, it is surely more intolerable than not to have returned what he owed. Therefore not the quantity of the payment, but the mind of the one returning, and the quality and affection is considered.

Recte igitur Cain obtulit; quia oblatio insigne devotionis, et indicium gratiarum est: sed non recte divisit; quia ante omnia Deo debuit deferre primitias, ut a gratia inchoaret auctoris. Etenim divisionis hic ordo est, ut prima secundis, non primis secunda praecurrant; et coelestia terrenis, non terrena coelestibus praeferantur.

CAPUT VII.

Deum qui in Adamo docuit non peccandum, in Caino docuisse non defendendum peccatum. Et ibi quam proclive sit ab impietate in alia scelera praecipitari.

24. Sed quia Cain confudit hunc ordinem, dicitur ei: Peccasti, quiesce (Gen. IV, 7). Omnia docet Deus. Primum ne pecces, ut in Adam monuit: secundo, si peccaveris, quiescas, ut in Cain doceris. Erubescere enim debemus, et condemnare peccatum, non defendere; quoniam pudore culpa minuitur, defensione cumulatur. Et silendo corrigimur, contentione prolabimur. Sit saltem verecundia, ubi non est absolutio. Inde illud: Justus in exordio sermonis accusator est sui (Prov. XVIII, 17). Et iterum ab ipso Domino alibi dictum legimus: Dic iniquitates tuas, ut justificeris (Esai. XLIII, 26). Quanta pudoris gratia, ut justitiam teneat verecundia, quam culpae reatus abstulerit! Ideo autem ait: Quiesce, quoniam non habes quod excuses. Culpae ipsius ad te conversio est. Non enim frater ei addicitur, sed error ascribitur, cujus ipse sibi auctor est. In te, inquit (Gen. IV, 7), revertitur crimen, quod a te coepit. Non habes in quo necessitatem magis, quam mentem tuam arguas. In te retorquetur improbitas tua, tu princeps es illius (Ibid.).

25. Bene ait: Tu princeps es illius. Etenim impietas mater quaedam est delictorum; et qui graviora peccaverit, in caetera facile prolabitur. Quomodo enim potest ab humanis temperare qui divina violavit, et hominibus bonus esse qui Deum laesit? Atrociorum igitur scelerum reatum vitia reliqua sequuntur; quoniam quo flagitiosa propenderint, eo inclinant caetera. Tu ergo princeps operis tui, tu dux criminis. Non te invitum, non imprudentem error attraxit: sed voluntarius reus iudicio, non lapsu fecisti dolum, quo divinae injuriae reum ipse convincis.

CAPUT VIII.

Rightly therefore Cain offered; because the offering is a mark of devotion and an indication of thanks: but he did not divide rightly; because before all things he ought to have deferred the first fruits (**primitiae**) to God, so that he might begin from the grace of the author. For this is the order of division, that the first things precede the second, not the second the first; and heavenly things be preferred to earthly, not earthly to heavenly.

CHAPTER VII.

That God, who in Adam taught that one should not sin, in Cain taught that sin should not be defended. And there, how prone one is to be precipitated from impiety into other crimes.

24. But because Cain confounded this order, it is said to him: *You have sinned, be still* (Gen. 4:7). God teaches all things. First, that you should not sin, as he warned in Adam: second, if you have sinned, that you should be still, as you are taught in Cain. For we ought to blush, and to condemn sin, not to defend it; since by shame fault is diminished, by defense it is accumulated. And by being silent we are corrected, by contention we slip. Let there be at least shame, where there is no absolution. Whence that: *The just is the accuser of himself at the beginning of his speech* (Prov. 18:17). And again we read it said elsewhere by the Lord himself: *Tell your iniquities, that you may be justified* (Isa. 43:26). How great is the grace of shame, that modesty should hold justice, which the guilt of fault has taken away! But for this reason he says: *Be still,* because you have nothing that you may excuse. The conversion of the fault itself is to you. For a brother is not awarded to him, but an error is ascribed, of which he himself is the author. In you, he says (Gen. 4:7), the crime returns, which began from you. You have nothing in which you may argue necessity more than your own mind. In you your wickedness is twisted back, *you are the prince of it* (ibid.).

25. He says well: *You are the prince of it.* For impiety is a certain mother of delights; and he who has sinned more gravely, easily slips into the rest. For how can he temper himself from human things who has violated divine things, and be good to men who has harmed God? The remaining vices therefore follow a more atrocious guilt of crimes; since whither shameful things have inclined, thither the rest incline. You therefore are the prince of your work, you the leader of the crime. Not unwilling, not imprudent did error attract you: but a voluntary guilty one by judgment, not by a slip, you committed deceit, by which you yourself convict yourself as guilty of divine injury.

