Sermon on the Mount Harmony of the Gospels Homilies on the Gospels part 6

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THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

EDITED BY

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PROFESSOR IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK.

IN CONNECTION WITH A NUMBER OF PATRISTIC SCHOLARS OF EUROPE AND

AMERICA.

VOLUME VI

ST. AUGUSTIN:

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

HOMILIES ON THE GOSPELS

T&T CLARK

EDINBURGH

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Translated by the Rev. William Findlay.

Revised and Annotated by the Rev. D. S. Schaff.

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delivered by our Lord on the Mount, as contained in the fifth chapter

of Matthew.

Book II. On the latter part of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount,

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the harmony of the gospels.

Translated by the Rev. S. D. F. Salmond, D.D.

Edited, with Notes, by the Rev. M. B. Riddle, D.D.

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Introductory Notice by Dr. Salmond.

Book I. The treatise opens with a short statement on the subject

of the authority of the Evangelists, their number, their order, and the

different plans of their narratives. Augustin then prepares for the

discussion of the questions relating to their harmony, by joining issue

in this book with those who raise a difficulty in the circumstance that

Christ has left no writing of His own, or who falsely allege that

certain books were composed by Him on the arts of magic. He also meets

the objections of those who, in opposition to the evangelical teaching,

assert that the disciples of Christ at once ascribe more to their

Master than He really was, when they affirmed that He was God, and

inculcated what they had not been instructed in by Him, when they

interdicted the worship of the gods. Against these antagonists he

vindicates the teaching of the Apostles, by appealing to the utterances

of the Prophets, and by showing that the God of Israel was to be the

sole object of worship, who also, although He was the only Deity to

whom acceptance was denied in former times by the Romans, and that for

the very reason that He prohibited them from worshipping other gods

along with Himself, has now in the end made the Empire of Rome subject

to His Name, and among all nations has broken their idols in pieces

through the preaching of the Gospel, as He had promised by His prophets

that the event should be.

Book II. In this book Augustin undertakes an orderly examination of

the Gospel according to Matthew, on to the narrative of the Supper, and

institutes a comparison between it and the other Gospels by Mark, Luke,

and John, with the view of demonstrating a complete harmony between the

four Evangelists throughout all these sections.

Book III. This book contains a demonstration of the

harmony of the Evangelists from the accounts of the Supper on to the

end of the Gospel, the narratives given by the several writers being

collated, and the whole arranged in one orderly connection.

Book IV. This book embraces a discussion of those

passages which are peculiar to Mark, Luke, or John.

sermons on selected lessons of the new testament.

Translated by the Rev. R. G. MacMullen.

Edited by Dr. Schaff.

Preface by Dr. E. B. Pusey.

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Preface.

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This volume contains the exegetical and homiletical writings of St.

Augustin on the Gospels.

The seventh volume will be devoted to his Commentary on the Gospel and

First Epistle of John, and the Soliloquies. It will be finished by the

1st of next April.

The eighth and last volume is reserved for his Commentary on the

Psalms, and will appear in July, 1888.

These eight volumes will form the most complete edition of St.

Augustin's Works in the English language, embracing the Edinburgh and

Oxford translations, and several treatises never before translated,

with introductions and explanatory notes.

Arrangements have been made for the regular issue of the Works of St.

Chrysostom according to the terms of the Publisher's Prospectus, which

so far has been promptly carried out. The favourable reception of the

preceding volumes by the public and the press, including some leading

theological journals of Europe (such as The Church Quarterly Review,

and Harnack's Theologische Literaturzeitung), will encourage the editor

and publisher to carry on this Patristic Library with undiminished

energy and zeal.

Philip Schaff.

New York, December, 1887.

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Introductory Essay.

St. Augustin as an Exegete.

By the Rev. David Schley Schaff

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The exegetical writings of Augustin are commentaries on Genesis (first

three chapters), the Psalms, the Gospel and First Epistle of John, the

Sermon on the Mount, the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and a

Harmony of the Gospels. Many of his commentaries, like those of

Chrysostom, are expository homilies preached to his congregation at

Hippo; all are practical rather than grammatical and critical. He only

covered the first five verses of the first chapter of Romans, and found

his comments so elaborate, that, from fear of the immense proportions a

commentary on the whole Epistle would assume, he drew back from the

task. Augustin's other writings abound in quotations from Scripture,

and pertinent expositions. His controversies with the Manich�ans and

Donatists were particularly adapted to render him thorough in the

knowledge of the Bible, and skilled in its use.

The opinions of Augustin's ability as an exegete, and the worth of his

labors in the department of connected Biblical exposition, have greatly

differed. Some not only represent him at his weakest in this capacity,

but disparage his exegesis as of inferior merit. Others have given him,

and some at the present time still give him, a very high rank among the

chief commentators of the early Church. P�re Simon, as quoted by

Archbishop Trench (Sermon on the Mount, p. 65), says, "One must needs

read a vast deal in the exegetical writings of Augustin to light on any

thing which is good." Reuss expresses himself thus: "The fact is, that

his exegesis was the weak side of the great man" (Gesch. d. heil.

Schriften N. T. p. 263). Farrar, in his History of Interpretation (p.

24), declares his comments to be "sometimes painfully beside the mark,"

and in general depreciates the value of Augustin's expository writings.

On the other hand, the student is struck with the profound esteem in

which Augustin was held as an interpreter of Scripture during the

Middle Ages. His exposition was looked upon as the highest authority;

and a saying was current, that, if one had Augustin on his side, it was

sufficient (Si Augustinus adest, sufficit ipse tibi). So powerful was

his influence, that Rupert of Deutz, in the preface to his Commentary

on St. John, deemed it necessary to state, in part in vindication of

his own effort, that, though the eagle wings of the Bishop of Hippo

overshadowed the Gospel, he did not exhaust the right of all Christians

to handle the Gospel. The Reformers quote Augustin more frequently than

any Father, and were greatly indebted to his writings, especially for

their views on sin and grace. Among modern opinions according to him a

high rank in this department may be mentioned two. The Rev. H. Browne,

in the preface to the translation of Augustin's Homilies on St. John,

in the Oxford Library of the Fathers (I. vi.), is somewhat extravagant

in his praise, when he says, that, "as an interpreter of the Word of

God, St. Augustin is acknowledged to stand at an elevation which few

have reached, none surpassed." Archbishop Trench, in the essay on

Augustin as an interpreter of Scripture, prefixed to his edition of the

Sermon on the Mount, accords equal praise, and speaks specifically of

the "tact and skill with which he unfolded to others the riches which

the Word contains" (p. 133).

The truth certainly is not with those who minimize Augustin's services

in the department of exposition. Whether we compare him with ancient or

modern commentators, he will fall behind the greatest in some

particulars; but in profundity of insight into the meaning of the text,

in comprehensive knowledge of the whole Scriptures, in simplicity of

spiritual aim, he stands in the first rank. It is as a contributor to

theological and religious thought that he asserts his eminence.

Exposition is something more than bald textual and lexicographical

comment: it aims also at a spiritual perception of the truth as it is

in Christ, and requires a capacity to extract, for the spiritual

nutriment of the reader, the vital forces of the Scriptures. In this

sense Augustin is eminently worthy of study. Of textual details, he

gives only the barest minimum of any value. His mistakes, arising out

of his slender philological apparatus and his reverence for the LXX.,

are numerous and glaring. He often wanders far away from the plain

meaning of the text, into allegorical and typical fancies, like the

other Fathers, and many of the older Protestant commentators. He was

not prepared for, nor did he aim at, grammatico-historical exegesis in

the modern sense of the word; but he possessed extraordinary acumen and

depth, spiritual insight, an uncommon knowledge of Scripture as a

whole, and a pious intention to bring the truth to the convictions of

men, and to extend the kingdom of Christ.

As to Augustin's special equipment for the work of an exegete and on

his exegetical principles, the following may be added:--

Exegetical Equipment.

1. Augustin had no knowledge of Hebrew (Confessions, xi. 3; in this ed.

vol. i. p. 164). His knowledge of Greek was only superficial, and far

inferior to that of Jerome (vol. i. p. 9). He depended almost entirely

on the imperfect old Latin version before its revision by Jerome, and

was at first even prejudiced against this revision, the so-called

Vulgate. But it should be remembered that only two of the great

expositors of the ancient Church were familiar with Hebrew,--Origen and

Jerome. Augustin knew only a few Hebrew words. In the treatise on

Christian Doctrine (ii. 11, 16; this ed. vol. ii. p. 540) he adduces

the words Amen and Hallelujah as being left untranslated on account of

the sacredness of the original forms, and the words Racha and Hosanna

as being untranslatable by any single Latin equivalents. In the Sermon

on the Mount (i. 9, 23) he refers again to Racha, and defends its

Hebrew origin as against those who derived it from the Greek term

rhakos (a rag).

Augustin's linguistic attainments seem to have included familiarity

with Punic (Sermon on the Mount, ii. 14, 47). The Phoenician origin of

the North African people, the location of his birthplace and his

episcopal diocese, furnish an explanation of this.

2. For the Old Testament, Augustin used, besides the Latin version,

occasionally the Septuagint, and had at hand the versions of Symmachus,

Theodotion, and Aquila (Qu�st. in Num. 52). He had profound reverence

for the LXX., and was inclined to give credit to the Jewish tradition

that each of the translators was confined in a separate cell, and on

comparing their work, which they had accomplished without communication

with each other, found their several versions to agree, word for word.

He held that the original was given through them in Greek by the

special direction of the Holy Spirit, and in such a way as to be most

suitable for the Gentiles (Christian Doctrine, ii. 15, 22; this ed. p.

542). He declared that the Latin copies were to be corrected from the

LXX., which was as authoritative as the Hebrew. Such a claim for the

authority of the Greek translation would make a knowledge of the Hebrew

almost unnecessary.

This excessive reverence for the LXX. has led Augustin to uphold, in

his exegesis of the Old Testament, all its errors of translation, which

a different view, coupled with a knowledge of Hebrew, would in most

cases have prevented him from accepting. Even at its plain and palpable

mistakes he takes no offence. He accepts the translation, "Yet three

days and Nineveh shall be overthrown," as of equal authority with the

"forty days" of the original, claiming a special symbolic meaning for

both.

3. For the New Testament, Augustin used some Latin translation or

translations older than the Vulgate. He declares the Latin translations

to be without number (Christian Doctr. ii. 11, 16; this ed. vol. ii. p.

540). There was already in his day "an endless diversity" of readings

in the Latin manuscripts. He vindicated for the Greek original the

claim of final authority, to which the Latin copies were to yield. As

there was likewise diversity of text among the Greek copies, he laid

down the rule, that those manuscripts were to be chosen for comparison

by the Latin student which were preserved in the churches of greater

learning and research (Christian Doctr. ii. 15, 22; in this ed. ii. p.

543). Not infrequently does Augustin cite the readings of the Greek. In

some cases he makes references to passages where there is a conflict of

text in the Latin authorities. He differs quite largely from Jerome's

Vulgate, to which he offered opposition, on the ground that a new

translation might unsettle the faith of some. In these variations of

construction and language he was sometimes nearer the original than

Jerome. Sometimes he does not approximate so closely. As a matter of

interest, and for the convenience of the reader, the differences of

Augustin's text and the Vulgate will be found, in all important cases,

noted down in this edition of the Sermon on the Mount.

Examples of Augustin's improvement upon the Vulgate are the omission of

the clause, "and despitefully use you" (et calumniantibus vos, Matt. v.

44), the use of quotidianum panem ("daily bread") instead of

supersubstantialem, and of inferas ("bring") instead of inducas

("lead"), in the fourth and sixth petitions of the Lord's Prayer (Matt.

vi. 11, 12). In reference to the last passage, it must be said,

however, that he notes a difference in the Latin mss., some using

infero, some induco; and while he adopts the former verb, he finds the

terms equivalent in meaning (Serm. on the Mt. ii. 9, 30).

4. Augustin's textual and grammatical comments are few in number, but

they cannot be said to be wanting in all value. A few instances will

suffice for a judgment of their merit:--

In the Harmony of the Gospels (ii. 29, 67), writing of the daughter of

Jairus (Matt. ix. 29), he mentions that some codices contain the

reading "woman" (mulier) for "damsel." Commenting on Matt. v. 22,

"Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause," he includes the

expression "without a cause" (eike) without even a hint of its

spuriousness (Serm. on the Mt. i. 9, 25); but in his Retractations (i.

19. 4) he makes the correction, "The Greek manuscripts do not contain

sine causa." Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, the Vulgate and the

Revised English Version, in agreement with the oldest mss., omit the

clause. He refers to a conflict of the Greek and Latin text of Matt. v.

39 ("Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek"), and follows the

authority of the Greek in omitting the adjective "right" (Serm. on the

Mt. i. 19, 58). At Matt. vi. 4 he casts out, on the authority of the

Greek, the adverb palam ("openly"), which was found in many Latin

translations (as it is also found in the Textus Receptus, but not in

the Vulgate, and the Sinaitic, B, D, and other mss.). Commenting on

Matt. vii. 12, "Wherefore all things whatsoever ye would that men,"

etc., he refers to the addition of "good" before "things" by the

Latins, and insists upon its erasure on the basis of the Greek text

(Serm. on the Mt. ii. 22, 74).

On occasion, though very rarely, he quotes the Greek, as in the Sermon

on the Mount (ne tnn kauchesin, i. 17, 51; himation, i. 19, 60), in

confirmation of his opinions of the text.

At other times he compares Greek and Latin terms of synonymous or

kindred meanings. One of the most important of these is the passage

(City of God, x. 1; this ed. vol. ii. p. 181) where he draws a clear

distinction between latreia, threskeia, eusebeia, theosebeia. Other

examples of the kind under review are given by Trench (p. 20 sqq.).

It is evident that Augustin's equipment was defective from the

stand-point of the modern critical exegete. It would be wrong, however,

to say that he shows no concern about textual questions. But his

exegetical power shows itself in other ways than minute textual

investigation,--in comprehensive comparison of Scripture with

Scripture, and penetrating spiritual vision. To these qualities he adds

a purpose to be exhaustive, sparing no pains to develop the full

meaning of the passage under review. More exhaustive discussions can

hardly be found, to take a single example, than that on Matt. v. 25,

"Agree with thine adversary quickly" (Serm. on the Mt. xi. 31, where,

however, the view least reasonable is taken), or spiritually

satisfactory ones than the discussion of the gradation of sin and its

punishment (Matt. v. 21, 22; Serm. on the Mt. ix. 22), and "Judge not,

that ye be not judged" (Matt. vii. i), or pungently suggestive than the

handling of the words of our Lord at the marriage feast at Cana:

"Woman, what have I to do with thee?" (John ii. 4; Homily VIII.), or

more indicative of great principles underlying the vindication to the

evangelists of a true historical character and of independence of each

other (at least in minor details) than discussions like that about the

differences in the details of the miracle of the five loaves and two

fishes, alone common of the miracles to the fourfold Gospel (a sort of

prelude to works like Blunt's Undesigned Coincidences), and the

relation of this miracle to the miracle of the seven loaves (Harmony,

xlvi.-1).

Exegetical Principles.

Augustin has laid down in a separate treatise a code of exegetical

principles. His Christian Doctrine (vol. ii. of this series) is the

earliest manual of Biblical hermeneutics. In spite of irrelevant and

lengthy digressions, it contains many suggestions of value, which have

not been improved upon in modern treatises on the subject.

1. He emphasizes Hebrew and Greek scholarship as an important aid to

the expositor, and an essential condition of the interpretation of the

figurative language of Scripture (ii. 11, 16; 16, 23, this ed., pp.

539, 543).

2. He will have his interpreter acquainted with sacred geography (ii.

29, 45, p. 549), natural history (ii. 16, 24, p. 543; 29, 45, p. 549),

music (ii. 16, 26, p. 544), chronology (ii. 28, 42, p. 549) and the

science of numbers (ii. 16, 25, p. 543), natural science generally (ii.

29, 45 sqq., p. 549 sqq.), history (ii. 28, 43, p. 549), dialectics

(ii. 31, 48, p. 550), and the writings of the ancient philosophers (ii.

40, 60, p. 554). He was the first to suggest a work which has been

realized in our dictionaries of the Bible. Pertinent to the subject he

says, "What some men have done in regard to all words and names found

in Scripture, in the Hebrew and Syriac and Egyptian and other tongues,

taking up and interpreting separately such as were left in Scripture

without interpretation; and what Eusebius has done in regard to the

history of the past...I think might be done in regard to other

matters....For the advantage of his brethren a competent man might

arrange in their several classes, and give an account of, the unknown

places, and animals and plants, and trees and stones and metals, and

other species of things mentioned in Scripture" (ii. 39, 59, p. 554).

It is, in view of this sage suggestion, almost incomprehensible that

Augustin pays no attention to these subjects in his commentaries.

Jerome, on the other hand, is quite rich in these departments.

3. He presses the view that the Scripture is designed to have more

interpretations than one (Christ. Doctr. iii. 27, 38 sq.; this ed. p.

567). Augustin constantly applies this canon (e.g., on the petition,

"Thy will be done," Sermon on the Mount, ii. 7, 21-23). He adopted the

seven rules of the Donatist Tichonius as assisting to a deep

understanding of the Word. These rules relate (1) to the Lord and His

body, (2) to the twofold division of the Lord's body, (3) to the

promises and the Law, (4) to species and genus, (5) to times, (6) to

recapitulation, (7) to the devil and his body (Christ. Doctr. iii. 30,

42, pp. 568-573). He explains and illustrates these laws at length, but

denies that they exhaust the rules for discovering the hidden truth of

Scripture.

4. He commends the method of interpreting obscure passages by the light

of passages that are understood, and prefers it before the

interpretation by reason (Christ. Doctr. iii. 29, 39, p. 567).

5. The spirit and intent of the interpreter are of more importance than

verbal accuracy and critical acumen (a qualification not always too

strictly insisted upon in these modern days of commentators and

critical Biblical study). One must be in sympathy with the Gospel of

Christ to interpret its records. [1] Even the mistakes of an exegete,

properly disposed, may confirm religious faith and character; and so

far forth are his labors to be commended, though he himself is to be

corrected, that he err not again after the same manner. "If the

mistaken interpretation," he says, "tends to build up love, which is

the end of the commandment, the interpreter goes astray in much the

same way as a man who, by mistake, quits the highroad, but yet reaches,

through the fields, the same place to which the road leads" (Christ.

Doctr. i. 36, 41 sq.; ii. p. 533).

That Augustin followed his own canons of interpretation, his writings

show. He does not hesitate to put more than one interpretation upon a

text (as especially in the Psalms), and none has been more elaborate in

comparing Scripture with Scripture than he. If he had possessed the

familiarity with the Hebrew that he recommends so strongly to others,

he would have been preserved from the misinterpretations with which his

commentaries on the Old Testament abound.

Use of Allegory.

Augustin's use of allegory has exposed him to much harsh criticism.

What was the practice of all, ought not to be considered a mortal fault

in one. None of the ancient expositors were free from it. Some of the

modern expositors, except as their works are designed only as a

critical arsenal for the student, are defective because of all absence

of the allegorical element.

Where Scripture itself has led the way, as in the case of the allegory

of Hagar and Sarah (Gal. iv.) and other cases, the uninspired penman

will be pardoned if he follow. The use of the allegorical method,

however, was carried to the most unreasonable excess, reaching its

culmination in Gregory's Commentary on Job. That writer finds that the

patriarch of Uz represents Christ, his sons the clergy, his three

daughters the three classes of the laity who are to worship the

Trinity, his friends the heretics, the oxen and she-asses the heathen,

etc. The frequent extravagance of Augustin, proceeding out of his

intellectual and Scriptural exuberance, cannot be commended; but it

will be found that his allegory is seldom commonplace, and mingled with

it, where it is most vicious, are comments of rare aptness and common

sense. In the Old Testament he looks upon almost every character and

event as symbolic of Christ and Christian institutions. But, as Trench

well says, "it is indeed far better to find Christ everywhere in the

Old Testament than to find Him nowhere" (p. 54).

In his effort to display the unity and harmony of all Scripture (to

which he was forced by the controversy with the Manich�ans) he often

strains after comparisons; and this came to be so much of a habit with

him, that, where he had no special purpose to gain, he is guilty of the

same excess. An instance among many is furnished in the opening

chapters of the Sermon on the Mount (iv. 11), where a close comparison

is instituted between the Beatitudes and the seven Spiritual operations

of Isa. xi. 2, 3. The historical element is nowhere denied, but

something else is constantly being superinduced upon it, especially in

the Old Testament.

A single illustration of Augustin's allegorical interpretation will

suffice. Turning away from the Psalms, where his imagination is

particularly fertile along this line, I extract one on the parable of

the five loaves and two fishes, as found in the XXIV. Homily on John.

The five loaves mean the five Books of Moses. They are not wheaten, but

barley, because they belong to the Old Testament. The nature of barley

is such that it is hard to be got at, as the kernel is set in a coating

of husk which is tenacious and hard to be stripped off. Such is the

letter of the Old Testament, enveloped in a covering of carnal

sacraments. The little lad represents the people of Israel, which, in

its childishness of mind, carried but did not eat. The two fishes

signify the persons of the Priest and King, which therefore point to

Christ. The multiplication of the loaves signifies the exposition into

many volumes of the five Books of Moses. There were five thousand

people fed, because they were under the Law, which is unfolded in five

books. "They sat upon the grass;" that is, they were carnally minded,

and rested in carnal things. The "fragments" are the truths of hidden

import which the people cannot receive, and which were therefore

entrusted to the twelve apostles.

The excessive taste for this style of interpretation, in which the

homilists and Biblical writers of a thousand years had revelled, was

sternly rebuked by the Reformers. Especially did Luther utter his

protest, on the ground that the fancies into which this method was apt

to lead had a tendency to shake confidence in the literal truth of the

sacred volume. He remarks, "Augustin said beautifully that a figure

proves nothing;" but, probably from the high regard he had for the

great theologian, he did not condemn his allegorizing exegesis. [2]

However much the great African bishop may have laid himself open to the

rebuke of a more critical and mechanical age in this regard and others,

his exegesis will continue to be admired for the diligence with which

the sacred text is scanned, the reverent frame of heart with which it

is approached, and the rich treasures of spiritual truth which it

brings forth to the willing and devout reader.

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[1] On the principle that Davidica intelligit, qui Davidica patitur;

or, as the German couplet runs,-- "Wer den Dichter will verstehen Muss

in Dichters Lande gehen."

[2] The passage is quoted in full by Trench (p. 64). His work, St.

Augustin on the Sermon on the Mount, 4th ed., London, 1881, contains an

elaborate introductory essay on Augustin as an Interpreter of

Scripture. His use of allegory is considered in a separate chapter

(iv). An older work is by Clausen: Augustinus, Sac. Script. Interpres,

pp. 267, Berol. 1828.

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St. AUGUSTIN:

our lord's sermon on the mount,

according to matthew.

[De Sermone Domini in Monte secundum Matthaeum.]

translated by

the rev. William Findlay, m.a.,

larkhall.

revised and annotated by

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our lord's sermon on the mount.

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Book I.

Explanation of the first part of the sermon delivered by our Lord on

the mount, as contained in the fifth chapter of Matthew.

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Chapter I.

1. If any one will piously and soberly consider the sermon which our

Lord Jesus Christ spoke on the mount, as we read it in the Gospel

according to Matthew, I think that he will find in it, so far as

regards the highest morals, a perfect standard of the Christian life:

and this we do not rashly venture to promise, but gather it from the

very words of the Lord Himself. For the sermon itself is brought to a

close in such a way, that it is clear there are in it all the precepts

which go to mould the life. For thus He speaks: "Therefore, whosoever

heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, I will liken [3] him unto

a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended,

and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat [4] upon that house;

and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that

heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, I will liken [5] unto

a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain

descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that

house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." Since, therefore, He

has not simply said, "Whosoever heareth my words," but has made an

addition, saying, "Whosoever heareth these words of mine," He has

sufficiently indicated, as I think, that these sayings which He uttered

on the mount so perfectly guide the life of those who may be willing to

live according to them, that they may justly be compared to one

building upon a rock. I have said this merely that it may be clear that

the sermon before us is perfect in all the precepts by which the

Christian life is moulded; for as regards this particular section a

more careful treatment will be given in its own place. [6]

2. The beginning, then, of this sermon is introduced as follows: "And

when He saw the great [7] multitudes, He went up into a mountain: [8]

and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: and He opened His

mouth, and taught them, saying." If it is asked what the "mountain"

means, it may well be understood as meaning the greater precepts of

righteousness; for there were lesser ones which were given to the Jews.

Yet it is one God who, through His holy prophets and servants,

according to a thoroughly arranged distribution of times, gave the

lesser precepts to a people who as yet required to be bound by fear;

and who, through His Son, gave the greater ones to a people whom it had

now become suitable to set free by love. Moreover, when the lesser are

given to the lesser, and the greater to the greater, they are given by

Him who alone knows how to present to the human race the medicine

suited to the occasion. Nor is it surprising that the greater precepts

are given for the kingdom of heaven, and the lesser for an earthly

kingdom, by that one and the same God, who made heaven and earth. With

respect, therefore, to that righteousness which is the greater, it is

said through the prophet, "Thy righteousness is like the mountains of

God:" [9] and this may well mean that the one Master alone fit to teach

matters of so great importance teaches on a mountain. Then He teaches

sitting, as behooves the dignity of the instructor's office; and His

disciples come to Him, in order that they might be nearer in body for

hearing His words, as they also approached in spirit to fulfil His

precepts. "And He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying." The

circumlocution before us, which runs, "And He opened His mouth,"

perhaps gracefully intimates by the mere pause that the sermon will be

somewhat longer than usual, unless, perchance, it should not be without

meaning, that now He is said to have opened His own mouth, whereas

under the old law He was accustomed to open the mouths of the prophets.

[10]

3. What, then, does He say? "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs

is the kingdom of heaven." We read in Scripture concerning the striving

after temporal things, "All is vanity and presumption of spirit;" [11]

but presumption of spirit means audacity and pride: usually also the

proud are said to have great spirits; and rightly, inasmuch as the wind

also is called spirit. And hence it is written, "Fire, hail, snow, ice,

spirit of tempest." [12] But, indeed, who does not know that the proud

are spoken of as puffed up, as if swelled out with wind? And hence also

that expression of the apostle, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity

edifieth." [13] And "the poor in spirit" are rightly understood here,

as meaning the humble and God-fearing, i.e. those who have not the

spirit which puffeth up. Nor ought blessedness to begin at any other

point whatever, if indeed it is to attain unto the highest wisdom; "but

the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" [14] for, on the

other hand also, "pride" is entitled "the beginning of all sin." [15]

Let the proud, therefore, seek after and love the kingdoms of the

earth; but "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom

of heaven." [16]

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[3] Similabo. The Vulgate, conforming more closely to the Greek, has

assimilabitur, "shall be likened."

[4] Offenderunt; the Vulgate has irruerunt.

[5] The Vulgate, more closely conforming to the Greek, has similis

erit.

[6] The main purpose of the Sermon on the Mount has been variously

stated. Augustin regards it as a perfect code of morals. Tholuck (Die

Bergpredigt) calls it "the Magna Charta of the kingdom of heaven."

Lange says, "The grand fundamental idea is to present the righteousness

of the kingdom of heaven in its relation to that of the Old Testament

theocracy." Geikie declares it to be the "formal inauguration of the

kingdom of God and the Magna Charta of our faith." Edersheim regards it

as presenting "the full delineation of the ideal man of God, of prayer,

and of righteousness; in short, of the inward and outward manifestation

of discipleship." Meyer (Com. 6th ed. p. 210) says that the aim of

Jesus is, as the One who fulfils the Law and the Prophets, to present

the moral conditions of participation in the Messianic kingdom. Weiss

(Leben Jesu) speaks of it as being "as little an ethical discourse as a

new proclamation of law. It is nothing else than an announcement of the

kingdom of God, in which is visible everywhere the purpose of Jesus to

distinguish between its righteousness and the righteousness revealed in

the Old Testament as well as that taught by the teachers of his day."

The Sermon on the Mount is a practical discourse, containing little of

what, in the strict sense, may be termed the credenda of Christianity.

It is the fullest statement of the nature and obligations of

citizenship in God's kingdom. It is noteworthy for its omissions as

well as for its contents. No reference is made to a priesthood, a

ritual, sacred places, or offerings. There is almost a total absence of

all that is sensuous and external. It deals with the motives and

affections of the inner man, and so comes into comparison and contrast

with the Mosaic law as well as with the Pharisaic ceremonialism of the

Lord's Day. The moral grandeur of the precepts of the Sermon on the

Mount has been acknowledged by believer and sceptics alike. Renan (Life

of Jesus) says, "The Sermon on the Mount will never be surpassed." On

the 15th of October, 1852, two weeks before he died, Daniel Webster

wrote and signed his name to the following words, containing a

testimony to this portion of Scripture, which he also ordered placed

upon his tombstone: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief....My

heart has assured me and reassured me that the gospel of Jesus Christ

must be a divine reality. The Sermon on the Mount cannot be a merely

human production. This belief enters into the very depth of my

conscience. The whole history of man proves it" (Curtis, Life of

Webster, ii. p. 684). The relation which the reports of Matthew and

Luke (vi. 20-49) sustain to each other is ignored by Augustin here

(who, except in rare cases, omits all critical discussion), but is

discussed in his Harmony of the Gospels, ii. 19. The agreements are

numerous. The differences are striking, and concern the matter, the

arrangement, the language, and the setting of the sermon. Matthew has a

hundred and seven verses, Luke thirty. Matthew has seven (or eight)

beatitudes, Luke but four, and adds four woes which Matthew omits.

According to the first evangelist Jesus spoke sitting on a mountain:

according to the third evangelist He spoke standing, and in the plain.

The views are, (1) Matthew and Luke give accounts of the same discourse

(Origen, Chrysostom, Calvin, Tholuck, Meyer, Keil, Schaff, Weiss). (2)

They report different sermons spoken at different times (Augustin not

positively, Storr, Plumptre). This is not probable, as so much of the

matter in both is identical: both begin with the same beatitude, and

close with the same parable; and both accounts are followed with the

report of the healing of the centurion's servant. (3) The two sermons

were delivered in close succession on the summit of the mountain to the

disciples, and on the plain to the multitude (Lange). Alford confesses

inability to reconcile the discrepancy.

[7] Multas turbas. The Vulgate omits multas.

[8] The Greek has the definite article to oros. Some, on this ground,

explain the expression to mean "mountain region." According to the

Latin tradition of the time of the Crusaders, the exact spot is the

Horns of Hattin, which Dean Stanley (Sinai and Palestine, Am. ed. p.

436) and most others adopt. The hill, which is horned like a saddle, is

south-west of Capernaum, and commands a good view of the Lake of

Galilee. It seems to meet the requirements of the text. Robinson says

there are a dozen other hills as eligible as this one. Tholuck enlarges

upon the "beautiful temple of nature in which the Lord delivered the

sermon." Matthew Henry says, "When the law was given, the Lord came

down upon the mountain, now the Lord went up; then He spake in thunder

and lightning, now in a still, small voice; then the people were

ordered to keep their distance, now they are invited to draw near,--a

blessed change!"

[9] Ps. xxxvi. 6.

[10] Chrysostom, Euthymius, etc., see in the expression the implication

that Christ also taught by works. Tholuck, with many modern

commentators, finds in it a reference to "loud and solemn utterance."

[11] Eccles. i. 14.

[12] Ps. cxlviii. 8.

[13] 1 Cor. viii. 1.

[14] Ps. cxi. 10.

[15] Ecclus. x. 13.

[16] Not the intellectually poor (Fritzsche), nor the poor in worldly

goods, as we might gather from Luke (vi. 20). Roman-Catholic

commentators have found here support for the doctrine of voluntary

poverty (Cornelius � Lapide, Maldonatus, etc.). The Emperor Julian, in

allusion to this passage and others like it, said he would only

confiscate the goods of Christians, that they might enter as the poor

into the kingdom of heaven (Lett. xliii.). Some (Olearius, Michaelis,

Paulus) have joined "in spirit" with "blessed." Augustin explains the

passage of those who are not elated or proud, taking "spirit" in an

evil sense. In another place he says, "Blessed are the poor in their

own spirit, rich in God's Spirit, for every man who follows his own

spirit is proud." He then compares him who subdues his own spirit to

one living in a valley which is filled with water from the hills (En.

in Ps. cxli. 4). The most explain of those who are conscious of

spiritual need (Matt. xi. 28), and are ready to be filled with the

gospel riches, as opposed to the spiritually proud, the just who need

no repentance (Tholuck, Meyer, Lange, etc.). "Many are poor in the

world, but high in spirit; poor and proud, murmuring and complaining,

and blaming their lot. Laodicea was poor in spirituals, and yet rich in

spirit; so well increased with goods as to have need of nothing. Paul

was rich in spirituals, excelling most in gifts and graces and yet poor

in spirit; the least of the apostles, and less than the least of all

saints" (M. Henry).

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Chapter II.

4. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall by inheritance possess [17]

the earth:" that earth, I suppose, of which it is said in the Psalm,

"Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." [18] For it

signifies a certain firmness and stability of the perpetual

inheritance, where the soul, by means of a good disposition, rests, as

it were, in its own place, just as the body rests on the earth, and is

nourished from it with its own food, as the body from the earth. This

is the very rest and life of the saints. Then, the meek are those who

yield to acts of wickedness, and do not resist evil, but overcome evil

with good. [19] Let those, then, who are not meek quarrel and fight for

earthly and temporal things; but "blessed are the meek, for they shall

by inheritance possess the earth," from which they cannot be driven

out. [20]

5. "Blessed are they that mourn: [21] for they shall be comforted."

Mourning is sorrow arising from the loss of things held dear; but those

who are converted to God lose those things which they were accustomed

to embrace as dear in this world: for they do not rejoice in those

things in which they formerly rejoiced; and until the love of eternal

things be in them, they are wounded by some measure of grief. Therefore

they will be comforted by the Holy Spirit, who on this account chiefly

is called the Paraclete, i.e. the Comforter, in order that, while

losing the temporal joy, they may enjoy to the full that which is

eternal. [22]

6. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:

for they shall be filled." Now He calls those parties, lovers of a true

and indestructible good. They will therefore be filled with that food

of which the Lord Himself says, "My meat is to do the will of my

Father," which is righteousness; and with that water, of which

whosoever "drinketh," as he also says, it "shall be in him a well of

water, springing up into everlasting life." [23]

7. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." [24] He

says that they are blessed who relieve the miserable, for it is paid

back to them in such a way that they are freed from misery.

8. "Blessed are the pure in heart: [25] for they shall see God." How

foolish, therefore, are those who seek God with these outward eyes,

since He is seen with the heart! as it is written elsewhere, "And in

singleness of heart seek Him." [26] For that is a pure heart which is a

single heart: and just as this light cannot be seen, except with pure

eyes; so neither is God seen, unless that is pure by which He can be

seen. [27]

9. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children

of God." It is the perfection of peace, where nothing offers

opposition; and the children of God are peacemakers, because nothing

resists God, and surely children ought to have the likeness of their

father. Now, they are peacemakers in themselves who, by bringing in

order all the motions of their soul, and subjecting them to

reason--i.e. to the mind and spirit--and by having their carnal lusts

thoroughly subdued, become a kingdom of God: in which all things are so

arranged, that that which is chief and pre-eminent in man rules without

resistance over the other elements, which are common to us with the

beasts; and that very element which is pre-eminent in man, i.e. mind

and reason, is brought under subjection to something better still,

which is the truth itself, the only-begotten Son of God. For a man is

not able to rule over things which are inferior, unless he subjects

himself to what is superior. And this is the peace which is given on

earth to men of goodwill; [28] this the life of the fully developed and

perfect wise man. From a kingdom of this sort brought to a condition of

thorough peace and order, the prince of this world is cast out, who

rules where there is perversity and disorder. [29] When this peace has

been inwardly established and confirmed, whatever persecutions he who

has been cast out shall stir up from without, he only increases the

glory which is according to God; being unable to shake anything in that

edifice, but by the failure of his machinations making it to be known

with how great strength it has been built from within outwardly. Hence

there follows: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for

righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

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[17] Hereditate possidebunt. Vulgate omits hereditate. The passage is

quoted almost literally in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, iii. 7.

[18] Ps. cxlii. 5.

[19] Rom. xii. 21.

[20] The order in which Augustin places this Beatitude is followed in

Cod. D, and approved by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Neander, and others (not

Westcott and Hort). The meek not only bear provocation, but quietly

submit to God's dealings, and comply with His designs. The temporal

possession promised is one of the few temporal promises in the New

Testament. The inheritance of the earth is referred to "earthly good

and possessions," by Chrysostom, Euthymius, Luther, etc.; to conquest

of the world by the kingdom of God, by Neander, to the actual kingdom

on this earth, first in its millennial then in its blessed state, by

Alford; typically to the Messiah kingdom, by Meyer; to the land of the

living beyond the heavens by Gregory of Nyssa. "Humility and meekness

have been proved to be a conquering principle in the world's history"

(Tholuck).

[21] Lugentes. Greek, penthountes. The Vulgate, qui lugent, which

Augustin follows, p. 7.

[22] The mourning is a mourning over sins of their own and others

(Chrysostom, etc.); too restricted, as is also Augustin's explanation.

Spiritual mourning in general (Ambrose, Jerome, Tholuck, etc.) sorrow

according to God (2 Cor. vii. 10). We are helped to the meaning by

comparing the woe on those that laugh (Luke vi. 22); that is, upon

those who are satisfied with earthly things, and avoid the seriousness

of repentance.

[23] John iv. 34, 14.

[24] Ipsorum miserabitur; closer to the Greek than the Vulgate ipsi

misericordiam consequentur. The same thought that underlies the fifth

petition of the Lord's Prayer, as Augustin also says, Retract. I. xix.

3.

[25] Mundi corde; the Vulgate, mundo corde.

[26] Wisd. i. 1.

[27] "Pure in heart." "Ceremonial purity does not suffice" (Bengel).

The singleness of heart which has God's will for its aim, and follows

integrity with our fellow-men (Tholuck). "Shall see God:" the most

infinite communion with God (Tholuck). The promise is fulfilled even

here (Lange, Alford, Schaff, etc.). It concerns only the beatific

vision in the spiritual body (Meyer). Not a felicity to the impure to

see God (Henry). Comp. 1 John iii. 2, Rev. xxii. 4, etc. Augustin has a

brilliant description of the future vision of God in City of God (this

series, vol. ii. pp. 507-509).

[28] Luke ii. 14.

[29] The "peacemakers" not only establish peace within themselves as

Augustin, encouraged by the Latin word, explains, but diffuse peace

around about them,--heal the alienations and discords of others, and

bring about reconciliations in the world; not merely peaceful, but

peacemakers. "In most kingdoms those stand highest who make war: in the

Messiah's kingdom the crowning beatitude respects those who make

peace." The expressions will be remembered, "peace of God" (Phil. iv.

7); "peace of Christ" (Col. iii. 15); "God of peace" (Rom. xv. 33),

etc. "If the peacemakers are blessed, woe to the peacebreakers!" (M.

Henry).

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Chapter III.

10. There are in all, then, these eight sentences. For now in what

remains He speaks in the way of direct address to those who were

present, saying: "Blessed shall ye be when men shall revile you and

persecute you." But the former sentences He addressed in a general way:

for He did not say, Blessed are ye poor in spirit, for yours is the

kingdom of heaven; but He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for

theirs is the kingdom of heaven:" nor, Blessed are ye meek, for ye

shall inherit the earth; but, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall

inherit the earth." And so the others up to the eighth sentence, where

He says: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness'

sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." After that He now begins to

speak in the way of direct address to those present, although what has

been said before referred also to His present audience; and that which

follows, and which seems to be spoken specially to those present,

refers also to those who were absent, or who would afterwards come into

existence.

For this reason the number of sentences before us is to be carefully

considered. For the beatitudes begin with humility: "Blessed are the

poor in spirit," i.e. those not puffed up, while the soul submits

itself to divine authority, fearing lest after this life it go away to

punishment, although perhaps in this life it might seem to itself to be

happy. Then it (the soul) comes to the knowledge of the divine

Scriptures, where it must show itself meek in its piety, lest it should

venture to condemn that which seems absurd to the unlearned, and should

itself be rendered unteachable by obstinate disputations. After that,

it now begins to know in what entanglements of this world it is held by

reason of carnal custom and sins: and so in this third stage, in which

there is knowledge, the loss of the highest good is mourned over,

because it sticks fast in what is lowest. Then, in the fourth stage

there is labour, where vehement exertion is put forth, in order that

the mind may wrench itself away from those things in which, by reason

of their pestilential sweetness, it is entangled: here therefore

righteousness is hungered and thirsted after, and fortitude is very

necessary; because what is retained with delight is not abandoned

without pain. Then, at the fifth stage, to those persevering in labour,

counsel for getting rid of it is given; for unless each one is assisted

by a superior, in no way is he fit in his own case to extricate himself

from so great entanglements of miseries. But it is a just counsel, that

he who wishes to be assisted by a stronger should assist him who is

weaker in that in which he himself is stronger: therefore "blessed are

the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." At the sixth stage there is

purity of heart, able from a good conscience of good works to

contemplate that highest good, which can be discerned by the pure and

tranquil intellect alone. Lastly is the seventh, wisdom itself--i.e.

the contemplation of the truth, tranquillizing the whole man, and

assuming the likeness of God, which is thus summed up: "Blessed are the

peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." The eighth,

as it were, returns to the starting-point, because it shows and

commends what is complete and perfect: [30] therefore in the first and

in the eighth the kingdom of heaven is named, "Blessed are the poor in

spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" and, "Blessed are they

which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom

of heaven:" as it is now said, "Who shall separate us from the love of

Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril, or sword?" [31] Seven in number, therefore, are

the things which bring perfection: for the eighth brings into light and

shows what is perfect, so that starting, as it were, from the beginning

again, the others also are perfected by means of these stages.

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[30] "In the eighth beatitude the other seven are only summed up under

the idea of the righteousness of the kingdom in its relation to those

who persecute it; while the ninth is a description of the eighth, with

reference to the relation in which these righteous persons stand to

Christ" (Lange).

[31] Rom. viii. 35.

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Chapter IV.

11. Hence also the sevenfold operation of the Holy Ghost, of which

Isaiah speaks, [32] seems to me to correspond to these stages and

sentences. But there is a difference of order: for there the

enumeration begins with the more excellent, but here with the inferior.

For there it begins with wisdom, and closes with the fear of God: but

"the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." And therefore, if we

reckon as it were in a gradually ascending series, there the fear of

God is first, piety second, knowledge third, fortitude fourth, counsel

fifth, understanding sixth, wisdom seventh. The fear of God corresponds

to the humble, of whom it is here said, "Blessed are the poor in

spirit," i.e. those not puffed up, not proud: to whom the apostle says,

"Be not high-minded, but fear;" [33] i.e. be not lifted up. Piety [34]

corresponds to the meek: for he who inquires piously honours Holy

Scripture, and does not censure what he does not yet understand, and on

this account does not offer resistance; and this is to be meek: whence

it is here said, "Blessed are the meek." Knowledge corresponds to those

that mourn who already have found out in the Scriptures by what evils

they are held chained which they ignorantly have coveted as though they

were good and useful. Fortitude corresponds to those hungering and

thirsting: for they labour in earnestly desiring joy from things that

are truly good, and in eagerly seeking to turn away their love from

earthly and corporeal things: and of them it is here said, "Blessed are

they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Counsel

corresponds to the merciful: for this is the one remedy for escaping

from so great evils, that we forgive, as we wish to be ourselves

forgiven; and that we assist others so far as we are able, as we

ourselves desire to be assisted where we are not able: and of them it

is here said, "Blessed are the merciful." Understanding corresponds to

the pure in heart, the eye being as it were purged, by which that may

be beheld which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and what hath not

entered into the heart of man: [35] and of them it is here said,

"Blessed are the pure in heart." Wisdom corresponds to the peacemakers,

in whom all things are now brought into order, and no passion is in a

state of rebellion against reason, but all things together obey the

spirit of man, while he himself also obeys God: and of them it is here

said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." [36]

12. Moreover, the one reward, which is the kingdom of heaven, is

variously named according to these stages. In the first, just as ought

to be the case, is placed the kingdom of heaven, which is the perfect

and highest wisdom of the rational soul. Thus, therefore, it is said,

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:"

as if it were said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

To the meek an inheritance is given, as it were the testament of a

father to those dutifully seeking it: "Blessed are the meek, for they

shall inherit the earth." To the mourners comfort, as to those who know

what they have lost, and in what evils they are sunk: "Blessed are they

that mourn, for they shall be comforted." To those hungering and

thirsting, a full supply, as it were a refreshment to those labouring

and bravely contending for salvation: "Blessed are they which do hunger

and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." To the

merciful mercy, as to those following a true and excellent counsel, so

that this same treatment is extended toward them by one who is

stronger, which they extend toward the weaker: "Blessed are the

merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." To the pure in heart is given

the power of seeing God, as to those bearing about with them a pure eye

for discerning eternal things: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they

shall see God." To the peacemakers the likeness of God is given, as

being perfectly wise, and formed after the image of God by means of the

regeneration of the renewed man: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they

shall be called the children of God." And those promises can indeed be

fulfilled in this life, as we believe them to have been fulfilled in

the case of the apostles. For that all-embracing change into the

angelic form, which is promised after this life, cannot be explained in

any words. "Blessed," therefore, "are they which are persecuted for

righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This eighth

sentence, which goes back to the starting-point, and makes manifest the

perfect man, is perhaps set forth in its meaning both by the

circumcision on the eighth day in the Old Testament, and by the

resurrection of the Lord after the Sabbath, the day which is certainly

the eighth, and at the same time the first day; and by the celebration

of the eight festival days which we celebrate in the case of the

regeneration of the new man; and by the very number of Pentecost. For

to the number seven, seven times multiplied, by which we make

forty-nine, as it were an eighth is added, so that fifty may be made

up, and we, as it were, return to the starting-point: on which day the

Holy Spirit was sent, by whom we are led into the kingdom of heaven,

and receive the inheritance, and are comforted; and are fed, and obtain

mercy, and are purified, and are made peacemakers; and being thus

perfect, we bear all troubles brought upon us from without for the sake

of truth and righteousness.

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[32] Isa. xi. 2, 3.

[33] Rom. xi. 20.

[34] Augustin follows the Septuagint, which has "piety" instead of "the

fear of the Lord" in the last clause of Isa. xi. 2.

[35] Isa. lxiv. 4 and 1 Cor. ii. 9.

[36] This is guarded against misconstruction in the Retract. I. xix. 1.

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Chapter V.

13. "Blessed are ye," says He, "when men shall revile you, and

persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for

my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great [37] is your reward

in heaven." Let any one who is seeking after the delights of this world

and the riches of temporal things under the Christian name, consider

that our blessedness is within; as it is said of the soul of the Church

[38] by the mouth of the prophet, "All the beauty of the king's

daughter is within;" [39] for outwardly revilings, and persecutions,

and disparagements are promised; and yet, from these things there is a

great reward in heaven, which is felt in the heart of those who endure,

those who can now say, "We glory in tribulations: knowing that

tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience,

hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed

abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." [40]

For it is not simply the enduring of such things that is advantageous,

but the bearing of such things for the name of Christ not only with

tranquil mind, but even with exultation. For many heretics, deceiving

souls under the Christian name, endure many such things; but they are

excluded from that reward on this account, that it is not said merely,

"Blessed are they which endure persecution;" but it is added, "for

righteousness' sake." Now, where there is no sound faith, there can be

no righteousness, for the just [righteous] man lives by faith. [41]

Neither let schismatics promise themselves anything of that reward; for

similarly, where there is no love, there cannot be righteousness, for

"love worketh no ill to his neighbour;" [42] and if they had it, they

would not tear in pieces Christ's body, which is the Church. [43]

14. But it may be asked, What is the difference when He says, "when men

shall revile you," and "when they shall say all manner of evil against

you," since to revile [44] is just this, to say evil against? [45] But

it is one thing when the reviling word is hurled with contumely in

presence of him who is reviled, as it was said to our Lord, "Say we not

the truth [46] that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" [47] and

another thing, when our reputation is injured in our absence, as it is

also written of Him, "Some said, He is a prophet; [48] others said,

Nay, but He deceiveth the people." [49] Then, further, to persecute is

to inflict violence, or to assail with snares, as was done by him who

betrayed Him, and by them who crucified Him. Certainly, as for the fact

that this also is not put in a bare form, so that it should be said,

"and shall say all manner of evil against you," but there is added the

word "falsely," and also the expression "for my sake;" I think that the

addition is made for the sake of those who wish to glory in

persecutions, and in the baseness of their reputation; and to say that

Christ belongs to them for this reason, that many bad things are said

about them; while, on the one hand, the things said are true, when they

are said respecting their error; and, on the other hand, if sometimes

also some false charges are thrown out, which frequently happens from

the rashness of men, yet they do not suffer such things for Christ's

sake. [50] For he is not a follower of Christ who is not called a

Christian according to the true faith and the catholic discipline.

15. "Rejoice," says He, "and be exceeding glad: for great is your

reward in heaven." I do not think that it is the higher parts of this

visible world that are here called heaven. For our reward, which ought

to be immoveable and eternal, is not to be placed in things fleeting

and temporal. But I think the expression "in heaven" means in the

spiritual firmament, where dwells everlasting righteousness: in

comparison with which a wicked soul is called earth, to which it is

said when it sins, "Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt return."

[51] Of this heaven the apostle says, "For our conversation is in

heaven." [52] Hence they who rejoice in spiritual good are conscious of

that reward now; but then it will be perfected in every part, when this

mortal also shall have put on immortality. "For," says He, "so

persecuted they the prophets also which were before you." In the

present case He has used "persecution" in a general sense, as applying

alike to abusive words and to the tearing in pieces of one's

reputation; and has well encouraged them by an example, because they

who speak true things are wont to suffer persecution: nevertheless did

not the ancient prophets on this account, through fear of persecution,

give over the preaching of the truth.

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[37] Multa; Vulgate, copiosa.

[38] Anima ecclesiastica.

[39] Ps. xlv. 13.

[40] Rom. v. 3-5.

[41] Hab. ii. 4 and Rom. i. 17.

[42] Rom. xiii. 10.

[43] Col. i. 24.

[44] Maledicere.

[45] Malum dicere.

[46] Verum. The Vulgate more literally has bene.

[47] John viii. 48.

[48] The Vulgate, following the Greek, has bonus,--good man.

[49] Chap. vii. 12.

[50] "It is not the suffering but the cause, that makes men martyrs."

For, says Augustin in another place (En. in Ps. xxxiv. 23), if the

suffering made the martyr, every mine would be full of martyrs, every

chain drag them, every one beheaded with the sword be crowned. They who

suffer for righteousness' sake, suffer for Christ's sake.

[51] Gen. iii. 19.

[52] Phil. iii. 20.

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Chapter VI.

16. Hence there follows most justly the statement, "Ye are the salt of

the earth;" showing that those parties are to be judged insipid, who,

either in the eager pursuit after abundance of earthly blessings, or

through the dread of want, lose the eternal things which can neither be

given nor taken away by men. "But [53] if the salt have lost [54] its

savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" i.e., If ye, by means of whom

the nations in a measure are to be preserved [from corruption], through

the dread of temporal persecutions shall lose the kingdom of heaven,

where will be the men through whom error may be removed from you, since

God has chosen you, in order that through you He might remove the error

of others? Hence the savourless salt is "good for nothing, but to be

cast out, and trodden under foot of men." It is not therefore he who

suffers persecution, but he who is rendered savourless by the fear of

persecution, that is trodden under foot of men. For it is only one who

is undermost that can be trodden under foot; but he is not undermost,

who, however many things he may suffer in his body on the earth, yet

has his heart fixed in heaven. [55]

17. "Ye are the light [56] of the world." In the same way as He said

above, "the salt of the earth," so now He says, "the light of the

world." For in the former case that earth is not to be understood which

we tread with our bodily feet, but the men who dwell upon the earth, or

even the sinners, for the preserving of whom and for the extinguishing

of whose corruptions the Lord sent the apostolic salt. And here, by the

world must be understood not the heavens and the earth, but the men who

are in the world or love the world, for the enlightening of whom the

apostles were sent. [57] "A city that is set on [58] an hill cannot be

hid," i.e. [a city] founded upon great and distinguished righteousness,

which is also the meaning of the mountain itself on which our Lord is

discoursing. "Neither do men light a candle [59] and put it under a

bushel measure." [60] What view are we to take? That the expression

"under a bushel measure" is so used that only the concealment of the

candle is to be understood, as if He were saying, No one lights a

candle and conceals it? Or does the bushel measure also mean something,

so that to place a candle under a bushel is this, to place the comforts

of the body higher than the preaching of the truth; so that one does

not preach the truth so long as he is afraid of suffering any annoyance

in corporeal and temporal things? And it is well said a bushel measure,

whether on account of the recompense of measure, for each one receives

the things done in his body,--"that every one," says the apostle, "may

there receive [61] the things done in his body;" and it is said in

another place, as if of this bushel measure of the body, "For with what

measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again:" [62] --or because

temporal good things, which are carried to completion in the body, are

both begun and come to an end in a certain definite number of days,

which is perhaps meant by the "bushel measure;" while eternal and

spiritual things are confined within no such limit, "for God giveth not

the Spirit by measure." [63] Every one, therefore, who obscures and

covers up the light of good doctrine by means of temporal comforts,

places his candle under a bushel measure. "But on a candlestick." [64]

Now it is placed on a candlestick by him who subordinates his body to

the service of God, so that the preaching of the truth is the higher,

and the serving of the body the lower; yet by means even of the service

of the body the doctrine shines more conspicuously, inasmuch as it is

insinuated into those who learn by means of bodily functions, i.e. by

means of the voice and tongue, and the other movements of the body in

good works. The apostle therefore puts his candle on a candlestick,

when he says, "So fight I, not as one that beateth [65] the air; but I

keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any

means, when I preach to others, I myself should be found a castaway."

[66] When He says, however, "that it may give light to all who are in

the house," I am of opinion that it is the abode of men which is called

a house, i.e. the world itself, on account of what He says before, "Ye

are the light of the world;" or if any one chooses to understand the

house as being the Church, this, too, is not out of place.

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[53] "A warning against pride" (Schaff).

[54] Infatuatum fuerit; Vulgate, evanuerit.

[55] Others follow Augustin in regarding the connection of this verse

and the next with the preceding one as very close. All the more must

they refuse to yield to persecution, as they have a function in the

world which is well represented by salt and light (Weizs�cker, Meyer,

etc.). The function of salt is to preserve and to season. With it

Elisha healed the unwholesome water (2 Kings ii. 21). The use of salt

in the sacrifices is, no doubt, alluded to (Tholuck). It becomes

savourless. Dr. Thomson says (Land and Book, ii. 43), "It is a

well-known fact that the salt in this country (gathered from the

marshes in dry weather), when in contact with the ground, or exposed to

air and sun, does become insipid and useless." The disciples are

appointed to communicate the truth and moral grace, before spoken of in

the Beatitudes, to counteract the error and corruption in the earth.

"Earth" not to be confined to "society as then existing, the definite

form the world then presented" (Lange), but to mankind in general, as

Augustin below. "Wherewith shall it be salted" does not imply that

those who have once fallen cannot be reclaimed (Alford). The comment of

Grotius is good: "Ipsi emendare alios debebent, non autem exspectare ut

ab aliis ipsi emendarentur" ("They ought to improve others, not expect

to be themselves improved by others").

[56] Lumen, also used for a luminary; Vulgate, lux. In a lower and

derivative sense are the disciples "the light," etc. (Alford), deriving

their light-giving quality from Him who is the "Light of the world"

(John viii. 12), so that they become "lights in the world" (Phil. ii.

15). Augustin (Sermon, ccclxxx.): Johannes lumen illuminatum, Christus

lumen illuminans.

[57] "The influence of salt is internal, of light external: hence the

element in which they work, the earth and the world, both referring to

mankind; the latter more to its organized external form" (Schaff).

[58] Constituta; Vulgate, posita. The city was probably visible. Some

have thought of the village on Mount Tabor, others of an ancient

fortress, predecessor of the present Safed (Dean Stanley, Thomson);

certainly not Jerusalem (Weizs�cker).

[59] Lucerna.

[60] The Greek has the definite article ton modion.

[61] 2 Cor. v. 10. Recipiat unusquisque qu� gessit in corpore. Vulgate,

referat unusquisque propria corporis, prout gessit, etc.

[62] Matt. vii. 2.

[63] John iii. 34; which words, however, are, as Augustin subsequently

observed (Retract. I. xix. 3), applicable only to Christ.

[64] Candelabrum.

[65] C�dens; Vulgate, verberans.

[66] 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. Ne forte aliis predicans...invenir. Vulgate, Ne

forte cum aliis pr�dicaverim...efficir.

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Chapter VII.

18. "Let your light," [67] says He, "so shine before men, that they may

see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." If He

had merely said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see

your good works," He would seem to have fixed an end in the praises of

men, which hypocrites seek, and those who canvass for honours and covet

glory of the emptiest kind. Against such parties it is said, "If I yet

pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ;" [68] and, by the

prophet, "They who please men are put to shame, because God hath

despised them;" and again, "God hath broken the bones of those who

please men;" [69] and again the apostle, "Let us not be desirous of

vainglory;" [70] and still another time, "But let every man prove his

own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in

another." [71] Hence our Lord has not said merely, "that they may see

your good works," but has added, "and glorify your Father who is in

heaven:" so that the mere fact that a man by means of good works

pleases men, does not there set it up as an end that he should please

men; but let him subordinate this to the praise of God, and for this

reason please men, that God may be glorified in him. For this is

expedient for them who offer praise, that they should honour, not man,

but God; as our Lord showed in the case of the man who was carried,

where, on the paralytic being healed, the multitude, marvelling at His

powers, as it is written in the Gospel, "feared and glorified God,

which had given such power unto men." [72] And His imitator, the

Apostle Paul, says, "But they had heard only, that he which persecuted

us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; and

they glorified [73] God in me."

19. And therefore, after He has exhorted His hearers that they should

prepare themselves to bear all things for truth and righteousness, and

that they should not hide the good which they were about to receive,

but should learn with such benevolence as to teach others, aiming in

their good works not at their own praise, but at the glory of God, He

begins now to inform and to teach them what they are to teach; as if

they were asking Him, saying: Lo, we are willing both to bear all

things for Thy name, and not to hide Thy doctrine; but what precisely

is this which Thou forbiddest us to hide, and for which Thou commandest

us to bear all things? Art Thou about to mention other things contrary

to those which are written in the law? "No," says He; "for think not

that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to

destroy, but to fulfil."

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[67] Lumen; Vulgate, lux. Christ presupposes His righteousness to have

become the principle of their life. "They were to stand forth openly

and boldly with the message of the New Testament" ( Lange).

[68] Gal. i. 10.

[69] Ps. liii. 5.

[70] Gal. v. 26.

[71] Chap. vi. 4.

[72] Matt. ix. 8.

[73] Gal. i. 23, 24. Vastabat...glorificabant; Vulgate,

expugnabat...clarificabant.

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Chapter VIII.

20. In this sentence the meaning is twofold. [74] We must deal with it

in both ways. For He who says, "I am not come [75] to destroy the law,

but to fulfil," means it either in the way of adding what is wanting,

or of doing what is in it. Let us then consider that first which I have

put first: for he who adds what is wanting does not surely destroy what

he finds, but rather confirms it by perfecting it; and accordingly He

follows up with the statement, "Verily I say unto you, [76] Till heaven

and earth pass, one iota or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the

law, till all be fulfilled." For, if even those things which are added

for completion are fulfilled, much more are those things fulfilled

which are sent in advance as a commencement. Then, as to what He says,

"One iota or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law," nothing

else can be understood but a strong expression of perfection, since it

is pointed out by means of single letters, among which letters "iota"

is smaller than the others, for it is made by a single stroke; while a

"tittle" is but a particle of some sort at the top of even that. And by

these words He shows that in the law all the smallest particulars even

are to be carried into effect. [77] After that He subjoins: "Whosoever,

therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach

men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." Hence

it is the least commandments that are meant by "one iota" and "one

tittle." And therefore, "whosoever shall break and shall teach [men]

so,"--i.e. in accordance with what he breaks, not in accordance with

what he finds and reads,--"shall be called the least in the kingdom of

heaven;" and therefore, perhaps, he will not be in the kingdom of

heaven at all, where only the great can be. "But whosoever shall do and

teach [men] so," [78] --i.e. who shall not break, and shall teach men

so, in accordance with what he does not break,--"shall be called great

in the kingdom of heaven." But in regard to him who shall be called

great in the kingdom of heaven, it follows that he is also in the

kingdom of heaven, into which the great are admitted: for to this what

follows refers.

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[74] Here begins the second part of the Sermon. In it our Lord sets

forth His relation as a lawgiver to the Mosaic law, especially as

currently interpreted according to the letter only (Meyer, Alford

etc.).

[75] Veni; Greek, elthon.

[76] A decisive assertion of authority. Asseveratio gravissima ei

propria, qui per se ipsum et per suam veritatem asseverat (Bengel). The

prophet's most emphatic statement was, "Thus saith the Lord." Christ

speaks in His own name, as the fount of authority (v. 20 and often:

John iii. 3, xiv. 12, etc.).

[77] "Christ's words are decisive against all those who would set aside

the Old Testament as without significance, or inconsistent with the New

Testament" (Alford). Christ declares the New to be rooted in the Old;

its consummation, not its destruction. The essence and purport of the

law, the "whole law," was fulfilled by Him (Meyer). Theophylact well

compares the law to a sketch, which Christ (like the painter) does not

destroy, but fills out.

[78] Sic; Greek, houtos; Vulgate, hic.

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Chapter IX.

21. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed

the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case

enter into the kingdom of heaven;" [79] i.e., unless ye shall fulfil

not only those least precepts of the law which begin the man, but also

those which are added by me, who am not come to destroy the law, but to

fulfil it, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. But you say

to me: If, when He was speaking above of those least commandments, He

said that whosoever shall break one of them, and shall teach in

accordance with his transgression, is called the least in the kingdom

of heaven; but that whosoever shall do them, and shall teach [men] so,

is called great, and hence will be already in the kingdom of heaven,

because he is great: what need is there for additions to the least

precepts of the law, if he can be already in the kingdom of heaven,

because whosoever shall do them, and shall so teach, is great? For this

reason that sentence is to be understood thus: "But whosoever shall do

and teach men so, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of

heaven,"--i.e. not in accordance with those least commandments, but in

accordance with those which I am about to mention. Now what are they?

"That your righteousness," says He, "may exceed that of the scribes and

Pharisees;" for unless it shall exceed theirs, ye shall not enter into

the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall break those least

commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least; but

whosoever shall do those least commandments, and shall teach men so, is

not necessarily to be reckoned great and meet for the kingdom of

heaven; but yet he is not so much the least as the man who breaks them.

But in order that he may be great and fit for that kingdom, he ought to

do and teach as Christ now teaches, i.e. in order that his

righteousness may exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. The

righteousness of the Pharisees is, that they shall not kill; the

righteousness of those who are destined to enter into the kingdom of

God, that they be not angry without a cause. The least commandment,

therefore, is not to kill; and whosoever shall break that, shall be

called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall fulfil that

commandment not to kill, will not, as a necessary consequence, be great

and meet for the kingdom of heaven, but yet he ascends a certain step.

He will be perfected, however, if he be not angry without a cause; and

if he shall do this, he will be much further removed from murder. For

this reason he who teaches that we should not be angry, does not break

the law not to kill, but rather fulfils it; so that we preserve our

innocence both outwardly when we do not kill, and in heart when we are

not angry.

22. "Ye have heard" therefore, says He, "that it was said to them of

old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in

danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry

with his brother without a cause [80] shall be in danger of the

judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in

danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in

danger of the gehenna of fire." What is the difference between being in

danger of the judgment, and being in danger of the council, and being

in danger of the gehenna of fire? [81] For this last sounds most

weighty, and reminds us that certain stages were passed over from

lighter to more weighty, until the gehenna of fire was reached. And,

therefore, if it is a lighter thing to be in danger of the judgment

than to be in danger of the council, and if it is also a lighter thing

to be in danger of the council than to be in danger of the gehenna of

fire, we must understand it to be a lighter thing to be angry with a

brother without a cause than to say "Raca;" and again, to be a lighter

thing to say "Raca" than to say "Thou fool." For the danger would not

have gradations, unless the sins also were mentioned in gradation.

23. But here one obscure word has found a place, for "Raca" is neither

Latin nor Greek. The others, however, are current in our language. Now,

some have wished to derive the interpretation of this expression from

the Greek, supposing that a ragged person is called "Raca," because a

rag is called in Greek rhakos; yet, when one asks them what a ragged

person is called in Greek, they do not answer "Raca;" and further, the

Latin translator might have put the word ragged where he has placed

"Raca," and not have used a word which, on the one hand, has no

existence in the Latin language, and, on the other, is rare in the

Greek. Hence the view is more probable which I heard from a certain

Hebrew whom I had asked about it; for he said that the word does not

mean anything, but merely expresses the emotion of an angry mind.

Grammarians call those particles of speech which express an affection

of an agitated mind interjections; as when it is said by one who is

grieved, "Alas," or by one who is angry, "Hah." And these words in all

languages are proper names, and are not easily translated into another

language; and this cause certainly compelled alike the Greek and the

Latin translators to put the word itself, inasmuch as they could find

no way of translating it. [82]

24. There is therefore a gradation in the sins referred to, so that

first one is angry, and keeps that feeling as a conception in his

heart; but if now that emotion shall draw forth an expression of anger

not having any definite meaning, but giving evidence of that feeling of

the mind by the very fact of the outbreak wherewith he is assailed with

whom one is angry, this is certainly more than if the rising anger were

restrained by silence; but if there is heard not merely an expression

of anger, but also a word by which the party using it now indicates and

signifies a distinct censure of him against whom it is directed, who

doubts but that this is something more than if merely an exclamation of

anger were uttered? Hence in the first there is one thing, i.e. anger

alone; in the second two things, both anger and a word that expresses

anger; in the third three things, anger and a word that expresses

anger, and in that word the utterance of distinct censure. Look now

also at the three degrees of liability,--the judgment, the council, the

gehenna of fire. For in the judgment an opportunity is still given for

defence; in the council, however, although there is also wont to be a

judgment, yet because the very distinction compels us to acknowledge

that there is a certain difference in this place, the production of the

sentence seems to belong to the council, inasmuch as it is not now the

case of the accused himself that is in question, whether he is to be

condemned or not, but they who judge confer with one another to what

punishment they ought to condemn him, who, it is clear, is to be

condemned; but the gehenna of fire does not treat as a doubtful matter

either the condemnation, like the judgment, or the punishment of him

who is condemned, like the council; for in the gehenna of fire both the

condemnation and the punishment of him who is condemned are certain.

Thus there are seen certain degrees in the sins and in the liability to

punishment; [83] but who can tell in what ways they are invisibly shown

in the punishments of souls? We are therefore to learn how great the

difference is between the righteousness of the Pharisees and that

greater righteousness which introduces into the kingdom of heaven,

because while it is a more serious crime to kill than to inflict

reproach by means of a word, in the one case killing exposes one to the

judgment, but in the other anger exposes one to the judgment, which is

the least of those three sins; for in the former case they were

discussing the question of murder among men, but in the latter all

things are disposed of by means of a divine judgment, where the end of

the condemned is the gehenna of fire. But whoever shall say that murder

is punished by a more severe penalty under the greater righteousness if

a reproach is punished by the gehenna of fire, compels us to understand

that there are differences of gehennas.

25. Indeed, in the three statements before us, we must observe that

some words are understood. For the first statement has all the words

that are necessary. "Whosoever," says He, "is angry with his brother

without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." But in the

second, when He says, "and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca,"

there is understood the expression without cause, [84] and thus there

is subjoined, "shall be in danger of the council." In the third, now,

where He says, "but whosoever shall say, Thou fool," two things are

understood, both to his brother and without cause. And in this way we

defend the apostle when he calls the Galatians fools, [85] to whom he

also gives the name of brethren; for he does not do it without cause.

And here the word brother is to be understood for this reason, that the

case of an enemy is spoken of afterwards, and how he also is to be

treated under the greater righteousness.

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[79] "With all their care, they had not understood the true spirit of

the law" (Schaff). The rest of the Sermon is largely a comment on this

verse, Christ giving His interpretation of the law, and the

righteousness following upon its observance; showing that the purport

goes beyond the external act of obedience to the purpose of the heart,

and that in the external act of obedience the real purport might be

ignored.

[80] Sine causa. The weight of critical evidence is against this

clause, which is omitted by Tischendorf, Westcott, and Hort, the

Vulgate and the Revised Version.

[81] The "judgment" (krisis) was the local court of seven, which every

community was enjoined to have (Deut. xvi. 18). The "council" was the

Sanhedrin, consisting of seventy-two members, sitting in Jerusalem. The

"gehenna" was the vale of Hinnom, on the confines of Jerusalem, where

sacrifices were offered to Moloch, and which became the place for

refuse and the burning of dead bodies. In the New Testament it is

equivalent to "hell."

[82] Raca is from the Chald. ryq', and is a term of contempt equivalent

to empty-headed (Thayer's Lexicon). Trench translates, "Oh, vain man!"

[83] It is important "to keep in mind that there is no distinction in

kind between these punishments, only of degree. The judgment' (krisis)

inflicted death by the sword, the Sanhedrin death by stoning, and the

disgrace of the gehenna followed as an intensification of death; but

the punishment is one and the same,--death. So also in the subject of

the similitude. All the punishments are spiritual; all result in

eternal death, but with various degrees, as the degrees of guilt have

been" (Alford).

[84] Augustin helps us to understand how the word eike (without cause)

in the preceding clause crept into some of the Mss. In Retract. I. xix.

4 he makes the critical note and correction: "Codices gr�ci non habent

sine causa."

[85] Gal. iii. 1.

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Chapter X.

26. Next there follows here: "Therefore, if thou hast brought [86] thy

gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought

against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way;

first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

From this surely it is clear that what is said above is said of a

brother: inasmuch as the sentence which follows is connected by such a

conjunction that it confirms the preceding one; for He does not say,

But if thou bring thy gift to the altar; but He says, "Therefore, if

thou bring thy gift to the altar." For if it is not lawful to be angry

with one's brother without a cause, or to say "Raca," or to say "Thou

fool," much less is it lawful so to retain anything in one's mind, as

that indignation may be turned into hatred. And to this belongs also

what is said in another passage: "Let not the sun go down upon your

wrath." [87] We are therefore commanded, when about to bring our gift

to the altar, if we remember that our brother hath ought against us, to

leave the gift before the altar, and to go and be reconciled to our

brother, and then to come and offer the gift. [88] But if this is to be

understood literally, one might perhaps suppose that such a thing ought

to be done if the brother is present; for it cannot be delayed too

long, since you are commanded to leave your gift before the altar. If,

therefore, such a thing should come into your mind respecting one who

is absent, and, as may happen, even settled down beyond the sea, it is

absurd to suppose that your gift is to be left before the altar until

you may offer it to God after having traversed both lands and seas. And

therefore we are compelled to have recourse to an altogether internal

and spiritual interpretation, in order that what has been said may be

understood without absurdity.

27. And so we may interpret the altar spiritually, as being faith

itself in the inner temple of God, whose emblem is the visible altar.

For whatever offering we present to God, whether prophecy, or teaching,

or prayer, or a psalm, or a hymn, and whatever other such like

spiritual gift occurs to the mind, it cannot be acceptable to God,

unless it be sustained by sincerity of faith, and, as it were, placed

on that fixedly and immoveably, so that what we utter may remain whole

and uninjured. For many heretics, not having the altar, i.e. true

faith, have spoken blasphemies for praise; being weighed down, to wit,

with earthly opinions, and thus, as it were, throwing down their

offering on the ground. But there ought also to be purity of intention

on the part of the offerer. And therefore, when we are about to present

any such offering in our heart, i.e. in the inner temple of God ("For,"

as it is said, "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are;" [89]

and, "That Christ may dwell in the inner man [90] by faith in your

hearts") if it occur to our mind that a brother hath ought against us,

i.e. if we have injured him in anything (for then he has something

against us whereas we have something against him if he has injured us,

and in that case it is not necessary to proceed to reconciliation: for

you will not ask pardon of one who has done you an injury, but merely

forgive him, as you desire to be forgiven by the Lord what you have

committed against Him), we are therefore to proceed to reconciliation,

when it has occurred to our mind that we have perhaps injured our

brother in something; but this is to be done not with the bodily feet,

but with the emotions of the mind, so that you are to prostrate

yourself with humble disposition before your brother, to whom you have

hastened in affectionate thought, in the presence of Him to whom you

are about to present your offering. For thus, even if he should be

present, you will be able to soften him by a mind free from

dissimulation, and to recall him to goodwill by asking pardon, if first

you have done this before God, going to him not with the slow movement

of the body, but with the very swift impulse of love; and then coming,

i.e. recalling your attention to that which you were beginning to do,

you will offer your gift. [91]

28. But who acts in a way that he is neither angry with his brother

without a cause, nor says "Raca" without a cause, nor calls him a fool

without a cause, all of which are most proudly committed; or so, that,

if perchance he has fallen into any of these, he asks pardon with

suppliant mind, which is the only remedy; who but just the man that is

not puffed up with the spirit of empty boasting? "Blessed" therefore

"are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Let us

look now at what follows.

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[86] Obtuleris; Vulgate, offers.

[87] Eph. iv. 26.

[88] The performance of an act of worship does not atone for an offence

against a fellow-man. The duties toward God never absolve from man's

duties to his neighbour. Inter rem sacram magis subit recordatio

offensarum, quam in strepitu negotiorum (Bengel).

[89] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

[90] Eph. iii. 17. In interiore homine, a different construction from

the Greek, which has eis with the accusative. So Vulgate, in interiorem

hominem.

[91] "Discharge of duty to men does not absolve from duty to God." The

passage has strong bearing upon the relation of morality and religion.

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Chapter XI.

29. "Be kindly disposed," [92] says he, "toward thine adversary

quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the

adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the

officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou

shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost

farthing." I understand who the judge is: "For the Father judgeth no

man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." [93] I understand

who the officer is: "And angels," it is said, "ministered unto Him:"

[94] and we believe that He will come with His angels to judge the

quick and the dead. I understand what is meant by the prison: evidently

the punishments of darkness, which He calls in another passage the

outer darkness: [95] for this reason, I believe, that the joy of the

divine rewards is something internal in the mind itself, or even if

anything more hidden can be thought of, that joy of which it is said to

the servant who deserved well, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;"

[96] just as also, under this republican government, one who is thrust

into prison is sent out from the council chamber, or from the palace of

the judge.

30. But now, with respect to paying the uttermost farthing, [97] it may

be understood without absurdity either as standing for this, that

nothing is left unpunished; just as in common speech we also say "to

the very dregs," when we wish to express that something is so drained

out that nothing is left: or by the expression "the uttermost farthing"

earthly sins may be meant. For as a fourth part of the separate

component parts of this world, and in fact as the last, the earth is

found; so that you begin with the heavens, you reckon the air the

second, water the third, the earth the fourth. It may therefore seem to

be suitably said, "till thou hast paid the last fourth," in the sense

of "till thou hast expiated thy earthly sins:" for this the sinner also

heard, "Earth thou art, and unto earth shall thou return." [98] Then,

as to the expression "till thou hast paid," I wonder if it does not

mean that punishment which is called eternal. [99] For whence is that

debt paid where there is now no opportunity given of repenting and of

leading a more correct life? For perhaps the expression "till thou hast

paid" stands here in the same sense as in that passage where it is

said, "Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy

footstool;" [100] for not even when the enemies have been put under His

feet, will He cease to sit at the right hand: or that statement of the

apostle, "For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His

feet;" [101] for not even when they have been put under His feet, will

He cease to reign. Hence, as it is there understood of Him respecting

whom it is said, "He must reign, till He hath put His enemies under His

feet," that He will reign for ever, inasmuch as they will be for ever

under His feet: so here it may be understood of him respecting whom it

is said, "Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid

the uttermost farthing," that he will never come out; for he is always

paying the uttermost farthing, so long as he is suffering the

everlasting punishment of his earthly sins. Nor would I say this in

such a way as that I should seem to prevent a more careful discussion

respecting the punishment of sins, as to how in the Scriptures it is

called eternal; although in all possible ways it is to be avoided

rather than known.

31. But let us now see who the adversary himself is, with whom we are

enjoined to agree quickly, whiles we are in the way with him. For he is

either the devil, or a man, or the flesh, or God, or His commandment.

[102] But I do not see how we should be enjoined to be on terms of

goodwill, i.e. to be of one heart or of one mind, with the devil. For

some have rendered the Greek word which is found here "of one heart,"

others "of one mind:" but neither are we enjoined to show goodwill to

the devil (for where there is goodwill there is friendship: and no one

would say that we are to make friends with the devil); nor is it

expedient to come to an agreement with him, against whom we have

declared war by once for all renouncing him, and on conquering whom we

shall be crowned; nor ought we now to yield to him, for if we had never

yielded to him, we should never have fallen into such miseries. Again,

as to the adversary being a man, although we are enjoined to live

peaceably with all men, as far as lieth in us, where certainly

goodwill, and concord, and consent may be understood; yet I do not see

how I can accept the view, that we are delivered to the judge by a man,

in a case where I understand Christ to be the judge, "before" whose

"judgment-seat we must all appear," [103] as the apostle says: how then

is he to deliver me to the judge, who will appear equally with me

before the judge? Or if any one is delivered to the judge because he

has injured a man, although the party who has been injured does not

deliver him, it is a much more suitable view, that the guilty party is

delivered to the judge by that law against which he acted when he

injured the man. And this for the additional reason, that if any one

has injured a man by killing him, there will be no time now in which to

agree with him; for he is not now in the way with him, i.e. in this

life: and yet a remedy will not on that account be excluded, if one

repents and flees for refuge with the sacrifice of a broken heart to

the mercy of Him who forgives the sins of those who turn to Him, and

who rejoices more over one penitent than over ninety-nine just persons.

[104] But much less do I see how we are enjoined to bear goodwill

towards, or to agree with, or to yield to, the flesh. For it is sinners

rather who love their flesh, and agree with it, and yield to it; but

those who bring it into subjection are not the parties who yield to it,

but rather they compel it to yield to them.

32. Perhaps, therefore, we are enjoined to yield to God, and to be

well-disposed towards Him, in order that we may be reconciled to Him,

from whom by sinning we have turned away, so that He can be called our

adversary. For He is rightly called the adversary of those whom He

resists, for "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble;"

[105] and "pride is the beginning of all sin, but the beginning of

man's pride is to become apostate from God;" [106] and the apostle

says, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the

death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His

life." [107] And from this it may be perceived that no nature [as

being] bad is an enemy to God, inasmuch as the very parties who were

enemies are being reconciled. Whoever, therefore, while in this way,

i.e. in this life, shall not have been reconciled to God by the death

of His Son, will be delivered to the judge by Him, for "the Father

judgeth no man, but hath delivered all judgment to the Son;" and so the

other things which are described in this section follow, which we have

already discussed. There is only one thing which creates a difficulty

as regards this interpretation, viz. how it can be rightly said that we

are in the way with God, if in this passage He Himself is to be

understood as the adversary of the wicked, with whom we are enjoined to

be reconciled quickly; unless, perchance, because He is everywhere, we

also, while we are in this way, are certainly with Him. For as it is

said, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in

hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and

dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead

me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." [108] Or if the view is not

accepted, that the wicked are said to be with God, although there is

nowhere where God is not present,--just as we do not say that the blind

are with the light, although the light surrounds their eyes,--there is

one resource remaining: that we should understand the adversary here as

being the commandment of God. For what is so much an adversary to those

who wish to sin as the commandment of God, i.e. His law and divine

Scripture, which has been given us for this life, that it may be with

us in the way, which we must not contradict, lest it deliver us to the

judge, but which we ought to submit to quickly? For no one knows when

he may depart out of this life. Now, who is it that submits to divine

Scripture, save he who reads or hears it piously, deferring to it as of

supreme authority; so that what he understands he does not hate on this

account, that he feels it to be opposed to his sins, but rather loves

being reproved by it, and rejoices that his maladies are not spared

until they are healed; and so that even in respect to what seems to him

obscure or absurd, he does not therefore raise contentious

contradictions, but prays that he may understand, yet remembering that

goodwill and reverence are to be manifested towards so great an

authority? But who does this, unless just the man who has come, not

harshly threatening, but in the meekness of piety, for the purpose of

opening and ascertaining the contents of his father's will? "Blessed,"

therefore, "are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Let us see

what follows.

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[92] Benevolus; Vulgate, consentiens. What is matter of prudence in a

civil case, becomes matter of life and death in spiritual things. The

Lord does not intend to inculcate simply a law of worldly prudence as

asserted by a few modern commentators.

[93] John v. 22.

[94] Matt. iv. 11.

[95] Matt. viii. 12.

[96] Matt. xxv. 23.

[97] The word translated "farthing" means literally "a fourth part" and

on this original sense Augustin's second interpretation is based.

[98] Gen. iii. 19.

[99] Universalists have quoted the passage to prove the doctrine that

punishment will not be endless, others in favor of purgatory. The main

idea is the inexorable rigor of the divine justice against the

impenitent. "The whole tone of the passage is that of one who seeks to

deepen the sense of danger, not to make light of it; to make men feel

that they cannot pay their debt, though God may forgive it freely"

(Plumptre).

[100] Ps. cx. 1.

[101] 1 Cor. xv. 25.