CHAPTER VIII.

Cain admonitione sprete insolentiam et crimen auget. Ejusdem verbis: Eamus in campum, significari ostenditur pravis actionibus deserta loca et sterilia convenire.

26. Admonitus igitur ut quiesceret, auget insolentiam, acerbatur flagitium. Quid igitur sibi vult quod ait: Eamus in campum (Ibid., 8); nisi quia locus nudus gignentium eligitur parricidio? Ubi enim frater habebat occidi, nisi ubi fructus deesset? Tamquam praesagens natura tanti sceleris loco germina denegaverat; quia non conveniebat, ut idem solum et contagia parricidalis sanguinis reciperet praeter naturam, et fructus secundum naturam germinaret. Merito ipse dicit: Eamus in campum. Non dicit: Eamus in paradisum, ubi poma florent, non in aliquem cultum et fructiferum locum. Ipsi parricidae indicant fructum se sceleris habere non posse, nec penes eos fructum manere, qui tantae impietati praeberint officium. Nam ipsam refugiant elementorum benignitatem, ut iste Cain qui videtur veritus, ne largior boni terra proventus triste facinus impediret, et liberalitatis assuetudine genitalis, quae facit sibi fetus et fructus varios germinascere, in hoc quoque criminis apparatu vel muta specie sui fratrum revocaret affectum. Latro diem refugit quasi criminis testem, lucem adulter erubescit quasi adulterii consciam, parricida terrarum fecunditatem fugit. Quomodo enim poterat communis partus videre consortia, qui consortem sui sanguinis trucidabat? Joseph in lacum mittitur siccum, Ammon intra domum occiditur. Justum igitur natura est impertita iudicium, ea loca in quibus erat futurum parricidium, muneris sui dote privando: ut ex innocentis soli quadam damnatione ostenderet quanta essent futura supplicia noxiorum. Propter scelus igitur hominum et ipsa elementa damnantur. Denique David montibus, in quibus Jonathas cum patre interemptus est, perpetuae poenam sterilitatis optavit dicens: Montes qui estis in Gelboe, neque ros, neque pluvia cadat super vos, montes mortis (II Reg. I, 21).

CAPUT IX.

Deum interrogasse Cainum, non ut disceret, sed ut eum ad confitendum induceret. Hujus responsio in Deum ac naturam impia; eique opposita Dei responsio germanitatis pietatem egregie docere ostenditur. A Deo justos audiri etiam mortuos, quod nimirum ei vivant, et peccatores mortui sint. Hos malis praesentibus ac futuris cruciari, magis tamen sollicitari praesentibus.

Cain, having spurned the admonition, increases his insolence and crime. By his very words: **Let us go into the field,** it is shown to be signified that deserted and sterile places are suitable for depraved actions.

26. Admonished therefore to be still, he increases his insolence, and embitters his disgrace. What therefore does it mean that he says: **Let us go into the field** (ibid., 8); unless that a place naked of things produced is chosen for parricide? For where was a brother to be killed, except where fruit was lacking? As if presaging, nature had denied germs to the place of so great a crime; because it was not suitable that the same soil should both receive the contagions of parricidal blood contrary to nature, and germinate fruits according to nature. Deservedly he himself says: **Let us go into the field.** He does not say: Let us go into paradise, where apples flourish, not into some cultivated and fruitful place. The parricides themselves indicate that they cannot have the fruit of crime, nor can fruit remain with those who have provided service to so great an impiety. For they flee the very benignity of the elements, as this Cain who seems to have feared lest a more abundant produce of the good earth might hinder the sad deed, and by the custom of genital liberality, which makes various offspring and fruits to germinate for itself, even in this apparatus of crime by its silent appearance might recall fraternal affection. The robber flees the day as a witness of crime, the adulterer blushes at the light as conscious of adultery, the parricide flees the fecundity of the lands. For how could he see the fellowships of a common birth, who was slaughtering the fellow of his own blood? Joseph is sent into a dry pit, Ammon is killed within the house. Nature therefore has imparted a just judgment, by depriving those places in which there was to be parricide of the endowment of its gift: so that from a certain condemnation of the innocent soil it might show how great would be the future punishments of the guilty. On account of the crime of men therefore even the elements themselves are condemned. Finally David for the mountains in which Jonathan was slain with his father, opted for the penalty of perpetual sterility, saying: **Mountains which are in Gilboa, let neither dew nor rain fall upon you, mountains of death** (2 Sam. 1:21).

CHAPTER IX.