[102] "The devil" (Clemens Alex.); "conscience" (Euthymius, Zig.); "the

man who has done the injury" (Meyer, Tholuck, Lange, Trench, etc.)

[103] 2 Cor. v. 10. Exhiberi; Vulgate, manifestari.

[104] Luke xv. 7.

[105] Jas. iv. 6.

[106] Ecclus. x. 13, 12.

[107] Rom. v. 10.

[108] Ps. cxxxix. 8-10.

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Chapter XII.

33. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not

commit adultery: but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman

to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his

heart." The lesser righteousness, therefore, is not to commit adultery

by carnal connection; but the greater righteousness of the kingdom of

God is not to commit adultery in the heart. Now, the man who does not

commit adultery in the heart, much more easily guards against

committing adultery in actual fact. Hence He who gave the later precept

confirmed the earlier; for He came not to destroy the law, but to

fulfil it. It is well worthy of consideration that He did not say,

Whosoever lusteth after a woman, but," Whosoever looketh on a woman to

lust after her," [109] i.e. turneth toward her with this aim and this

intent, that he may lust after her; which, in fact, is not merely to be

tickled [110] by fleshly delight, but fully to consent to lust; so that

the forbidden appetite is not restrained, but satisfied if opportunity

should be given.

34. For there are three things which go to complete sin: the suggestion

of, the taking pleasure in, and the consenting to. Suggestion takes

place either by means of memory, or by means of the bodily senses, when

we see, or hear, or smell, or taste, or touch anything. And if it give

us pleasure to enjoy this, this pleasure, if illicit, must be

restrained. Just as when we are fasting, and on seeing food the

appetite of the palate is stirred up, this does not happen without

pleasure; but we do not consent to this liking, and [111] we repress it

by the right of reason, which has the supremacy. But if consent shall

take place, the sin will be complete, known to God in our heart,

although it may not become known to men by deed. There are, then, these

steps: the suggestion is made, as it were, by a serpent, that is to

say, by a fleeting and rapid, i.e. a temporary, movement of bodies: for

if there are also any such images moving about in the soul, they have

been derived from without from the body; and if any hidden sensation of

the body besides those five senses touches the soul, that also is

temporary and fleeting; and therefore the more clandestinely it glides

in, so as to affect the process of thinking, the more aptly is it

compared to a serpent. Hence these three stages, as I was beginning to

say, resemble that transaction which is described in Genesis, so that

the suggestion and a certain measure of suasion is put forth, as it

were, by the serpent; but the taking pleasure in it lies in the carnal

appetite, as it were in Eve; and the consent lies in the reason, as it

were in the man: and these things having been acted through, the man is

driven forth, as it were, from paradise, i.e. from the most blessed

light of righteousness, into death [112] --in all respects most

righteously. For he who puts forth suasion does not compel. And all

natures are beautiful in their order, according to their gradations;

but we must not descend from the higher, among which the rational mind

has its place assigned, to the lower. Nor is any one compelled to do

this; and therefore, if he does it, he is punished by the just law of

God, for he is not guilty of this unwillingly. But yet, previous to

habit, either there is no pleasure, or it is so slight that there is

hardly any; and to yield to it is a great sin, as such pleasure is

unlawful. Now, when any one does yield, he commits sin in the heart.

If, however, he also proceeds to action, the desire seems to be

satisfied and extinguished; but afterwards, when the suggestion is

repeated, a greater pleasure is kindled, which, however, is as yet much

less than that which by continuous practice is converted into habit.

For it is very difficult to overcome this; and yet even habit itself,

if one does not prove untrue to himself, and does not shrink back in

dread from the Christian warfare, he will get the better of under His

(i.e. Christ's) leadership and assistance; and thus, in accordance with

primitive peace and order, both the man is subject to Christ, and the

woman is subject to the man. [113]

35. Hence, just as we arrive at sin by three steps,--suggestion,

pleasure, consent,--so of sin itself there are three varieties,--in

heart, in deed, in habit,--as it were, three deaths: one, as it were,

in the house, i.e. when we consent to lust in the heart; a second now,

as it were, brought forth outside the gate, when assent goes forward

into action; a third, when the mind is pressed down by the force of bad

habit, as if by a mound of earth, and is now, as it were, rotting in

the sepulchre. And whoever reads the Gospel perceives that our Lord

raised to life these three varieties of the dead. And perhaps he

reflects what differences may be found in the very word of Him who

raises them, when He says on one occasion, "Damsel, arise;" [114] on

another, "Young man, [115] I say unto thee, Arise;" [116] and when on

another occasion He groaned in the spirit, and wept, and again groaned,

and then afterwards "cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth."

[117]

36. And therefore, under the category of the adultery mentioned in this

section, we must understand all fleshly and sensual lust. For when

Scripture so constantly speaks of idolatry as fornication, and the

Apostle Paul calls avarice by the name of idolatry, [118] who doubts

but that every evil lust is rightly called fornication, since the soul,

neglecting the higher law by which it is ruled, and prostituting itself

for the base pleasure of the lower nature as its reward (so to speak),

is thereby corrupted? And therefore let every one who feels carnal

pleasure rebelling against right inclination in his own case through

the habit of sinning, by whose unsubdued violence he is dragged into

captivity, recall to mind as much as he can what kind of peace he has

lost by sinning, and let him cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who

shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus

Christ." [119] For in this way, when he cries out that he is wretched,

in the act of bewailing he implores the help of a comforter. Nor is it

a small approach to blessedness, when he has come to know his

wretchedness; and therefore "blessed" also "are they that mourn, [120]

for they shall be comforted."

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[109] The Greek pros to epithumesai refers to sin of intent. "The

particle pros indicates the mental aim" (Tholuck, Meyer, etc.). So

Augustin, rightly: "Qui hoc fine et hoc animo attenderit."

[110] Titillari.

[111] The reading "if" has been proposed by some.

[112] Gen. iii.

[113] 1 Cor. xi. 3 and Eph. v. 23.

[114] Mark v. 41.

[115] Juvenis; Vulgate, adolescens.

[116] Luke vii. 14.

[117] John xi. 33-44.

[118] Col. iii. 5 and Eph. v. 5.

[119] Rom. vii. 24, 25.

[120] Lugentes; Vulgate, qui lugent.

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Chapter XIII.

37. In the next place, He goes on to say: "And if thy right eye offend

thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for

thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body

should go [121] into hell." Here, certainly, there is need of great

courage in order to cut off one's members. [122] For whatever it is

that is meant by the "eye," undoubtedly it is such a thing as is

ardently loved. For those who wish to express their affection strongly

are wont to speak thus: I love him as my own eyes, or even more than my

own eyes. Then, when the word "right" is added, it is meant perhaps to

intensify the strength of the affection. [123] For although these

bodily eyes of ours are turned in a common direction for the purpose of

seeing, and if both are turned they have equal power, yet men are more

afraid of losing the right one. So that the sense in this case is:

Whatever it is which thou so lovest that thou reckonest it as a right

eye, if it offends thee, i.e. if it proves a hindrance to thee on the

way to true happiness, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is

profitable for thee, that one of these which thou so lovest that they

cleave to thee as if they were members, should perish, rather than that

thy whole body should be cast into hell.

38. But since He follows it up with a similar statement respecting the

right hand, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it

from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should

perish, and not that thy whole body should go [124] into hell," He

compels us to inquire more carefully what He has spoken of as an eye.

And as regards this inquiry, nothing occurs to me as a more suitable

explanation than a greatly beloved friend: for this, certainly, is

something which we may rightly call a member which we ardently love;

and this friend a counsellor, for it is an eye, as it were, pointing

out the road; and that in divine things, for it is the right eye: so

that the left is indeed a beloved counsellor, but in earthly matters,

pertaining to the necessities of the body; concerning which as a cause

of stumbling it was superfluous to speak, inasmuch as not even the

right was to be spared. Now, a counsellor in divine things is a cause

of stumbling, if he endeavours to lead one into any dangerous heresy

under the guise of religion and doctrine. Hence also let the right hand

be taken in the sense of a beloved helper and assistant in divine

works: for in like manner as contemplation is rightly understood as

having its seat in the eye, so action in the right hand; so that the

left hand may be understood in reference to works which are necessary

for this life, and for the body.

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[121] Eat; Vulgate, mittatur.

[122] Not literally (Fritzsche). Excision of the members would not of

itself destroy the lust of the heart.

[123] So Meyer et al. What Robert South says (Sermon on John vii. 17)

of the Sermon on the Mount as a whole, can certainly be applied here:

"All the particulars of Matt. v.-vii. are wrapt up in the doctrine of

self-denial, prescribing to the world the most inward purity of heart,

and a constant conflict with all our sensual appetites and worldly

interests," etc. Augustin's interpretation is correct as far as it

goes, but it is too restricted. Christ does not here insist upon the

renunciation of sinful lusts, but upon the evasion of occasions of sin.

What is harmless and innocent of itself, when through any temperament

or condition it becomes an occasion of sinning, is to be relinquished.

[124] Eat. So Vulgate.

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Chapter XIV.

39. "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give

her a writing of divorcement." This is the lesser righteousness of the

Pharisees, which is not opposed by what our Lord says: "But I say unto

you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of

fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: [125] and whosoever shall

marry her that is loosed from her husband committeth adultery." [126]

For He who gave the commandment that a writing of divorcement should be

given, did not give the commandment that a wife should be put away; but

"whosoever shall put away," says He, "let him give her a writing of

divorcement," in order that the thought of such a writing might

moderate the rash anger of him who was getting rid of his wife. And,

therefore, He who sought to interpose a delay in putting away,

indicated as far as He could to hard-hearted men that He did not wish

separation. And accordingly the Lord Himself in another passage, when a

question was asked Him as to this matter, gave this reply: "Moses did

so because of the hardness of your hearts." [127] For however

hard-hearted a man may be who wishes to put away his wife, when he

reflects that, on a writing of divorcement being given her, she could

then without risk marry another, he would be easily appeased. Our Lord,

therefore, in order to confirm that principle, that a wife should not

lightly be put away, made the single exception of fornication; but

enjoins that all other annoyances, if any such should happen to spring

up, be borne with fortitude for the sake of conjugal fidelity and for

the sake of chastity; and he also calls that man an adulterer who

should marry her that has been divorced by her husband. And the Apostle

Paul shows the limit of this state of affairs, for he says it is to be

observed as long as her husband liveth; but on the husband's death he

gives permission to marry. [128] For he himself also held by this rule,

and therein brings forward not his own advice, as in the case of some

of his admonitions, but a command by the Lord when he says: "And unto

the married [129] I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife

[130] depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain

unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put

away his wife." [131] I believe that, according to a similar rule, if

he shall put her away, he is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to

his wife. For it may happen that he puts away his wife for the cause of

fornication, which our Lord wished to make an exception of. But now, if

she is not allowed to marry while the husband is living from whom she

has departed, nor he to take another while the wife is living whom he

has put away, much less is it right to commit unlawful acts of

fornication with any parties whomsoever. More blessed indeed are those

marriages to be reckoned, where the parties concerned, whether after

the procreation of children, or even through contempt of such an

earthly progeny, have been able with common consent to practise

self-restraint toward each other: both because nothing is done contrary

to that precept whereby the Lord forbids a spouse to be put away (for

he does not put her away who lives with her not carnally, but

spiritually), and because that principle is observed to which the

apostle gives expression, "It remaineth, that they that have wives be

as though they had none." [132]

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[125] Per alias nuptias, quarum potestatem dat divortium ("by another

marriage, power of which divorce gives."--Bengel). So also Meyer,

Alford, etc.

[126] Solutam a viro...moechatur; Vulgate, dimissam...adulterat.

[127] Matt. xix. 8.

[128] Rom. vii. 2, 3.

[129] In conjugio...mulierem; Vulgate, matrimonio...uxorem.

[130] In conjugio...mulierem; Vulgate, matrimonio...uxorem.

[131] 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

[132] 1 Cor. vii. 29.

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Chapter XV.

40. But it is rather that statement which the Lord Himself makes in

another passage which is wont to disturb the minds of the little ones,

who nevertheless earnestly desire to live now according to the precepts

of Christ: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother,

and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own

life also, he cannot be my disciple." [133] For it may seem a

contradiction to the less intelligent, that here He forbids the putting

away of a wife saving for the cause of fornication, but that elsewhere

He affirms that no one can be a disciple of His who does not hate his

wife. But if He were speaking with reference to sexual intercourse, He

would not place father, and mother, and brothers in the same category.

But how true it is, that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and

they that use violence take it by force!" [134] For how great violence

is necessary, in order that a man may love his enemies, and hate his

father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers! For He

commands both things who calls us to the kingdom of heaven. And how

these things do not contradict each other, it is easy to show under His

guidance; but after they have been understood, it is difficult to carry

them out, although this too is very easy when He Himself assists us.

For in that eternal kingdom to which He has vouchsafed to call His

disciples, to whom He also gives the name of brothers, there are no

temporal relationships of this sort. For "there is neither Jew nor

Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor

female;" "but Christ is all, and in all." [135] And the Lord Himself

says: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in

marriage, [136] but are as the angels of God in heaven." [137] Hence it

is necessary that whoever wishes here and now to aim after the life of

that kingdom, should hate not the persons themselves, but those

temporal relationships by which this life of ours, which is transitory

and is comprised in being born and dying, is upheld; because he who

does not hate them, does not yet love that life where there is no

condition of being born and dying, which unites parties in earthly

wedlock.

41. Therefore, if I were to ask any good Christian who has a wife, and

even though he may still be having children by her, whether he would

like to have his wife in that kingdom; mindful in any case of the

promises of God, and of that life where this incorruptible shall put on

incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; [138] though at

present hesitating from the greatness, or at least from a certain

degree of love, he would reply with execration that he is strongly

averse to it. Were I to ask him again, whether he would like his wife

to live with him there, after the resurrection, when she had undergone

that angelic change which is promised to the saints, he would reply

that he desired this as strongly as he reprobated the other. Thus a

good Christian is found in one and the same woman to love the creature

of God, whom he desires to be transformed and renewed; but to hate the

corruptible and mortal conjugal connection and sexual intercourse: i.e.

to love in her what is characteristic of a human being, to hate what

belongs to her as a wife. So also he loves his enemy, not in as far as

he is an enemy, but in as far as he is a man; so that he wishes the

same prosperity to come to him as to himself, viz. that he may reach

the kingdom of heaven rectified and renewed. This is to be understood

both of father and mother and the other ties of blood, that we hate in

them what has fallen to the lot of the human race in being born and

dying, but that we love what can be carried along with us to those

realms where no one says, My Father; but all say to the one God, "Our

Father:" and no one says, My mother; but all say to that other

Jerusalem, Our mother: and no one says, My brother; but each says

respecting every other, Our brother. But in fact there will be a

marriage on our part as of one spouse (when we have been brought

together into unity), with Him who hath delivered us from the pollution

of this world by the shedding of His own blood. It is necessary,

therefore, that the disciple of Christ should hate these things which

pass away, in those whom he desires along with himself to reach those

things which shall for ever remain; and that he should the more hate

these things in them, the more he loves themselves.

42. A Christian may therefore live in concord with his wife, whether

with her providing for a fleshly craving, a thing which the apostle

speaks by permission, not by commandment; or providing for the

procreation of children, which may be at present in some degree

praiseworthy; or providing for a brotherly and sisterly fellowship,

without any corporeal connection, having his wife as though he had her

not, as is most excellent and sublime in the marriage of Christians:

yet so that in her he hates the name of temporal relationship, and

loves the hope of everlasting blessedness. For we hate, without doubt,

that respecting which we wish at least, that at some time hereafter it

should not exist; as, for instance, this same life of ours in the

present world, which if we were not to hate as being temporal, we would

not long for the future life, which is not conditioned by time. For as

a substitute for this life the soul is put, respecting which it is said

in that passage, "If a man hate not his own soul [139] also, he cannot

be my disciple." For that corruptible meat is necessary for this life,

of which the Lord Himself says, "Is not the soul [140] more than meat?"

i.e. this life to which meat is necessary. And when He says that He

would lay down His soul [141] for His sheep, He undoubtedly means this

life, as He is declaring that He is going to die for us.

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[133] Luke xiv. 26.

[134] Matt xi. 12. Qui vim faciunt diripiunt illud; Vulgate, violenti

rapiunt illud.

[135] Gal. iii. 28 and Col. iii. 11.

[136] Uxores ducent; Vulgate, nubentur.

[137] Matt. xxii. 30.

[138] 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.

[139] Luke xiv. 26.

[140] Matt. vi. 25.

[141] John x. 15.

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Chapter XVI.

43. Here there arises a second question, when the Lord allows a wife to

be put away for the cause of fornication, in what latitude of meaning

fornication is to be understood in this passage,--whether in the sense

understood by all, viz. that we are to understand that fornication to

be meant which is committed in acts of uncleanness; or whether, in

accordance with the usage of Scripture in speaking of fornication (as

has been mentioned above), as meaning all unlawful corruption, such as

idolatry or covetousness, and therefore, of course, every transgression

of the law on account of the unlawful lust [involved in it]. [142] But

let us consult the apostle, that we may not say rashly. "And unto the

married I command," says he, "yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife

depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain

unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband." For it may happen that she

departs for that cause for which the Lord gives permission to do so.

Or, if a woman is at liberty to put away her husband for other causes

besides that of fornication, and the husband is not at liberty, what

answer shall we give respecting this statement which he has made

afterwards, "And let not the husband put away his wife"? Wherefore did

he not add, saving for the cause of fornication, which the Lord

permits, unless because he wishes a similar rule to be understood, that

if he shall put away his wife (which he is permitted to do for the

cause of fornication), he is to remain without a wife, or be reconciled

to his wife? For it would not be a bad thing for a husband to be

reconciled to such a woman as that to whom, when nobody had dared to

stone her, the Lord said, "Go, and sin no more." [143] And for this

reason also, because He who says, It is not lawful to put away one's

wife saving for the cause of fornication, forces him to retain his

wife, if there should be no cause of fornication: but if there should

be, He does not force him to put her away, but permits him, just as

when it is said, Let it not be lawful for a woman to marry another,

unless her husband be dead; if she shall marry before the death of her

husband, she is guilty; if she shall not marry after the death of her

husband, she is not guilty, for she is not commanded to marry, but

merely permitted. If, therefore, there is a like rule in the said law

of marriage between man and woman, to such an extent that not merely of

the woman has the same apostle said, "The wife hath not power of her

own body, but the husband;" but he has not been silent respecting him,

saying, "And likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body,

but the wife;"--if, then, the rule is similar, there is no necessity

for understanding that it is lawful for a woman to put away her

husband, saving for the cause of fornication, as is the case also with

the husband.

44. It is therefore to be considered in what latitude of meaning we

ought to understand the word fornication, and the apostle is to be

consulted, as we were beginning to do. For he goes on to say, "But to

the rest speak I, not the Lord." Here, first, we must see who are "the

rest," for he was speaking before on the part of the Lord to those who

are married, but now, as from himself, he speaks to "the rest:" hence

perhaps to the unmarried, but this does not follow. For thus he

continues: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be

pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away." Hence, even now

he is speaking to those who are married. What, then, is his object in

saying "to the rest," unless that he was speaking before to those who

were so united, that they were alike as to their faith in Christ; but

that now he is speaking to "the rest," i.e. to those who are so united,

that they are not both believers? But what does he say to them? "If any

brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell

with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband

that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not

put him away." If, therefore, he does not give a command as from the

Lord, but advises as from himself, then this good result springs from

it, that if any one act otherwise, he is not a transgressor of a

command, just as he says a little after respecting virgins, that he has

no command of the Lord, but that he gives his advice; and he so praises

virginity, that whoever will may avail himself of it; yet if he shall

not do so, he may not be judged to have acted contrary to a command.

For there is one thing which is commanded, another respecting which

advice is given, another still which is allowed. [144] A wife is

commanded not to depart from her husband; and if she depart, to remain

unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband: therefore it is not

allowable for her to act otherwise. But a believing husband is advised,

if he has an unbelieving wife who is pleased to dwell with him, not to

put her away: therefore it is allowable also to put her away, because

it is no command of the Lord that he should not put her away, but an

advice of the apostle: just as a virgin is advised not to marry; but if

she shall marry, she will not indeed adhere to the advice, but she will

not act in opposition to a command. Allowance is given [145] when it is

said, "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." And

therefore, if it is allowable that an unbelieving wife should be put

away, although it is better not to put her away, and yet not allowable,

according to the commandment of the Lord, that a wife should be put

away, saving for the cause of fornication, [then] unbelief itself also

is fornication.

45. For what sayest thou, O apostle? Surely, that a believing husband

who has an unbelieving wife pleased to dwell with him is not to put her

away? Just so, says he. When, therefore, the Lord also gives this

command, that a man should not put away his wife, saving for the cause

of fornication, why dost thou say here, "I speak, not the Lord"? For

this reason, viz. that the idolatry which unbelievers follow, and every

other noxious superstition, is fornication. Now, the Lord permitted a

wife to be put away for the cause of fornication; but in permitting, He

did not command it: He gave opportunity to the apostle for advising

that whoever wished should not put away an unbelieving wife, in order

that, perchance, in this way she might become a believer. "For," says

he, "the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the

unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother." [146] I suppose it had

already occurred that some wives were embracing the faith by means of

their believing husbands, and husbands by means of their believing

wives; and although not mentioning names, he yet urged his case by

examples, in order to strengthen his counsel. Then he goes on to say,

"Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." For now the

children were Christians, who were sanctified at the instance of one of

the parents, or with the consent of both; which would not take place

unless the marriage were broken up by one of the parties becoming a

believer, and unless the unbelief of the spouse were borne with so far

as to give an opportunity of believing. This, therefore, is the counsel

of Him whom I regard as having spoken the words, "Whatsoever thou

spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." [147]

46. Moreover, if unbelief is fornication, and idolatry unbelief, and

covetousness idolatry, it is not to be doubted that covetousness also

is fornication. Who, then, in that case can rightly separate any

unlawful lust whatever from the category of fornication, if

covetousness is fornication? And from this we perceive, that because of

unlawful lusts, not only those of which one is guilty in acts of

uncleanness with another's husband or wife, but any unlawful lusts

whatever, which cause the soul making a bad use of the body to wander

from the law of God, and to be ruinously and basely corrupted, a man

may, without crime, put away his wife, and a wife her husband, because

the Lord makes the cause of fornication an exception; which

fornication, in accordance with the above considerations, we are

compelled to understand as being general and universal.

47. But when He says, "saving for the cause of fornication," He has not

said of which of them, whether the man or the woman. [148] For not only

is it allowed to put away a wife who commits fornication; but whoever

puts away that wife even by whom he is himself compelled to commit

fornication, puts her away undoubtedly for the cause of fornication.

As, for instance, if a wife should compel one to sacrifice to idols,

the man who puts away such an one puts her away for the cause of

fornication, not only on her part, but on his own also: on her part,

because she commits fornication; on his own, that he may not commit

fornication. Nothing, however, is more unjust than for a man to put

away his wife because of fornication, if he himself also is convicted

of committing fornication. For that passage occurs to one: "For wherein

thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest

doest the same things." [149] And for this reason, whosoever wishes to

put away his wife because of fornication, ought first to be cleared of

fornication; and a like remark I would make respecting the woman also.

48. But in reference to what He says, "Whosoever shall marry her that

is divorced [150] committeth adultery," it may be asked whether she

also who is married commits adultery in the same way as he does who

marries her. For she also is commanded to remain unmarried, or be

reconciled to her husband; but this in the case of her departing from

her husband. There is, however, a great difference whether she put away

or be put away. For if she put away her husband, and marry another, she

seems to have left her former husband from a desire of changing her

marriage connection, which is, without doubt, an adulterous thought.

But if she be put away by the husband, with whom she desired to be, he

indeed who marries her commits adultery, according to the Lord's

declaration; but whether she also be involved in a like crime is

uncertain,--although it is much less easy to discover how, when a man

and woman have intercourse one with another with equal consent, one of

them should be an adulterer, and the other not. To this is to be added

the consideration, that if he commits adultery by marrying her who is

divorced from her husband (although she does not put away, but is put

away), she causes him to commit adultery, which nevertheless the Lord

forbids. And hence we infer that, whether she has been put away, or has

put away her husband, it is necessary for her to remain unmarried, or

be reconciled to her husband. [151]

49. Again, it is asked whether, if, with a wife's permission, either a

barren one, or one who does not wish to submit to intercourse, a man

shall take to himself another woman, not another man's wife, nor one

separated from her husband, he can do so without being chargeable with

fornication? And an example is found in the Old Testament history;

[152] but now there are greater precepts which the human race has

reached after having passed that stage; and those matters are to be

investigated for the purpose of distinguishing the ages of the

dispensation of that divine providence which assists the human race in

the most orderly way; but not for the purpose of making use of the

rules of living. But yet it may be asked whether what the apostle says,

"The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise

also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife," can be

carried so far, that, with the permission of a wife, who possesses the

power over her husband's body, a man can have intercourse with another

woman, who is neither another man's wife nor divorced from her husband;

but such an opinion is not to be entertained, lest it should seem that

a woman also, with her husband's permission, could do such a thing,

which the instinctive feeling of every one prevents.

50. And yet some occasions may arise, where a wife also, with the

consent of her husband, may seem under obligation to do this for the

sake of that husband himself; as, for instance, is said to have

happened at Antioch about fifty years ago, [153] in the times of

Constantius. For Acyndinus, at that time prefect and at one time also

consul, when he demanded of a certain public debtor the payment of a

poundweight of gold, impelled by I know not what motive, did a thing

which is often dangerous in the case of those magistrates to whom

anything whatever is lawful, or rather is thought to be lawful, viz.

threatened with an oath and with a vehement affirmation, that if he did

not pay the foresaid gold on a certain day which he had fixed, he would

be put to death. Accordingly, while he was being kept in cruel

confinement, and was unable to rid himself of that debt, the dread day

began to impend and to draw near. He happened, however, to have a very

beautiful wife, but one who had no money wherewith to come to the

relief of her husband; and when a certain rich man had had his desires

inflamed by the beauty of this woman, and had learned that her husband

was placed in that critical situation, he sent to her, promising in

return for a single night, if she would consent to hold intercourse

with him, that he would give her the pound of gold. Then she, knowing

that she herself had not power over her body, but her husband, conveyed

the intelligence to him, telling him that she was prepared to do it for

the sake of her husband, but only if he himself, the lord by marriage

of her body, to whom all that chastity was due, should wish it to be

done, as if disposing of his own property for the sake of his life. He

thanked her, and commanded that it should be done, in no wise judging

that it was an adulterous embrace, because it was no lust, but great

love for her husband, that demanded it, at his own bidding and will.

The woman came to the villa of that rich man, did what the lewd man

wished; but she gave her body only to her husband, who desired not, as

was usual, his marriage rights, but life. She received the gold; but he

who gave it took away stealthily what he had given, and substituted a

similar bag with earth in it. When the woman, however, on reaching her

home, discovered it, she rushed forth in public in order to proclaim

the deed she had done, animated by the same tender affection for her

husband by which she had been forced to do it; she goes to the prefect,

confesses everything, shows the fraud that had been practised upon her.

Then indeed the prefect first pronounces himself guilty, because the

matter had come to this by means of his threats, and, as if pronouncing

sentence upon another, decided that a pound of gold should be brought

into the treasury from the property of Acyndinus; but that she (the

woman) be installed as mistress of that piece of land whence she had

received the earth instead of the gold. I offer no opinion either way

from this story: let each one form a judgment as he pleases, for the

history is not drawn from divinely authoritative sources; but yet, when

the story is related, man's instinctive sense does not so revolt

against what was done in the case of this woman, at her husband's

bidding, as we formerly shuddered when the thing itself was set forth

without any example. But in this section of the Gospel nothing is to be

more steadily kept in view, than that so great is the evil of

fornication, that, while married people are bound to one another by so

strong a bond, this one cause of divorce is excepted; but as to what

fornication is, that we have already discussed. [154]

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[142] Augustin expresses himself (Retract. I. xix. 6) as having

misgivings about his own explanation of this matter here. He advises

readers to go to his other writings on the subject of marriage and

divorce, or to the works of other writers. He says all sin is not

fornication (omne peccatum fornicatio non est); and to determine which

sins are fornication, and when a wife may be dismissed, is a most broad

(latebrosissima) question. He calls the question a most difficult

(difficillimam) one, and says, "But verily I feel that I have not come

to the perfect conclusion of this matter (imo non me pervenisse ad

hujus rei perfectionem sentio." Retract. ii. 57). Some of his treatises

on the marriage relation: De Bono Conjugali; De Conjugiis Adulterinis;

De Nuptiis et Concupiscientia.

[143] John viii. 11. Vide deinceps ne pecces; Vulgate, jam amplius noli

peccare.

[144] Ignoscitur, lit. "is pardoned."

[145] Lit. "it is pardoned."

[146] 1 Cor. vii. 14. Augustin conforms to the approved reading in the

Greek text: in uxore...in fratre. Vulgate, per mulierem,...per virum.

(See Revised Version.)

[147] Luke x. 35.

[148] Modern commentators do not spring this question, agreeing that

the fornication referred to is of the wife. Paulus, D�llinger (in

Christ. u. Kirche, to which Professor Conington replied in Cont. Rev.,

May, 1869) think the fornication of the woman was committed before her

marriage. Plumptre also prefers the reference to ante-nuptial sin.

[149] Rom. ii. 1.

[150] ?aolelumenen; that is, one divorced unlawfully who has not been

guilty of fornication (so Meyer very positively, Stier et. al., Alford

hesitatingly). This explanation might seem to limit re-marriage to such

an one, inasmuch as the essence of the marriage bond has not been

touched (So Alford et. al.).

[151] That is, innocent or guilty, she cannot marry without committing

adultery. The Roman-Catholic Church forbids divorces, but permits an

indefinite separation a mensa et toro ("from table and bed").

[152] Abraham taking Hagar with Sarah's consent.

[153] About the year 343; for Augustin wrote this treatise about the

year 393.

[154] The law permitted divorce for "some uncleanness" (Deut. xxiv. 1).

In the time of Christ divorce was allowed on trivial grounds. While

Schammai interpreted the Deuteronomic prescription of moral uncleanness

or adultery, Hillel interpreted it to include physical uncleanness or

unattractiveness. A wife's cooking her husband's food unpalatably he

declared to be a legitimate cause for dissolution of the marriage bond.

Opposing the loose views current, Christ declared that it was on

account of the "hardness of their hearts" that Moses had suffered them

to put away their wives, and asserted adultery to be the only allowable

reason for divorce. The question whether the innocent party may marry,

is beset with great difficulties in view of this passage and Matt. xix.

9. The answer turns somewhat upon the construction of the passage.

Augustin here, the Council of Trent (and so the Roman-Catholic Church),

Weiss, Mansel, and others hold that all marriage of a divorced person

is declared illegal. In another place (De Conj. Adult. i. 9) Augustin

says, "Why, I say, did the Lord interject the cause of fornication,'

and not say rather, in a general way, Whosoever shall put away his wife

and marry another commits adultery'?...I think, because the Lord wishes

to mention that which is greater. For who will deny that it is a

greater adultery to marry another when the divorced wife has not

committed fornication than when any one divorces his wife and then

marries another? Not because this is not adultery, but because it is a

lesser sort." The Apost. Constitutions (vii. 2) say, "Thou shalt not

commit adultery, for thou dividest one flesh into two," etc. Weiss:

"Jesus everywhere takes it for granted that in the sight of God there

is no such thing as a dissolution of the marriage bond" (Leben Jesu, i.

529). President Woolsey, on the other hand, unhesitatingly declares,

that, by Christ's precepts, marriage is dissolved by adultery, so that

the innocent party may marry again. According to this passage, the

woman divorced on other grounds than adultery seems to be declared

adulterous if she marry. According to Matt. xix. 9 the man who puts

away his wife for adultery, seems to be permitted to marry without

becoming adulterous himself. According to Mark x. 12 the woman had the

privilege in that day of putting away her husband, but "there is no

evidence in the Hebrew Scriptures that the woman could get herself

divorced from her husband." To the able treatment of Augustin, which

might seem either exceedingly fearless or mawkish at the present day,

according to the stand-point of the critic, the reader would do well to

read Alford and Lange on this passage; Stanley on 1 Cor. vii. 11; and

Woolsey, art. "Divorce" in Schaff-Herzog Encycl. Whatever may be the

exact meaning of our Lord concerning the marriage of the innocent

party, it is evident that He regards the marriage bond as profoundly

sacred, and warrants the celebrant in binding the parties to marriage

to be faithful one to the other "till death do you part." He Himself

said, "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put

asunder" (Mark x. 9).

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Chapter XVII.

51. "Again," says He, "ye have heard that it hath been said to them of

old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the

Lord thine oath: [155] But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by

heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His

footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one

hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay:

for whatsoever is more [156] than these cometh of evil." The

righteousness of the Pharisees is not to forswear oneself; and this is

confirmed by Him who gives the command not to swear, so far as relates

to the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven. For just as he who does

not speak at all cannot speak falsely, so he who does not swear at all

cannot swear falsely. But yet, since he who takes God to witness

swears, this section must be carefully considered, lest the apostle

should seem to have acted contrary to the Lord's precept, who often

swore in this way, when he says, "Now the things which I write unto

you, behold, before God I lie not;" [157] and again, "The God and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth

that I lie not." [158] Of like nature also is that asseveration, "For

God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His

Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers."

[159] Unless, perchance, one were to say that it is to be reckoned

swearing only when something is spoken of by which one swears; so that

he has not used an oath, because he has not said, by God; but has said,

"God is witness." It is ridiculous to think so; yet because of the

contentious, or those very slow of apprehension, lest any one should

think there is a difference, let him know that the apostle has used an

oath in this way also, saying, "By your rejoicing, I die daily." [160]

And let no one think that this is so expressed as if it were said, Your

rejoicing makes me die daily; just as it is said, By his teaching he

became learned, i.e. by his teaching it came about that he was

perfectly instructed: the Greek copies decide the matter, where we find

it written, Ne ten kauchesin humeteran, an expression which is used

only by one taking an oath. Thus, then, it is understood that the Lord

gave the command not to swear in this sense, lest any one should

eagerly seek after an oath as a good thing, and by the constant use of

oaths sink down through force of habit into perjury. And therefore let

him who understands that swearing is to be reckoned not among things

that are good, but among things that are necessary, refrain as far as

he can from indulging in it, unless by necessity, when he sees men slow

to believe what it is useful for them to believe, except they be

assured by an oath. To this, accordingly, reference is made when it is

said, "Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay;" this is good, and what

is to be desired. "For whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;"

i.e., if you are compelled to swear, know that it comes of a necessity

arising from the infirmity of those whom you are trying to persuade of

something; which infirmity is certainly an evil, from which we daily

pray to be delivered, when we say, "Deliver us from evil." [161] Hence

He has not said, Whatsoever is more than these is evil; for you are not

doing what is evil when you make a good use of an oath, which, although

not in itself good, is yet necessary in order to persuade another that

you are trying to move him for some useful end; but it "cometh of evil"

on his part by whose infirmity you are compelled to swear. [162] But no

one learns, unless he has had experience, how difficult it is both to

get rid of a habit of swearing, and never to do rashly what necessity

sometimes compels him to do. [163]

52. But it may be asked why, when it was said, "But I say unto you,

Swear not at all," it was added, "neither by heaven, for it is God's

throne," etc., up to "neither by thy head." I suppose it was for this

reason, that the Jews did not think they were bound by the oath, if

they had sworn by such things: and since they had heard it said, "Thou

shalt perform unto the Lord thine oath," they did not think an oath

brought them under obligation to the Lord, if they swore by heaven, or

earth, or by Jerusalem, or by their head; and this happened not from

the fault of Him who gave the command, but because they did not rightly

understand it. Hence the Lord teaches that there is nothing so

worthless among the creatures of God, as that any one should think that

he may swear falsely by it; since created things, from the highest down

to the lowest, beginning with the throne of God and going down to a

white or black hair, are ruled by divine providence. "Neither by

heaven," says He, "for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is

His footstool:" i.e., when you swear by heaven or the earth, do not

imagine that your oath does not bring you under obligation to the Lord;

for you are convicted of swearing by Him who has heaven for His throne,

and the earth for His footstool. "Neither by Jerusalem, for it is the

city of the great King;" a better expression than if He had said, "My

[city];" although, however, we understand Him to have meant this. And,

because He is undoubtedly the Lord, the man who swears by Jerusalem is

bound by his oath to the Lord. "Neither shall thou swear by thy head."

Now, what could any one suppose to belong more to himself than his own

head? But how is it ours, when we have not the power of making one hair

white or black? Hence, whoever should wish to swear even by his own

head, is bound by his oath to God, who in an ineffable way keeps all

things in His power, and is everywhere present. And here also all other

things are understood, which could not of course be enumerated; just as

that saying of the apostle we have mentioned, "By your rejoicing, I die

daily." And to show that he was bound by this oath to the Lord, he has

added, "which I have in Christ Jesus."

53. But yet (I make the remark for the sake of the carnal) we must not

think that heaven is called God's throne, and the earth His footstool,

because God has members placed in heaven and in earth, in some such way

as we have when we sit down; but that seat means judgment. And since,

in this organic whole of the universe, heaven has the greatest

appearance, and earth the least,--as if the divine power were more

present where the beauty excels, but still were regulating the least

degree of it in the most distant and in the lowest regions,--He is said

to sit in heaven, and to tread upon the earth. But spiritually the

expression heaven means holy souls, and earth sinful ones: and since

the spiritual man judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no

man, [164] he is suitably spoken of as the seat of God; but the sinner

to whom it is said, "Earth thou art, and unto earth shall thou return,"

[165] because, in accordance with that justice which assigns what is

suitable to men's deserts, he is placed among things that are lowest,

and he who would not remain in the law is punished under the law, is

suitably taken as His footstool.

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[155] Jusjurandum; Vulgate, juramenta; Greek, tous horkous.

[156] Amplius; Vulgate, abundantius.

[157] Gal. i. 20.

[158] 2 Cor. xi. 31.

[159] Rom. i. 9.

[160] 1 Cor. xv. 31.

[161] Matt. vi. 13.

[162] Revised Version, Evil One. So Euthymius, Zig. (auctorem habet

diabolum), Chrysostom, Theophylact, Fritzsche, Keim, Meyer, Plumptre,

etc. The interpretation of Augustin is shared by Luther, Bengel, De

Wette, Tholuck, Ewald, etc.

[163] Augustin is somewhat perplexed about the meaning, but decides the

injunction to be directed against the abuse of the oath, not to forbid

it wholly. The oath was permitted by the law (Lev. xxii. 11), was to be

held sacred (Num. xxx. 2), and to be made in God's name (Deut. vi. 13).

It was customary under the Old Testament to swear (Gen. xxiv. 37, Josh.

ix. 15; perhaps only a solemn affirmation), and in the name of the Lord

(1 Sam. xx. 42; Iren�us, Clement, Origen, Chrysostom, etc.). The

Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Quakers understand the precept to forbid

all oaths, even in the civil court. "Christendom, if it were fully

conformed to Christ's will, as it should be, would tolerate no oaths

whatever" (Meyer). "The proper state of Christians is to require no

oaths" (Alford). If interpreted as a definite prohibition of all

swearing, the passage comes into conflict with Christ's own example

(Matt. xxvi. 63), and the apostle's conduct in the passages quoted by

Augustin. The meaning has been restricted to rash and frivolous oaths

on the street and in the market (Keim); in daily conversation (Carr,

Camb. Bible for Schools). In the ideal Christian community, where truth

and honesty prevail, oaths will be superfluous: the simple

asseverations, "Yea, nay," will be sufficient. To this, Christ's

precept ultimately looks. But He, no doubt, had in mind the widespread

profanity of His day, and the current opinion that only oaths

containing the name of God were binding (Lightfoot cites from the

Rabbinical books to this effect). All unnecessary appeals to God, as

well as careless and profane swearing, are forbidden, as coming either

from bad passions within or a want of reverence. "Prohibition would be

repeal of the Mosaic law" (Plumptre). "All strengthening of the simple

Yea and nay' is occasioned by the presence of sin and Satan in the

world. There is no more striking proof of the existence of evil than

the prevalence of the foolish, low, useless habit of swearing. It could

never have arisen if men did not believe each other to be liars," etc.

(Schaff). "Men use their protestations because they are distrustful one

of another. An oath is physic, which supposes disease" (M. Henry). When

the oath is performed for the "sake of ethical interests, as when the

civil authority demands it," as seems to be necessary and safe for

society in its present unsanctified condition, the precept does not

interfere (K�stlin, art. "Oath," Schaff-Herzog Encycl., Meyer, Wuttke,

Alford, Tholuck, etc.). An interesting imitation of the Rabbinical

casuistry above referred to was practised by the crafty and subtle

Louis XI. Scott says (Introd. to Quentin Durward), "He admitted to one

or two peculiar forms of oath the force of a binding obligation which

he denied to all others, strictly preserving the secret; which mode of

swearing he really accounted obligatory, as one of the most valuable of

State secrets."

[164] 1 Cor. ii. 15.

[165] Gen. iii. 19.

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Chapter XVIII.

54. But now, to conclude by summing up this passage, what can be named

or thought of more laborious and toilsome, where the believing soul is

straining every nerve of its industry, than the subduing of vicious

habit? Let such an one cut off the members which obstruct the kingdom

of heaven, and not be overwhelmed by the pain: in conjugal fidelity let

him bear with everything which, however grievously annoying it may be,

is still free from the guilt of unlawful corruption, i.e. of

fornication: as, for instance, if any one should have a wife either

barren, or misshapen in body, or faulty in her members,--either blind,

or deaf, or lame, or having any other defect,--or worn out by diseases

and pains and weaknesses, and whatever else may be thought of exceeding

horrible, fornication excepted, let him endure it for the sake of his

plighted love and conjugal union; [166] and let him not only not put

away such a wife, but even if he have her not, let him not marry one

who has been divorced by her husband, though beautiful, healthy, rich,

fruitful. And if it is not lawful to do such things, much less is it to

be deemed lawful for him to come near any other unlawful embrace; and

let him so flee from fornication, as to withdraw himself from base

corruption of every sort. Let him speak the truth, and let him commend

it not by frequent oaths, but by the probity of his morals; and with

respect to the innumerable crowds of all bad habits rising up in

rebellion against him, of which, in order that all may be understood, a

few have been mentioned, let him betake himself to the citadel of

Christian warfare, and let him lay them prostrate, as if from a higher

ground. But who would venture to enter upon labours so great, unless

one who is so inflamed with the love of righteousness, that, as it were

utterly consumed with hunger and thirst, and thinking there is no life

for him till that is satisfied, he puts forth violence to obtain the

kingdom of heaven? For otherwise he will not be able bravely to endure

all those things which the lovers of this world reckon toilsome and

arduous, and altogether difficult in getting rid of bad habits.

"Blessed," therefore, "are they which do hunger and thirst after

righteousness: for they shall be filled."

55. But yet, when any one encounters difficulty in these toils, and

advancing through hardships and roughnesses surrounded with various

temptations, and perceiving the troubles of his past life rise up on

this side and on that, becomes afraid lest he should not be able to

carry through what he has undertaken, let him eagerly avail himself of

the counsel that he may obtain assistance. But what other counsel is

there than this, that he who desires to have divine help for his own

infirmity should bear that of others, and should assist it as much as

possible? And so, therefore, let us look at the precepts of mercy. The

meek and the merciful man, however, seem to be one and the same: but

there is this difference, that the meek man, of whom we have spoken

above, from piety does not gainsay the divine sentences which are

brought forward against his sins, nor those statements of God which he

does not yet understand; but he confers no benefit on him whom he does

not gainsay or resist. But the merciful man in such a way offers no

resistance, that he does it for the purpose of correcting him whom he

would render worse by resisting.

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[166] Pro fide et societate.

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Chapter XIX.

56. Hence the Lord goes on to say: "Ye have heard that it hath been

said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you,

that ye resist not evil; [167] but whosoever shall smite thee on thy

right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee

at the law, and take away thy coat [tunic, undergarment], let him have

thy cloak [168] also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go

with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, [169] and from him that

would borrow of thee turn not thou away." It is the lesser

righteousness of the Pharisees not to go beyond measure in revenge,

that no one should give back more than he has received: and this is a

great step. For it is not easy to find any one who, when he has

received a blow, wishes merely to return the blow; and who, on hearing

one word from a man who reviles him, is content to return only one, and

that just an equivalent; but he avenges it more immoderately, either

under the disturbing influence of anger, or because he thinks it just,

that he who first inflicted injury should suffer more severe injury

than he suffered who had not inflicted injury. Such a spirit was in

great measure restrained by the law, where it was written, "An eye for

an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" by which expressions a certain

measure is intended, so that the vengeance should not exceed the

injury. And this is the beginning of peace: but perfect peace is to

have no wish at all for such vengeance.

57. Hence, between that first course which goes beyond the law, that a

greater evil should be inflicted in return for a lesser, and this to

which the Lord has given expression for the purpose of perfecting the

disciples, that no evil at all should be inflicted in return for evil,

a middle course holds a certain place, viz. that as much be paid back

as has been received; by means of which enactment the transition is

made from the highest discord to the highest concord, according to the

distribution of times. See, therefore, at how great a distance any one

who is the first to do harm to another, with the desire of injuring and

hurting him, stands from him who, even when injured, does not pay back

the injury. That man, however, who is not the first to do harm to any

one, but who yet, when injured, inflicts a greater injury in return,

either in will or in deed, has so far withdrawn himself from the

highest injustice, and made so far an advance to the highest

righteousness; but still he does not yet hold by what the law given by

Moses commanded. And therefore he who pays back just as much as he has

received already forgives something: for the party who injures does not

deserve merely as much punishment as the man who was injured by him has

innocently suffered. And accordingly this incomplete, by no means

severe, but [rather] merciful justice, is carried to perfection by Him

who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it. Hence there are still

two intervening steps which He has left to be understood, while He has

chosen rather to speak of the very highest development of mercy. For

there is still what one may do who does not come fully up to that

magnitude of the precept which belongs to the kingdom of heaven; acting

in such a way that he does not pay back as much, but less; as, for

instance, one blow instead of two, or that he cuts off an ear for an

eye that has been plucked out. He who, rising above this, pays back

nothing at all, approaches the Lord's precept, but yet he does not

reach it. For still it seems to the Lord not enough, if, for the evil

which you may have received, you should inflict no evil in return,

unless you be prepared to receive even more. And therefore He does not

say, "But I say unto you," that you are not to return evil for evil;

although even this would be a great precept: but He says, "that ye

resist not evil;" [170] so that not only are you not to pay back what

may have been inflicted on you, but you are not even to resist other

inflictions. For this is what He also goes on to explain: "But

whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other

also:" for He does not say, If any man smite thee, do not wish to smite

him; but, Offer thyself further to him if he should go on to smite

thee. As regards compassion, they feel it most who minister to those

whom they greatly love as if they were their children, or some very

dear friends in sickness, or little children, or insane persons, at

whose hands they often endure many things; and if their welfare demand

it, they even show themselves ready to endure more, until the weakness

either of age or of disease pass away. And so, as regards those whom

the Lord, the Physician of souls, was instructing to take care of their

neighbours, what else could He teach them, than that they endure

quietly the infirmities of those whose welfare they wish to consult?

For all wickedness arises from infirmity [171] of mind: because nothing

is more harmless than the man who is perfect in virtue.

58. But it may be asked what the right cheek means. For this is the

reading we find in the Greek copies, which are most worthy of

confidence; though many Latin ones have only the word "cheek," without

the addition of "right." Now the face is that by which any one is

recognised; and we read in the apostle's writings, "For ye suffer,

[172] if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man

take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face:"

then immediately he adds, "I speak as concerning reproach;" [173] so

that he explains what striking on the face is, viz. to be contemned and

despised. Nor is this indeed said by the apostle for this reason, that

they should not bear with those parties; but that they should bear with

himself rather, who so loved them, that he was willing that he himself

should be spent for them. [174] But since the face cannot be called

right and left, and yet there may be a worth according to the estimate

of God and according to the estimate of this world, it is so

distributed as it were into the right and left cheek that whatever

disciple of Christ might have to bear reproach for being a Christian,

he should be much more ready to bear reproach in himself, if he

possesses any of the honours of this world. Thus this same apostle, if

he had kept silence respecting the dignity which he had in the world,

when men were persecuting in him the Christian name, would not have

presented the other cheek to those that were smiting the right one. For

when he said, I am a Roman citizen, [175] he was not unprepared to

submit to be despised, in that which he reckoned as least, by those who

had despised in him so precious and life-giving a name. For did he at

all the less on that account afterwards submit to the chains, which it

was not lawful to put on Roman citizens, or did he wish to accuse any

one of this injury? And if any spared him on account of the name of

Roman citizenship, yet he did not on that account refrain from offering

an object they might strike at, since he wished by his patience to cure

of so great perversity those whom he saw honouring in him what belonged

to the left members rather than the right. For that point only is to be

attended to, in what spirit he did everything, how benevolently and

mildly he acted toward those from whom he was suffering such things.

For when he was smitten with the hand by order of the high priest, what

he seemed to say contumeliously when he affirms, "God shall smite thee,

thou whited wall," sounds like an insult to those who do not understand

it; but to those who do, it is a prophecy. For a whited wall is

hypocrisy, i.e. pretence holding forth the sacerdotal dignity before

itself, and under this name, as under a white covering, concealing an

inner and as it were sordid baseness. For what belonged to humility he

wonderfully preserved, when, on its being said to him, "Revilest thou

the high priest?" [176] he replied, "I wist not, brethren, that he was

the high priest; for it is written, Thou shall not speak evil of the

ruler of thy people." [177] And here he showed with what calmness he

had spoken that which he seemed to have spoken in anger, because he

answered so quickly and so mildly, which cannot be done by those who

are indignant and thrown into confusion. And in that very statement he

spoke the truth to those who understood him, "I wist not that he was

the high priest:" [178] as if he said, I know another High Priest, for

whose name I bear such things, whom it is not lawful to revile, and

whom ye revile, since in me it is nothing else but His name that ye

hate. Thus, therefore, it is necessary for one not to boast of such

things in a hypocritical way, but to be prepared in the heart itself

for all things, so that he can sing that prophetic word, "My heart is

prepared, [179] O God, my heart is prepared." For many have learned how

to offer the other cheek, but do not know how to love him by whom they

are struck. But in truth, the Lord Himself, who certainly was the first

to fulfil the precepts which He taught, did not offer the other cheek

to the servant of the high priest when smiting Him thereon; but, so far

from that, said, "If I have spoken evil, hear witness of the evil;

[180] but if well, why smitest thou me?" [181] Yet was He not on that

account unprepared in heart, for the salvation of all, not merely to be

smitten on the other cheek, but even to have His whole body crucified.

59. Hence also what follows, "And if any man will sue thee at the law,

and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak [182] also," is rightly

understood as a precept having reference to the preparation of heart,

not to a vain show of outward deed. But what is said with respect to

the coat and cloak is to be carried out not merely in such things, but

in the case of everything which on any ground of right we speak of as

being ours for time. For if this command is given with respect to what

is necessary, how much more does it become us to contemn what is

superfluous! But still, those things which I have called ours are to be

included in that category under which the Lord Himself gives the

precept, when He says, "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take

away thy coat." Let all these things therefore be understood for which

we may be sued at the law, so that the right to them may pass from us

to him who sues, or for whom he sues; such, for instance, as clothing,

a house, an estate, a beast of burden, and in general all kinds of

property. But whether it is to be understood of slaves also is a great

question. For a Christian ought not to possess a slave in the same way

as a horse or money: although it may happen that a horse is valued at a

greater price than a slave, and some article of gold or silver at much

more. But with respect to that slave, if he is being educated and ruled

by time as his master, in a way more upright, and more honourable, and

more conducing to the fear of God, than can be done by him who desires

to take him away, I do not know whether any one would dare to say that

he ought to be despised like a garment. For a man ought to love a

fellow-man as himself, inasmuch as he is commanded by the Lord of all

(as is shown by what follows) even to love his enemies.

60. It is carefully to be observed that every tunic [183] is a garment,

[184] but that every garment is not a tunic. Hence the word garment

means more than the word tunic. And therefore I think it is so

expressed, "And if any one will sue thee at the law, and take away thy

tunic, let him have thy garment also," as if He had said, Whoever

wishes to take away thy tunic, give over to him whatever other clothing

thou hast. And so some have interpreted the word pallium, which in the

Greek as used here is himation.

61. "And whosoever," says He, "shall compel [185] thee to go a mile, go

with him other two." And this, certainly, not so much in the sense that

thou shouldest do it on foot, as that thou shouldest be prepared in

mind to do it. For in the Christian history itself, which is

authoritative, you will find no such thing done by the saints, or by

the Lord Himself when in His human nature, which He condescended to

assume, He was showing us an example of how to live; while at the same

time, in almost all places, you will find them prepared to bear with

equanimity whatever may have been wickedly forced upon them. But are we

to suppose it is said for the sake of the mere expression, "Go with him

other two;" or did He rather wish that three should be completed,--the

number which has the meaning of perfection; so that every one should

remember when he does this, that he is fulfilling perfect righteousness

by compassionately bearing the infirmities of those whom he wishes to

be made whole? It may seem for this reason also that He has recommended

these precepts by three examples: of which the first is, if any one

shall smite thee on the cheek; the second, if any one shall wish to

take away thy coat; the third, if any one shall compel thee to go a

mile: in which third example twice as much is added to the original

unit, so that in this way the triplet is completed. And if this number

in the passage before us does not, as has been said, mean perfection,

let this be understood, that in laying down His precepts, as it were

beginning with what is more tolerable, He has gradually gone on, until

He has reached as far as the enduring of twice as much more. For, in

the first place, He wished the other cheek to be presented when the

right had been smitten, so that you may be prepared to bear less than

you have borne. For whatever the right means, it is at least something

more dear than that which is meant by the left; and if one who has

borne with something in what is more dear, bears with it in what is

less dear, it is something less. Then, secondly, in the case of one who

wishes to take away a coat, He enjoins that the garment also should be

given up to him: which is either just as much, or not much more; not,

however, twice as much. In the third place, with respect to the mile,

to which He says that two miles are to be added, He enjoins that you

should bear with even twice as much more: thus signifying that whether

it be somewhat less than the original demand, or just as much, or more,

that any wicked man shall wish to take from thee, it is to be borne

with tranquil mind.

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[167] Adversus malum; Vulgate, malo.

[168] Vestimentum; Vulgate, pallium.

[169] Omni petenti te, da; Vulgate, qui petit a te, etc.

[170] With Augustin, Calvin, Tholuck, Ewald, Lange construe this as

neuter, evil; Chrysostom, Theophylact, the devil; De Wette, Meyer,

Alford, Plumptre, as also the Revised Version, the man who does evil.

Renan says the practice of this doctrine put down slavery: "It was not

Spartacus who suppressed slavery, but rather was it Blandina" ("Ce

n'est pas Spartacus qui a supprim� l'esclavage, c'est bien pl�t�t

Blandine").

[171] Imbecillitate.

[172] Toleratis; Vulgate, sustinetis.

[173] 2 Cor. xi. 20, 21.

[174] 2 Cor. xii. 15.

[175] Acts xxii. 25.

[176] Principi sacerdotum; Vulgate, summum sacerdotem.

[177] Acts xxiii. 3-5.

[178] Interpreted by modern commentators usually of temporary

forgetfulness, or, what is much better, failure to recognise through

infirmity of vision.

[179] English version, "fixed"-- Ps. lvii. 7.

[180] Exprobra de malo; Vulgate, testimonium perhibe de malo.

[181] John xviii. 23.

[182] The coat or tunic was the under-garment. The cloak, or pallium,

was the outer-garment, and the more precious.

[183] English version, "coat."

[184] English version, "cloak."

[185] The Greek word angareuo is derived from the Persian, to press one

into service, as a courier to bear despatches. (See Thayer, Lexicon.)

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Chapter XX.

62. And, indeed, in these three classes of examples, I see that no

class of injury is passed over. [186] For all matters in which we

suffer any injustice are divided into two classes: of which the one is,

where restitution cannot be made; the other, where it can. But in that

case where restitution cannot be made, a compensation in revenge is

usually sought. For what does it profit, that on being struck you

strike in return? Is that part of the body which was injured for that

reason restored to its original condition? But an excited mind desires

such alleviations. Things of that sort, however, afford no pleasure to

a healthy and firm one; nay, such an one judges rather that the other's

infirmity is to be compassionately borne with, than that his own (which

has no existence) should be soothed by the punishment of another.

63. Nor are we thus precluded from inflicting such punishment

[requital] [187] as avails for correction, and as compassion itself

dictates; nor does it stand in the way of that course proposed, where

one is prepared to endure more at the hand of him whom he wishes to set

right. But no one is fit for inflicting this punishment except the man

who, by the greatness of his love, has overcome that hatred wherewith

those are wont to be inflamed who wish to avenge themselves. For it is

not to be feared that parents would seem to hate a little son when, on

committing an offence, he is beaten by them that he may not go on

offending. And certainly the perfection of love is set before us by the

imitation of God the Father Himself when it is said in what follows:

"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them

[188] which persecute you;" and yet it is said of Him by the prophet,

"For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; yea, He scourgeth every son

whom He receiveth." [189] The Lord also says, "The servant that knows

not [190] his Lord's will, and does things worthy of stripes, shall be

beaten with few stripes; but the servant that knows his Lord's will,

and does things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with many stripes."

[191] No more, therefore, is sought for, except that he should punish

to whom, in the natural order of things, the power is given; and that

he should punish with the same goodwill which a father has towards his

little son, whom by reason of his youth he cannot yet hate. For from

this source the most suitable example is drawn, in order that it may be

sufficiently manifest that sin can be punished in love rather than be

left unpunished; so that one may wish him on whom he inflicts it not to

be miserable by means of punishment, but to be happy by means of

correction, yet be prepared, if need be, to endure with equanimity more

injuries inflicted by him whom he wishes to be corrected, whether he

may have the power of putting restraint upon him or not.

64. But great and holy men, although they at the time knew excellently

well that that death which separates the soul from the body is not to

be dreaded, yet, in accordance with the sentiment of those who might

fear it, punished some sins with death, both because the living were

struck with a salutary fear, and because it was not death itself that

would injure those who were being punished with death, but sin, which

might be increased if they continued to live. They did not judge rashly

on whom God had bestowed such a power of judging. Hence it is that

Elijah inflicted death on many, both with his own hand [192] and by

calling down fire from heaven; [193] as was done also without rashness

by many other great and godlike men, in the same spirit of concern for

the good of humanity. And when the disciples had quoted an example from

this Elias, mentioning to the Lord what had been done by him, in order

that He might give to themselves also the power of calling down fire

from heaven to consume those who would not show Him hospitality, the

Lord reproved in them, not the example of the holy prophet, but their

ignorance in respect to taking vengeance, their knowledge being as yet

elementary; [194] perceiving that they did not in love desire

correction, but in hated desired revenge. Accordingly, after He had

taught them what it was to love one's neighbour as oneself, and when

the Holy Spirit had been poured out, whom, at the end of ten days after

His ascension, He sent from above, as He had promised, [195] there were

not wanting such acts of vengeance, although much more rarely than in

the Old Testament. For there, for the most part, as servants they were

kept down by fear; but here mostly as free they were nourished by love.

For at the words of the Apostle Peter also, Ananias and his wife, as we

read in the Acts of the Apostles, fell down dead, and were not raised

to life again, but buried.

65. But if the heretics who are opposed to the Old Testament [196] will

not credit this book, let them contemplate the Apostle Paul, whose

writings they read along with us, saying with respect to a certain

sinner whom he delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the

flesh, "that the spirit may be saved." [197] And if they will not here

understand death (for perhaps it is uncertain), let them acknowledge

that punishment [requital] of some kind or other was inflicted by the

apostle through the instrumentality of Satan; and that he did this not

in hatred, but in love, is made plain by that addition, "that the

spirit may be saved." Or let them notice what we say in those books to

which they themselves attribute great authority, where it is written

that the Apostle Thomas imprecated on a certain man, by whom he had

been struck with the palm of the hand, the punishment of death in a

very cruel form, while yet commending his soul to God, that it might be

spared in the world to come,--whose hand, torn from the rest of his

body after he had been killed by a lion, a dog brought to the table at

which the apostle was feasting. It is allowable for us not to credit

this writing, for it is not in the catholic canon; yet they both read

it, and honour it as being thoroughly uncorrupted and thoroughly

truthful, who rage very fiercely (with I know not what blindness)

against the corporeal punishments which are in the Old Testament, being

altogether ignorant in what spirit and at what stage in the orderly

distribution of times they were inflicted.

66. Hence, in this class of injuries which is atoned for by punishment,

such a measure will be preserved by Christians, that, on an injury

being received, the mind will not mount up into hatred, but will be

ready, in compassion for the infirmity, to endure even more; nor will

it neglect the correction, which it can employ either by advice, or by

authority, or by [the exercise of] power. There is another class of

injuries, where complete restitution is possible, of which there are

two species: the one referring to money, the other to labour. And

therefore examples are subjoined: of the former in the case of the coat

and cloak, of the latter in the case of the compulsory service of one

and two miles; for a garment may be given back, and he whom you have

assisted by labour may also assist you, if it should be necessary.

Unless, perhaps, the distinction should rather be drawn in this way:

that the first case which is supposed, in reference to the cheek being

struck, means all injuries that are inflicted by the wicked in such a

way that restitution cannot be made except by punishment; and that the

second case which is supposed, in reference to the garment, means all

injuries where restitution can be made without punishment; and

therefore, perhaps, it is added, "if any man will sue thee at the law,"

because what is taken away by means of a judicial sentence is not

supposed to be taken away with such a degree of violence as that

punishment is due; but that the third case is composed of both, so that

restitution may be made both without punishment and with it. For the

man who violently exacts labour to which he has no claim, without any

judicial process, as he does who wickedly compels a man to go with him,

and forces in an unlawful way assistance to be rendered to himself by

one who is unwilling, is able both to pay the penalty of his wickedness

and to repay the labour, if he who endured the wrong should ask it

again. In all these classes of injuries, therefore, the Lord teaches

that the disposition of a Christian ought to be most patient and

compassionate, and thoroughly prepared to endure more.

67. But since it is a small matter merely to abstain from injuring,

unless you also confer a benefit as far as you can, He therefore goes

on to say, "Give to every one that asketh thee, and from him that would

borrow of thee turn not thou away." "To every one that asketh," says

He; not, Everything to him that asketh: so that you are to give that

which you can honestly and justly give. For what if he should ask

money, wherewith he may endeavour to oppress an innocent man? what if,

in short, he should ask something unchaste? [198] But not to recount

many examples, which are in fact innumerable, that certainly is to be

given which may hurt neither thyself nor the other party, as far as can

be known or supposed by man; and in the case of him to whom you have

justly denied what he asks, justice itself is to be made known, so that

you may not send him away empty. Thus you will give to every one that

asketh you, although you will not always give what he asks; and you

will sometimes give something better, when you have set him right who

was making unjust requests.

68. Then, as to what He says, "From him that would borrow of thee turn

not thou away," it is to be referred to the mind; for God loveth a

cheerful giver. [199] Moreover, every one who accepts anything borrows,

even if he himself is not going to pay it; for inasmuch as God pays

back more to the merciful, whosoever does a kindness lends at interest.

Or if it does not seem good to understand the borrower in any other

sense than of him who accepts of anything with the intention of

repaying it, we must understand the Lord to have included those two

methods of doing a favour. For we either give in a present what we give

in the exercise of benevolence, or we lend to one who will repay us.

And frequently men who, setting before them the divine reward, are

prepared to give away in a present, become slow to give what is asked

in loan, as if they were destined to get nothing in return from God,

inasmuch as he who receives pays back the thing which is given him.

Rightly, therefore, does the divine authority exhort us to this mode of

bestowing a favour, saying, "And from him that would borrow of thee

turn not thou away:" i.e., do not alienate your goodwill from him who

asks it, both because your money will be useless, and because God will

not pay you back, inasmuch as the man has done so; but when you do that

from a regard to God's precept, it cannot be unfruitful with Him who

gives these commands. [200]

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[186] Exemplum citatur injuri� privat�, forensis, curialis (Bengel).

[187] Vindicta.

[188] Pro eis qui vos persequuntur; Vulgate, pro persequentibus.

[189] Prov. iii. 12. So the LXX. English version: "even as a father the

son in whom he delighteth," following the Hebrew.

[190] Nescit; Vulgate, non cognovit.

[191] Luke xii. 48, 47.

[192] 1 Kings xviii. 40.

[193] 2 Kings i. 10.

[194] Luke ix. 52-56.

[195] Acts ii. 1-4.

[196] i.e., The Manicheans.

[197] 1 Cor. v. 5.

[198] "To give everything to every one--the sword to the madman, the

alms to the impostor, the criminal request to the temptress--would be

to act as the enemy of others and ourselves" (Alford). Paul's

willingness to spend and be spent illustrates a proper conformity to

the precept.

[199] 2 Cor. ix. 7.

[200] This section, which concerns the law of retaliation, grew out of

a rule of every-day life which the Pharisees constructed upon a

principle of judicature laid down, Exod. xxi. 24 (Tholuck). The spirit,

not the exact letter, of the illustrations is to be observed, and, when

the spirit of the precept would demand it, the exact letter. Christians

are taught to bear witness by enduring, yielding, and giving. "Sin is

to be conquered by being made to feel the power of goodness." Christ

gave a good example at His trial, without following the letter of His

precept here; and Paul followed Him (1 Cor. iv. 12, 13).

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Chapter XXI.

69. In the next place, He goes on to say, "Ye have heard that it hath

been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I

say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and

pray for them which persecute you; [201] that ye may be the children of

your Father which is in heaven: for He commandeth [202] His sun to rise

on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the

unjust. For if ye love [203] them which love you, what reward have ye?

Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren

only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the Gentiles the very

same? [204] Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in

heaven [205] is perfect." For without this love, wherewith we are

commanded to love even our enemies and persecutors, who can fully carry

out those things which are mentioned above? Moreover, the perfection of

that mercy, wherewith most of all the soul that is in distress is cared

for, cannot be stretched beyond the love of an enemy; and therefore the

closing words are: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is

in heaven is perfect." Yet in such a way that God is understood to be

perfect as God, and the soul to be perfect as a soul.

70. That there is, however, a certain step [in advance] in the

righteousness of the Pharisees, which belongs to the old law, is

perceived from this consideration, that many men hate even those by

whom they are loved; as, for instance, luxurious children hate their

parents for restraining them in their luxury. That man therefore rises

a certain step, who loves his neighbour, although as yet he hates his

enemy. But in the kingdom of Him who came to fulfil the law, not to

destroy it, he will bring benevolence and kindness to perfection, when

he has carried it out so far as to love an enemy. For the former stage,

although it is something, is yet so little that it may be reached even

by the publicans as well. And as to what is said in the law, "Thou

shalt hate thine enemy," [206] it is not to be understood as the voice

of command addressed to a righteous man, but rather as the voice of

permission to a weak man.

71. Here indeed arises a question in no way to be blinked, that to this

precept of the Lord, wherein He exhorts us to love our enemies, and to

do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who persecute us,

many other parts of Scripture seem to those who consider them less

diligently and soberly to stand opposed; for in the prophets there are

found many imprecations against enemies, which are thought to be

curses: as, for instance, that one, "Let their table become a snare,"

[207] and the other things which are said there; and that one, "Let his

children be fatherless, and his wife a widow," [208] and the other

statements which are made either before or afterwards in the same Psalm

by the prophet, as bearing on the case of Judas. Many other statements

are found in all parts of Scripture, which may seem contrary both to

this precept of the Lord, and to that apostolic one, where it is said,

"Bless; and curse not;" [209] while it is both written of the Lord,

that He cursed the cities which received not His word; [210] and the

above-mentioned apostle thus spoke respecting a certain man, "The Lord

will reward him according to his works." [211]

72. But these difficulties are easily solved, for the prophet predicted

by means of imprecation what was about to happen, not as praying for

what he wished, but in the spirit of one who saw it beforehand. So also

the Lord, so also the apostle; although even in the words of these we

do not find what they have wished, but what they have foretold. For

when the Lord says, "Woe unto thee, Capernaum," He does not utter

anything else than that some evil will happen to her as a punishment of

her unbelief; and that this would happen the Lord did not malevolently

wish, but saw by means of His divinity. And the apostle does not say,

May [the Lord] reward; but, "The Lord will reward him according to his

work;" which is the word of one who foretells, not of one uttering an

imprecation. Just as also, in regard to that hypocrisy of the Jews of

which we have already spoken, whose destruction he saw to be impending,

he said," God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." [212] But the

prophets especially are accustomed to predict future events under the

figure of one uttering an imprecation, just as they have often foretold

those things which were to come under the figure of past time: as is

the case, for example, in that passage, "Why have the nations raged,

and the peoples imagined vain things?" [213] For he has not said, Why

will the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? although he

was not mentioning those things as if they were already past, but was

looking forward to them as yet to come. Such also is that passage,

"They have parted my garments among them, and have cast lots upon my

vesture:" [214] for here also he has not said, They will part my

garments among them, and will cast lots upon my vesture. And yet no one

finds fault with these words, except the man who does not perceive that

variety of figures in speaking in no degree lessens the truth of facts,

and adds very much to the impressions on our minds.

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[201] Augustin, with the best Greek text, omits et calumniantibus vos

("and despitefully use you") of the Vulgate.

[202] Jubet; Vulgate, facit (with the Greek).

[203] Dilexeritis; Vulgate, diligitis.

[204] Hoc ipsum; Vulgate, hoc; Greek, to auto.

[205] Qui est in coelis; Vulgate, coelestis (see Revised Version).

[206] The first part of the Lord's quotation is found in Lev. xix. 18;

these words, whatever may be said about the sanction, real or apparent,

of revenge and triumph over an enemy's fall in the Old Testament, are

not found there. Bengel well says "pessima glossa" ("wretched

gloss"),--a gloss of the Pharisees, "bearing plainly enough the

character of post-exilic Judaism in its exclusiveness toward all

surrounding nations" (Weiss). Centuries after Christ spoke these words,

Maimonides gives utterance to this narrow feeling of hate: "If a Jew

see a Gentile fall into the sea, let him by no means take him out; for

it is written, Thou shalt love thy neighbour's blood,' but this is not

thy neighbour." The separation of the Jews, demanded by their

theocratic position, was the explanation in part--not an excuse--for

such feeling towards people of other nationalities. Heathen peoples had

the same feeling towards enemies. "It was the celebrated felicity of

Sulla; and this was the crown of Xenophon's panegyric of Cyrus the

Younger, that no one had done more good to his friends or more mischief

to his enemies." Plautus said, "Man is a wolf to the stranger" ("homo

homini ignoto lupus est"). The term "stranger" in Greek means "enemy."

But common as this philosophy was to the pre-Christian world, the Jew

was specially known for his hatred of all not of his own nationality

(Juvenal, Sat. xiv. 104, etc.). The "enemy" referred to in the passage

is not a national enemy ( Keim) but a personal one (Weiss, Meyer,

etc.). Our Lord subsequently defined who was to be understood by the

term "neighbour" in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 36).

[207] Ps. lxix. 22.

[208] Ps. cix. 9.

[209] Rom. xii. 14.

[210] Matt xi. 20-24 and Luke x. 13-15.

[211] 2 Tim. iv. 14. Augustin here again follows the better text than

the Textus Receptus; so also Vulgate, reddet. See Revised Version.

[212] See above chap. xix. 58.

[213] Ps. ii. 1. The English version employs the present tense.

[214] Ps. xxii. 18.

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Chapter XXII.

73. But the question before us is rendered more urgent by what the

Apostle John says: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not

unto death, he shall ask, and the Lord shall give him life for him who

sinneth not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he

shall pray for it." [215] For he manifestly shows that there are

certain brethren for whom we are not commanded to pray, although the

Lord bids us pray even for our persecutors. Nor can the question in

hand be solved, unless we acknowledge that there are certain sins in

brethren which are more heinous than the persecution of enemies.

Moreover, that brethren mean Christians can be proved by many examples

from the divine Scriptures. Yet that one is plainest which the apostle

thus states: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife,

and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother." [216] For he

has not added the word our; but has thought it plain, as he wished a

Christian who had an unbelieving wife to be understood by the

expression brother. And therefore he says a little after, "But if the

unbelieving depart, let him depart: a brother or a sister is not under

bondage in such cases." [217] Hence I am of opinion that the sin of a

brother is unto death, when any one, after coming to the knowledge of

God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, makes an assault on the

brotherhood, and is impelled by the fires of envy to oppose that grace

itself by which he is reconciled to God. But the sin is not unto death,

if any one has not withdrawn his love from a brother, but through some

infirmity of disposition has failed to perform the incumbent duties of

brotherhood. And on this account our Lord also on the cross says,

"Father, forgive [218] them; for they know not what they do:" [219]

for, not yet having become partakers of the grace of the Holy Spirit,

they had not yet entered the fellowship of the holy brotherhood. And

the blessed Stephen in the Acts of the Apostles prays for those by whom

he is being stoned, [220] because they had not yet believed on Christ,

and were not fighting against that common grace. And the Apostle Paul

on this account, I believe, does not pray for Alexander, because he was

already a brother, and had sinned unto death, viz. by making an assault

on the brotherhood through envy. But for those who had not broken off

their love, but had given way through fear, he prays that they may be

pardoned. For thus he expresses it: "Alexander the coppersmith did me

much evil: the Lord will reward him according to his works. Of whom be

thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words." [221] Then he

adds for whom he prays, thus expressing it: "At my first defence no man

stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be

laid to their charge." [222]

74. It is this difference in their sins which separates Judas the

betrayer from Peter the denier: not that a penitent is not to be

pardoned, for we must not come into collision with that declaration of

our Lord, where He enjoins that a brother is to be pardoned, when he

asks his brother to pardon him; [223] but that the ruin connected with

that sin is so great, that he cannot endure the humiliation of asking

for it, even if he should be compelled by a bad conscience both to

acknowledge and divulge his sin. For when Judas had said, "I have

sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood," yet it was easier

for him in despair to run and hang himself, [224] than in humility to

ask for pardon. And therefore it is of much consequence to know what

sort of repentance God pardons. For many much more readily confess that

they have sinned, and are so angry with themselves that they vehemently

wish they had not sinned; but yet they do not condescend to humble the

heart and to make it contrite, and to implore pardon: and this

disposition of mind we must suppose them to have, as feeling themselves

already condemned because of the greatness of their sin.

75. And this is perhaps the sin against the Holy Ghost, i.e. through

malice and envy to act in opposition to brotherly love after receiving

the grace of the Holy Ghost,--a sin which our Lord says is not forgiven

either in this world or in the world to come. And hence it may be asked

whether the Jews sinned against the Holy Ghost, when they said that our

Lord was casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils:

whether we are to understand this as said against our Lord Himself,

because He says of Himself in another passage, "If they have called the

Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of

His household!" [225] or whether, inasmuch as they had spoken from

great envy, being ungrateful for so manifest benefits, although they

were not yet Christians, they are, from the very greatness of their

envy, to be supposed to have sinned against the Holy Ghost? This latter

is certainly not to be gathered from our Lord's words. For although He

has said in the same passage, "And whosoever speaketh a word against

the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh a word

against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this

world, neither in the world to come;" yet it may seem that He

admonished them for this purpose, that they should come to His grace,

and after accepting of it should not so sin as they have now sinned.

For now they have spoken a word against the Son of man, and it may be

forgiven them, if they be converted, and believe on Him, and receive

the Holy Ghost; but if, after receiving Him, they should choose to envy

the brotherhood, and to assail the grace they have received, it cannot

be forgiven them, neither in this world nor in the world to come. For

if He reckoned them so condemned, that there was no hope left for them,

He would not judge that they ought still to be admonished, as He did by

adding the statement, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good;

or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt." [226]

76. Let it be understood, therefore, that we are to love our enemies,

and to do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who

persecute us, in such a way, that it is at the same time understood

that there are certain sins of brethren for which we are not commanded

to pray; lest, through unskilfulness on our part, divine Scripture

should seem to contradict itself (a thing which cannot happen). But

whether, as we are not to pray for certain parties, so we are also to

pray against some, has not yet become sufficiently evident. For it is

said in general, "Bless, and curse not;" and again, "Recompense to no

man evil for evil." [227] Moreover, while you do not pray for one, you

do not therefore pray against him: for you may see that his punishment

is certain, and his salvation altogether hopeless; and you do not pray

for him, not because you hate him, but because you feel you can profit

him nothing, and you do not wish your prayer to be rejected by the most

righteous Judge. But what are we to think respecting those parties

against whom we have it revealed that prayers were offered by the

saints, not that they might be turned from their error (for in this way

prayer is offered rather for them), but that final condemnation might

come upon them: not as it was offered against the betrayer of our Lord

by the prophet; for that, as has been said, was a prediction of things

to come, not a wish for punishment: nor as it was offered by the

apostle against Alexander; for respecting that also enough has been

already said: but as we read in the Apocalypse of John of the martyrs

praying that they may be avenged; [228] while the well-known first

martyr prayed that those who stoned him should be pardoned.

77. But we need not be moved by this circumstance. For who would

venture to affirm, in regard to those white-robed saints, when they

pleaded that they should be avenged, whether they pleaded against the

men themselves or against the dominion of sin? For of itself it is a

genuine avenging of the martyrs, and one full of righteousness and

mercy, that the dominion of sin should be overthrown, under which

dominion they were subjected to so great sufferings. And for its

overthrow the apostle strives, saying, "Let not sin therefore reign in

your mortal body." [229] But the dominion of sin is destroyed and

overthrown, partly by the amendment of men, so that the flesh is

brought under subjection to the spirit; partly by the condemnation of

those who persevere in sin, so that they are righteously disposed of in

such a way that they cannot be troublesome to the righteous who reign

with Christ. Look at the Apostle Paul; does it not seem to you that he

avenges the martyr Stephen in his own person, when he says: "So fight

I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring

it into subjection"? [230] For he was certainly laying prostrate, and

weakening, and bringing into subjection, and regulating that principle

in himself whence he had persecuted Stephen and the other Christians.

Who then can demonstrate that the holy martyrs were not asking from the

Lord such an avenging of themselves, when at the same time, in order to

their being avenged, they might lawfully wish for the end of this

world, in which they had endured such martyrdoms? And they who pray for

this, on the one hand pray for their enemies who are curable, and on

the other hand do not pray against those who have chosen to be

incurable: because God also, in punishing them, is not a malevolent

Torturer, but a most righteous Disposer. Without any hesitation,

therefore, let us love our enemies, let us do good to those that hate

us, and let us pray for those who persecute us.

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[215] 1 John v. 16.

[216] See note p.

[217] 1 Cor. vii. 14, 15.

[218] Ignosce; Vulgate, dimitte.

[219] Luke xxiii. 34.

[220] Acts vii. 60.

[221] Sermonibus; Vulgate, verbis.

[222] 2 Tim. iv. 14-16.

[223] Matt. xviii. 21. Luke xvii. 3.

[224] Matt. xxvii. 4, 5.

[225] Matt. x. 25.

[226] Matt. xii. 24-33.

[227] Rom. xii. 14, 17.

[228] Rev. vi. 10.

[229] Rom. vi. 12.

[230] 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. Sevituti subjicio; Vulgate, in servitutem

redigo.

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Chapter XXIII.

78. Then, as to the statement which follows, "that ye may be the

children of your Father which is in heaven," [231] it is to be

understood according to that rule in virtue of which John also says,

"He gave them power to become the sons of God." [232] For one is a Son

by nature, who knows nothing at all of sin; but we, by receiving power,

are made sons, in as far as we perform those things which are commanded

us by Him. And hence the apostolic teaching gives the name of adoption

to that by which we are called to an eternal inheritance, that we may

be joint-heirs with Christ. [233] We are therefore made sons by a

spiritual regeneration, and we are adopted into the kingdom of God, not

as aliens, but as being made and created by Him: so that it is one

benefit, His having brought us into being through His omnipotence, when

before we were nothing; another, His having adopted us, so that, as

being sons, we might enjoy along with Him eternal life for our

participation. Therefore He does not say, Do those things, because ye

are sons; but, Do those things, that ye may be sons.

79. But when He calls us to this by the Only-begotten Himself, He calls

us to His own likeness. For He, as is said in what follows, "maketh

[234] His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on

the just and on the unjust." Whether you are to understand His sun as

being not that which is visible to the fleshly eyes, but that wisdom of

which it is said, "She is the brightness of the everlasting light;"

[235] of which it is also said, "The Sun of righteousness has arisen

upon me;" and again, "But unto you that fear the name of the Lord shall

the Sun of righteousness arise:" [236] so that you would also

understand the rain as being the watering with the doctrine of truth,

because Christ hath appeared to the good and the evil, and is preached

to the good and the evil. Or whether you choose rather to understand

that sun which is set forth before the bodily eyes not only of men, but

also of cattle; and that rain by which the fruits are brought forth,

which have been given for the refreshment of the body, which I think is

the more probable interpretation: so that that spiritual sun does not

rise except on the good and holy; for it is this very thing which the

wicked bewail in that book which is called the Wisdom of Solomon, "And

the sun rose not upon us:" [237] and that spiritual rain does not water

any except the good; for the wicked were meant by the vineyard of which

it is said, "I will also command my clouds that they rain no rain upon

it." [238] But whether you understand the one or the other, it takes

place by the great goodness of God, which we are commanded to imitate,

if we wish to be the children of God. For who is there so ungrateful as

not to feel how great the comfort, so far as this life is concerned,

which that visible light and the material rain bring? And this comfort

we see bestowed in this life alike upon the righteous and upon sinners

in common. But He does not say, "who maketh the sun to rise on the evil

and on the good;" but He has added the word "His," i.e. which He

Himself made and established, and for the making of which He took

nothing from any one, as it is written in Genesis respecting all the

luminaries; [239] and He can properly say that all the things which He

has created out of nothing are His own: so that we are hence admonished

with how great liberality we ought, according to His precept, to give

to our enemies those things which we have not created, but have

received from His gifts.