That God questioned Cain, not that he might learn, but that he might induce him to confess. His response impious towards God and nature; and the opposite response of God is shown to teach excellently the piety of brotherhood. That the just are heard by God even when dead, because forsooth they live for him, and sinners are dead. That these are tortured by present and future evils, yet are more solicited by the present.

27. Nunc consideremus qua ratione interrogavit Deus Cain ubi esset frater suus, quasi nesciret occisum. Sed quod ad scientiam Dei spectat, negantem arguit, et inficianti quasi sciens respondit: Vox sanguinis fratris tui ad me clamat (Gen. IV, 10): quod autem ad rationem profundam attinet, peccantes admonet ad poenitentiam. Confessio enim poenarum compendium est. Inde in judiciis saecularibus impositi equuleo torquentur negantes, et quaedam tangit iudicem miseratio confitentis. Est quaedam in peccatis verecundia, et poenitentiae portio crimen fateri, nec derivare culpam, sed recognoscere. Mitigat iudicem pudor reorum, excitat autem pertinacia denegantium. Vult te provocare ad poenitentiam Deus, vult de se sperari indulgentiam, vult demonstrare tua confessione quod non sit auctor malitiae. Nam qui peccatum suum ad quamdam referunt, ut gentiles asserunt, decreti aut operis sui necessitatem, divina arguere videntur, quasi ipsorum vis causa peccati sit. Qui enim necessitate aliqua coactus occiderit, quasi invitus occidit. Ea vero quae a nobis sunt, excusationem non habent: quae autem praeter nos sunt, excusabilia sunt. Sed quanto gravius peccato ipso ad Deum referre quod feceris, et reatus tui invidiam transfundere in auctorem non criminis, sed innocentiae.

28. Perpende autem parricidae responsionem: Nescio, inquit, numquid custos fratris mei ego sum (Gen. IV, 9)? Etsi contumaciam prodat hic sermo, sonat tamen quia si bonum fratrem considerasset, custos debuit esse pietatis. Quem enim magis, quam fratrem servare debuerat? Sed quomodo germanitatis servaret officium, qui necessitudinis non agnovisset affectum? Aut quomodo fieri posset, ut naturae obedientiam deferret, qui Deo reverentiam non exhiberet? Negat primum quasi apud ignorantem: recusat fraternae munus custodiae, quasi exsors naturae: declinat iudicem, quasi liber arbitrii. Quid miraris si pietatem non agnovit, qui non agnovit auctorem? Et ideo doceris hac serie Scripturarum fidem esse radicem virtutum omnium. Unde et Apostolus ait: Quia fundamentum nostrum Christus est (I Cor. III, 11); et quidquid supra hoc fundamentum aedificaveris, hoc solum ad operis tui fructum, et ad virtutis proficere mercedem.

27. Now let us consider by what reason God questioned Cain where his brother was, as if he did not know he was killed. But as far as it regards the knowledge of God, he convicts the one denying, and to the one denying he answered as if knowing: **The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me** (Gen. 4:10). But as it pertains to profound reason, he admonishes those sinning to penitence. For confession is a compendium of punishments. Whence in secular judgments those placed on the rack are tortured when denying, and a certain commiseration for the one confessing touches the judge. There is a certain shame in sins, and a portion of penitence is to confess the crime, not to derive the fault elsewhere, but to recognize it. The shame of the guilty mitigates the judge, but the pertinacity of those denying excites him. God wants to provoke you to penitence, he wants indulgence to be hoped from him, he wants to demonstrate by your confession that he is not the author of malice. For those who refer their sin to a certain necessity of decree or of their own work, as the Gentiles assert, seem to argue divine things, as if their own force were the cause of sin. For he who has killed coerced by some necessity, killed as if unwillingly. But those things which are from us have no excuse; whereas those which are beyond us are excusable. But how much more grave than the sin itself to refer to God what you have done, and to transfuse the envy of your guilt into the author not of crime, but of innocence.

28. Weigh also the parricide's response: **I do not know,** he says, **am I my brother's keeper?** (Gen. 4:9). Even if this speech betrays contumacy, it sounds nevertheless that if he had considered his brother good, he ought to have been a keeper of piety. For whom more than a brother ought he to have preserved? But how could he keep the office of brotherhood, who had not recognized the affection of relationship? Or how could it happen that he should defer obedience to nature, who did not exhibit reverence to God? He denies first as if before one ignorant: he refuses the office of fraternal keeping as if one outside of nature: he declines the judge as if free of will. Why do you wonder if he did not recognize piety, who did not recognize the author? And therefore you are taught by this series of Scriptures that faith is the root of all virtues. Whence also the Apostle says: **Because our foundation is Christ** (1 Cor. 3:11); and whatever you shall have built upon this foundation, this alone profits for the fruit of your work and for the reward of virtue.