80. But who can either be prepared to bear injuries from the weak, in

as far as it is profitable for their salvation; and to choose rather to

suffer more injustice from another than to repay what he has suffered;

to give to every one that asketh anything from him, either what he

asks, if it is in his possession, and if it can rightly be given, or

good advice, or to manifest a benevolent disposition, and not to turn

away from him who desires to borrow; to love his enemies, to do good to

those who hate him, to pray for those who persecute him;--who, I say,

does these things, but the man who is fully and perfectly merciful?

[240] And with that counsel misery is avoided, by the assistance of Him

who says, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice." [241] "Blessed,"

therefore, "are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." But now I

think it will be more convenient, that at this point the reader,

fatigued with so long a volume, should breathe a little, and recruit

himself for considering what remains in another book.

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[231] "Not in power or wisdom,--which was the cause of man's fall, and

leads evermore to the same,--but in love" (Plumptre).

[232] John i. 12.

[233] Rom viii. 17 and Gal. iv. 5.

[234] Facit(above, jubet). Bengel's comment is good: "Magnifica

appellatio. Ipse et fecit solem et gubernat et habet in sua unius

potestate" ("Splendid designation. He made the sun, governs it, and has

it in His own power").

[235] Wisd. vii. 26.

[236] Mal. iv. 2.

[237] Wisd. v. 6.

[238] Isa. v. 6.

[239] Gen. i. 16.

[240] "Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The Greek text has here the future: esesthe teleioi, "Ye therefore

shall be perfect" (Revised Version). Meyer gives the verb the

imperative sense; Alford, Lange, and others include the imperative

sense. The imperative force adds not a little to the plausibility of

deriving the doctrine of perfectibility on earth, or complete

"sanctification," from the passage, as the Pelagians (whom Augustin

elsewhere combats) and some Methodist commentators (Whedon, etc.).

Alford, Trench, etc., deny that the verse gives any countenance to the

doctrine. As regards the nature of the perfection, Bengel sententiously

says, "in amore, erga omnes" ("in love, toward all." See Col. iii. 14).

It seems "to refer chiefly to the perfection of the divine love"

(Mansel); so also Bleek, Meyer. Weiss (whose Leben Jesu, i. 532-534,

see) finds an allusion to the fundamental command of the Old Testament,

"Be ye holy," etc. In the place of the divine holiness, or God's

elevation above all uncleanness of the creature, is substituted the

divine perfection, whose essence is all-comprehensive and unselfish

love; and in the place of the God separated from the sinful people,

appears He who in love condescends to them and brings them into

likeness with Himself as His children. The last verse of the Sermon as

reported by Luke (vi. 36) confirms the idea that the perfection is of

love: "Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful."

Commenting on this verse, Dr. Schaff says, "Instruction in morality

cannot rise above this. Having thus led us up to our heavenly Father as

the true standard, our Lord, by a natural transition, passes to our

religious duties, i.e. duties to our heavenly Father."

[241] Hos. vi. 6.

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Book II.

On the latter part of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, contained in the

sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew.

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Chapter I.

1. The subject of mercy, with the treatment of which the first book

came to a close, is followed by that of the cleansing of the heart,

with which the present one begins. [242] The cleansing of the heart,

then, is as it were the cleansing of the eye by which God is seen; and

in keeping that single, there ought to be as great care as the dignity

of the object demands, which can be beheld by such an eye. But even

when this eye is in great part cleansed, it is difficult to prevent

certain defilements from creeping insensibly over it, from those things

which are wont to accompany even our good actions,--as, for instance,

the praise of men. If, indeed, not to live uprightly is hurtful; yet to

live uprightly, and not to wish to be praised, what else is this than

to be an enemy to the affairs of men, which are certainly so much the

more miserable, the less an upright life on the part of men gives

pleasure? If, therefore, those among whom you live shall not praise you

when living uprightly, they are in error: but if they shall praise you,

you are in danger; unless you have a heart so single and pure, that in

those things in which you act uprightly you do not so act because of

the praises of men; and that you rather congratulate those who praise

what is right, as having pleasure in what is good, than yourself;

because you would live uprightly even if no one were to praise you: and

that you understand this very praise of you to be useful to those who

praise you, only when it is not yourself whom they honour in your good

life, but God, whose most holy temple every man is who lives well; so

that what David says finds its fulfilment, "In the Lord shall my soul

be praised; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." [243] It

belongs therefore to the pure eye not to look at the praises of men in

acting rightly, nor to have reference to these while you are acting

rightly, i.e. to do anything rightly with the very design of pleasing

men. For thus you will be disposed also to counterfeit what is good, if

nothing is kept in view except the praise of man; who, inasmuch as he

cannot see the heart, may also praise things that are false. And they

who do this, i.e. who counterfeit goodness, are of a double heart. No

one therefore has a single, i.e. a pure heart, except the man who rises

above the praises of men; and when he lives well, looks at Him only,

and strives to please Him who is the only Searcher of the conscience.

And whatever proceeds from the purity of that conscience is so much the

more praiseworthy, the less it desires the praises of men.

2. "Take heed, [244] therefore," says He, "that ye do not your

righteousness [245] before men, to be seen of them:" i.e., take heed

that ye do not live righteously with this intent, and that ye do not

place your happiness in this, that men may see you. "Otherwise ye have

no reward of your Father who is in heaven:" not if ye should be seen by

men; but if ye should live righteously with the intent of being seen by

men. For, [were it the former], what would become of the statement made

in the beginning of this sermon, "Ye are the light of the world. A city

that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle,

and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light

unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men,

that they may see your good works"? But He did not set up this as the

end; for He has added, "and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

[246] But here, because he is finding fault with this, if the end of

our right actions is there, i.e. if we act rightly with this design,

only of being seen of men; after He has said, "Take heed that ye do not

your righteousness before men," He has added nothing. And hereby it is

evident that He has said this, not to prevent us from acting rightly

before men, but lest perchance we should act rightly before men for the

purpose of being seen by them, i.e. should fix our eye on this, and

make it the end of what we have set before us.

3. For the apostle also says, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be

the servant of Christ;" [247] while he says in another place, "Please

all men in all things, even as I also please all men in all things."

[248] And they who do not understand this think it a contradiction;

while the explanation is, that he has said he does not please men,

because he was accustomed to act rightly, not with the express design

of pleasing men, but of pleasing God, to the love of whom he wished to

turn men's hearts by that very thing in which he was pleasing men.

Therefore he was both right in saying that he did not please men,

because in that very thing he aimed at pleasing God: and right in

authoritatively teaching that we ought to please men, not in order that

this should be sought for as the reward of our good deeds; but because

the man who would not offer himself for imitation to those whom he

wished to be saved, could not please God; but no man possibly can

imitate one who has not pleased him. As, therefore, that man would not

speak absurdly who should say, In this work of seeking a ship, it is

not a ship, but my native country, that I seek: so the apostle also

might fitly say, In this work of pleasing men, it is not men, but God,

that I please; because I do not aim at pleasing men, but have it as my

object, that those whom I wish to be saved may imitate me. Just as he

says of an offering that is made for the saints, "Not because I desire

a gift, but I desire fruit;" [249] i.e., In seeking your gift, I seek

not it, but your fruit. For by this proof it could appear how far they

had advanced Godward, when they offered that willingly which was sought

from them not for the sake of his own joy over their gifts, but for the

sake of the fellowship of love.

4. Although when He also goes on to say, "Otherwise ye have no reward

of your Father who is in heaven," [250] He points out nothing else but

that we ought to be on our guard against seeking man's praise as the

reward of our deeds, i.e. against thinking we thereby attain to

blessedness.

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[242] Jesus passes from the precepts of the genuine righteousness to

the actual practice of the same (Meyer, Weiss), from moral to religious

duties (Lange), from actions to motives; having spoken to the heart

before by inference, he now speaks directly (Alford).

[243] Ps. xxxiv. 2.

[244] Cavete facere; Vulgate, attendite ne faciatis.

[245] In agreement with the best Greek text. (See Revised Version.)

This verse is a general proposition. The three leading manifestations

of righteousness and practical piety among the Jews

follow,--alms-giving, prayer, fasting.

[246] Matt. v. 14-16.

[247] Gal. i. 10.

[248] 1 Cor. x. 32, 33.

[249] Phil. iv. 17.

[250] Acts otherwise noble and praiseworthy become sin when done to

make an appearance before men, and get honour from them. Bad intentions

vitiate pious observances.

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Chapter II.

5. "Therefore, when thou doest thine alms," says He, "do not sound a

trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the

streets, that they may have glory [251] of men." Do not, says He,

desire to become known in the same way as the hypocrites. Now it is

manifest that hypocrites have not that in their heart also which they

hold forth before the eyes of men. For hypocrites are pretenders, as it

were setters forth of other characters, just as in the plays of the

theatre. For he who acts the part of Agamemnon in tragedy, for example,

or of any other person belonging to the history or legend which is

acted, is not really the person himself, but personates him, and is

called a hypocrite. In like manner, in the Church, or in any phase of

human life, whoever wishes to seem what he is not is a hypocrite. For

he pretends, but does not show himself, to be a righteous man; because

he places the whole fruit [of his acting] in the praise of men, which

even pretenders may receive, while they deceive those to whom they seem

good, and are praised by them. But such do not receive a reward from

God the Searcher of the heart, unless it be the punishment of their

deceit: from men, however, says He, "They have received their reward;"

and most righteously will it be said to them, Depart from me, ye

workers of deceit; ye had my name, but ye did not my works. Hence they

have received their reward, who do their alms for no other reason than

that they may have glory of men; not if they have glory of men, but if

they do them for the express purpose of having this glory, as has been

discussed above. For the praise of men ought not to be sought by him

who acts rightly, but ought to follow him who acts rightly, so that

they may profit who can also imitate what they praise, not that he whom

they praise may think that they are profiting him anything.

6. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right

hand doeth." If you should understand unbelievers to be meant by the

left hand, then it will seem to be no fault to wish to please

believers; while nevertheless we are altogether prohibited from placing

the fruit and end of our good deed in the praise of any men whatever.

But as regards this point, that those who have been pleased with your

good deeds should imitate you, we are to act before the eyes not only

of believers, but also of unbelievers, so that by our good works, which

are to be praised, they may honour God, and may come to salvation. But

if you should be of opinion that the left hand means an enemy, so that

your enemy is not to know when you do alms, why did the Lord Himself,

when His enemies the Jews were standing round, mercifully heal men? why

did the Apostle Peter, by healing the lame man whom he pitied at the

gate Beautiful, bring also the wrath of the enemy upon himself, and

upon the other disciples of Christ? [252] Then, further, if it is

necessary that the enemy should not know when we do our alms, how shall

we do with the enemy himself so as to fulfil that precept, "If thine

enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him

water to drink"? [253]

7. A third opinion is wont to be held by carnal people, so absurd and

ridiculous, that I would not mention it had I not found that not a few

are entangled in that error, who say that by the expression left hand a

wife is meant; so that, inasmuch as in family affairs women are wont to

be more tenacious of money, it is to be kept hid from them when their

husbands compassionately spend anything upon the needy, for fear of

domestic quarrels. As if, forsooth, men alone were Christians, and this

precept were not addressed to women also! From what left hand, then, is

a woman enjoined to conceal her deed of mercy? Is a husband also the

left hand of his wife? A statement most absurd. Or if any one thinks

that they are left hands to each other; if any part of the family

property be expended by the one party in such a way as to be contrary

to the will of the other party, such a marriage will not be a Christian

one; but whichever of them should choose to do alms according to the

command of God, whomsoever he should find opposed, would inevitably be

an enemy to the command of God, and therefore reckoned among

unbelievers,--the command with respect to such parties being, that a

believing husband should win his wife, and a believing wife her

husband, by their good conversation and conduct; and therefore they

ought not to conceal their good works from each other, by which they

are to be mutually attracted, so that the one may be able to attract

the other to communion in the Christian faith. Nor are thefts to be

perpetrated in order that God may be rendered propitious. But if

anything is to be concealed as long as the infirmity of the other party

is unable to bear with equanimity what nevertheless is not done

unjustly and unlawfully; yet, that the left hand is not meant in such a

sense on the present occasion, readily appears from a consideration of

the whole section, whereby it will at the same time be discovered what

He calls the left hand.

8. "Take heed," says He, "that ye do not your righteousness before men,

to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is

in heaven." Here He has mentioned righteousness generally, then He

follows it up in detail. For a deed which is done in the way of alms is

a certain part of righteousness, and therefore He connects the two by

saying, "Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet

before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets,

that they may have glory of men." In this there is a reference to what

He says before, "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before

men, to be seen of them." But what follows, "Verily I say unto you,

They have received their reward," refers to that other statement which

He has made above, "Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is

in heaven." Then follows, "But when thou doest alms." When He says,

"But thou," what else does He mean but, Not in the same manner as they?

What, then, does He bid me do? "But when thou doest alms," says He,

"let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Hence those

other parties so act, that their left hand knoweth what their right

hand doeth. What, therefore, is blamed in them, this thou art forbidden

to do. But this is what is blamed in them, that they act in such a way

as to seek the praises of men. And therefore the left hand seems to

have no more suitable meaning than just this delight in praise. But the

right hand means the intention of fulfilling the divine commands. When,

therefore, with the consciousness of him who does alms is mixed up the

desire of man's praise, the left hand becomes conscious of the work of

the right hand: "Let not, therefore, thy left hand know what thy right

hand doeth;" [254] i.e. Let there not be mixed up in thy consciousness

the desire of man's praise, when in doing alms thou art striving to

fulfil a divine command.

9. "That thine alms may be in secret." [255] What else is meant by "in

secret," but just in a good conscience, which cannot be shown to human

eyes, nor revealed by words? since, indeed, the mass of men tell many

lies. And therefore, if the right hand acts inwardly in secret, all

outward things, which are visible and temporal, belong to the left

hand. Let thine alms, therefore, be in thine own consciousness, where

many do alms by their good intention, even if they have no money or

anything else which is to be bestowed on one who is needy. But many

give alms outwardly, and not inwardly, who either from ambition, or for

the sake of some temporal object, wish to appear merciful, in whom the

left hand only is to be reckoned as working. Others again hold, as it

were, a middle place between the two; so that, with a design which is

directed Godward, they do their alms, and yet there insinuates itself

into this excellent wish also some desire after praise, or after a

perishable and temporal object of some sort or other. But our Lord much

more strongly prohibits the left hand alone being at work in us, when

He even forbids its being mixed up with the works of the right hand:

that is to say, that we are not only to beware of doing alms from the

desire of temporal objects alone; but that in this work we are not even

to have regard to God in such a way as that there should be mingled up

or united therewith the grasping after outward advantages. For the

question under discussion is the cleansing of the heart, which, unless

it be single, will not be clean. But how will it be single, if it

serves two masters, and does not purge its vision by the striving after

eternal things alone, but clouds it by the love of mortal and

perishable things as well? "Let thine alms," therefore, "be in secret;

and thy [256] Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee."

Altogether most righteously and most truly. For if you expect a reward

from Him who is the only Searcher of the conscience, let conscience

itself suffice thee for meriting a reward. Many Latin copies have it

thus, "And thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly;"

but because we have not found the word "openly" in the Greek copies,

which are earlier, [257] we have not thought that anything was to be

said about it.

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[251] Glorificantur; Vulgate honorificentur. The sounding of trumpet is

referred by some to an alleged custom of the parties themselves calling

the poor together by a trumpet, or even to the noise of the coins on

the trumpet-shaped chests in the temple. Better, it is figurative of

"self-laudation and display" (Meyer, Alford, Lange, etc.).

[252] Acts iii., iv.

[253] Prov. xxv. 21.

[254] "With complete modesty; secret, noiseless giving" (Chrysostom).

No reference to a counting of the money by the left hand (Paulus, De

Wette). Luther's comment is quaint and characteristic: "When thou

givest alms with thy right hand, take heed that thou dost not seek with

the left to take more, but put it behind thy back." Trench pronounces

this discussion concerning the meaning of the left hand "laborious,

and, as I cannot but think, unnecessary;" but it is ingenious and

interesting.

[255] Pii lucent et tamen latent (Bengel).

[256] Not our Father.

[257] It is wanting in the Sinaitic, B, D, etc., mss., as also in the

Vulgate copies.

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Chapter III.

10. "And when ye pray," says He, "ye shall not be as the hypocrites

are; for they love to pray standing [258] in the synagogues and in the

corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men." And here also it

is not the being seen of men that is wrong, but doing these things for

the purpose of being seen of men; and it is superfluous to make the

same remark so often, since there is just one rule to be kept, from

which we learn that what we should dread and avoid is not that men know

these things, but that they be done with this intent, that the fruit of

pleasing men should be sought after in them. Our Lord Himself, too,

preserves the same words, when He adds similarly, "Verily I say unto

you, They have received their reward;" hereby showing that He forbids

this,--the striving after that reward in which fools delight when they

are praised by men.

11. "But when ye [259] pray," says He, "enter into your bed-chambers."

What are those bed-chambers but just our hearts themselves, as is meant

also in the Psalm, when it is said, "What ye say in your hearts, have

remorse for even in your beds"? [260] "And when ye have shut [261] the

doors," says He, "pray to your Father who is in secret." [262] It is a

small matter to enter into our bed-chambers if the door stand open to

the unmannerly, through which the things that are outside profanely

rush in and assail our inner man. Now we have said that outside are all

temporal and visible things, which make their way through the door,

i.e. through the fleshly sense into our thoughts, and clamorously

interrupt those who are praying by a crowd of vain phantoms. Hence the

door is to be shut, i.e. the fleshly sense is to be resisted, so that

spiritual prayer may be directed to the Father, which is done in the

inmost heart, where prayer is offered to the Father which is in secret.

"And your Father," says He, "who seeth in secret, shall reward you."

And this had to be wound up with a closing statement of such a kind;

for here at the present stage the admonition is not that we should

pray, but as to how we should pray. Nor is what goes before an

admonition that we should give alms, but as to the spirit in which we

should do so, inasmuch as He is giving instructions with regard to the

cleansing of the heart, which nothing cleanses but the undivided and

single-minded striving after eternal life from the pure love of wisdom

alone.

12. "But when ye pray," says He, "do not speak much, [263] as the

heathen do; for they think [264] that they shall be heard for their

much speaking." As it is characteristic of the hypocrites to exhibit

themselves to be gazed at when praying, and their fruit is to please

men, so it is characteristic of the heathen, i.e. of the Gentiles, to

think they are heard for their much speaking. And in reality, every

kind of much speaking comes from the Gentiles, who make it their

endeavour to exercise the tongue rather than to cleanse the heart. And

this kind of useless exertion they endeavour to transfer even to the

influencing of God by prayer, supposing that the Judge, just like man,

is brought over by words to a certain way of thinking. "Be not ye,

therefore, like unto them," says the only true Master. "For your Father

knoweth what things are necessary [265] for you, before ye ask Him."

For if many words are made use of with the intent that one who is

ignorant may be instructed and taught, what need is there of them for

Him who knows all things, to whom all things which exist, by the very

fact of their existence, speak, and show themselves as having been

brought into existence; and those things which are future do not remain

concealed from His knowledge and wisdom, in which both those things

which are past, and those things which will yet come to pass, are all

present and cannot pass away?

13. But since, however few they may be, yet there are words which He

Himself also is about to speak, by which He would teach us to pray; it

may be asked why even these few words are necessary for Him who knows

all things before they take place, and is acquainted, as has been said,

with what is necessary for us before we ask Him? Here, in the first

place, the answer is, that we ought to urge our case with God, in order

to obtain what we wish, not by words, but by the ideas which we cherish

in our mind, and by the direction of our thought, with pure love and

sincere desire; but that our Lord has taught us the very ideas in

words, that by committing them to memory we may recollect those ideas

at the time we pray.

14. But again, it may be asked (whether we are to pray in ideas or in

words) what need there is for prayer itself, if God already knows what

is necessary for us; unless it be that the very effort involved in

prayer calms and purifies our heart, and makes it more capacious for

receiving the divine gifts, which are poured into us spiritually. [266]

For it is not on account of the urgency of our prayers that God hears

us, who is always ready to give us His light, not of a material kind,

but that which is intellectual and spiritual: but we are not always

ready to receive, since we are inclined towards other things, and are

involved in darkness through our desire for temporal things. Hence

there is brought about in prayer a turning of the heart to Him, who is

ever ready to give, if we will but take what He has given; and in the

very act of turning there is effected a purging of the inner eye,

inasmuch as those things of a temporal kind which were desired are

excluded, so that the vision of the pure heart may be able to bear the

pure light, divinely shining, without any setting or change: and not

only to bear it, but also to remain in it; not merely without

annoyance, but also with ineffable joy, in which a life truly and

sincerely blessed is perfected.

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[258] They love to stand praying, more than they love to pray. Like the

Mohammedans of to-day, they took delight in airing their piety. Our

Lord mentions the most conspicuous localities. The usual posture of the

Jews in prayer was standing (1 Sam. i. 26, Luke xviii. 11, etc.).

[259] Vos; Vulgate, tu (Revised Version).

[260] Ps. iv. 4. The English version renders, "Commune with your own

heart upon your bed, and be still."

[261] Claudentes ostia; Vulgate, clauso ostio.

[262] Our Lord on occasion followed this habit (Matt. xiv. 23 and in

Gethsemane).

[263] Greek, battalogeo "Use not vain repetitions," Revised Version (or

stammer). Some derive the word from Battus, king of Cyrene, who

stuttered, or from Battus, author of wordy poems. The word is probably

only an imitation of the sound of the stammerer (Thayer, Lexicon, who

spells battologeo). The Jews were only doing as well as the Gentiles

when they placed virtue in the length of the prayer, and no better.

"Who makes his prayer long, shall not return home empty" (Rabbi

Chasima, quoted by Hausrath, 73). The Rabbins took up at great length

the question how many and what kind of petitions should be offered up

at the table spread on different occasions with different viands,

whether salutations should be acknowledged in the course of prayer,

etc. (see Sch�rer, pp. 498, 499). Examples of repetitious prayer in

Scripture: 1 Kings xviii. 26, Acts xix. 34. The warning is not against

frequent prayer (Luke xviii. 1).

[264] Arbitrantur; Vulgate, putant.

[265] Vobis necessarium; Vulgate, opus.

[266] The illustration is frequently used (M. Henry; after him F. W.

Robertson), to represent the position of some, that prayer only has an

influence on the petitioner, of a boatman in his boat, taking hold of

the wharf with his grappling hook. While prayer does not "inform or

persuade God," it is the condition of receiving. The sanctifying

influence is secondary and incidental.

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Chapter IV.

15. But now we have to consider what things we are taught to pray for

by Him through whom we both learn what we are to pray for, and obtain

what we pray for. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye," [267] says

He: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom

come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day

our daily [268] bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our

debtors. And bring [269] us not into temptation, but deliver us from

evil." [270] Seeing that in all prayer we have to conciliate the

goodwill of him to whom we pray, then to say what we pray for; goodwill

is usually conciliated by our offering praise to him to whom the prayer

is directed, and this is usually put in the beginning of the prayer:

and in this particular our Lord has bidden us say nothing else but "Our

Father who art in heaven." For many things are said in praise of God,

which, being scattered variously and widely over all the Holy

Scriptures, every one will be able to consider when he reads them: yet

nowhere is there found a precept for the people of Israel, that they

should say "Our Father," or that they should pray to God as a Father;

but as Lord He was made known to them, as being yet servants, i.e.

still living according to the flesh. I say this, however, inasmuch as

they received the commands of the law, which they were ordered to

observe: for the prophets often show that this same Lord of ours might

have been their Father also, if they had not strayed from His

commandments: as, for instance, we have that statement, "I have

nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me;"

[271] and that other, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are

children of the Most High;" [272] and this again, "If then I be a

Father, where is mine honour? and if I be a Master, where is my fear?"

[273] and very many other statements, where the Jews are accused of

showing by their sin that they did not wish to become sons: those

things being left out of account which are said in prophecy of a future

Christian people, that they would have God as a Father, according to

that gospel statement, "To them gave He power to become the sons of

God." [274] The Apostle Paul, again, says, "The heir, as long as he is

a child, differeth nothing from a servant;" and mentions that we have

received the Spirit of adoption, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father." [275]

16. And since the fact that we are called to an eternal inheritance,

that we might be fellow-heirs with Christ and attain to the adoption of

sons, is not of our deserts, but of God's grace; we put this very same

grace in the beginning of our prayer, when we say "Our Father." And by

that appellation both love is stirred up--for what ought to be dearer

to sons than a father?--and a suppliant disposition, when men say to

God, "Our Father:" and a certain presumption of obtaining what we are

about to ask; since, before we ask anything, we have received so great

a gift as to be allowed to call God "Our Father." [276] For what would

He not now give to sons when they ask, when He has already granted this

very thing, namely, that they might be sons? Lastly, how great

solicitude takes hold of the mind, that he who says "Our Father,"

should not prove unworthy of so great a Father! For if any plebeian

should be permitted by the party himself to call a senator of more

advanced age father; without doubt he would tremble, and would not

readily venture to do it, reflecting on the humbleness of his origin,

and the scantiness of his resources, and the worthlessness of his

plebeian person: how much more, therefore, ought we to tremble to call

God Father, if there is so great a stain and so much baseness in our

character, that God might much more justly drive forth these from

contact with Himself, than that senator might the poverty of any beggar

whatever! Since, indeed, he (the senator) despises that in the beggar

to which even he himself may be reduced by the vicissitude of human

affairs: but God never falls into baseness of character. And thanks be

to the mercy of Him who requires this of us, that He should be our

Father,--a relationship which can be brought about by no expenditure of

ours, but solely by God's goodwill. Here also there is an admonition to

the rich and to those of noble birth, so far as this world is

concerned, that when they have become Christians they should not

comport themselves proudly towards the poor and the low of birth; since

together with them they call God "Our Father,"--an expression which

they cannot truly and piously use, unless they recognise that they

themselves are brethren.

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[267] Orate; Vulgate, Orabitis.

[268] Quotidianum; Vulgate, supersubstantialem.

[269] Inferas (Rev. Vers.); Vulgate, inducas.

[270] This prayer is called the Lord's Prayer because our Lord is its

author, He did not and could not have used it Himself, on account of

(1) the special meaning of the pronoun "our" in the address, (2) the

confession of sins in the fifth petition. Luke's account (xi. 1) agrees

in the subject of the petitions as in the address, but differs (1) in

the omission of the third petition (Crit text); (2) in the addition to

the fifth petition (which, however, Matthew gives at the close of the

prayer in a more elaborate form); (3) in adducing a request of the

disciples as the occasion of the prayer. Some have thought the prayer

was given on two occasions (Meyer in earlier edd., Tholuck). Others

hold that Matthew has inserted it out of its proper historical place

(Neander, Olshausen, De Wette, Ebrard, Meyer in ed. vi., Weiss, etc.).

This question of priority and accuracy as between the forms of Matthew

and Luke may be regarded as set at rest by the Teaching of the Twelve

Apostles, which (viii. 2) gives the exact form of Matthew with three

unimportant differences: viz. (1) heaven, ourano, instead of heavens;

(2) the omission of the article before earth; (3) debt instead of

debts. This document contains the doxology (with the omission of

kingdom), and supports the Textus Receptus in giving the present, we

forgive, aphiemen, instead of the perfect, we have forgiven,

aphekamen.--The division of the prayer is usually made into (1)

address, (2) petitions, (3) doxology (omitted from the approved

critical Greek text and the Revised Version).--The petitions are seven

according to Augustin, Luther, Bengel, Tholuck, etc: six (the two last

being combined as one) according to Chrysostom, Reformed catechisms,

Calvin, Schaff, etc. The petitions are divided into two groups

(Tertullian) or tables (Calvin).--The contents of the first three

petitions concern the glory of God; of the last four, the wants of men.

In the first group the pronoun is thy, and the direction of the thought

is from heaven downwards to earth; in the second group it is us, and

the direction of the thought is from earth upwards to God.--The

numbers, in view of their significance in the Old Testament, 3, 4, 7,

are not an uninteresting item. Tholuck says: "The attention of the

student who has otherwise heard of the doctrine of the Trinity will

find a distinct reference to it in the arrangement of this prayer. In

the first petition of each group, God is referred to as Creator and

Preserver; in the second as Redeemer; in the third as the Holy

Spirit."--The Lord's Prayer is more than a specimen of prayer: it is a

pattern. Different views are held concerning its liturgical use, which

can be traced back to Cyprian and Tertullian, and now farther still, to

the Teaching of the Apostles, which, after giving the prayer, says,

"Thrice a day pray thus." It also gives (ix.) a form of prayer to be

used after the Eucharist. Of its abuse Luther says, "It is the greatest

martyr."--It is not a compilation, although similar or the same,

petitions may have been in use among the Jews. The simplicity, symmetry

of arrangement, depth and progress of thought, reverence of feeling,

make it, indeed, the model prayer,--the Lord's Prayer. Tertullian calls

it breviarium totius evangelii (so Meyer).

[271] Isa. i. 2.

[272] Ps. lxxxii. 6.

[273] Mal. i. 6.

[274] John i. 12.

[275] Rom. viii. 15-23 and Gal. iv. 1-6.

[276] Patrem quisquis appellare potest, omnia orare potest (Bengel).

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Chapter V.

17. Let the new people, therefore, who are called to an eternal

inheritance, use the word of the New Testament, and say, "Our Father

who art in heaven," [277] i.e. in the holy and the just. For God is not

contained in space. For the heavens are indeed the higher material

bodies of the world, but yet material, and therefore cannot exist

except in some definite place; but if God's place is believed to be in

the heavens, as meaning the higher parts of the world, the birds are of

greater value than we, for their life is nearer to God. But it is not

written, The Lord is nigh unto tall men, or unto those who dwell on

mountains; but it is written, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a

broken heart," [278] which refers rather to humility. But as a sinner

is called earth, when it is said to him, "Earth thou art, and unto

earth shalt thou return;" [279] so, on the other hand, a righteous man

may be called heaven. For it is said to the righteous, "For the temple

of God is holy, which temple ye are." [280] And therefore, if God

dwells in His temple, and the saints are His temple, the expression

"which art in heaven" is rightly used in the sense, which art in the

saints. And most suitable is such a similitude, so that spiritually

there may be seen to be as great a difference between the righteous and

sinners, as there is materially between heaven and earth.

18. And for the purpose of showing this, when we stand at prayer, we

turn to the east, whence the heaven rises: not as if God also were

dwelling there, in the sense that He who is everywhere present, not as

occupying space, but by the power of His majesty, had forsaken the

other parts of the world; but in order that the mind may be admonished

to turn to a more excellent nature, i.e. to God, when its own body,

which is earthly, is turned to a more excellent body, i.e. to a

heavenly one. It is also suitable for the different stages of religion,

and expedient in the highest degree, that in the minds of all, both

small and great, there should be cherished worthy conceptions of God.

And therefore, as regards those who as yet are taken up with the

beauties that are seen, and cannot think of anything incorporeal,

inasmuch as they must necessarily prefer heaven to earth, their opinion

is more tolerable, if they believe God, whom as yet they think of after

a corporeal fashion, to be in heaven rather than upon earth: so that

when at any future time they have learned that the dignity of the soul

exceeds even a celestial body, they may seek Him in the soul rather

than in a celestial body even; and when they have learned how great a

distance there is between the souls of sinners and of the righteous,

just as they did not venture, when as yet they were wise only after a

carnal fashion, to place Him on earth, but in heaven, so afterwards

with better faith or intelligence they may seek Him again in the souls

of the righteous rather than in those of sinners. Hence, when it is

said, "Our Father which art in heaven," it is rightly understood to

mean in the hearts of the righteous, as it were in His holy temple. And

at the same time, in such a way that he who prays wishes Him whom he

invokes to dwell in himself also; and when he strives after this,

practises righteousness,--a kind of service by which God is attracted

to dwell in the soul.

19. Let us see now what things are to be prayed for. For it has been

stated who it is that is prayed to, and where He dwells. First of all,

then, of those things which are prayed for comes this petition,

"Hallowed be Thy name." And this is prayed for, not as if the name of

God were not holy already, but that it may be held holy by men; i.e.,

that God may so become known to them, that they shall reckon nothing

more holy, and which they are more afraid of offending. For, because it

is said, "In Judah is God known; His name is great in Israel," [281] we

are not to understand the statement in this way, as if God were less in

one place, greater in another; but there His name is great, where He is

named according to the greatness of His majesty. And so there His name

is said to be holy, where He is named with veneration and the fear of

offending Him. And this is what is now going on, while the gospel, by

becoming known everywhere throughout the different nations, commends

the name of the one God by means of the administration of His Son.

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[277] "The address puts us into the proper attitude of prayer. It

indicates our filial relation to God as Father' (word of faith),

fraternal relation to our fellow-men (our,' word of love), and our

destination of heaven' (word of hope)."

[278] Ps. xxxiv. 18.

[279] Gen. iii. 19.

[280] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

[281] Ps. lxxvi. 1.

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Chapter VI.

20. In the next place there follows, "Thy kingdom come." Just as the

Lord Himself teaches in the Gospel that the day of judgment will take

place at the very time when the gospel shall have been preached among

all nations: [282] a thing which belongs to the hallowing of God's

name. For here also the expression "Thy kingdom come" is not used in

such a way as if God were not now reigning. But some one perhaps might

say the expression "come" meant upon earth; as if, indeed, He were not

even now really reigning upon earth, and had not always reigned upon it

from the foundation of the world. "Come," therefore, is to be

understood in the sense of "manifested to men." For in the same way

also as a light which is present is absent to the blind, and to those

who shut their eyes; so the kingdom of God, though it never departs

from the earth, is yet absent to those who are ignorant of it. But no

one will be allowed to be ignorant of the kingdom of God, when His

Only-begotten shall come from heaven, not only in a way to be

apprehended by the understanding, but also visibly in the person of the

Divine Man, in order to judge the quick and the dead. And after that

judgment, i.e. when the process of distinguishing and separating the

righteous from the unrighteous has taken place, God will so dwell in

the righteous, that there will be no need for any one being taught by

man, but all will be, as it is written, "taught of God." [283] Then

will the blessed life in all its parts be perfected in the saints unto

eternity, just as now the most holy and blessed heavenly angels are

wise and blessed, from the fact that God alone is their light; because

the Lord hath promised this also to His own: "In the resurrection,"

says He, "they will be as the angels in heaven." [284]

21. And therefore, after that petition where we say, "Thy kingdom

come," there follows, "Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth:"

i.e., just as Thy will is in the angels who are in heaven, so that they

wholly cleave to Thee, and thoroughly enjoy Thee, no error beclouding

their wisdom, no misery hindering their blessedness; so let it be done

in Thy saints who are on earth, and made from the earth, so far as the

body is concerned, and who, although it is into a heavenly habitation

and exchange, are yet to be taken from the earth. To this there is a

reference also in that doxology of the angels, "Glory to God in the

highest, [285] and on earth peace to men of goodwill:" [286] so that

when our goodwill has gone before, which follows Him that calleth, the

will of God is perfected in us, as it is in the heavenly angels; so

that no antagonism stands in the way of our blessedness: and this is

peace. "Thy will be done" is also rightly understood in the sense of,

Let obedience be rendered to Thy precepts: "as in heaven so on earth,"

i.e. as by the angels so by men. For, that the will of God is done when

His precepts are obeyed, the Lord Himself says, when He affirms, "My

meat is to do the will of Him that sent me;" [287] and often, "I came,

not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me;" [288] and

when He says, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do

the will of God, [289] the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

[290] And therefore, in those at least who do the will of God, the will

of God is accomplished; not because they cause God to will, but because

they do what He wills, i.e. they do according to His will.

22. There is also that other interpretation, "Thy will be done as in

heaven so on earth,"--as in the holy and just, so also in sinners. And

this, besides, may be understood in two ways: either that we should

pray even for our enemies (for what else are they to be reckoned, in

spite of whose will the Christian and Catholic name still spreads?), so

that it is said, "Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth,"--as if

the meaning were, As the righteous do Thy will, in like manner let

sinners also do it, so that they may be converted unto Thee; or in this

sense, "Let Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth," so that every

one may get his own; which will take place at the last judgment, the

righteous being requited with a reward, sinners with condemnation--when

the sheep shall be separated from the goats. [291]

23. That other interpretation also is not absurd, nay, it is thoroughly

accordant with both our faith and hope, that we are to take heaven and

earth in the sense of spirit and flesh. And since the apostle says,

"With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the

law of sin," [292] we see that the will of God is done in the mind,

i.e. in the spirit. But when death shall have been swallowed up in

victory, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, which will

happen at the resurrection of the flesh, and at that change which is

promised to the righteous, according to the prediction of the same

apostle, [293] let the will of God be done on earth, as it is in

heaven; i.e., in such a way that, in like manner as the spirit does not

resist God, but follows and does His will, so the body also may not

resist the spirit or soul, which at present is harassed by the weakness

of the body, and is prone to fleshly habit: and this will be an element

of the perfect peace in the life eternal, that not only will the will

be present with us, but also the performance of that which is good.

"For to will," says he, "is present with me; but how to perform that

which is good I find not:" for not yet in earth as in heaven, i.e. not

yet in the flesh as in the spirit, is the will of God done. For even in

our misery the will of God is done, when we suffer those things through

the flesh which are due to us in virtue of our mortality, which our

nature has deserved because of its sin. But we are to pray for this,

that the will of God may be done as in heaven so in earth; that in like

manner as with the heart we delight in the law after the inward man,

[294] so also, when the change in our body has taken place, no part of

us may, on account of earthly griefs or pleasures, stand opposed to

this our delight.

24. Nor is that view inconsistent with truth, that we are to understand

the words, "Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth," as in our Lord

Jesus Christ Himself, so also in the Church: as if one were to say, As

in the man who fulfilled the will of the Father, so also in the woman

who is betrothed to him. For heaven and earth are suitably understood

as if they were man and wife; since the earth is fruitful from the

heaven fertilizing it.

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[282] Matt. xxiv. 14.

[283] Isa. liv. 13; John vi. 45.

[284] Matt. xxii. 30.

[285] In excelsis; Vulgate, in altissimis.

[286] Luke ii. 14.

[287] John iv. 34.

[288] John vi. 38.

[289] Vulgate, Patris qui in coelis ("Father who is in heaven"). So the

Greek.

[290] Matt. xxii. 49, 50.

[291] Matt. xxv. 33, 46.

[292] Rom. vii. 25.

[293] 1 Cor. xv. 42, 55.

[294] Rom. vii. 18, 22.

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Chapter VII.

25. The fourth petition is, "Give us this day our daily bread." Daily

bread is put either for all those things which meet the wants of this

life, in reference to which He says in His teaching, "Take no thought

for the morrow:" so that on this account there is added, "Give us this

day:" or, it is put for the sacrament of the body of Christ, which we

daily receive: or, for the spiritual food, of which the same Lord says,

"Labour for the meat which perisheth not;" [295] and again, "I am the

bread of life, [296] which came down from heaven." [297] But which of

these three views is the more probable, is a question for

consideration. For perhaps some one may wonder why we should pray that

we may obtain the things which are necessary for this life,--such, for

instance, as food and clothing,--when the Lord Himself says, "Be not

anxious what ye shall eat, or what ye shall put on." Can any one not be

anxious for a thing which he prays that he may obtain; when prayer is

to be offered with so great earnestness of mind, that to this refers

all that has been said about shutting our closets, and also the

command, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and

all these things shall be added [298] unto you"? Certainly He does not

say, Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and then seek those other

things; but "all these things," says He, "shall be added unto you,"

that is to say, even though ye are not seeking them. But I know not

whether it can be found out, how one is rightly said not to seek what

he most earnestly pleads with God that he may receive.

26. But with respect to the sacrament of the Lord's body (in order that

they may not start a question, who, the most of them being in Eastern

parts, do not partake of the Lord's supper daily, while this bread is

called daily bread: in order, therefore, that they may be silent, and

not defend their way of thinking about this matter even by the very

authority of the Church, because they do such things without scandal,

and are not prevented from doing them by those who preside over their

churches, and when they do not obey are not condemned; whence it is

proved that this is not understood as daily bread in these parts: for,

if this were the case, they would be charged with the commission of a

great sin, who do not on that account receive it daily; but, as has

been said, not to argue at all to any extent from the case of such

parties), this consideration at least ought to occur to those who

reflect, that we have received a rule for prayer from the Lord, which

we ought not to transgress, either by adding or omitting anything. And

since this is the case, who is there who would venture to say that we

ought only once to use the Lord's Prayer, or at least that, even if we

have used it a second or a third time before the hour at which we

partake of the Lord's body, afterwards we are assuredly not so to pray

during the remaining hours of the day? For we shall no longer be able

to say, "Give us this day," respecting what we have already received;

or every one will be able to compel us to celebrate that sacrament at

the very last hour of the day.