29. Congrue igitur respondit Dominus tam imprudenter neganti, dicens: Vox sanguinis fratris tui ad me clamat (Gen. IV, 10), hoc est, cur nescis ubi est frater tuus? Soli eratis cum duobus parentibus, inter paucos frater te latere non debuit. An quia parentes tui accusatores esse non possunt? Nolo enim ut ea necessitudo quae est auctor salutis, fiat auctor periculi. In te solo leges suas natura amiserit. Ideo ergo putas crimen latere, quia parentes accusare non debent? Sed eo major est condemnatio tua. Nam si chara necessitudinis nomina accusare non debent, multo magis non debent occidere. Sed si me testem abnuis, et refugis arbitrum, vox sanguinis fratris tui testis est, quae ad me clamat. Illa te majore auctoritate arguit, quam si frater viveret. Soli eratis, quis eum potuit alter occidere? Si accusas parentes, parricidam probas. Potuit fratrem occidere, qui non parcit parentibus. Potuit parricida esse, qui de parricidis se ortum probare desiderat.

30. Et bene ait: Vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat, non frater clamat. Hoc innocentia et gratia germanitatis etiam in ipsa morte servat. Non accusat frater Abel, ne videatur parricida. Non accusat vox ipsius, non anima ejus, sed vox sanguinis accusat, quem ipse fudisti. Tuum te ergo facinus, non frater accusat. Simul querela criminoso adimitur. Non potest de alieno testimonio queri, qui crimem proprio facinore confitetur. Minor est sermo, quam factum. Est tamen etiam terra testis, quae cepit sanguinem. Et bene ait: Vox sanguinis fratris tui de terra clamat: non dixit, de fratris clamat corpore, sed de terra clamat. Et si frater parcit, terra non parcit. Si frater lacet, terra condemnat. Ipsa est, in te et testis et iudex: testis acrior, quae adhuc parricidii tui sanguine madet: iudex asperior, quae tanto scelere coinquinata est, ut aperiret os suum, et exciperet sanguinem fratris tui de manu tua. Et illa quidem aperuit os suum, quasi exceptura de fratribus verba pietatis, nihil timens cum fratres videret, quae sciret jus germanitatis amoris incentivum esse, non odii. Nam quomodo poterat parricidium suspectare, quae adhuc non viderat homicidium? Sed tu effudisti sanguinem, cujus dolens ipsa contagium: Non augebit, inquit, virtutem suam dare tibi. Quam innocens ultio, ut quae tam graviter violata fuerit, satis habens non prodesse, non quaerat nocere.

29. Congruously therefore the Lord responded to the one denying so imprudently, saying: *The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me* (Gen. 4:10), that is, why do you not know where your brother is? You were alone with two parents; among few, a brother ought not to have been hidden from you. Or is it because your parents cannot be accusers? For I do not wish that that relationship which is the author of salvation should become the author of peril. In you alone nature would have lost its laws. For this reason therefore do you think the crime is hidden, because parents ought not to accuse? But by so much greater is your condemnation. For if the dear names of relationship ought not to accuse, much more they ought not to kill. But if you refuse me as a witness, and flee me as an arbiter, the voice of your brother's blood is a witness, which cries out to me. That voice convicts you with greater authority than if your brother were living. You were alone; who else could have killed him? If you accuse your parents, you prove yourself a parricide. He could have killed a brother, who does not spare his parents. He could have been a parricide, who desires to prove himself sprung from parricides.

30. And he says well: *The voice of your brother's blood cries out,* not "the brother cries out." This, innocence and the grace of brotherhood preserve even in death itself. Brother Abel does not accuse, lest he seem a parricide. His voice does not accuse, nor his soul, but the voice of the blood accuses, which you yourself shed. Therefore your deed, not your brother, accuses you. At the same time, complaint is taken away from the criminal. He cannot complain of another's testimony, who confesses the crime by his own deed. Speech is less than deed. Yet the earth also is a witness, which received the blood. And he says well: *The voice of your brother's blood cries out from the earth:* he did not say, "cries out from your brother's body," but *cries out from the earth.* And if the brother spares, the earth does not spare. If the brother is silent, the earth condemns. She herself is to you both witness and judge: a sharper witness, which is still wet with the blood of your parricide; a harsher judge, which has been so polluted by so great a crime, that she opened her mouth and received your brother's blood from your hand. And she indeed opened her mouth, as if about to receive words of piety from brothers, fearing nothing when she saw brothers, whom she knew the right of brotherhood to be an incentive of love, not of hatred. For how could she suspect parricide, who had not yet seen homicide? But you shed blood, whose contagion she herself grieving: *It shall not increase,* he says, *to give you its virtue.* How innocent an avenging, that she who has been so gravely violated, holding it sufficient not to profit, should not seek to harm.

31. Non mediocre etiam dogma quod ait: Vox sanguinis fratris tui ad me clamat; quia Deus justos suos audit etiam mortuos, quoniam Deo vivunt. Et merito pro viventibus habentur; quia etiam si corporis gustaverint mortem, vitam tamen incorpoream capiunt, et illuminantur suorum splendore meritorum, luce quoque fruuntur aeterna. Justorum ergo audit sanguinem: avertit se autem a precibus impiorum; quoniam etiam si videantur vivere, miserieiores tamen sunt omnibus mortuis, carnem suam sicut tumulum circumferentes, cui infelicem infoderunt animam suam. Quid enim aliud est quam sepulta, quae intra humum volvitur, et terrenae avaritiae cupiditatibus, caeterisque vitiis includitur, ut gratiae coelestis auram spirare non possit? Hujus modi peccator a terra maledictus est, quae est infima et postrema pars mundi. Superius utique coelum, et quae in coelo sunt, sol, luna, et stellae, Throni, Dominationes, Principatus, et Potestates, Cherubim et Seraphim. Non est ergo dubium quod eum et superiora damnaverint, quem inferiora damnarunt. Nam quomodo absolvitur pura illic coelestique sententia quem nec terrae potuerunt absolvere? Et ideo gemens et tremens jubetur esse super terram.

32. Evidens generalisque ratio, quia omni improbo mala adsunt, et adfutura sunt. Quae adsunt, tristitiam operantur; quae futura, formidinem. Sed improbum plus praesentia, quam futura sollicitant. Unde et Cain dixit ad Deum: Major causa mea est, quam ut dimittatur mihi. Si dereliques me hodie, a facie tua abscondam me. Nihil enim gravius quam errantem a Deo deserì, ut se revocare non possit. Mors peccatoris finem peccandi affert: vita autem divino gubernaculo destituta praecipitatur, et in graviora prolabitur; ut si gregem pastor relinquat, incursent bestiae: ita cum Deus deserit hominem, ingruit diabolus. Grave est praesertim insipientibus non habere rectorem. Serpit malitia, vulnus augetur, ubi medicina defuerit. Abscondit se autem qui velare vult culpam, et tegere peccatum. Qui enim male agit odit lucem, et tenebras et suorum quaerit latibula delictorum. Justus autem non abscondere se a Domino Deo suo, sed ipse magis se offerre consuevit dicens: Ecce sum ego qui non habeo criminosam conscientiam, quam timeam deprehendi.

33. Merito ergo se abscondit male conscius, et ait: Omnis qui invenerit me, occidet me. Augustae mentis homo praesentem mortem veretur, perpetuam negligit, et divinum iudicium non reformidat, interitum solum corporis deprecatur. Sed a quo timebat occidi, qui solos parentes habebat in terris? Potuit quidem et incursus bestiarum timere, qui legis divinae jura violaverat; nec praesumere de subjectis animalibus caeteris, qui hominem docuerat occidi. Potuit et parentes parricidas timere, qui docuerat parricidium posse committi.

31. Not mediocre also is the dogma that he says: *The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me;* because God hears his just even when dead, since they live for God. And deservedly they are held for living; because even if they have tasted the death of the body, they nevertheless take up an incorporeal life, and are illuminated by the splendor of their own merits, and enjoy eternal light. He hears therefore the blood of the just: but he turns himself away from the prayers of the impious; since even if they seem to live, they are nevertheless more miserable than all the dead, carrying their flesh about like a tomb, in which they have buried their unhappy soul. For what else is it but buried, that which is rolled within the ground, and is enclosed by the desires of earthly avarice and by other vices, so that it cannot breathe the aura of heavenly grace? A sinner of this kind is cursed by the earth, which is the lowest and last part of the world. Above surely is heaven, and those things which are in heaven: sun, moon, and stars, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers, Cherubim and Seraphim. It is not therefore doubtful that the superior things also have condemned him, whom the inferior have condemned. For how is he absolved by the pure and heavenly sentence there, whom not even the earths could absolve? And therefore groaning and trembling he is commanded to be upon the earth.