27. It remains, therefore, that we should understand the daily bread as

spiritual, that is to say, divine precepts, which we ought daily to

meditate and to labour after. For just with respect to these the Lord

says, "Labour for the meat which perisheth not." That food, moreover,

is called daily food at present, so long as this temporal life is

measured off by means of days that depart and return. And, in truth, so

long as the desire of the soul is directed by turns, now to what is

higher, now to what is lower, i.e. now to spiritual things, now to

carnal, as is the case with him who at one time is nourished with food,

at another time suffers hunger; bread is daily necessary, in order that

the hungry man may be recruited, and he who is falling down may be

raised up. As, therefore, our body in this life, that is to say, before

that great change, is recruited with food, because it feels loss; so

may the soul also, since by means of temporal desires it sustains as it

were a loss in its striving after God, be reinvigorated by the food of

the precepts. Moreover, it is said, "Give us this day," as long as it

is called to-day, i.e. in this temporal life. For we shall be so

abundantly provided with spiritual food after this life unto eternity,

that it will not then be called daily bread; because there the flight

of time, which causes days to succeed days, whence it may be called

to-day, will not exist. But as it is said, "To-day, if ye will hear His

voice," [299] which the apostle interprets in the Epistle to the

Hebrews, As long as it is called to-day; [300] so here also the

expression is to be understood, "Give us this day." But if any one

wishes to understand the sentence before us also of food necessary for

the body, or of the sacrament of the Lord's body, we must take all

three meanings conjointly; that is to say, that we are to ask for all

at once as daily bread, both the bread necessary for the body, and the

visible hallowed bread, and the invisible bread of the word of God.

[301]

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[295] Escam qu� non corrumpitur; Vulgate, non cibum qui perit.

[296] Panis vit�; Vulgate, panis vivus.

[297] John vi. 27, 41.

[298] Apponentur; Vulgate, adjicientur.

[299] Ps. xcv. 7.

[300] Heb. iii. 13.

[301] The Greek epiousios, translated daily (see margin of Revised

Version, with alternate rendering of American Committee), is found only

here and in Luke (xi. 3). Its meaning does not seem to come under the

review of Augustin, but has troubled modern commentators. It has been

taken to mean (1) needful, hence sufficient, as opposed to superfluity

or want (Chrysostom, Tholuck, Ewald, Ebrard, Weiss, etc.); (2) daily

(Luther, English version, etc.); (3) for the coming day (Grotius,

Meyer, Thayer, Lightfoot, who has an elaborate treatment in Revision of

English New Testament, Append. pp. 195-245). The direct reference of

the bread to spiritual food is given by the Vulgate, and generally

accepted in the Roman-Catholic Church. Olshausen, Delitzsch, Alford,

etc., regard the spiritual nourishment involved by implication in the

term.

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Chapter VIII.

28. The fifth petition follows: "And forgive us our debts, as we also

forgive [302] our debtors." It is manifest that by debts are meant

sins, either from that statement which the Lord Himself makes, "Thou

shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost

farthing;" [303] or from the fact that He called those men debtors who

were reported to Him as having been killed, either those on whom the

tower fell, or those whose blood Herod had mingled with the sacrifice.

For He said that men supposed it was because they were debtors above

measure, i.e. sinners, and added "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye

repent, ye shall all likewise die." [304] Here, therefore, it is not a

money claim that one is pressed to remit, but whatever sins another may

have committed against him. For we are enjoined to remit a money claim

by that precept rather which has been given above, "If any man will sue

thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;"

[305] nor is it necessary to remit a debt to every money debtor; but

only to him who is unwilling to pay, to such an extent that he wishes

even to go to law. "Now the servant of the Lord," as says the apostle,

"must not go to law." [306] And therefore to him who shall be

unwilling, either spontaneously or when requested, to pay the money

which he owes, it is to be remitted. For his unwillingness to pay will

arise from one of two causes, either that he has it not, or that he is

avaricious and covetous of the property of another; and both of these

belong to a state of poverty: for the former is poverty of substance,

the latter poverty of disposition. Whoever, therefore, remits a debt to

such an one, remits it to one who is poor, and performs a Christian

work; while that rule remains in force, that he should be prepared in

mind to lose what is owing to him. For if he has used exertion in every

way, quietly and gently, to have it restored to him, not so much aiming

at a money profit, as that he may bring the man round to what is right,

to whom without doubt it is hurtful to have the means of paying, and

yet not to pay; not only will he not sin, but he will even do a very

great service, in trying to prevent that other, who is wishing to make

gain of another's money, from making shipwreck of the faith; which is

so much more serious a thing, that there is no comparison. And hence it

is understood that in this fifth petition also, where we say, "Forgive

us our debts," the words are spoken not indeed in reference to money,

but in reference to all ways in which any one sins against us, and by

consequence in reference to money also. For the man who refuses to pay

you the money which he owes, when he has the means of doing so, sins

against you. And if you do not forgive this sin, you will not be able

to say, "Forgive us, as we also forgive;" but if you pardon it, you see

how he who is enjoined to offer such a prayer is admonished also with

respect to forgiving a money debt.

29. That may indeed be construed in this way, that when we say,

"Forgive us our debts, as [307] we also forgive," then only are we

convicted of having acted contrary to this rule, if we do not forgive

them who ask pardon, because we also wish to be forgiven by our most

gracious Father when we ask His pardon. But, on the other hand, by that

precept whereby we are enjoined to pray for our enemies, it is not for

those who ask pardon that we are enjoined to pray. For those who are

already in such a state of mind are no longer enemies. By no

possibility, however, could one truthfully say that he prays for one

whom he has not pardoned. And therefore we must confess that all sins

which are committed against us are to be forgiven, if we wish those to

be forgiven by our Father which we commit against Him. For the subject

of revenge has been sufficiently discussed already, as I think. [308]

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[302] The present with the Vulgate, Textus Receptus, Teaching of Twelve

Apostles. The perfect is found in ', B, Z, etc., and adopted by

Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and Revised Version.

[303] Matt. v. 26.

[304] Luke xiii. 1-5. Moriemini; Vulgate, peribitis. Augustin has

written "Herod" instead of "Pilate."

[305] Matt. v. 40.

[306] 2 Tim. ii. 24.

[307] Not "because," nor "to the same extent as," but "in the same

manner as." It is interesting to note the contrast between the spirit

of Christianity and Islam as indicated by a comparison of this petition

with the prayer offered every night by the ten thousand students at the

Mahometan college in Cairo: "I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the

accursed. In the name of Allah the compassionate, the merciful, O Lord

of all the creatures! O Allah! destroy the infidels and polytheists,

thine enemies, the enemies of the religion. O Allah! make their

children orphans, and defile their abodes. Cause their feet to slip,"

etc.

[308] See Book i. chaps. 19, 20.

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Chapter IX.

30. The sixth petition is, "And bring [309] us not into temptation."

Some manuscripts have the word "lead," [310] which is, I judge,

equivalent in meaning: for both translations have arisen from the one

Greek word which is used. But many parties in prayer express themselves

thus, "Suffer us not to be led into temptation;" that is to say,

explaining in what sense the word "lead" is used. For God does not

Himself lead, but suffers that man to be led into temptation whom He

has deprived of His assistance, in accordance with a most hidden

arrangement, and with his deserts. Often, also, for manifest reasons,

He judges him worthy of being so deprived, and allowed to be led into

temptation. But it is one thing to be led into temptation, another to

be tempted. For without temptation no one can be proved, whether to

himself, as it is written, "He that hath not been tempted, what manner

of things doth he know?" [311] or to another, as the apostle says, "And

your temptation in my flesh ye despised not:" [312] for from this

circumstance he learnt that they were stedfast, because they were not

turned aside from charity by those tribulations which had happened to

the apostle according to the flesh. For even before all temptations we

are known to God, who knows all things before they happen.

31. When, therefore, it is said, "The Lord your God tempteth (proveth)

you, that He may know if ye love Him," [313] the words "that He may

know" are employed for what is the real state of the case, that He may

make you know: just as we speak of a joyful day, because it makes us

joyful; of a sluggish frost, because it makes us sluggish; and of

innumerable things of the same sort, which are found either in ordinary

speech, or in the discourse of learned men, or in the Holy Scriptures.

And the heretics who are opposed to the Old Testament, not

understanding this, think that the brand of ignorance, as it were, is

to be placed upon Him of whom it is said, "The Lord your God tempteth

you:" as if in the Gospel it were not written of the Lord, "And this He

said to tempt (prove) him, for He Himself knew what He would do." [314]

For if He knew the heart of him whom He was tempting, what is it that

He wished to see by tempting him? But in reality, that was done in

order that he who was tempted might become known to himself, and that

he might condemn his own despair, on the multitudes being filled with

the Lord's bread, while he had thought they had not enough to eat.

32. Here, therefore, the prayer is not, that we should not be tempted,

but that we should not be brought into temptation: as if, were it

necessary that any one should be examined by fire, he should pray, not

that he should not be touched by the fire, but that he should not be

consumed. For "the furnace proveth the potter's vessels, and the trial

of tribulation righteous men." [315] Joseph therefore was tempted with

the allurement of debauchery, but he was not brought into temptation.

[316] Susanna was tempted, but she was not led or brought into

temptation; [317] and many others of both sexes: but Job most of all,

in regard to whose admirable stedfastness in the Lord his God, those

heretical enemies of the Old Testament, when they wish to mock at it

with sacrilegious mouth, brandish this above other weapons, that Satan

begged that he should be tempted. [318] For they put the question to

unskilful men by no means able to understand such things, how Satan

could speak with God: not understanding (for they cannot, inasmuch as

they are blinded by superstition and controversy) that God does not

occupy space by the mass of His corporeity; and thus exist in one

place, and not in another, or at least have one part here, and another

elsewhere: but that He is everywhere present in His majesty, not

divided by parts, but everywhere complete. But if they take a fleshly

view of what is said, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my

footstool," [319] --to which passage our Lord also bears testimony,

when He says, "Swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's

throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool," [320] --what wonder

if the devil, being placed on earth, stood before the feet of God, and

spoke something in His presence? For when will they be able to

understand that there is no soul, however wicked, which can yet reason

in any way, in whose conscience God does not speak? For who but God has

written the law of nature in the hearts of men?--that law concerning

which the apostle says: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law,

do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the

law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written

in their hearts, their conscience also bearing them witness, [321] and

their thoughts [322] the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one

another, in the day when the Lord [323] shall judge the secrets of

men." [324] And therefore, as in the case of every rational soul, which

thinks and reasons, even though blinded by passion, we attribute

whatever in its reasoning is true, not to itself but to the very light

of truth by which, however faintly, it is according to its capacity

illuminated, so as to perceive some measure of truth by its reasoning;

what wonder if the depraved spirit of the devil, perverted though it be

by lust, should be represented as having heard from the voice of God

Himself, i.e. from the voice of the very Truth, whatever true thought

it has entertained about a righteous man whom it was proposing to

tempt? But whatever is false is to be attributed to that lust from

which he has received the name of devil. Although it is also the case

that God has often spoken by means of a corporeal and visible creature

whether to good or bad, as being Lord and Governor of all, and Disposer

according to the merits of every deed: as, for instance, by means of

angels, who appeared also under the aspect of men; and by means of the

prophets, saying, Thus saith the Lord. What wonder then, if, though not

in mere thought, at least by means of some creature fitted for such a

work, God is said to have spoken with the devil?

33. And let them not imagine it unworthy of His dignity, and as it were

of His righteousness, that God spoke with him: inasmuch as He spoke

with an angelic spirit, although one foolish and lustful, just as if He

were speaking with a foolish and lustful human spirit. Or let such

parties themselves tell us how He spoke with that rich man, whose most

foolish covetousness He wished to censure, saying: "Thou fool, this

night thy soul shall be required [325] of thee: then whose shall those

things be which thou hast provided?" [326] Certainly the Lord Himself

says so in the Gospel, to which those heretics, whether they will or

no, bend their necks. But if they are puzzled by this circumstance,

that Satan asks from God that a righteous man should be tempted; I do

not explain how it happened, but I compel them to explain why it is

said in the Gospel by the Lord Himself to the disciples, "Behold, Satan

hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;" [327] and He

says to Peter, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

[328] And when they explain this to me, they explain to themselves at

the same time that which they question me about. But if they should not

be able to explain this, let them not dare with rashness to blame in

any book what they read in the Gospel without offence.

34. Temptations, therefore, take place by means of Satan not by his

power, but by the Lord's permission, either for the purpose of

punishing men for their sins, or of proving and exercising them in

accordance with the Lord's compassion. And there is a very great

difference in the nature of the temptations into which each one may

fall. For Judas, who sold his Lord, did not fall into one of the same

nature as Peter fell into, when, under the influence of terror, he

denied his Lord. There are also temptations common to man, I believe,

when every one, though well disposed, yet yielding to human frailty,

falls into error in some plan, or is irritated against a brother, in

the earnest endeavour to bring him round to what is right, yet a little

more than Christian calmness demands: concerning which temptations the

apostle says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common

to man;" while he says at the same time, "But God is faithful, who will

not suffer [329] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will

with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to

bear [330] it." [331] And in that sentence he makes it sufficiently

evident that we are not to pray that we may not be tempted, but that we

may not be led into temptation. For we are led into temptation, if such

temptations have happened to us as we are not able to bear. But when

dangerous temptations, into which it is ruinous for us to be brought

and led, arise either from prosperous or adverse temporal

circumstances, no one is broken down by the irksomeness of adversity,

who is not led captive by the delight of prosperity. [332]

35. The seventh and last petition is, "But deliver us from evil." [333]

For we are to pray not only that we may not be led into the evil from

which we are free, which is asked in the sixth place; but that we may

also be delivered from that into which we have been already led. And

when this has been done, nothing will remain terrible, nor will any

temptation at all have to be feared. And yet in this life, so long as

we carry about our present mortality, into which we were led by the

persuasion of the serpent, it is not to be hoped that this can be the

case; but yet we are to hope that at some future time it will take

place: and this is the hope which is not seen, of which the apostle,

when speaking, said, "But hope which is seen is not hope." [334] But

yet the wisdom which is granted in this life also, is not to be

despaired of by the faithful servants of God. And it is this, that we

should with the most wary vigilance shun what we have understood, from

the Lord's revealing it, is to be shunned; and that we should with the

most ardent love seek after what we have understood, from the Lord's

revealing it, is to be sought after. For thus, after the remaining

burden of this mortality has been laid down in the act of dying, there

shall be perfected in every part of man at the fit time, the

blessedness which has been begun in this life, and which we have from

time to time strained every nerve to lay hold of and secure.

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[309] Inferas...inducas, as the Vulgate.

[310] Inferas...inducas, as the Vulgate.

[311] Ecclus. xxxiv. 9, 11.

[312] Gal. iv. 13, 14. The English version renders "my temptation," but

"your temptation" is the reading of the oldest mss.

[313] Deut. xiii. 3.

[314] John vi. 6.

[315] Ecclus. xxvii. 5.

[316] Gen. xxxix. 7-12.

[317] Hist. of Sus. i. 19-22.

[318] Job i. 11.

[319] Isa. lxvi. 1.

[320] Matt. v. 34, 35.

[321] Contestante; Vulgate, testimonium reddente.

[322] Cogitationum accusantium; Vulgate, cogitationibus accusantibus.

[323] Dominus; Vulgate, Deus.

[324] Rom. ii. 14-16.

[325] Anima expostulatur; Vulgate, animam repetunt.

[326] Luke xii. 20.

[327] Petit vos vexare quomodo triticum; Vulgate, expetivit vos ut

cribraret sicut triticum.

[328] Luke xxii. 31, 32.

[329] Sinat; Vulgate, patietur.

[330] Tolerare; Vulgate, sustinere.

[331] 1 Cor. x. 13.

[332] Trench, giving the essence of Augustin's discussion, says, "God

does tempt quite as truly as the devil tempts; all the difference lies

in the end and aim with which they severally do it,--the one tempting

to deceive, the other to approve: Satan, to their ruin; God, to their

everlasting gain."

[333] Alford and other modern commentators agree with Augustin in

explaining apo tou ponerou "of evil;" Bengel, Meyer, Schaff, and others

(see Revised Version) make the form masculine,--"the Evil One."

[334] Rom. viii. 24.

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Chapter X.

36. But the distinction among these seven petitions is to be considered

and commended. For inasmuch as our temporal life is being spent now,

and that which is eternal hoped for, and inasmuch as eternal things are

superior in point of dignity, albeit it is only when we have done with

temporal things that we pass to the other; although the three first

petitions begin to be answered in this life, which is being spent in

the present world (for both the hallowing of God's name begins to be

carried on just with the coming of the lord of humility; and the coming

of His kingdom, to which He will come in splendour, will be manifested,

not after the end of the world, but in the end of the world; and the

perfect doing of His will in earth as in heaven, whether you understand

by heaven and earth the righteous and sinners, or spirit and flesh, or

the Lord and the Church, or all these things together, will be brought

to completion just with the perfecting of our blessedness, and

therefore at the close of the world), yet all three will remain to

eternity. For both the hallowing of God's name will go on for ever, and

there is no end of His kingdom, and eternal life is promised to our

perfected blessedness. Hence those three things will remain consummated

and thoroughly completed in that life which is promised us.

37. But the other four things which we ask seem to me to belong to this

temporal life. [335] And the first of them is, "Give us this day our

daily bread." For whether by this same thing which is called daily

bread be meant spiritual bread, or that which is visible in the

sacrament or in this sustenance of ours, it belongs to the present

time, which He has called "to-day," not because spiritual food is not

everlasting, but because that which is called daily food in the

Scriptures is represented to the soul either by the sound of the

expression or by temporal signs of any kind: things all of which will

certainly no more have existence when all shall be taught of God, [336]

and thus shall no longer be making known to others by movement of their

bodies, but drinking in each one for himself by the purity of his mind

the ineffable light of truth itself. For perhaps for this reason also

it is called bread, not drink, because bread is converted into aliment

by breaking and masticating it, just as the Scriptures feed the soul by

being opened up and made the subject of discourse; but drink, when

prepared, passes as it is into the body: so that at present the truth

is bread, when it is called daily bread; but then it will be drink,

when there will be no need of the labour of discussing and discoursing,

as it were of breaking and masticating, but merely of drinking

unmingled and transparent truth. And sins are at present forgiven us,

and at present we forgive them; which is the second petition of these

four that remain: but then there will be no pardon of sins, because

there will be no sins. And temptations molest this temporal life; but

they will have no existence when these words shall be fully realized,

"Thou shall hide them in the secret of Thy presence." [337] And the

evil from which we wish to be delivered, and the deliverance from evil

itself, belong certainly to this life, which as being mortal we have

deserved at the hand of God's justice, and from which we are delivered

by His mercy.

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[335] Or, as he expresses it in another place (Sermon lvii. 7), "to

this life of our pilgrimage" ("ista vita peregrinationis nostr�").

[336] Isa. liv. 13; John vi. 45.

[337] Ps. xxxi. 20.

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Chapter XI.

38. The sevenfold number of these petitions also seems to me to

correspond to that sevenfold number out of which the whole sermon

before us has had its rise. [338] For if it is the fear of God through

which the poor in spirit are blessed, inasmuch as theirs is the kingdom

of heaven; let us ask that the name of God may be hallowed among men

through that "fear which is clean, enduring for ever." [339] If it is

piety through which the meek are blessed, inasmuch as they shall

inherit the earth; let us ask that His kingdom may come, whether it be

over ourselves, that we may become meek, and not resist Him, or whether

it be from heaven to earth in the splendour of the Lord's advent, in

which we shall rejoice, and shall be praised, when He says, "Come, ye

blessed of my Father, inherit [340] the kingdom prepared for you from

the foundation [341] of the world." [342] For "in the Lord," says the

prophet, "shall my soul be praised; the meek shall hear thereof, and be

glad." [343] If it is knowledge through which those who mourn are

blessed, inasmuch as they shall be comforted; let us pray that His will

may be done as in heaven so in earth, because when the body, which is

as it were the earth, shall agree in a final and complete peace with

the soul, which is as it were heaven, we shall not mourn: for there is

no other mourning belonging to this present time, except when these

contend against each other, and compel us to say, "I see another law in

my members, warring against the law of my mind;" and to testify our

grief with tearful voice, "O wretched [344] man that I am! who shall

deliver me from the body of this death?" [345] If it is fortitude

through which those are blessed who hunger and thirst after

righteousness, inasmuch as they shall be filled; let us pray that our

daily bread may be given to us to-day, by which, supported and

sustained, we may be able to reach that most abundant fulness. If it is

prudence through which the merciful are blessed, inasmuch as they shall

obtain mercy; let us forgive their debts to our debtors, and let us

pray that ours may be forgiven to us. If it is understanding through

which the pure in heart are blessed, inasmuch as they shall see God;

let us pray not to be led into temptation, lest we should have a double

heart, in not seeking after a single good, to which we may refer all

our actings, but at the same time pursuing things temporal and earthly.

For temptations arising from those things which seem to men burdensome

and calamitous, have no power over us, if those other temptations have

no power which befall us through the enticements of such things as men

count good and cause for rejoicing. If it is wisdom through which the

peacemakers are blessed, inasmuch as they shall be called the children

of God; [346] let us pray that we may be freed from evil, for that very

freedom will make us free, i.e. sons of God, so that we may cry in the

spirit of adoption, "Abba, Father." [347]

39. Nor are we indeed carelessly to pass by the circumstance, that of

all those sentences in which the Lord has taught us to pray, He has

judged that that one is chiefly to be commended which has reference to

the forgiveness of sins: in which He would have us to be merciful,

because it is the only wisdom for escaping misery. For in no other

sentence do we pray in such a way that we, as it were, enter into a

compact with God: for we say, "Forgive us, as we also forgive." And if

we lie in that compact, the whole prayer is fruitless. For He speaks

thus: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father

will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses,

neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

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[338] Lange draws a comparison between the petitions and the Beatitudes

similar to that which follows.

[339] Ps. xix. 9.

[340] Accipite; Vulgate, possidete.

[341] Origine, Vulgate, constitutione.

[342] Matt. xxv. 34.

[343] Ps. xxxiv. 2.

[344] Miser; Vulgate, infelix.

[345] Rom. vii. 23, 24.

[346] Matt. v. 3-9.

[347] Rom. viii. 15 and Gal. iv. 6.

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Chapter XII.

40. There follows a precept concerning fasting, having reference to

that same purification of heart which is at present under discussion.

For in this work also we must be on our guard, lest there should creep

in a certain ostentation and hankering after the praise of man, which

would make the heart double, and not allow it to be pure and single for

apprehending God. "Moreover, when ye fast," says He, "be not, as the

hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, [348]

that they may appear [349] unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you,

they have their reward. But ye, [350] when ye fast, anoint your head,

and wash your face; that ye appear not unto men to fast, but unto your

Father which is in secret: and your Father, which seeth in secret,

shall reward you." It is manifest from these precepts that all our

effort is to be directed towards inward joys, lest, seeking a reward

from without, we should be conformed to this world, and should lose the

promise of a blessedness so much the more solid and firm, as it is

inward, in which God has chosen that we should become conformed to the

image of His Son. [351]

41. But in this section it is chiefly to be noticed, that there may be

ostentatious display not merely in the splendour and pomp of things

pertaining to the booty, but also in doleful squalor itself; and the

more dangerous on this account, that it deceives under the name of

serving God. And therefore he who is very conspicuous by immoderate

attention to the body, and by the splendour of his clothing or other

things, is easily convicted by the things themselves of being a

follower of the pomps of the world, and misleads no one by a cunning

semblance of sanctity; but in regard to him who under a profession of

Christianity, fixes the eyes of men upon himself by unusual squalor and

filth, when he does it voluntarily, and not under the pressure of

necessity, it may be conjectured from the rest of his actings whether

he does this from contempt of superfluous attention to the body, or

from a certain ambition: for the Lord has enjoined us to beware of

wolves under a sheep's skin; but "by their fruits," says He, "shall ye

know them." For when by temptations of any kind those very things begin

to be withdrawn from them or refused to them, which under that veil

they either have obtained or desire to obtain, then of necessity it

appears whether it is a wolf in a sheep's skin or a sheep in its own.

For a Christian ought not to delight the eyes of men by superfluous

ornament on this account, because pretenders also too often assume that

frugal and merely necessary dress, that they may deceive those who are

not on their guard: for those sheep also ought not to lay aside their

own skins, if at any time wolves cover themselves there with.

42. It is usual, therefore, to ask what He means, when He says: "But

ye, when ye fast, anoint your head, and wash your faces, that ye appear

not unto men to fast." For it would not be right in any one to teach

(although we may wash our face according to daily custom) that we ought

also to have our heads anointed when we fast. If, then, all admit this

to be most unseemly, we must understand this precept with respect to

anointing the head and washing the face as referring to the inner man.

[352] Hence, to anoint the head refers to joy; to wash the face, on the

other hand, refers to purity: and therefore that man anoints his head

who rejoices inwardly in his mind and reason. For we rightly understand

that as being the head which has the pre-eminence in the soul, and by

which it is evident that the other parts of man are ruled and governed.

And this is done by him who does not seek his joy from without, so as

to draw his delight in a fleshly way from the praises of men. For the

flesh, which ought to be subject, is in no way the head of the whole

nature of man. "No man," indeed, "ever yet hated his own flesh," as the

apostle says, when giving the precept as to loving one's wife; [353]

but the man is the head of the woman, and Christ is the head of the

man. [354] Let him, therefore, rejoice inwardly in his fasting [355] in

this very circumstance, that by his fasting he so turns away from the

pleasure of the world as to be subject to Christ, who according to this

precept desires to have the head anointed. For thus also he will wash

his face, i.e. cleanse his heart, with which he shall see God, no veil

being interposed on account of the infirmity contracted from squalor;

but being firm and stedfast, inasmuch as he is pure and guileless.

"Wash you," says He, "make you clean; put away the evil of your doings

from before mine eyes." [356] From the squalor, therefore, by which the

eye of God is offended, our face is to be washed. For we, with open

face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into

the same image. [357]

43. Often also the thought of things necessary belonging to this life

wounds and defiles our inner eye; and frequently it makes the heart

double, so that in regard to those things in which we seem to act

rightly with our fellowmen, we do not act with that heart wherewith the

Lord enjoins us; i.e., it is not because we love them, but because we

wish to obtain some advantage from them for the necessity of the

present life. But we ought to do them good for their eternal salvation,

not for our own temporal advantage. May God, therefore, incline our

heart to His testimonies, and not to covetousness. [358] For "the end

of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good

conscience, and of faith unfeigned." [359] But he who looks after his

brother from a regard to his own necessities in this life, does not

certainly do so from love, because he does not look after him whom he

ought to love as himself, but after himself; or rather not even after

himself, seeing that in this way he makes his own heart double, by

which he is hindered from seeing God, in the vision of whom alone there

is certain and lasting blessedness.

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[348] Vultum...videantur; Vulgate, facies...appareant. The Greek has a

play on words, aphanizousi...phanosi ("they mar their appearance, that

they may make an appearance").

[349] Vultum...videantur; Vulgate, facies...appareant. The Greek has a

play on words, aphanizousi...phanosi ("they mar their appearance, that

they may make an appearance").

[350] Vulgate has the singular as the Greek. The Pharisees were

scrupulous in keeping fast-days. Monday and Thursday were observed by

the strict with different degrees of scrupulosity,--the lowest

admitting of washing and anointing the head. (See Sch�rer, N.

Zeitgesch. p. 505 sqq.). The early practice of fasting in the

sub-apostolic Church is evident from the Teaching of the Twelve

Apostles, which enjoins it before baptism, and on the "fourth day and

the Preparation Day" (vii., viii.).

[351] Rom. viii. 29.

[352] So modern exegetes (Meyer, etc.).

[353] Eph. v. 25-33.

[354] 1 Cor. xi. 3.

[355] "It hardly needs to add," says Trench, "that Augustin everywhere

interprets when ye fast' as a command."

[356] Isa. i. 16.

[357] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

[358] Ps. cxix. 36.

[359] 1 Tim. i. 5.

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Chapter XIII.

44. Rightly, therefore, does he who is intent on cleansing our heart

follow up [360] what He has said with a precept, where He says: "Lay

not up [361] for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust

[362] doth corrupt, [363] and where thieves break through and steal:

but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor

rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be [364] also." If,

therefore, the heart be on earth, i.e. if one perform anything with a

heart bent on obtaining earthly advantage, how will that heart be clean

which wallows on earth? But if it be in heaven, it will be clean,

because whatever things are heavenly are clean. For anything becomes

polluted when it is mixed with a nature that is inferior, although not

polluted of its kind; for gold is polluted even by pure silver, if it

be mixed with it: so also our mind becomes polluted by the desire after

earthly things, although the earth itself be pure of its kind and

order. But we would not understand heaven in this passage as anything

corporeal, because everything corporeal is to be reckoned as earth. For

he who lays up treasure for himself in heaven ought to despise the

whole world. Hence it is in that heaven of which it is said, "The

heaven of heavens is the Lord's, [365] i.e. in the spiritual firmament:

for it is not in that which is to pass away that we ought to fix and

place our treasure and our heart, but in that which ever abideth; but

heaven and earth shall pass away. [366]

45. And here He makes it manifest that He gives all these precepts with

a view to the cleansing of the heart, when He says: "The candle [367]

of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole

body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body

shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light [lamp] [368] that

is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" And this passage

we are to understand in such a way as to learn from it that all our

works are pure and well-pleasing in the sight of God, when they are

done with a single heart, i.e. with a heavenly intent, having that end

of love in view; for love is also the fulfilling of the law. [369]

Hence we ought to take the eye here in the sense of the intent itself,

wherewith we do whatever we are doing; and if this be pure and right,

and looking at that which ought to be looked at, all our works which we

perform in accordance therewith are necessarily good. And all those

works He has called the whole body; for the apostle also speaks of

certain works of which he disapproves as our members, and teaches that

they are to be mortified, saying, "Mortify therefore your members which

are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, covetousness," [370] and

all other such things. [371]

46. It is not, therefore, what one does, but the intent with which he

does it, that is to be considered. For this is the light in us, because

it is a thing manifest to ourselves that we do with a good intent what

we are doing; for everything which is made manifest is light. [372] For

the deeds themselves which go forth from us to human society, have an

uncertain issue; and therefore He has called them darkness. For I do

not know, when I present money to a poor man who asks it, either what

he is to do with it, or what he is to suffer from it; and it may happen

that he does some evil with it, or suffers some evil on account of it,

a thing I did not wish to happen when I gave it to him, nor would I

have given it with such an intention. If, therefore, I did it with a

good intention,--a thing which was known to me when I was doing it, and

is therefore called light,--my deed also is lighted up, whatever issue

it shall have; but that issue, inasmuch as it is uncertain and unknown,

is called darkness. But if I have done it with a bad intent, the light

itself even is darkness. For it is spoken of as light, because every

one knows with what intent he acts, even when he acts with a bad

intent; but the light itself is darkness, because the aim is not

directed singly to things above, but is turned downwards to things

beneath, and makes, as it were, a shadow by means of a double heart.

"If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is

that darkness!" i.e., if the very intent of the heart with which you do

what you are doing (which is known to you) is polluted by the hunger

after earthly and temporal things, and blinded, how much more is the

deed itself, whose issue is uncertain, polluted and full of darkness!

Because, although what you do with an intent which is neither upright

nor pure, may turn out for some one's good, it is the way in which you

have done it, not how it has turned out for him, that is reckoned to

you. [373]

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[360] Having uttered warnings against formalists, the Lord now passes

to the complete dedication of the heart.

[361] Condere...tinea et comestura exterminant; Vulgate,

thesaurizare...�rugo et tinea domolitur.

[362] Not the specific rust of metals; wider sense of wear and tear.

[363] Condere...tinea et comestura exterminant; Vulgate,

thesaurizare...�rugo et tinea domolitur.

[364] Erit; Vulgate, est.

[365] Ps. cxv. 16.

[366] Matt. xxiv. 35. Robert South gives his sermon on this passage the

heading, "No man ever went to heaven whose heart was not there before."

It has been remarked, as regards an earthly Church, one does not take

abiding interest in it unless one gives toward it.

[367] Lucerna...lumen.

[368] Lucerna...lumen.

[369] Rom. xiii. 10.

[370] Col. iii. 5.

[371] "Singleness of intention will preserve us from the snare of

having a double treasure, and therefore a divided heart" (Plumptre).

[372] Eph. v. 13. Augustin's rendering here is the true sense of the

original.

[373] The eye is as the lamp (Revised Version) through which the body

gets light,--the organ whose proper work it is to transmit light. The

blind have no light, because their lamp is out or destroyed. The light

within us is "the reason, especially the practical reason" (Meyer);

that which is left of the divine image in man (Tholuck); the reason

that was left after the fall of Adam (Calvin); the Old-Testament

revelation perverted (Lange); the conscience (Alford). "The spirit of

man is the candle (lamp, Revised Version) of the Lord" (Prov. xx. 27):

it guides the faculties of the soul. But if it be in darkness how great

is that darkness; i.e. the darkness which already existed! What a

terrible condition those are in who do not receive the Spirit of

enlightenment (who becomes the "inner light"), and feel no need of Him!

"He whose affections are on heavenly things, has his whole soul

lighted; he whose affections are depraved, has his understanding and

his whole soul darkened also" (Mansel).

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Chapter XIV.

47. Then, further, the statement which follows, "No man can serve two

masters," is to be referred to this very intent, as He goes on to

explain, saying: "For either he will hate the one, and love the other;

or else he will [374] submit to the one, and despise the other." And

these words are to be carefully considered; for who the two masters are

he forthwith shows, when He says, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Riches are said to be called mammon among the Hebrews. The Punic name

also corresponds: for gain is called mammon in Punic. [375] But he who

serves mammon certainly serves him who, as being set over those earthly

things in virtue of his perversity, is called by our Lord the prince of

this world. [376] A man will therefore "either hate" this one, "and

love the other," i.e. God; "or he will submit to the one, and despise

the other." For whoever serves mammon submits to a hard and ruinous

master: for, being entangled by his own lust, he becomes a subject of

the devil, and he does not love him; for who is there who loves the

devil? But yet he submits to him; as in any large house he who is

connected with another man's maid servant submits to hard bondage on

account of his passion. even though he does not love him whose

maid-servant he loves.

48. But "he will despise the other," He has said; not, he will hate.

For almost no one's conscience can hate God; but he despises, i.e. he

does not fear Him, as if feeling himself secure in consideration of His

goodness. From this carelessness and ruinous security the Holy Spirit

recalls us, when He says by the prophet, "My son, do not add sin upon

sin, and say, The mercy of God is great ;" [377] and, "Knowest thou not

that the patience [378] of God inviteth [379] thee to repentance?"

[380] For whose mercy can be mentioned as being so great as His, who

pardons all the sins of those who return, and makes the wild olive a

partaker of the fatness of the olive? and whose severity as being so

great as His, who spared not the natural branches, but broke them off

because of unbelief? [381] But let not any one who wishes to love God,

and to beware of offending Him, suppose that he can serve two masters;

[382] and let him disentangle the upright intention of his heart from

all doubleness: for thus he will think of the Lord with a good heart,

and in simplicity of heart will seek Him. [383]

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[374] Alterum patietur; Vulgate, unum sustinebit.

[375] Augustin is the only one to give this derivation. His residence

in North Africa is the explanation of his knowledge of the Punic. The

word probably comes from the Chaldee and through the Hebrew word aman,

"what is trusted in." (See Thayer, Lexicon.)

[376] John xii. 31 and xiv. 30.

[377] Ecclus. v. 5, 6.

[378] Patientia...invitat; Vulgate, benignitas...adducit.

[379] Patientia...invitat; Vulgate, benignitas...adducit.

[380] Rom. ii. 4.

[381] Rom. xi. 17-24.

[382] Luther says the world can do it in a masterly way, and carry the

tree (or "water" according to the English figure) on both shoulders.

This verse is a rebuke to those who think they can combine a supreme

affection for heavenly and for earthly things at the same time, and

pursue both with equal zeal.

[383] Wisd. i. 1.

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Chapter XV.

49. "Therefore," says He, "I say unto you, Have not anxiety [384] for

your life, what ye shall eat; [385] nor yet for your body, what ye

shall put on." Lest perchance, although it is not now superfluities

that are sought after, the heart should be made double by reason of

necessaries themselves, and the aim should be wrenched aside to seek

after those things of our own, when we are doing something as it were

from compassion; i.e. so that when we wish to appear to be consulting

for some one's good, we are in that matter looking after our own profit

rather than his advantage: and we do not seem to ourselves to be

sinning for this reason, that it is not superfluities, but necessaries,

which we wish to obtain. But the Lord admonishes us that we should

remember that God, when He made and compounded us of body and soul,

gave us much more than food and clothing, through care for which He

would not have us make our hearts double. "Is not," says He, "the soul

more than the meat?" So that you are to understand that He who gave the

soul will much more easily give meat. "And the body than the raiment,"

i.e. is more than raiment: so that similarly you are to understand,

that He who gave the body will much more easily give raiment.

50. And in this passage the question is wont to be raised, whether the

food spoken of has reference to the soul, since the soul is

incorporeal, and the food in question is corporeal food. But let us

admit that the soul in this passage stands for the present life, whose

support is that corporeal nourishment. In accordance with this

signification we have also that statement: "He that loveth his soul

shall lose it." [386] And here, unless we understand the expression of

this present life, which we ought to lose for the kingdom of God, as it

is clear the martyrs were able to do, this precept will be in

contradiction to that sentence where it is said: "What is a man

profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose [387] his own

soul?" [388]

51. "Behold," says He, "the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither

do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth

them: are ye not much better than they?" i.e. ye are of more value. For

surely a rational being such as man has a higher rank in the nature of

things than irrational ones, such as birds. "Which of you, by taking

thought, [389] can add one cubit unto his stature? [390] And why take

ye thought for raiment?" That is to say, the providence of Him by whose

power and sovereignty it has come about that your body was brought up

to its present stature, can also clothe you; but that it is not by your

care that it has come about that your body should arrive at this

stature, may be understood from this circumstance, that if you should

take thought, and should wish to add one cubit to this stature, you

cannot. Leave, therefore, the care of protecting the body to Him by

whose care you see it has come about that you have a body of such a

stature.

52. But an example was to be given for the clothing too, just as one is

given for the food. Hence He goes on to say, "Consider the lilies of

the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet

I say unto you, that even Solomon [391] in all his glory was not

arrayed [392] like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass

of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven;

shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" But these

examples are not to be treated as allegories, so that we should inquire

what the fowls of heaven or the lilies of the field mean: for they

stand here, in order that from smaller matters we may be persuaded

respecting greater ones; [393] just as is the case in regard to the

judge who neither feared God nor regarded man, and yet yielded to the

widow who often importuned him to consider her case, not from piety or

humanity, but that he might be saved annoyance. For that unjust judge

does not in any way allegorically represent the person of God; but yet

as to how far God, who is good and just, cares for those who supplicate

Him, our Lord wished the inference to be drawn from this circumstance,

that not even an unjust man can despise those who assail him with

unceasing petitions, even were his motive merely to avoid annoyance.

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[384] Habere sollicitudinem; Vulgate, sollicit� sitis.

[385] Edatis; Vulgate, manducetis.

[386] John xii. 25.

[387] Detrimentum faciat; Vulgate, detrimentum patiatur.

[388] Matt. xvi. 26.

[389] Curans; Vulgate, cogitans.

[390] The term helikia, translated by Augustin and the Vulgate statura,

and by the English version stature, more probably means the measure of

life, or age (American notes to Revised Version, Tholuck, De Wette,

Trench, Alford, Meyer, Schaff, Plumptre, Weiss, etc.) A cubit was equal

to the length of the forearm. The force of the Lord's words would be

greatly diminished if such a measure was conceived of as possible to be

added to the stature. The idea is, that human ingenuity and labor

cannot add the least measure.

[391] To the Jew the highest representative of splendour and pomp.

[392] Vestitutus; Vulgate, coopertus. "As the beauties of the flower

are unfolded by the divine Creator Spirit from within, from the laws

and capacities of its own individual life, so must all true adornment

of man be unfolded from within by the same Spirit. This hidden meaning

must not be overlooked" (Alford). The law of spiritual growth is

mysterious and spontaneous.

[393] The argument, so called, a minore ad majus.

[394] Luke xviii. 2-8.

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Chapter XVI.

53. "Therefore be not anxious," says He," saying, What shall we eat?

[395] or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

[396] (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your

Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first

the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be

added [397] unto you." Here He shows most manifestly that these things

are not to be sought as if they were our blessings in such sort, that

on account of them we ought to do well in all our actings, but yet that

they are necessary. For what the difference is between a blessing which

is to be sought, and a necessary which is to be taken for use, He has

made plain by this sentence, when He says, "Seek ye first the kingdom

of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto

you." [398] The kingdom and the righteousness of God therefore are our

good; and this is to be sought, and there the end is to be set up, on

account of which we are to do everything which we do. But because we

serve as soldiers in this life, in order that we may be able to reach

that kingdom, and because our life cannot be spent without these

necessaries, "These things shall be added unto you," says He; "but seek

ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." For in using that

word "first," He has indicated that this is to be sought later, not in

point of time, but in point of importance: the one as being our good,

the other as being something necessary for us; but the necessary on

account of that good.

54. For neither ought we, for example, to preach the gospel with this

object, that we may eat; but to eat with this object, that we may

preach the gospel: for if we preach the gospel for this cause, that we

may eat, we reckon the gospel of less value than food; and in that case

our good will be in eating, but that which is necessary for us in

preaching the gospel. And this the apostle also forbids, when he says

it is lawful for himself even, and permitted by the Lord, that they who

preach the gospel should live of the gospel, i.e. should have from the

gospel the necessaries of this life; but yet that he has not made use

of this power. For there were many who were desirous of having an

occasion for getting and selling the gospel, from whom the apostle

wished to cut off this occasion, and therefore he submitted to a way of

living by his own hands. [399] For concerning these parties he says in

another passage, "That I may cut off occasion from them which seek

[400] occasion." [401] Although even if, like the rest of the good

apostles, by the permission of the Lord he should live of the gospel,

he would not on that account place the end of preaching the gospel in

that living, but would rather make the gospel the end of his living;

i.e., as I have said above, he would not preach the gospel with this

object, that he might get his food and all other necessaries; but he

would take such things for this purpose, in order that he might carry

out that other object, viz. that willingly, and not of necessity, he

should preach the gospel. For this he disapproves of when he says, "Do

ye not know, that they which minister in the temple [402] eat the

things which are of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are

partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they

which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none

of these things." Hence he shows that it was permitted, not commanded;

otherwise he will be held to have acted contrary to the precept of the

Lord. Then he goes on to say: "Neither have I written these things,

that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die,

than that any man should make my glorying void." [403] This he said, as

he had already resolved, because of some who were seeking occasion, to

gain a living by his own hands. "For if I preach the gospel," says he,

"I have nothing to glory of:" i.e., if I preach the gospel in order

that such things may be done in my case, or, if I preach with this

object, in order that I may obtain those things, and if I thus place

the end of the gospel in meat and drink and clothing. But wherefore has

he nothing to glory of? "Necessity," says he," is laid upon me;" i.e.

so that I should preach the gospel for this reason, because I have not

the means of living, or so that I should acquire temporal fruit from

the preaching of eternal things; for thus, consequently, the preaching

of the gospel will be a matter of necessity, not of free choice. "For

woe is unto me," says he, "if I preach not the gospel!" But how ought

he to preach the gospel? Evidently in such a way as to place the reward

in the gospel itself, and in the kingdom of God: for thus he can preach

the gospel, not of constraint, but willingly. "For if I do this thing

willingly," says he, "I have a reward: but if against my will, a

dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me;" [404] if, constrained

by the want of those things which are necessary for temporal life, I

preach the gospel, others will have through me the reward of the

gospel, who love the gospel itself when I preach it; but I shall not

have it, because it is not the gospel itself I love, but its price

lying in those temporal things. And this is something sinful, that any

one should minister the gospel not as a son, but as a servant to whom a

stewardship of it has been committed; that he should, as it were, pay

out what belongs to another, but should himself receive nothing from it

except victuals, which are given not in consideration of his sharing in

the kingdom, but from without, for the support of a miserable bondage.

Although in another passage he calls himself also a steward. For a

servant also, when adopted into the number of the children, is able

faithfully to dispense to those who share with him that property in

which he has acquired the lot of a fellow-heir. But in the present

case, where he says, "But if against my will, a dispensation

(stewardship) is committed unto me," he wished such a steward to be

understood as dispenses what belongs to another, and from it gets

nothing himself.

55. Hence anything whatever that is sought for the sake of something

else, is doubtless inferior to that for the sake of which it is sought;

and therefore that is first for the sake of which you seek such a

thing, not the thing which you seek for the sake of that other. And for

this reason, if we seek the gospel and the kingdom of God for the sake

of food, we place food first, and the kingdom of God last; so that if

food were not to fail us, we would not seek the kingdom of God: this is

to seek food first, and then the kingdom of God. But if we seek food

for this end, that we may gain the kingdom of God, we do what is said,

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these

things shall be added unto you." [405]

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[395] Edemus...vestiemur; Vulgate, manducabimus...operiemur.

[396] Edemus...vestiemur; Vulgate, manducabimus...operiemur.

[397] Apponentur; Vulgate, adjicientur.

[398] Matt. vi. 33.

[399] Acts xx. 34.

[400] Qu�runt; Vulgate, volunt.

[401] 2 Cor. xi. 12.

[402] Templo; Vulgate, sacrario.

[403] Inanem faciat; Vulgate, evacuet.

[404] 1 Cor. ix. 13-17.

[405] Nor is it said, "Seek...in order that all these things may be

added:" simply, "and all," etc., yet largely inclusive,--sanctity and

comfort. The comfort follows naturally. The passage is a rebuke to

those who condemn the amenities of life and art, and a caution to those

who place these things before themselves as a chief end. The passage

justifies the statement that religion (or godliness) is profitable for

the life that now is. The Psalmist never saw the righteous forsaken. A

traditional saying of Jesus, quoted by Clement, Origen, and Eusebius,

runs, "Ask great things, and little things shall be added; ask heavenly

things, and earthly things shall be added."

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Chapter XVII.

56. For in the case of those who are seeking first the kingdom of God

and His righteousness, i.e. who are preferring this to all other

things, so that for its sake they are seeking the other things, there

ought not to remain behind the anxiety lest those things should fail

which are necessary to this life for the sake of the kingdom of God.

For He has said above, "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of all

these things." And therefore, when He had said, "Seek ye first the

kingdom of God and His righteousness," He did not say, Then seek such

things (although they are necessary), but He affirms "all these things

shall be added unto you," [406] i.e. will follow, if ye seek the

former, without any hindrance on your part: lest while ye seek such

things, ye should be turned away from the other; or lest ye should set

up two things to be aimed at, so as to seek both the kingdom of God for

its own sake, and such necessaries: but these rather for the sake of

that other; so shall they not be wanting to you. For ye cannot serve

two masters. But the man is attempting to serve two masters, who seeks

both the kingdom of God as a great good, and these temporal things. He

will not, however, be able to have a single eye, and to serve the Lord

God alone, unless he take all other things, so far as they are

necessary, for the sake of this one thing, i.e. for the sake of the

kingdom of God. But as all who serve as soldiers receive provisions and

pay, so all who preach the gospel receive food and clothing. But all do

not serve as soldiers for the welfare of the republic, but some do so

for what they get: so also all do not minister to God for the welfare

of the Church, but some do so for the sake of these temporal things,

which they are to obtain in the shape as it were of provisions and pay;

or both for the one thing and for the other. But it has been already

said above, "Ye cannot serve two masters." Hence it is with a single

heart and only for the sake of the kingdom of God that we ought to do

good to all; and we ought not in doing so to think either of the

temporal reward alone, or of that along with the kingdom of God: all

which temporal things He has placed under the category of to-morrow,

saying, "Take no thought for to-morrow." [407] For to-morrow is not

spoken of except in time, where the future succeeds the past.

Therefore, when we do anything good, let us not think of what is

temporal, but of what is eternal; then will that be a good and perfect

work. "For the morrow," says He, "will be anxious for the things of

itself;" [408] i.e., so that, when you ought, you will take food, or

drink, or clothing, that is to say, when necessity itself begins to

urge you. For these things will be within reach, because our Father

knoweth that we have need of all these things. For "sufficient unto the

day," says He, "is the evil thereof;" [409] i.e. it is sufficient that

necessity itself will urge us to take such things. And for this reason,

I suppose, it is called evil, because for us it is penal: for it

belongs to this frailty and mortality which we have earned by sinning.

Do not add, therefore, to this punishment of temporal necessity

anything more burdensome, so that you should not only suffer the want

of such things, but should also for the purpose of satisfying this want

enlist as a soldier for God.

57. In the use of this passage, however, we must be very specially on

our guard, lest perchance, when we see any servant of God making

provision that such necessaries shall not be wanting either to himself

or to those with whose care he has been entrusted, we should decide

that he is acting contrary to the Lord's precept, and is anxious for

the morrow. [410] For the Lord Himself also, although angels ministered

to Him, [411] yet for the sake of example, that no one might afterwards

be scandalized when he observed any of His servants procuring such

necessaries, condescended to have money bags, out of which whatever

might be required for necessary uses might be provided; of which bags,

as it is written, Judas, who betrayed Him, was the keeper and the

thief. [412] In like manner, the Apostle Paul also may seem to have

taken thought for the morrow, when he said: "Now concerning the

collection for the saints, as I have given order to the saints of

Galatia, even so do ye: upon the first day of the week let every one of

you lay by him in store [413] what shall seem good unto him, that there

be no gatherings when I come. And when I come [414] whomsoever ye shall

approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto

Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me. Now

I will come unto you when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I shall

pass through Macedonia. And it may be that I will abide, yea, and

winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while

with you, if the Lord permit. But I will tarry at Ephesus until

Pentecost." [415] In the Acts of the Apostles also it is written, that

such things as are necessary for food were provided for the future, on

account of an impending famine. For we thus read: "And in these days

came prophets down from Jerusalem to Antioch, [416] and there was great

rejoicing. And when we were gathered together, [417] there stood up one

of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be

great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days

of Claudius C�sar. Then the disciples, every one according to his

ability, determined to send relief to the elders for the brethren which

dwelt in Jud�a, which also they did by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

[418] And in the case of the necessaries presented to him, wherewith

the same Apostle Paul when setting sail was laden, [419] food seems to

have been furnished for more than a single day. And when the same

apostle writes, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him

labour, working [420] with his hands the thing which is good, that he

may have to give to him that needeth;" [421] to those who misunderstand

him he does not seem to keep the Lord's precept, which runs, "Behold

the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor

gather into barns;" and, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they

grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;" while he enjoins the

parties in question to labour, working with their hands, that they may

have something which they may be able to give to others also. And in

what he often says of himself, that he wrought with his hands that he

might not be burdensome; [422] and in what is written of him, that he

joined himself to Aquila on account of the similarity of their

occupation, in order that they might work together at that from which

they might make a living; [423] he does not seem to have imitated the

birds of the air and the lilies of the field. From these and such like

passages of Scripture, it is sufficiently apparent that our Lord does

not disapprove of it, when one looks after such things in the ordinary

way that men do; but only when one enlists as a soldier of God for the

sake of such things, so that in what he does he fixes his eye not on

the kingdom of God, but on the acquisition of such things.

58. Hence this whole precept is reduced to the following rule, that

even in looking after such things we should think of the kingdom of

God, but in the service of the kingdom of God we should not think of

such things. For in this way, although they should sometimes be wanting

(a thing which God often permits for the purpose of exercising us),

they not only do not weaken our proposition, but even strengthen it,

when it is examined and tested. For, says He, "we glory in tribulations

also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience

experience, and experience hope: And hope maketh not ashamed, because

the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is

given unto us." [424] Now, in the mention of his tribulations and

labours, the same apostle mentions that he has had to endure not only

prisons and shipwrecks and many such like annoyances, but also hunger

and thirst, cold and nakedness. [425] But when we read this, let us not

imagine that the promises of God have wavered, so that the apostle

suffered hunger and thirst and nakedness while seeking the kingdom and

righteousness of God, although it is said to us, "Seek ye first the

kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be

added unto you:" since that Physician to whom we have once for all

entrusted ourselves wholly, and from whom we have the promise of life

present and future, knows such things just as helps, when He sets them

before us, when He takes them away, just as He judges it expedient for

us; whom He rules and directs as parties who require both to be

comforted and exercised in this life, and after this life to be

established and confirmed in perpetual rest. For man also, when he

frequently takes away the fodder from his beast of burden, is not

depriving it of his care, but rather does what he is doing in the

exercise of care.

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[406] Nor is it said, "Seek...in order that all these things may be

added:" simply, "and all," etc., yet largely inclusive,--sanctity and

comfort. The comfort follows naturally. The passage is a rebuke to

those who condemn the amenities of life and art, and a caution to those

who place these things before themselves as a chief end. The passage

justifies the statement that religion (or godliness) is profitable for

the life that now is. The Psalmist never saw the righteous forsaken. A

traditional saying of Jesus, quoted by Clement, Origen, and Eusebius,

runs, "Ask great things, and little things shall be added; ask heavenly

things, and earthly things shall be added."

[407] Cogitare in crastino; Vulgate, solliciti esse in crastinum. There

is no uniformity in Augustin's or the Vulgate's translation of the

Greek merimnao ("take anxious thought") in this passage.

[408] The morrow will bring its own vexations and anxieties. The

English version entirely misleads as to the meaning of the special

clause, "will take care of itself." The Revised Version is a literal

translation, and at least gives the true sense by implication. But with

each day's temptations and troubles, it is implied, special enablement

and deliverance will be provided.

[409] Wiclif, following the Vulgate, translates malice; Tyndale,

trouble; the Genevan Bible, grief.

[410] Our Lord's precept is not against provident forethought,--of

which Augustin goes on to give examples,--but against anxious thought

which implies distrust of God's providence. Anxious, fretful,

distrustful care for the future, unreliant upon God's bounty, wisdom,

and love (as implied in the address, your heavenly Father) is declared

to be unnecessary (25, 26), foolish (27-30), and heathenish (32, "After

these things do the Gentiles seek"). The passages teach trust in God,

who is more interested in His children than in the fowls of the air,

and will certainly take care of them.

[411] Matt. iv. 11.

[412] John xii. 6.

[413] Thesaurizans; Vulgate, recondens.

[414] Advenero; Vulgate, pr�sens fuero.

[415] 1 Cor. xvi. 1-8.

[416] Not in the original Greek or Vulgate, but implied in the

preceding context.

[417] Not in the original Greek or Vulgate, but implied in the

preceding context.

[418] Acts xi. 27-30. The clause shows much divergence from the Vulgate

in construction.

[419] Acts xxviii. 10.

[420] Operans; Vulgate, operando.

[421] Eph. iv. 28. Unde tribuere cui opus est; Vulgate, unde tribuat

necessitatem patienti.

[422] 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8.

[423] Acts xviii. 2, 3.

[424] Rom. v. 3-5.

[425] 2 Cor. xi. 23-27.

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Chapter XVIII.

59. And inasmuch as when such things are either provided against the

time to come, or reserved, if there is no cause wherefore you should

expend them, it is uncertain with what intention it is done, since it

may be done with a single heart, and also with a double one, He has

seasonably added in this passage: "Judge not, [426] that ye be not

judged. [427] For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged,

[428] and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you

again." In this passage, I am of opinion that we are taught nothing

else, but that in the case of those actions respecting which it is

doubtful with what intention they are done, we are to put the better

construction on them. For when it is written, "By their fruits ye shall

know them," the statement has reference to things which manifestly

cannot be done with a good intention; such as debaucheries, or

blasphemies, or thefts, or drunkenness, and all such things, of which

we are permitted to judge, according to the apostle's statement: "For

what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge

them that are within?" [429] But concerning the kind of food, because

every kind of human food can be taken indiscriminately with a good

intention and a single heart, without the vice of concupiscence, the

same apostle forbids that they who ate flesh and drank wine be judged

by those who abstained from such kinds of sustenance: "Let not him that

eateth," says he, "despise him that eateth not; and let not him which

eateth not, judge him that eateth." There also he says: "Who art thou

that judges another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or

falleth." [430] For in reference to such matters as can be done with a

good and single and noble intention, although they may also be done

with an intention the reverse of good, those parties wished, howbeit

they were [mere] men, to pronounce judgment upon the secrets of the

heart, of which God alone is Judge.

60. To this category belongs also what he says in another passage:

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both

will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make

manifest the thoughts [431] of the hearts: and then shall every man

have praise of God." [432] There are therefore certain ambiguous

actions, respecting which we are ignorant with what intention they are

performed, because they may be done both with a good or with an evil

one, of which it is rash to judge, especially for the purpose of

condemning. Now the time will come for these to be judged, when the

Lord "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make

manifest the counsels of the hearts." In another passage also the same

apostle says: "Some men's aims are manifest beforehand, going before to

judgment; and some men they follow after." He calls those sins

manifest, with regard to which it is clear with what intention they are

done; these go before to judgment, because if a judgment shall follow,

it is not rash. But those which are concealed follow, because neither

shall they remain hid in their own time. So we must understand with

respect to good works also. For he adds to this effect: "Likewise also

the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are

otherwise cannot be hid." [433] Let us judge, therefore, with respect

to those which are manifest; but respecting those which are concealed,

let us leave the judgment to God: for they also cannot be hid, whether

they be good or evil, when the time shall come for them to be

manifested.

61. There are two things, moreover, in which we ought to beware of rash

judgment; when it is uncertain with what intention any thing is done;

or when it is uncertain what sort of a person he is going to be, who at

preset is manifestly either good or bad. If, therefore, any one, for

example, complaining of his stomach, would not fast, and you, not

believing this, were to attribute it to the vice of gluttony, you would

judge rashly. Likewise, if you were to come to know the gluttony and

drunkenness as being manifest, and were so to administer reproof as if

the man could never be amended and changed, you would nevertheless

judge rashly. Let us not therefore reprove those things about which we

do not know with what intention they are done; nor let us so reprove

those things which are manifest, as that we should despair of a return

to a right state of mind; and thus we shall avoid the judgment of which

in the present instance it is said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

62. But what He says may cause perplexity: "For with what judgment ye

judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be

measured to you again." Is it the case, then, that if we shall judge

any thing with a rash judgment, God will also judge rashly with respect

to us? or if we shall measure any thing with an unjust measure, is

there with God also an unjust measure, according to which it shall be

measured to us again? (for by the expression measure also, I suppose

the judgment itself is meant.) By no means does God either judge

rashly, or recompense to any one with an unjust measure; but it is so

expressed, inasmuch as that very same rashness wherewith you punish

another must necessarily punish yourself. Unless, perchance, it is to

be imagined that injustice does harm in some way to him against whom it

goes forth, but in no way to him from whom it goes forth; but nay, it

often does no harm to him who suffers the injury, but it must

necessarily do harm to him who inflicts it. For what harm did the

injustice of the persecutors do to the martyrs? None; but very much to

the persecutors themselves. For although some of them were turned from

the error of their ways, yet at the time at which they were acting as

persecutors, their wickedness was blinding them. So also a rash

judgment frequently does no harm to him who is the object of the rash

judgment; but to him who judges rashly, the rashness itself must

necessarily do harm. According to such a rule, I judge of that saying

also: "Every one that strikes [434] with the sword shall perish with

the sword." [435] For how many take the sword, and yet do not perish

with the sword, Peter himself being an instance! But lest any should

think that he escaped such punishment by the pardon of his sins

(although nothing could be more absurd than to think that the

punishment of the sword, which did not befall Peter, could have been

greater than that of the cross, which actually befell him), yet what

would they say of the malefactors who were crucified with our Lord; for

both he who got pardon, got it after he was crucified, and the other

did not get it at all? [436] Or had they perhaps crucified all whom

they had slain; and did they therefore themselves too deserve to suffer

the same thing? It is ridiculous to think so. For what else is meant by

the statement, "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the

sword," but that the soul dies by that very sin, whatever it may be,

which it has committed?

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[426] Sine scientia, amore, necessitate ("without knowledge, love,

necessity."--Bengel). The discussion is one of the most thorough and

satisfactory sections of Augustin's commentary.

[427] Judicetur de vobis...judicabitur; Vulgate,

judicemini...judicabimini.

[428] Judicetur de vobis...judicabitur; Vulgate,

judicemini...judicabimini.

[429] 1 Cor. v. 12.

[430] Rom. xiv. 3, 4.

[431] Cogitationes; Vulgate, consilia.

[432] 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[433] 1 Tim. v. 24, 25.

[434] Omnis qui percusserit; Vulgate, omnes qui acceperint.

[435] Matt. xxvi. 52.

[436] Luke xxiii. 33-43.

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Chapter XIX.

63. And inasmuch as the Lord is admonishing us in this passage with

respect to rash and unjust judgment,--for He wishes that whatever we

do, we should do it with a heart that is single and directed toward God

alone; and inasmuch as, with respect to many things, it is uncertain

with what intention they are done, regarding which it is rash to judge;

inasmuch, moreover, as those parties especially judge rashly respecting

things that are uncertain, and readily find fault, who love rather to

censure and to condemn than to amend and to improve, which is a fault

arising either from pride or from envy; therefore He has subjoined the

statement: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's

eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" So that if

perchance, for example, he has transgressed in anger, you should find

fault in hatred; there being, as it were, as much difference between

anger and hatred as between a mote and a beam. For hatred is inveterate

anger, which, as it were simply by its long duration, has acquired so

great strength as to be justly called a beam. Now, it may happen that,

though you are angry with a man, you wish him to be turned from his

error; but if you hate a man, you cannot wish to convert him.

64. "Or how wilt [437] thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the

mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou

hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt

thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye;" i.e.,

first cast the hatred away from thee, and then, but not before, shalt

thou be able to amend him whom thou lovest. [438] And He well says,

"Thou hypocrite." For to make complaint against vices is the duty of

good and benevolent men; and when bad men do it, they are acting a part

which does not belong to them; just like hypocrites, who conceal under

a mask what they are, and show themselves off in a mask what they are

not. Under the designation hypocrites, therefore, you are to understand

pretenders. And there is, in fact, a class of pretenders much to be

guarded against, and troublesome, who, while they take up complaints

against all kinds of faults from hatred and spite, also wish to appear

counsellors. And therefore we must piously and cautiously watch, so

that when necessity shall compel us to find fault with or rebuke any

one, we may reflect first whether the fault is such as we have never

had, or one from which we have now become free; and if we have never

had it, let us reflect that we are men, and might have had it; but if

we have had it, and are now free from it, let the common infirmity

touch the memory, that not hatred but pity may go before that

fault-finding or administering of rebuke: so that whether it shall

serve for the conversion of him on whose account we do it, or for his

perversion (for the issue is uncertain), we at least from the

singleness of our eye may be free from care. If, however, on

reflection, we find ourselves involved in the same fault as he is whom

we were preparing to censure, let us not censure nor rebuke; but yet

let us mourn deeply over the case, and let us invite him not to obey

us, but to join us in a common effort.

65. For in regard also to what the apostle says,--"Unto the Jews I

became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the

law, as under the law (not being under the law), that I might gain them

that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law

(being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I

might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak,

that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I

might gain all,"--he did not certainly so act in the way of pretence,

as some wish it to be understood, in order that their detestable

pretence may be fortified by the authority of so great an example; but

he did so from love, under the influence of which he thought of the

infirmity of him whom he wished to help as if it were his own. For this

he also lays as the foundation beforehand, when he says: "For although

I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I

might gain [439] the more." [440] And that you may understand this as

being done not in pretence, but in love, under the influence of which

we have compassion for men who are weak as if we were they, he thus

admonishes us in another passage, saying, "Brethren, ye have been

called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,

but by love serve one another." [441] And this cannot be done, unless

each one reckon the infirmity of another as his own, so as to bear it

with equanimity, until the party for whose welfare he is solicitous is

freed from it.

66. Rarely, therefore, and in a case of great necessity, are rebukes to

be administered; yet in such a way that even in these very rebukes we

may make it our earnest endeavour, not that we, but that God, should be

served. For He, and none else, is the end: so that we are to do nothing

with a double heart, removing from our own eye the beam of envy, or

malice, or pretence, in order that we may see to cast the mote out of a

brother's eye. For we shall see it with the dove's eyes,--such eyes as

are declared to belong to the spouse of Christ, [442] whom God hath

chosen for Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, [443]

i.e. pure and guileless.

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[437] The meaning is, how wilt thou have the effrontery to say, dare to

say. The precept forbids all meddling, censoriousness, and captious

faultfinding, and the spirit of slander, backbiting, calumny, etc.

[438] "Ere you remark another's sin, Bid your own conscience look

within." --Cowper.

[439] Lucrifacerem; Vulgate, facerem salvos.

[440] 1 Cor. ix. 19-22.

[441] Gal. v. 13.

[442] Cant. iv. 1.

[443] Eph. v. 27.

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Chapter XX.

67. But inasmuch as the word "guileless" may mislead some who are

desirous of obeying God's precepts, so that they may think it wrong, at

times, to conceal the truth, just as it is wrong at times to speak a

falsehood, and inasmuch as in this way,--by disclosing things which the

parties to whom they are disclosed are unable to bear,--they may do

more harm than if they were to conceal them altogether and always, He

very rightly adds: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither

cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their

feet, and turn again and rend you." For the Lord Himself, although He

never told a lie, yet showed that He was concealing certain truths,

when He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot

bear them now." [444] And the Apostle Paul, too, says: "And I,

brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto

carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not

with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now

are ye able. For ye are yet carnal." [445]

68. Now, in this precept by which we are forbidden to give what is holy

to the dogs, and to cast our pearls before swine, we must carefully

require what is meant by holy, what by pearls, what by dogs, what by

swine. A holy thing is something which it is impious to violate and to

corrupt; and the very attempt and wish to commit that crime is held to

be criminal, although that holy thing should remain in its nature

inviolable and incorruptible. By pearls, again, are meant whatever

spiritual things we ought to set a high value upon, both because they

lie hid in a secret place, are as it were brought up out of the deep,

and are found in wrappings of allegory, as it were in shells that have

been opened. We may therefore legitimately understand that one and the

same thing may be called both holy and a pearl: but it gets the name of

holy for this reason, that it ought not to be corrupted; of a pearl for

this reason, that it ought not to be despised. Every one, however,

endeavours to corrupt what he does not wish to remain uninjured: but he

despises what he thinks worthless, and reckons to be as it were beneath

himself; and therefore whatever is despised is said to be trampled on.

And hence, inasmuch as dogs spring at a thing in order to tear it in

pieces, and do not allow what they are tearing in pieces to remain in

its original condition, "Give not," says He, "that which is holy unto

the dogs:" for although it cannot be torn in pieces and corrupted, and

remains unharmed and inviolable, yet we must think of what is the wish

of those parties who bitterly and in a most unfriendly spirit resist,

and, as far as in them lies, endeavour, if it were possible, to destroy

the truth. But swine, although they do not, like dogs, fall upon an

object with their teeth, yet by recklessly trampling on it defile it:

"Do not therefore cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them

under their feet, and turn again and rend you." We may therefore not

unsuitably understand dogs as used to designate the assailants of the

truth, swine the despisers of it.

69. But when He says, "they turn again and rend you," He does not say,

they rend the pearls themselves. For by trampling on them, just when

they turn in order that they may hear something more, they yet rend him

by whom the pearls have just been cast before them which they have

trampled on. For you would not easily find out what pleasure the man

could have who has trampled pearls under foot, i.e. has despised divine

things whose discovery is the result of great labour. But in regard to

him who teaches such parties, I do not see how he would escape being

rent in pieces through their anger and wrathfulness. Moreover, both

animals are unclean, the dog as well as the swine. We must therefore be

on our guard, lest anything should be opened up to him who does not

receive it: for it is better that he should seek for what is hidden,

than that he should either attack or slight at what is open. Neither,

in fact, is any other cause found why they do not receive those things

which are manifest and of importance, except hatred and contempt, the

one of which gets them the name of dogs, the other that of swine. And

all this impurity is generated by the love of temporal things, i.e. by

the love of this world, which we are commanded to renounce, in order

that we may be able to be pure. The man, therefore, who desires to have

a pure and single heart, ought not to appear to himself blameworthy, if

he conceals anything from him who is unable to receive it. Nor is it to

be supposed from this that it is allowable to lie: for it does not

follow that when truth is concealed, falsehood is uttered. Hence, steps

are to be taken first, that the hindrances which prevent his receiving

it may be removed; for certainly if pollution is the reason he does not

receive it, he is to be cleansed either by word or by deed, as far as

we can possibly do it.

70. Then, further, when our Lord is found to have made certain

statements which many who were present did not accept, but either

resisted or despised, He is not to be thought to have given that which

is holy to the dogs, or to have cast pearls before swine: for He did

not give such things to those who were not able to receive them, but to

those who were able, and were at the same time present; whom it was not

meet that He should neglect on account of the impurity of others. And

when tempters put questions to Him, and He answered them, so that they

might have nothing to gainsay, although they might pine away from the

effects of their own poisons, rather than be filled with His food, yet

others, who were able to receive His teaching, heard to their profit

many things in consequence of the opportunity created by these parties.

I have said this, lest any one, perhaps, when he is not able to reply

to one who puts a question to him, should seem to himself excused, if

he should say that he is unwilling to give that which is holy to the

dogs, or to cast pearls before swine. For he who knows what to answer

ought to do it, even for the sake of others, in whose minds despair

arises, if they believe that the question proposed cannot be answered:

and this in reference to matters that are useful, and that belong to

saving instruction. For many things which may be the subject of inquiry

on the part of idle people are needless and vain, and often hurtful,

respecting which, however, something must be said; but this very point

is to be opened up and explained, viz. why such things ought not to

form the subject of inquiry. In reference, therefore, to things that

are useful, we ought sometimes to give a reply to what is asked of us:

just as the Lord did, when the Sadducees had asked Him about the woman

who had seven husbands, to which of them she would belong in the

resurrection. For He answered that in the resurrection they will

neither marry, nor be given in marriage, but will be as the angels in

heaven. But sometimes, he who asks is to be asked something else, by

telling which he would answer himself as to the matter he asked about;

but if he should refuse to make a statement, it would not seem to those

who are present unfair, if he himself should not hear anything as to

the matter he inquired about. For those who put the question, tempting

Him, whether tribute was to be paid, were asked another question, viz.

whose image the money bore which was brought forward by themselves; and

because they told what they had been asked, i.e. that the money bore

the image of C�sar, they gave a kind of answer to themselves in

reference to the question they had asked the Lord: and accordingly from

their answer He drew this inference, "Render therefore unto C�sar the

things which are C�sar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

[446] When, however, the chief priests and elders of the people had

asked by what authority He was doing those things, He asked them about

the baptism of John: and when they would not make a statement which

they saw to be against themselves, and yet would not venture to say

anything bad about John, on account of the bystanders, "Neither tell I

you," says He, "by what authority I do these things;" [447] a refusal

which appeared most just to the bystanders. For they said they were

ignorant of that which they really knew, but did not wish to tell. And,

in truth, it was right that they who wished to have an answer to what

they asked, should themselves first do what they required to be done

toward them; and if they had done this, they would certainly have

answered themselves. For they themselves had sent to John, asking who

he was; or rather they themselves, being priests and Levites, had been

sent, supposing that he was the very Christ, but he said that he was

not, and gave forth a testimony concerning the Lord: [448] a testimony

respecting which if they chose to make a confession, they would teach

themselves by what authority as the Christ He was doing those things;

which as if ignorant of they had asked, in order that they might find

an avenue for calumny.

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[444] John xvi. 12.

[445] 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.

[446] Matt. xxii. 15-34.

[447] Chap. xxi. 23-27.

[448] John i. 19-27.

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Chapter XXI.

71. Since, therefore, a command had been given that what is holy should

not be given to dogs, and pearls should not be cast before swine, a

hearer might object and say, conscious of his own ignorance and

weakness, and hearing a command addressed to him, that he should not

give what he felt that he himself had not yet received,--might (I say)

object and say, What holy thing do you forbid me to give to the dogs,

and what pearls do you forbid me to cast before swine, while as yet I

do not see that I possess such things? Most opportunely He has added

the statement: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall

find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh

receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it

shall be opened." The asking refers to the obtaining by request

soundness and strength of mind, so that we may be able to discharge

those duties which are commanded; the seeking, on the other hand,

refers to the finding of the truth. For inasmuch as the blessed life is

summed up in action and knowledge, action wishes for itself a supply of

strength, contemplation desiderates that matters should be made clear:

of these therefore the first is to be asked, the second is to be

sought; so that the one may be given, the other found. But knowledge in

this life belongs rather to the way than to the possession itself: but

whoever has found the true way, will arrive at the possession itself

which, however, is opened to him that knocks.

72. In order, therefore, that these three things--viz. asking, seeking,

knocking--may be made clear, let us suppose, for example, the case of

one weak in his limbs, who cannot walk: in the first place, he is to be

healed and strengthened so as to be able to walk; and to this refers

the expression He has used, "Ask." But what advantage is it that he is

now able to walk, or even run, if he should go astray by devious paths?

A second thing therefore is, that he should find the road that leads to

the place at which he wishes to arrive; and when he has kept that road,

and arrived at the very place where he wishes to dwell, if he find it

closed, it will be of no use either that he has been able to walk, or

that he has walked and arrived, unless it be opened to him; to this,

therefore, the expression refers which has been used, "Knock."

73. Moreover, great hope has been given, and is given, by Him who does

not deceive when He promises: for He says, "Every one that asketh,

receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it

shall be opened." Hence there is need of perseverance, in order that we

may receive what we ask, and find what we seek, and that what we knock

at may be opened. [449] Now, just as He talked of the fowls of heaven

and of the lilies of the field, that we might not despair of food and

clothing being provided for us, so that our hopes might rise from

lesser things to greater; so also in this passage, "Or what man is

there of you," says He, "whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a

stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then,

being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much

more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that

ask Him?" How do the evil give good things? Now, He has called those

evil [450] who are as yet the lovers of this world and sinners. And, in

fact, the good things are to be called good according to their feeling,

because they reckon these to be good things. Although in the nature of

things also such things are good, but temporal, and pertaining to this

feeble life: and whoever that is evil gives them, does not give of his

own; for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, [451] who

made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is. [452] How

much reason, therefore, there is for the hope that God will give us

good things when we ask Him, and that we cannot be deceived, so that we

should get one thing instead of another, when we ask Him; since we

even, although we are evil, know how to give that for which we are

asked? For we do not deceive our children; and whatever good things we

give are not given of our own, but of what is His.

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[449] The conditions of effective prayer are, that it should be made in

the name of Christ (John xv. 16), with faith, and according to God's

will (1 John v. 14).

[450] This has been regarded as a strong proof-text for the doctrine of

original sin. Bengel calls it "a shining testimony for original sin."

Stier says it is "the strongest proof-text for original sin in the

whole of the Holy Scriptures." Meyer says the reference is to actual

sin; while Plumptre declares that "the words at once recognise the fact

of man's depravity, and assert that it is not total."

[451] Ps. xxiv. 1.

[452] Ps. cxlvi. 6.

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Chapter XXII.

74. Moreover, a certain strength and vigour in walking along the path

of wisdom ties in good morals, which are made to extend as far as to

purification and singleness of heart,--a subject on which He has now

been speaking long, and thus concludes: "Therefore all good [453]

things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to

them: for this is the law and the prophets." In the Greek copies we

find the passage runs thus: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would

that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." But I think the word

"good" has been added by the Latins to make the sentence clear. For the

thought occurred, that if any one should wish something wicked to be

done to him, and should refer this clause to that,--as, for instance,

if one should wish to be challenged to drink immoderately, and to get

drunk over his cups, and should first do this to the party by whom he

wishes it to be done to himself,--it would be ridiculous to imagine

that he had fulfilled this clause. Inasmuch, therefore, as they were

influenced by this consideration, as I suppose, one word was added to

make the matter clear; so that in the statement, "Therefore all things

whatsoever ye would that men should do to you," there was inserted the

word "good." But if this is wanting in the Greek copies, they also

ought to be corrected: but who would venture to do this? It is to be

understood, therefore, that the clause is complete and altogether

perfect, even if this word be not added. For the expression used,

"whatsoever ye would," ought to be understood as used not in a

customary and random, but in a strict sense. For there is no will

except in the good: for in the case of bad and wicked deeds, desire is

strictly spoken of, not will. Not that the Scriptures always speak in a

strict sense; but where it is necessary, they so keep a word to its

perfectly strict meaning, that they do not allow anything else to be

understood.

75. Moreover, this precept seems to refer to the love of our neighbour,

and not to the love of God also, seeing that in another passage He says

that there are two precepts on which "hang all the law and the

prophets." For if He had said, All things whatsoever ye would should be

done to you, do ye even so; in this one sentence He would have embraced

both those precepts: for it would soon be said that every one wishes

that he himself should be loved both by God and by men; and so, when

this precept was given to him, that what he wished done to himself he

should himself do, that certainly would be equivalent to the precept

that he should love God and men. But when it is said more expressly of

men, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to

you, do ye even so to them," nothing else seems to be meant than, "Thou

shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." [454] But we must carefully

attend to what He has added here: "for this is the law and the

prophets." Now, in the case of these two precepts, He not merely says,

The law and the prophets hang; but He has also added, "all the law and

the prophets," [455] which is the same as the whole of prophecy: and in

not making the same addition here, He has kept a place for the other

precept, which refers to the love of God. Here, then, inasmuch as He is

following out the precepts with respect to a single heart, and it is to

be dreaded lest any one should have a double heart toward those from

whom the heart can be hid, i.e. toward men, a precept with respect to

that very thing was to be given. For there is almost nobody that would

wish that any one of double heart should have dealings with himself.

But no one can bestow anything upon a fellowman with a single heart,

unless he so bestow it that he expects no temporal advantage from him,

and does it with the intention which we have sufficiently discussed

above, when we were speaking of the single eye.

76. The eye, therefore, being cleansed and rendered single, will be

adapted and suited to behold and contemplate its own inner light. For

the eye in question is the eye of the heart. Now, such an eye is

possessed by him who, in order that his works may be truly good, does

not make it the aim of his good works that he should please men; but

even if it should turn out that he pleases them, he makes this tend

rather to their salvation and to the glory of God, not to his own empty

boasting; nor does he do anything that is good tending to his

neighbour's salvation for the purpose of gaining by it those things

that are necessary for getting through this present life; nor does he

rashly condemn a man's intention and wish in that action in which it is

not apparent with what intention and wish it has been done; and

whatever kindnesses he shows to a man, he shows them with the same

intention with which he wishes them shown to himself, viz. as not

expecting any temporal advantage from him: thus will the heart be

single and pure in which God is sought. "Blessed," therefore, "are the

pure in heart: for they shall see God." [456]

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[453] Bona; the Vulgate does not contain it.

[454] The nearest approach that any uninspired Jewish teacher came to

the Golden Rule--the designation by which these words are known--was

the saying of Hillel, "What is unpleasant to thyself, do not to thy

neighbour. This is the whole law, and all the rest is commentary upon

it." Beautiful as the saying is, it falls behind Christ's words,

because it is merely negative, while they are a positive requirement.

The Stoics and the Chinese ethics also have a similar negative precept.

It is strange that the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (i. 2) gives the

negative form, and not the positive precept. Augustin says we ought to

be glad when writers before Christ spoke things in the Gospel (En. in

Ps. cxl. 6).

[455] Matt. xxii. 37-40.

[456] Matt. v. 8.

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Chapter XXIII.

77. But because this belongs to few, He now begins to speak of

searching for and possessing wisdom, which is a tree of life; and

certainly, in searching for and possessing, i.e. contemplating this

wisdom, such an eye is led through all that precedes to a point where

there may now be seen the narrow way and the strait gate. When,

therefore, He says in continuation, "Enter ye [457] in at the strait

gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to

destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is

the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there

be that find it; [458] He does not say so for this reason, that the

Lord's yoke is rough, or His burden heavy; but because few are willing

to bring their labours to an end, giving too little credit to Him who

cries, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in

heart: for my yoke is easy, [459] and my burden [460] is light" [461]

(hence, moreover, the sermon before us took as its starting-point the

lowly and meek in heart): and this easy yoke and light burden which

many spurn, few submit to; and on that account the way becomes narrow

which leadeth unto life, and the gate strait by which it is entered.

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[457] Introite; Vulgate, intrate.

[458] The narrowness of the way is taken to represent the self-denial

and hardships of disciples (Meyer, Mansel, etc.), or righteousness

(Bengel, Schaff, etc.). "The picture is a dark one, and yet it

represents but too faithfully the impression made, I do not say on

Calvinist or true Christian, but on any ethical teacher, by the actual

state of mankind around us. If there is any wider hope, it is found in

hints and suggestions of the possibilities of the future (1 Pet. iii.

19, iv. 6)," etc. ( Plumptre).

[459] Lene...sarcina; Vulgate, suave...onus.

[460] Lene...sarcina; Vulgate, suave...onus.

[461] Matt. xi. 28-30.

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Chapter XXIV.

78. Here, therefore, those who promise a wisdom and a knowledge of the

truth which they do not possess, are especially to be guarded against;

as, for instance, heretics, who frequently commend themselves on

account of their fewness. And hence, when He had said that there are

few who find the strait gate and the narrow way, lest they [the

heretics] should falsely substitute themselves under the pretext of

their fewness, He immediately added, "Beware of false prophets, [462]

which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening

wolves." But such parties do not deceive the single eye, which knows

how to distinguish a tree by its fruits. For He says: "Ye shall know

them by their fruits." Then He adds the similitudes: "Do men gather

grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree

bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil

fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt

tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good

fruit [463] is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their

fruits ye shall know them."