32. The reason is evident and general, because to every wicked one evils are present, and are about to be present. Those which are present work sadness; those which are future, dread. But present things solicit the wicked more than future. Whence also Cain said to God: *My cause is greater than that it may be forgiven me.* *If you forsake me today, from your face I shall hide myself.* For nothing is more grave than for the erring one to be deserted by God, so that he cannot recall himself. The death of a sinner brings an end of sinning: but a life destitute of divine governance is precipitated, and slips into more grave things; as if a shepherd should leave the flock, beasts would rush in: so when God deserts a man, the devil rushes in. It is grave especially for the foolish not to have a rector. Malice creeps, the wound is increased, where medicine has been lacking. But he hides himself who wants to veil his fault, and to cover his sin. For he who does evil hates the light, and seeks darkness and the hiding places of his crimes. But the just is accustomed not to hide himself from the Lord his God, but rather to offer himself, saying: *Behold here am I,* who have no criminal conscience which I may fear to be detected.

33. Deservedly therefore he who is conscious of evil hides himself, and says: *Everyone who shall find me, shall kill me.* A man of narrow mind fears present death, neglects the perpetual, and does not dread divine judgment; he deprecates only the destruction of the body. But by whom was he fearing to be killed, who had only his parents on the earth? He could indeed fear also the incursions of beasts, he who had violated the laws of divine right; nor could he presume concerning the rest of the subject animals, he who had taught that a man could be killed. He could also fear parricidal parents, he who had taught that parricide could be committed.

Potuerunt enim et parentes de filio discere, quod didicerunt posterius de parente.

CAPUT X.

Dei comminatio, Si quis occiderit Cain, etc., moraliter explicatur; in signo posito super eodem divina clementia declaratur, sicut et in eo Caini dementia, quod mortem temporalem plus timuerit, quam aeternam. Hinc pulchre disseritur de incorruptibilitate animae, ac futura vita. Tandem iudicium non praepropere ferendum, nec rursus inultum crimen sinendum esse ostenditur.

34. Nunc consideremus qua causa dixerit Deus: Omnis qui occiderit Cain septies vindictam exsolvet (Gen. IV, 15); et qua ratione signum super eum ponitur, ne occidatur parricida, cum prospectum non fuerit, ne innocens occideretur. Octavus est homo, habet rationabile quo praestet caeteris, habet et quinque corporis sensus, habet etiam vocem, habet et generandi gratiam. Haec septem nisi illo rationabili regantur, subjecta morti sunt; et ideo stultus in his habet omne periculum sui. Qui ergo rationabile illud amiserit, frustra de istorum sibi usu septem carnalium munerum blandietur. Dissolvuntur haec omnia, nisi habent quibusdam rationis astricta sint. Mors itaque rationis, mortem operatur irrationabilium passionum. Sed illud melius quod septimus numerus quietis et remissionis est. Ergo qui alii non pepercit peccatori, et munus ei remissionis peccatorum inviderit, ipse sibi spem remissionis eripiet, et erit in eo pari mensura vindicta de gratia.

35. Quod autem signum posuit super Cain, ne quis eum occideret, reflectere voluit errantem, et beneficio suo invitare ad correctionem. Ipsi enim nos facilius committere solemus, quorum habemus gratiam. Nec tamen magna concedit: sed in eo ipso imprudentiam insipientis ulciscitur, qui cum esset perpetuis suppliciis obnoxius, non remitti sibi poenam poposcit, sed vitam corporis huius obsecrandam putavit, in qua plus aerumnae est, quam voluptatis. Mors enim una est in secessione animae et corporis, et in fine istius vitae, quae simul ut venit, omnes corporis dolores auferre, non augere consuevit. Metus vero qui hanc vitam viventibus frequenter ingruunt, moestitiae, dolores, gemitus, diversique cruciatus, gravitatum, et aegritudinum vulnera plurimas etiam mortes generi humano inferunt, ut ista mors remedium esse videatur, non poena. Non enim peremptoria est, per quam non adimitur vita, sed ad meliora transfertur. Nam si nocentes moriuntur, qui gradum a peccatis revocare noluerint; vel invitati tamen finem non naturae, sed culpae adipiscuntur, ne plura delinquant, quibus vita fenus est delictorum. Si autem bonae spei compotes sunt, migrare magis quam deficere credendi sunt.

For parents also could learn from a son what posterity learned from a parent.

CHAPTER X.

The threat of God, *If anyone shall kill Cain,* etc., is explained morally; in the sign placed upon him divine clemency is declared, as also in this the dementia of Cain, that he feared temporal death more than eternal. Hence there is a beautiful discussion concerning the incorruptibility of the soul and the future life. Finally it is shown that judgment is not to be brought too hastily, nor again is crime to be left unavenged.

34. Now let us consider for what cause God said: *Everyone who shall kill Cain shall pay sevenfold vengeance* (Gen. 4:15); and by what reason a sign is placed upon him, lest the parricide be killed, while there had been no provision lest the innocent be killed. Man is the eighth; he has the rational by which he excels the rest, he has also five senses of the body, he has also voice, he has also the grace of generating. These seven, unless they are ruled by that rational, are subject to death; and therefore the fool has in these every peril of himself. He therefore who has lost that rational, will in vain flatter himself concerning the use of these seven carnal gifts. All these are dissolved unless they are bound by certain reins of reason. Therefore the death of reason works the death of irrational passions. But that is better, that the seventh number is of rest and remission. Therefore he who has not spared another sinner, and has envied him the gift of the remission of sins, shall snatch away from himself the hope of remission, and there shall be in him in equal measure vengeance concerning grace.

35. But as to his placing a sign upon Cain lest anyone should kill him, he wished to turn back the erring one, and by his own benefit to invite him to correction. For we are accustomed to commit ourselves more easily to those whose grace we have. Nor yet does he concede great things: but in that very thing he avenges the imprudence of the foolish one, who while he was obnoxious to perpetual punishments, did not ask for the penalty to be remitted to him, but thought the life of this body was to be besought, in which there is more of hardship than of pleasure (*voluptas*). For death is one in the separation (*secessionem*) of soul and body, and in the end of this life, which as soon as it comes, is accustomed to take away all the pains of the body, not to increase them. But the fears which frequently rush upon those living this life—sadness, pains, groans, and diverse tortures, the wounds of gravities and sicknesses—bring even very many deaths to the human race, so that that death seems to be a remedy, not a punishment. For it is not peremptory, through which life is not taken away, but transferred to better things. For if the guilty die, who have not wished to recall their step from sins; yet even unwillingly they obtain an end not of nature, but of fault, lest they delinquent more, to whom life is a usury of crimes. But if they are possessors of good hope, they are to be believed to migrate rather than to fail.

36. Insertur hoc loco dogma de incorruptione animae, quod ipsa vera et beata vita sit, quam unusquisque bene conscius vivit multo purius ac beatius, cum hujus carnis anima nostra deposuerit involucrum, et quodam carcere isto fuerit absoluta corporeo; in illum superiorem revolans locum, unde nostris infusa visceribus compassionem corporis hujus ingemuit, donec commissi gubernaculi munus impleret; ut carnis hujus irrationabiles motus rationabili ductu regeret et coerceret. Inde est quod postea prophetae in captivitatem cum populo Judaeorum transierunt; ne reliqua plebs sanctorum destituta praesidio, consilioque viduata graviolem subiret aerumnam: sed magis frequentibus commonita oraculis prophetarum, ad Dominum Deum suum pio rediret affectu; ne adversis captivitatis attrita proueret in perfidiae peccatum, salutisque perpetuae remedium desperaret.

37. Redarguuntur itaque hoc in loco qui unicam hanc vitam putent esse, quae sit in hoc saeculo (omnia plena lapsus, plena moeroris sunt) et redarguuntur simplici serie gestorum. Ecce enim justus, innocens, pius, propter gratiam devotionis odia fratris incurrens, immaturus adhuc aevi sublatus est parricidio; et iniquus, sceleratus, impius, etiam fraterna caede pollutus longaevam duxit aetatem, duxit uxorem, posteritatem reliquit, urbes condidit, et hoc meruit permissione divina. Nonne in his aperte vox Dei clamat? Erratis, qui putatis hic esse omnem vivendi gratiam: non intelligitis, non advertitis senectutem hanc miseriarum esse veteranam, processionemque aetatis aerumnarum stipendia, et scylleo quodam usu circumsonari nos quotidianis naufragiis, tundi fluctibus, in scopulosis habitaculis degere, et in his delectari, sicut illud non tam aeternum animal, quam immortale malum? Ergo et isti Cain longaevitas indulta, vindicta est; eo quod vixit in metu, et prolixum spatium multo cucurrit et infructuoso labore, qua poena nihil gravius quam ut quis ipse sibi majorum causa poenarum sit. Vide igitur quam perpetua vita justorum, et nulla sit improborum! Justi sanguis clamat et mortui, vita autem peccatoris absconditur.

38. Tertium est, quoniam cum parricidium esset admissum, hoc est, scelerum principatus, ubi peccatum obrepsit, statim et lex divinae mansuetudinis prorogari debuit; ne si continuo vindicatum esset in reum, homines quoque in vindicando nullam patientiam moderationemque servarent, sed statim reos supplicio darent.

36. There is inserted in this place the dogma concerning the incorruption of the soul, that it itself is the true and blessed life, which each one well-conscious lives much more purely and blessedly, when our soul shall have laid down the wrapping of this flesh, and shall have been absolved from this certain corporeal prison; flying back into that superior place, from whence infused into our viscera it groaned with compassion for this body, until it might fulfill the office of the committed helm; so that it might rule and coerce the irrational motions of this flesh by a rational guidance. Whence it is that afterwards the prophets passed into captivity with the people of the Jews; lest the remaining multitude of the saints, destitute of protection and widowed of counsel, should undergo a more grave hardship: but rather admonished by frequent oracles of the prophets, they might return to the Lord their God with a pious affection; lest worn down by the adversities of captivity they should rush headlong into the sin of perfidy (*perfidia*), and despair of the remedy of perpetual salvation.

Those therefore are refuted in this place who think this life is unique, which is in this age (all things are full of slip, full of sorrow) and they are refuted by a simple series of deeds. For behold the just, innocent, pious, incurring the hatred of his brother on account of the grace of devotion, was taken away by parricide while still immature of age; and the iniquitous, wicked, impious, even polluted by fraternal slaughter, led a long-lived age, led a wife, left posterity, founded cities, and this he merited by divine permission. Does not the voice of God openly cry out in these? You err, who think that all the grace of living is here: you do not understand, you do not notice that this old age is a veteran of miseries, and the procession of age the wages of hardships, and by a certain Scyllean usage we are surrounded by the sound of daily shipwrecks, beaten by waves, to dwell in rocky habitations, and to be delighted in these, like that not so much eternal animal as immortal evil? Therefore even to this Cain longevity was indulged as a vengeance; for the reason that he lived in fear, and ran through a prolix space with much and fruitless labor, than which penalty nothing is more grave than that someone himself be to himself the cause of greater punishments. See therefore how perpetual is the life of the just, and none is that of the wicked! The blood of the just cries out even when dead, but the life of the sinner is hidden.

The third thing is, since when parricide had been admitted, that is, the principality of crimes, where sin crept in, immediately the law of divine mildness ought to have been prorogated; lest if vengeance had been continuously taken upon the guilty, men also in avenging should preserve no patience and moderation, but immediately give the guilty to punishment.

Divinae autem sententiae providentia huiusmodi est, ut magnanimitatem et patientiam doceret iudices; ne quis praepropere raperetur studio vindictae, et ipsa deliberationis immaturitate puniret innoxium, aut poenam acerbaret irati: nec tamen penitus inultum esse pateretur in eo qui nullam poenitentiam sceleris induisset. Repulit enim eum a facie sua, et a parentibus abdicatum separatae habitationis quodam relegavit exilio; eo quod ab humana mansuetudine transisset ad saevitiam bestiarum. Verumtamen non homicidio voluit homicidam vindicari, qui mavult peccatoris correctionem, quam mortem. Unde in Lamech septuagies septies vindicatur; quia gravior culpa ejus est, qui nec post damnationem se correxit alterius. Cain impetu quodam improvido ante peccaverat: Lamech utique quod in altero reprehensum adverterat, cavere debuerat. Suo quippe iudici sententia debebatur, ne quis passim reum esse ferendum putaret. Et ut ad mysterium venias, non debuit interimere eum, qui usque ad naturalem terminum mortis suae agendaе habebat spatium poenitentiae. Excusare posset quod se redemisset vel sera actione poenitentiae, nisi eum praematura poena rapuisset.

But the providence of the divine sentence is of this kind, that it might teach magnanimity and patience to judges; lest anyone be hastily snatched by the study of vengeance, and by that very immaturity of deliberation punish the harmless, or embitter the penalty of the one angered: nor yet would he allow it to be entirely unavenged in him who had put on no penitence for the crime. For he repelled him from his face, and abdicated by his parents he relegated him to a certain exile of separate habitation; for the reason that he had passed from human mildness to the savageness of beasts. Nevertheless he did not wish the homicide to be avenged by homicide, he who prefers the correction of the sinner rather than death. Whence in Lamech it is avenged seventy-seven times; because more grave is the fault of him who did not correct himself even after the condemnation of another. Cain had sinned before by a certain unprovided impulse: Lamech surely ought to have taken care against that which he had noticed reprehended in another. To his own judge indeed the sentence was due, lest anyone should think the guilty was to be struck everywhere. And so that you may come to the mystery, he ought not to have killed him, who even to the natural term of his death had a space for doing penitence. He could excuse that he had redeemed himself even by a late action of penitence, unless a premature penalty had snatched him away.