79. And in [the interpretation of] this passage we must be very much on

our guard against the error of those who judge from these same two

trees that there are two original natures, the one of which belongs to

God, but the other neither belongs to God nor springs from Him. And

this error has both been already discussed in other books [of ours]

[464] very copiously, and if that is still too little, will be

discussed again; but at present we have merely to show that the two

trees before us do not help them. In the first place, because it is so

clear that He is speaking of men, that whoever reads what goes before

and what follows will wonder at their blindness. Secondly, they fix

their attention on what is said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil

fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit," and

therefore think that neither can it happen that an evil soul should be

changed into something better, nor a good one into something worse; as

if it were said, A good tree cannot become evil, nor an evil tree good.

But it is said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can

a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." For the tree is certainly the

soul itself, i.e. the man himself, but the fruits are the works of the

man; an evil man, therefore, cannot perform good works, nor a good man

evil works. If an evil man, therefore, wishes to perform good works,

let him first become good. So the Lord Himself says in another passage

more plainly: "Either make the tree good, or make the tree bad." But if

He were figuratively representing the two natures of such parties by

these two trees, He would not say, "Make:" for who of the sons of men

can make a nature? Then also in that passage, when He had made mention

of these two trees, He added, "Ye hypocrites, how can ye, being evil,

speak good things?" [465] As long, therefore, as any one is evil, he

cannot bring forth good fruits; for if he were to bring forth good

fruits, he would no longer be evil. So it might most truly have been

said, snow cannot be warm; for when it begins to be warm, we no longer

call it snow, but water. It may therefore come about, that what was

snow is no longer so; but it cannot happen that snow should be warm. So

it may come about, that he who was evil is no longer evil; it cannot,

however, happen that an evil man should do good. And although he is

sometimes useful, this is not the man's own doing; but it is done

through him, in virtue of the arrangements of divine providence: as,

for instance, it is said of the Pharisees, "What they bid you, do; but

what they do, do not consent to do." This very circumstance, that they

spoke things that were good, and that the things which they spoke were

usefully listened to and done, was not a matter belonging to them: for,

says He, "they sit in Moses' seat." [466] It was, therefore, when

engaged through divine providence in preaching the law of God, that

they were able to be useful to their hearers, although they were not so

to themselves. Respecting such it is said in another place by the

prophet, "They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns;" [467] because

they teach what is good, and do what is evil. Those, therefore, who

listened to them, and did what was said by them, did not gather grapes

of thorns, but through the thorns gathered grapes of the vine: just as,

were any one to thrust his hand through a hedge, or were at least to

gather a grape from a vine which was entangled in a hedge, that would

not be the fruit of the thorns, but of the vine.

80. The question, indeed, is most rightly put, What are the fruits He

would wish us to attend to, whereby we might know the tree? For many

reckon among the fruits certain things which belong to the sheep's

clothing, and in this way are deceived by wolves: as, for instance,

either fastings, or prayers, or almsgivings; but unless all of these

things could be done even by hypocrites, He would not say above, "Take

heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them."

And after prefixing this sentence, He goes on to speak of those very

three things, almsgiving, prayer, fasting. For many give largely to the

poor, not from compassion, but from vanity; and many pray, or rather

seem to pray, while not keeping God in view, but desiring to please

men; and many fast, and make a wonderful show of abstinence before

those to whom such things appear difficult, and by whom they are

reckoned worthy of honour: and catch them with artifices of this sort,

while they hold up to view one thing for the purpose of deceiving, and

put forth another for the purpose of preying upon or killing those who

cannot see the wolves under that sheep's clothing. These, therefore,

are not the fruits by which He admonishes us that the tree is known.

For such things, when they are done with a good intention in sincerity,

are the appropriate clothing of sheep; but when they are done in wicked

deception, they cover nothing else but wolves. But the sheep ought not

on this account to hate their own clothing, because the wolves often

conceal themselves therein.

81. What the fruits are by the finding of which we may know an evil

tree, the apostle tells us: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest,

which are these; adulteries, fornications, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

idolatry, witchcraft, hatreds, variances, emulations, wrath, strife,

seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and

such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in

time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom

of God." And what the fruits are by which we may know a good tree, the

very same apostle goes on to tell us: "But the fruit of the Spirit is

love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

meekness, temperance." [468] It must be known, indeed, that "joy"

stands here in a strict and proper sense; for bad men are, strictly

speaking, not said to rejoice, but to make extravagant demonstrations

of joy: just as we have said above, that "will" which the wicked do not

possess, stands in a strict sense where it is said, "All things

whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

In accordance with that strict sense of the word, in virtue of which

joy is spoken of only in the good, the prophet also speaks, saying:

"Rejoicing is not for the wicked, saith the Lord." [469] So also

"faith" stands, not certainly as meaning any kind of it, but true

faith: and the other things which find a place here have certain

resemblances of their own in bad men and deceivers; so that they

entirely mislead, unless one has the pure and single eye by which he

may know such things. It is accordingly the best arrangement, that the

cleansing of the eye is first discussed, and then mention is made of

what things were to be guarded against.

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[462] Cavete a pseudoprophetis; Vulgate, attendite a falsis prophetis.

[463] Excellency of fruitage is sanctity of life (Bonitas fructuum est

sanctitas vit� (Bengel).

[464] More particularly his works against the Manich�ans, Contra

Faustum Manich�um, etc. Augustin also made much use of this passage

against the Pelagians, to show that the will must be aided to produce

good thoughts and deeds; that the unregenerate man is incapable of

restoring himself.

[465] Matt. xii. 33, 34.

[466] Matt. xxiii. 3, 2.

[467] Jer. xii. 13.

[468] Gal. v. 19-23.

[469] Isa. lvii. 21, according to the Septuagint.

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Chapter XXV.

82. But seeing that, however pure an eye one may have, i.e. with

however single and sincere a heart one may live, he yet cannot look

into the heart of another: whatever things could not have become

apparent in deeds or words, are disclosed by trials. Now trial is

twofold; either in the hope of obtaining some temporal advantage, or in

the terror of losing it. And especially must we be on our guard, lest,

when striving after wisdom, which can be found in Christ alone, in whom

are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; [470] --we must be

on our guard, I say, lest, under the very name of Christ, we be

deceived by heretics, or by any parties whatever defective in

intelligence, and lovers of this world. For on this account He adds a

warning, saying, "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, [471]

shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of

My Father which is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of

heaven:" lest we should think that the mere fact of one saying to our

Lord, "Lord, Lord," belongs to those fruits; and from that he should

seem to us to be a good tree. But those are the fruits, to do the will

of the Father who is in heaven, in the doing of which He has

condescended to exhibit Himself as an example.

83. But the question may fairly be started, how with this sentence the

statement of the apostle is to be reconciled, where he says, "No man

speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and no man can

say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:" [472] for neither

can we say that any who have the Holy Spirit will not enter into the

kingdom of heaven, if they persevere onwards to the end; nor can we

affirm that those who say, "Lord, Lord," and yet do not enter into the

kingdom of heaven, have the Holy Spirit. How then does no one say "that

Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," unless it is because the

apostle has used the word "say" here in a strict and proper sense, so

that it implies the will and understanding of him who says? But the

Lord has used the word which He employs in a general sense: "Not every

one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of

heaven." For he also who neither wishes nor understands what he says,

seems to say it; but he properly says it, who gives expression to his

will and mind by the sound of his voice: just as, a little before, what

is called "joy" among the fruits of the Spirit is called so in a strict

and proper sense, not in the way in which the same apostle elsewhere

uses the expression, "Rejoiceth not in iniquity:" [473] as if any one

could rejoice in iniquity: for that transport of a mind making confused

and boisterous demonstrations of joy is not joy; for this latter is

possessed by the good alone. Hence those also seem to say it, who

neither perceive with the understanding nor engage with the deliberate

consent of the will in this which they utter, but utter it with the

voice merely; and after this manner the Lord says, "Not every one that

saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." But

truly and properly those parties say it whose utterance in speech

really represents their will and intention; and it is in accordance

with this signification that the apostle has said, "No one can say that

Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

84. And besides, it belongs especially to the matter in hand, that, in

striving after the contemplation of the truth, we should not only not

be deceived by the name of Christ, by means of those who have the name

and have not the deeds; but also not by certain deeds and miracles, for

when the Lord performed of the same kind for the sake of unbelievers,

He has warned us not to be deceived by such things, thinking that an

invisible wisdom is present where we see a visible miracle. Hence He

annexes the statement: "Many will say to Me on that day, Lord, Lord,

have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out

devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I say

[474] unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work

iniquity." He will not, therefore, recognise any but the man that

worketh righteousness. For He forbade also His own disciples themselves

to rejoice in such things, viz. that the spirits were subject unto

them: "But rejoice," says He, "because your names are written in

heaven;" [475] I suppose, in that city of Jerusalem which is in heaven,

in which only the righteous and holy shall reign. "Know ye not," says

the apostle, "that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of

God?" [476]

85. But perhaps some one may say that the unrighteous cannot perform

those visible miracles, and may believe rather that those parties are

telling a lie, who will be found saying, "We have prophesied in Thy

name, and have cast out devils in Thy name, and have done many

wonderful works." Let him therefore read what great things the magi of

the Egyptians did who resisted Moses, the servant of God; [477] or if

he will not read this, because they did not do them in the name of

Christ, let him read what the Lord Himself says of the false prophets,

speaking thus: "Then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is

Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs,

and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch

that the very elect shall be deceived. [478] Behold, I have told you

before." [479]

86. How much need, therefore, is there of the pure and single eye, in

order that the way of wisdom may be found, against which there is the

clamour of so great deceptions and errors on the part of wicked and

perverse men, to escape from all of which is indeed to arrive at the

most certain peace, and the immoveable stability of wisdom! For it is

greatly to be feared, lest, by eagerness in quarrelling and

controversy, one should not see what can be seen by few, that small is

the disturbance of gainsayers, unless one also disturbs himself. And in

this direction, too, runs that statement of the apostle: "And the

servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle [480] unto all men,

apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that think

differently; [481] if God peradventure will give them repentance to the

acknowledging of the truth." [482] "Blessed," therefore, "are the

peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." [483]

87. Hence we must take special notice how terribly the conclusion of

the whole sermon is introduced: "Therefore, whosoever heareth these

sayings of Mine, and doeth them, is like [484] unto a wise man, which

built his house upon the rock." For no one confirms what he hears or

understands, unless by doing. And if Christ is the rock, as many

Scripture testimonies proclaim [485] that man builds in Christ who does

what he hears from Him. "The rain descended, and the floods came, and

the winds blew, and beat [486] upon that house; and it fell not: for it

was founded upon a rock." Such an one, therefore, is not afraid of any

gloomy superstitions (for what else is understood by rain, when it is

put in the sense of anything bad?), or of turnouts of men, which I

think are compared to winds; or of the river of this life, as it were

flowing over the earth in carnal lusts. For it is the man who is

seduced by the prosperity that is broken down by the adversities

arising from these three things; none of which is feared by him who has

his house founded upon a rock, i.e. who not only hears, but also does,

the Lord's commands. And the man who hears and does them not is in

dangerous proximity to all these, for he has no stable foundation; but

by hearing and not doing, he builds a ruin. For He goes on to say: "And

every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall

be like unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: [487]

and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and

beat [488] upon that house; and it fell: and great was [489] the fall

of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the

people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one

having authority, and not as their scribes." [490] This is what I said

before was meant by the prophet in the Psalms, when he says: "I will

act confidently in regard of him. The words of the Lord are pure words:

as silver tried and proved in a furnace of earth, purified seven

times." [491] And from this number, I am admonished to trace back those

precepts also to the seven sentences which He has placed in the

beginning of this sermon, when He was speaking of those who are

blessed; and to those seven operations of the Holy Spirit, which the

prophet Isaiah mentions; [492] but whether the order before us, or some

other, is to be considered in these, the things we have heard from the

Lord are to be done, if we wish to build upon a rock.

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[470] Col. ii. 3.

[471] Many called Him Lord, but He never called any one Lord (ipsum

multi, etiam amplissimi viri,--ipse neminem ne Pilatum quidem, dominum

vocavit.--Bengel).

[472] 1 Cor. xii. 3.

[473] 1 Cor. xiii. 6.

[474] Dicam; Vulgate, confitebor; Greek, homologeso. Meyer says, "It is

the conscious dignity of the future Judge of the world." Bengel calls

attention to the great power of the word (magna potestas hujus dicti).

In this action Christ lays the most confident claim to functions not

imparted to any human being.

[475] Luke x. 20.

[476] 1 Cor. vi. 9.

[477] Exod. vii. and viii.

[478] Inducantur etiam electi; Vulgate, inducantur, si fieri potest,

etiam electi.

[479] Matt. xxiv. 23-25.

[480] Mitem...diversa sentientes; Vulgate, mansuetum...resistunt

veritati.

[481] Mitem...diversa sentientes; Vulgate, mansuetum...resistunt

veritati.

[482] 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

[483] Matt. v. 9.

[484] Similis est...; Vulgate, assimilabitur. Meyer, Tholuck, etc,

refer this to the future judgment, "I will make him like," etc., when

Christ will establish those who keep His sayings for ever (opposed by

Alford etc.).

[485] 1 Cor. x. 4. So Alford, who thinks this signification too plain

to be overlooked.

[486] Offenderunt; Vulgate, irruerunt.

[487] The transitory teachings and institutions of men as opposed to

Christ's own word.

[488] Offenderunt; Vulgate, irruerunt.

[489] Facta est; Vulgate, fuit.

[490] Vulgate adds et Pharis�i. The people were astonished, not merely

at His teachings, but the dignity and self-consciousness with which

Christ uttered them, quod nova qu�dam majestas et insueta hominum

mentes ad se raperet (Calvin). The Scribes spoke as expounders of the

law, and referred back to Moses for their authority; Christ spoke in

His own name, and as an independent legislator, vested with greater

authority than Moses and a higher dignity. The Scribes by elaborate

sophistry often drew many meanings from a single precept, and burdened

the people with an intricate and endless variety of precepts for the

details of conduct, laying painful stress upon their observance; Christ

directed attention from outward acts to the motive and intent of the

heart. "He opposed a genuine righteousness to the mock righteousness of

the Scribes and Pharisees."

[491] Ps. xii. 5, 6.

[492] Isa. xi. 2, 3.

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St. AUGUSTIN:

the harmony of the gospels

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Introductory Essay.

By Professor M. B. Riddle, D.D.

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The treatise of Augustin On the Harmony of the Evangelists (De Consensu

Evangelistarum) is regarded as the most laborious task undertaken by

the great African Father. But its influence has been much less obvious

than that of his strictly exegetical and doctrinal works. Dr. Salmond,

in his Introductory Notice, gives a discriminating and just estimate of

it. Jerome was, in some respects, far better equipped for such a task

than Augustin; yet one cannot study this work, bearing in mind the

hermeneutical tendencies of the fourth century, without having an

increased respect for the ability, candour, and insight of the great

theologian when engaged in labours requiring linguistic knowledge,

which he did not possess. Despite his ignorance of the correct text in

many difficult passages, his lack of familiarity with the Greek

original, many of his explanations have stood the test of time, finding

acceptance even among the exegetes of this age.

Most modern Harmonies give indications of the abiding influence of the

work. Yet the treatise itself has not called forth extended comments.

From its character it directs attention to the problems it discusses

rather than to its own solutions of them. Hence the difficulty of

presenting an adequate Bibliographical List in connection with this

work. All Gospel Harmonies, all Lives of Christ, all discussions of the

apparent discrepancies of the Gospels, stand related to it. As a

complete list was out of the question, it seemed fitting to preface

this edition of the work with a few general statements in regard to

Harmonies of the Gospels.

The early date of the oldest work of this character, before A.D. 170

(see below), attests the genuineness of our four canonical Gospels, by

proving that they, and they only, were generally accepted at that time.

But it also shows that the existence of four Gospels, recognised as

genuine and authoritative, naturally calls forth harmonistic efforts.

Two questions confront every intelligent reader of these four Gospels:

(1) In view of the variation in the order of events as narrated by the

different evangelists, what is the more probable chronological order?

(2) In view of the variation in details, what is, in each case, the

correct explanation of such variations? These problems are largely

exegetical; but those of the former class soon lead to the historical

method of treatment, while those of the latter class lead to apologetic

discussions, when apparent discrepancies are discovered. The work of

Augustin deals more largely with the latter; more recent Harmonies lay

greater stress upon the historical and chronological questions. The

methods represent the tendencies of the age to which they respectively

belong. The historical method is doubtless the more correct one; but,

when it assumes the extreme form of destructive criticism, it denies

the possibility of harmony. On the other hand, the apologetic method,

when linked with a mechanical view of inspiration, too often adopts

interpretations that are ungrammatical, in order to ignore the

necessity of harmonizing differences. The true position lies between

these extremes: the grammatico-historical sense must be accepted; the

correct text of each Gospel must be determined, independently of verbal

variations; the truthfulness of each evangelist must be assumed, until

positive error is proven; the more definite statements are to be used

in explaining the less definite; the characteristics of each evangelist

must be given their proper weight in determining the probabilities of

greater or less accuracy of detail.

But the necessary limitations of harmonistic methods should be fully

recognised. Absolute certainty is often impossible: there will always

be room for difference of judgment. For example, there is to-day as

little agreement as ever in regard to the length of our Lord's

ministry; i.e., whether the Evangelist John refers to three or four

passovers. The Tripaschal and Quadripaschal theories still divide

scholars, as in past ages of the Church.

Still, the progress made in textual criticism has, by indicating more

positively the exact words of all four accounts, laid the foundation

for better results in harmonistic labours.

One great advantage of a Harmony, as now constructed, with the text of

the evangelists in parallel columns, or in independent sections when

the matter is peculiar to one of them, is the emphasis it gives to the

historical sequence. The movement of the evangelical narrative is made

more apparent; the relations of the events shed light upon the entire

story; the purpose of discourses and journeys appears; the training of

the Twelve can be better studied; the emphasis placed upon the closing

events of our Lord's life on earth is made more obvious. A comparison

of the several accounts gives to the events new significance, often

reveals minute and undesigned coincidences which attest the

truthfulness of all the narrators. Now that the attempt to secure

mechanical uniformity in the narratives has been universally rejected

by scholars, another advantage of a Harmony is seen to be this: that it

sets forth most strikingly the verbal differences and correspondences

of the parallel passages. Only by a minute comparison of these can we

discover the data for a settlement of the problem respecting the origin

and relation of the Synoptic Gospels. [493]

The dangers attending harmonistic methods are obvious enough, and

appeared very early. The tendency has been to create a rigid verbal

uniformity. Hence the peculiarities of the several evangelists are

obscured; the text of one is, consciously or unconsciously, conformed

to that of another. The Gospel of Mark, the most individual and

striking of the Synoptics, probably the oldest, has been repeatedly

altered to correspond with that of Matthew. When uniformity could not

be secured by this process, false exegesis was often resorted to, and

hermeneutical principles avowed which injured the cause of truth.

Evangelical truth cannot be defended with the weapons of error. This

vicious method was usually the result of mechanical views of

inspiration. That view of inspiration which rightly recognises language

as vital, and which therefore seeks to know the meaning of every word,

has no worse foe than the hermeneutical principle which ignores the

historical sense of any word of Scripture.

The tendency just referred to brought harmonistic labours into

disrepute. The immense activity of the present century in exegetical

theology has not taken this direction. Moreover, the historical method

received its greatest impulse from the tendency-theory of the T�bingen

school, which presupposes the impossibility of constructing a Harmony

of the four Gospels. Hence the reaction, in Germany especially, has

been excessive.

Yet Harmonies are still prepared, and are still useful. Harmonistic

labours have their rightful, though limited, place in the field of

Exegetical Theology.

A very brief sketch of the leading works of this character will serve

to illustrate the above statements.

The earliest attempt at constructing a Harmony was that of Tatian [494]

(died A.D. 172). The date of its appearance was between A.D. 153 and

170; and its title, Diatessaron, furnishes abundant evidence of the

early acceptance of our four canonical Gospels. Our knowledge of this

work was, until recently, very slight. But the discovery of an Armenian

translation of a commentary upon it, by Ephraem the Syrian, has enabled

Zahn to reconstruct a large part of the text. The commentary was

translated into Latin in 1841, but little attention was paid to it

until an edition by Moesinger appeared in 1876. [495] The influence of

Tatian's Diatessaron upon the Greek text seems to have been

unfortunate. Many of the corruptions in the received text of the Gospel

of Mark are probably due to the confusion of the separate narratives

occasioned by this work. Tregelles (in the new edition of Horne's

Introduction, vol. iv. p. 40) says that it "had more effect apparently

in the text of the Gospels in use throughout the Church than all the

designed falsifications of Marcion and every scion of the Gnostic

blood." It seems to have contained nothing indicating heretical bias or

intentional alteration.

The next Harmony was that of Ammonius of Alexandria, the teacher of

Origen, the first work bearing this title (HaArmonia). It appeared

about A.D. 220, but has been lost. Until recently it was supposed that

the sections into which some early mss. divide the Gospels were those

of Ammonius himself; but, while he did make such divisions, those

bearing his name are to be attributed to Eusebius (see below). Ammonius

made Matthew the basis of his work, and by his arrangement destroyed

the continuity of the separate narratives. Every Harmony based upon the

order of Matthew must be a failure.

Eusebius of C�sarea (died A.D. 340) adopted a similar set of divisions,

adding to them numbers from 1 to 10, called "Canons," which indicate

the parallelisms of the sections. These sections and canons are printed

in Tischendorf's critical editions of the Greek Testament, and in some

other editions. [496] The influence of this system seems to have been

great, but Eusebius often accepts a parallelism where there is really

none whatever. Some of the sections are very brief, containing only

part of a verse. Hence the tables of sections furnish no basis for

estimating the matter common to two or more evangelists.

The work of Augustin comes next in order; it deals little with

chronological questions, and shows no trace of such complete textual

labour as that of Eusebius.

The Reformation gave a new impulse to this department of Biblical

study. In the sixteenth century many Harmonies appeared. Among the

authors are the well-known names of Osiander, Jansen, Robert Stephens,

John Calvin, Du Moulin, Chemnitz. These works were written in Latin, as

a rule; and they are worthy of the age which produced them. Lack of

sufficient critical material prevented complete accuracy, but the

exegetical methods of the sixteenth century obtain in the Harmonies

also.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries present little in this field

of labour that deserves favourable notice. The undisputed reign of the

Textus Receptus impeded investigation; the supernaturalism of the

dominant theology was not favourable to historical investigation; the

mechanical theory of inspiration led to arbitrary and forced

interpretations. Even the older rationalism, which explained away the

supernatural, was scarcely more faulty in its exegesis than many an

orthodox commentator. The labours of J. Lightfoot deserve grateful

recognition. This great Hebrew scholar did not finish his Harmony of

the Gospels, but shed great light upon many of the problems involved,

by his knowledge of Jewish customs. J. A. Bengel, the pioneer of modern

textual criticism of the New Testament, published a valuable Harmony in

German. W. Newcome published a Harmony of the Gospels in Greek (Dublin,

1778). He follows Le Clerc (Amsterdam, 1779), and his Harmony is the

basis of the more modern work by Edward Robinson (see below).

While the T�bingen school, by its tendency-theory, virtually denied the

possibility of constructing a Harmony, it compelled the conservative

theologians to adopt the historical method. Thus there has been

gathered much material for harmonistic labours. But in Germany, as in

England and America, Lives of Christ have been more numerous than

Harmonies.

K. Wieseler and C. Tischendorf, among recent German scholars, have

published valuable Harmonies. In England the work most in use is that

of E. Greswell. The Archbishop of York, William Thomson, presents in

Smith's Bible Dictionary a valuable table of the Harmony of the Four

Gospels (article "Gospels," Am. ed. vol. ii. p. 751).

An interesting edition of the Synoptic Gospels is that of W. G.

Rushbrooke (Synopticon, Cambridge, 1880-81). It is designed to show, by

different type and colour, the divergences and correspondences of the

three Gospels. The Greek text is that of Tischendorf, corrected from

that of Westcott and Hort. It presents in the readiest form the

material for harmonistic comparisons; but the editor has prepared it

with a purpose diametrically opposed to that of the Harmonist, namely,

to construct from the matter common to the Synoptists a "triple

tradition," which will, in the author's judgment, approximately present

the "source" from which all have drawn. The work has great value apart

from its theory of the origin of the Synoptic Gospels.

In America Edward Robinson published, in repeated editions, a Harmony

of the Gospels in Greek and also in English. He had previously

reprinted that of Newcome.

S. J. Andrews (Life of our Lord; New York, 1863), has sought "to

arrange the events of the Lord's life, as given us by the evangelists,

so far as possible, in a chronological order, and to state the grounds

of this order." It is virtually a Harmony, with the full text of the

Gospels omitted. Few works of the kind equal it in value, though it

needs revision in the light of the more recent results of textual

criticism.

Frederic Gardinerhas published a Harmony of the Four Gospels in Greek

(Andover, 1871, 1876). It gives the text of Tischendorf (eighth

edition), with a collation of the Textus Receptus, and of the texts of

Griesbach, Lachmann, and Tregelles. The authorities are cited in the

case of important variations. Another valuable feature is a comparative

table, presenting in parallel columns the arrangement adopted by

Greswell, Stroud, Robinson, Thomson, Tischendorf, and Gardiner.

A number of works, aiming to consolidate into one narrative the four

accounts, have been passed over.

The Harmony of Dr. Robinson, which has held its ground for more than

forty years, has been recently revised by the present writer. The text

of Tischendorf has been substituted for that of Hahn; all the various

readings materially affecting the sense which are found in Tregelles,

Westcott and Hort, and in the Revised English version of 1881, have

been given in footnotes, with a selection of the leading authorities

(mss. and versions) for or against each reading cited. The Appendix has

been enlarged to meet the new phases of discussion; but the whole

volume is what it purports to be,--a revision of the standard work of

Dr. Robinson. In the matter of the Greek text, the author would

probably have done what has now been done by the editor. A similar but

less extensive revision of the English Harmony of Dr. Robinson has been

published. [497]

Allegheny, Pa., Nov. 14, 1887.

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[493] The writer may be pardoned for alluding to his own experience in

connection with this point. In the exegetical labours of some years, he

found himself accepting the theory that the three Synoptists wrote

independently of each other. Afterwards, when the task of editing Dr.

Robinson's Greek Harmony compelled him to compare again and again every

word of each account, the evidences of independence seemed to him to be

overwhelming.

[494] See Schaff, History of the Christian Church, vol. ii. rev. ed.,

pp. 493 sqq., 726 sqq.; also Schaff-Herzog, Encyclopedia, article

"Diatessaron." For the literature, see as above, and the supplementary

volume of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, pp. 33-35. Tatian's Address to the

Greeks may be found in vol. ii. Ante-Nicene Fathers, pp. 65-83.

[495] For full titles of these volumes, see Schaff, as above.

[496] The letter of Eusebius to Caprianus is given by C. R. Gregory

(Prolegomena to Tischendorf's eighth edition, part i. pp. 143-153),

together with a full list of the sections arranged under the separate

canons. The numbers signify as follows:-- 1. In all four Gospels, 71.

2. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, 111. 3. In Matthew, Luke, John, 22. 4. In

Matthew, Mark, John, 26. 5. In Matthew, Luke, 82. 6. In Matthew, Mark,

47. 7. In Matthew, John, 7. 8. In Luke, Mark, 14. 9. In Luke, John, 21.

10. In one Gospel: Matthew, 62; Mark, 21; Luke, 71; John, 97.

[497] For lists of Harmonies, see Schaff, History of the Christian

Church, rev. ed. vol. i. pp. 575, 576; Gardiner, Harmony, pp.

xxxiv.-xxxvii.; Robinson, Harmony, revised by Riddle, pp. ix, x. Each

of these lists contains references to older authors and their lists.

See also Smith, Bible Dictionary, Am. ed. (Hackett and Abbot) ii. pp.

950, 960.

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Translator's Introductory Notice.

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In the remarkable work known as his Retractations, Augustin makes a

brief statement on the subject of this treatise on the Harmony of the

Evangelists. The sixteenth chapter of the second book of that memorable

review of his literary career, contains corrections of certain points

on which he believed that he had not been sufficiently accurate in

these discussions. In the same passage he informs us that this treatise

was undertaken during the years in which he was occupied with his great

work on the Trinity, and that, breaking in upon the task which had been

making gradual progress under his hand, he wrought continuously at this

new venture until it was finished. Its composition is assigned to about

the year 400 A.D. The date is determined in the following manner: In

the first book there is a sentence (� 27) which appears to indicate

that, by the time when Augustin engaged himself with this effort, the

destruction of the idols of the old religion was being carried out

under express imperial authority. No law of that kind, however,

affecting Africa, seems to be found expressed previous to those to

which he refers at the close of the eighteenth book of the City of God.

There he gives us to understand that such measures were put in force in

Carthage, under Gaudentius and Jovius, the associates of the Emperor

Honorius, and states that for the space of nearly thirty years from

that time the Christian religion made advances large enough to arrest

general attention. Before that period, which must have been about the

year 399, the idols could not be destroyed, as Augustin elsewhere

indicates (Serm. lxii. 11, n. 17), but with the consent of the parties

to whom they belonged. These considerations are taken to fix the

composition of this work to a date not earlier than the close of 399

A.D.

Among Augustin's numerous theological productions, this one takes rank

with the most toilsome and exhaustive. We find him expressing himself

to that effect now and again, when he has occasion to allude to it.

Thus, in the 112th Tractate on John (n. i), he calls it a laborious

piece of literature; and in the 117th Tractate on the same evangelist,

he speaks of the themes here dealt with as matters which were discussed

with the utmost painstaking.

Its great object is to vindicate the Gospel against the critical

assaults of the heathen. Paganism, having tried persecution as its

first weapon, and seen it fail, attempted next to discredit the new

faith by slandering its doctrine, impeaching its history, and attacking

with special persistency the veracity of the Gospel writers. In this it

was aided by some of Augustin's heretical antagonists, who endeavoured

at times to establish a conspicuous inconsistency between the Jewish

Scriptures and the Christian, and at times to prove the several

sections of the New Testament to be at variance with each other. Many

alleged that the original Gospels had received considerable additions

of a spurious character. And it was a favorite method of argumentation,

adopted both by heathen and by Manich�an adversaries, to urge that the

evangelical historians contradicted each other. Thus, in the present

treatise (i. 7), Augustin speaks of this matter of the discrepancies

between the Evangelists as the palmary argument wielded by his

opponents. Hence, as elsewhere he sought to demonstrate the congruity

of the Old Testament with the New, he set himself here to exonerate

Christianity from the charge of any defect of harmony, whether in the

facts recorded or in the order of their narration, between its four

fundamental historical documents.

The plan of the work is laid out in four great divisions. In the first

book, he refutes those who asserted that Christ was only the wisest

among men, and who aimed at detracting from the authority of the

Gospels, by insisting on the absence of any written compositions

proceeding from the hand of Christ Himself, and by affirming that the

disciples went beyond what had been his own teaching both on the

subject of His divinity, and on the duty of abandoning the worship of

the gods. In the second, he enters upon a careful examination of

Matthew's Gospel, on to the record of the supper, comparing it with

Mark, Luke, and John, and exhibiting the perfect harmony subsisting

between them. In the third, he demonstrates the same consistency

between the four Evangelists, from the account of the supper on to the

end. And in the fourth, he subjects to a similar investigation those

passages in Mark, Luke, and John, which have no proper parallels in

Matthew.

For the discharge of a task like this, Augustin was gifted with much,

but he also lacked much. The resources of a noble and penetrating

intellect, profound spiritual insight, and reverent love for Scripture,

formed high qualifications at his command. But he was deficient in

exact scholarship. Thoroughly versed in Latin literature, as is evinced

here by the happy notices of Ennius, Cicero, Lucan, and others of its

great writers, he knew little Greek, and no Hebrew. He refers more than

once in the present treatise to his ignorance of the original language

of the Old Testament; and while his knowledge of that of the New was

probably not so unserviceable as has often been supposed, instances

like that in which he solves the apparent difficulty in the two

burdens, mentioned in Gal. vi., without alluding to the distinction

between the Greek words, make it sufficiently plain that it was not at

least his invariable habit to prosecute these studies with the original

in his view. Hence we find him missing many explanations which would at

once have suggested themselves, had he not so implicitly followed the

imperfect versions of the sacred text.

An analysis of the contents of the work might show much that is of

interest to the Biblical critic. Principles elsewhere theoretically

enunciated are seen here in their free application. In some respects,

this effort is one of a more severely scientific character than is

often the case with Augustin. It displays much less digression than is

customary with him. The tendency to extravagant allegorizing is also

less frequently indulged in, although it does come to the surface at

times, as in the notable example of the interpretation of the names

Leah and Rachel. His inordinate dependence upon the Septuagint,

however, is as broadly marked here as anywhere. As he sometimes

indicates an inclination to accept the story of Aristeas, in this

composition he almost goes the length of claiming a special inspiration

for these translators. On the other hand, in many passages we have the

privilege of seeing his resolve to be no uncritical expositor. He

pauses often to chronicle varieties of reading, sometimes in the Latin

text and sometimes in the Greek. Thus he notices the occurrence of

Lebb�us for Thadd�us, of Dalmanutha for Magedan, and the like, and

mentions how some codices read woman for maid, in the sentence, The

maid is not dead, but sleepeth (Matt. ix. 24).

His principles of harmonizing are ordinarily characterized by

simplicity and good sense. In general, he surmounts the difficulty of

what may seem at first sight discordant versions of one incident, by

supposing different instances of the same circumstances, or repeated

utterances of the same words. He holds emphatically by the position,

that wherever it is possible to believe two similar incidents to have

taken place, no contradiction can legitimately be alleged, although no

Evangelist may relate them both together. All merely verbal variations

in the records of the same occurrence he regards as matters of too

little consequence to create any serious perplexity to the student

whose aim is honestly to reach the sense intended. Such narratives as

those of the storm upon the lake, the healing of the centurion's

servant, and the denials of Peter, furnish good examples of his method,

and of the fair and fearless spirit of his inquiry. And however

unsuccessful we may now judge some of his endeavours, when we consider

the comparative poverty of his materials, and the untrodden field which

he essayed to search, we shall not deny to this treatise the merit of

grandeur in original conception, and exemplary faithfulness in actual

execution.

S. D. F. S.

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the harmony of the gospels.

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Book I.

The treatise opens with a short statement on the subject of the

authority of the evangelists, their number, their order, and the

different plans of their narratives. Augustin then prepares for the

discussion of the questions relating to their harmony, by joining issue

in this book with those who raise a difficulty in the circumstance that

Christ has left no writing of His own, or who falsely allege that

certain books were composed by Him on the arts of magic. He also meets

the objections of those who, in opposition to the evangelical teaching,

assert that the disciples of Christ at once ascribed more to their

Master than He really was, when they affirmed that He was God, and

inculcated what they had not been instructed in by Him, when they

interdicted the worship of the gods. Against these antagonists he

vindicates the teaching of the apostles, by appealing to the utterances

of the prophets, and by showing that the God of Israel was to be the

sole object of worship, who also, although He was the only Deity to

whom acceptance was denied in former times by the Romans, and that for

the very reason that He prohibited them from worshipping other gods

along with Himself, has now in the end made the empire of Rome subject

to His name, and among all nations has broken their idols in pieces

through the preaching of the gospel, as He had promised by His prophets

that the event should be.

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Chapter I.--On the Authority of the Gospels.

1. In the entire number of those divine records which are contained in

the sacred writings, the gospel deservedly stands pre-eminent. For what

the law and the prophets aforetime announced as destined to come to

pass, is exhibited in the gospel in its realization [498] and

fulfilment. The first preachers of this gospel were the apostles, who

beheld our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in person when He was yet

present in the flesh. And not only did these [499] men keep in

remembrance the words heard from His lips, and the deeds wrought by Him

beneath their eyes; but they were also careful, when the duty of

preaching the gospel was laid upon them, to make mankind acquainted

with those divine and memorable occurrences which took place at a

period antecedent to the formation of their own connection with Him in

the way of discipleship, which belonged also to the time of His

nativity, His infancy, or His youth, and with regard to which they were

able to institute exact inquiry and to obtain information, either at

His own hand or at the hands of His parents or other parties, on the

ground of the most reliable intimations and the most trustworthy

testimonies. Certain of them also--namely, Matthew and John--gave to

the world, in their respective books, a written account of all those

matters which it seemed needful to commit to writing concerning Him.

2. And to preclude the supposition that, in what concerns the

apprehension and proclamation of the gospel, it is a matter of any

consequence whether the enunciation comes by men who were actual

followers of this same Lord here when He manifested Himself in the

flesh and had the company of His disciples attendant on Him, or by

persons who with due credit received facts with which they became

acquainted in a trustworthy manner through the instrumentality of these

former, divine providence, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, has

taken care that certain of those also who were nothing more than

followers of the first apostles should have authority given them not

only to preach the gospel, but also to compose an account of it in

writing. I refer to Mark and Luke. All those other individuals,

however, who have attempted or dared to offer a written record of the

acts of the Lord or of the apostles, failed to commend themselves in

their own times as men of the character which would induce the Church

to yield them its confidence, and to admit their compositions to the

canonical authority of the Holy Books. And this was the case not merely

because they were persons who could make no rightful claim to have

credit given them in their narrations, but also because in a deceitful

manner they introduced into their writings certain matters which are

condemned at once by the catholic and apostolic rule of faith, and by

sound doctrine. [500]

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[498] Reading redditum. Four mss. give revelatum = as brought to

light.--Migne.

[499] Instead of Qui non solum, as above, many mss. read Cujus,

etc.--Migne.

[500] [The character of the Apocryphal Gospels is obvious. The

reference of Luke (i. 1) is probably to fragmentary records, now lost.

Comp. below Book iv. chap. 8.--R.]

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Chapter II.--On the Order of the Evangelists, and the Principles on

Which They Wrote.

3. Now, those four evangelists whose names have gained the most

remarkable circulation [501] over the whole world, and whose number has

been fixed as four,--it may be for the simple reason that there are

four divisions of that world through the universal length of which

they, by their number as by a kind of mystical sign, indicated the

advancing extension of the Church of Christ,--are believed to have

written in the order which follows: first Matthew, then Mark, thirdly

Luke, lastly John. Hence, too, [it would appear that] these had one

order determined among them with regard to the matters of their

personal knowledge and their preaching [of the gospel], but a different

order in reference to the task of giving the written narrative. As far,

indeed, as concerns the acquisition of their own knowledge and the

charge of preaching, those unquestionably came first in order who were

actually followers of the Lord when He was present in the flesh, and

who heard Him speak and saw Him act; and [with a commission received]

from His lips they were despatched to preach the gospel. But as

respects the task of composing that record of the gospel which is to be

accepted as ordained by divine authority, there were (only) two,

belonging to the number of those whom the Lord chose before the

passover, that obtained places,--namely, the first place and the last.

For the first place in order was held by Matthew, and the last by John.

And thus the remaining two, who did not belong to the number referred

to, but who at the same time had become followers of the Christ who

spoke in these others, were supported on either side by the same, like

sons who were to be embraced, and who in this way were set in the midst

between these twain.

4. Of these four, it is true, only Matthew is reckoned to have written

in the Hebrew language; the others in Greek. And however they may

appear to have kept each of them a certain order of narration proper to

himself, this certainly is not to be taken as if each individual writer

chose to write in ignorance of what his predecessor had done, or left

out as matters about which there was no information things which

another nevertheless is discovered to have recorded. But the fact is,

that just as they received each of them the gift of inspiration, they

abstained from adding to their several labours any superfluous conjoint

compositions. For Matthew is understood to have taken it in hand to

construct the record of the incarnation of the Lord according to the

royal lineage, and to give an account of most part of His deeds and

words as they stood in relation to this present life of men. Mark

follows him closely, and looks like his attendant and epitomizer. [502]

For in his narrative he gives nothing in concert with John apart from

the others: by himself separately, he has little to record; in

conjunction with Luke, as distinguished from the rest, he has still

less; but in concord with Matthew, he has a very large number of

passages. Much, too, he narrates in words almost numerically and

identically the same as those used by Matthew, where the agreement is

either with that evangelist alone, or with him in connection with the

rest. On the other hand, Luke appears to have occupied himself rather

with the priestly lineage and character [503] of the Lord. For although

in his own way he carries the descent back to David, what he has

followed is not the royal pedigree, but the line of those who were not

kings. That genealogy, too, he has brought to a point in Nathan the son

of David, [504] which person likewise was no king. It is not thus,

however, with Matthew. For in tracing the lineage along through Solomon

the king, [505] he has pursued with strict regularity the succession of

the other kings; and in enumerating these, he has also conserved that

mystical number of which we shall speak hereafter.

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[501] Notissimi.

[502] [This opinion is not only unwarranted, since Mark shows greater

signs of originality, but it has been prejudicial to the correct

appreciation of the Gospel of Mark. The verbal identity of Matthew and

Mark in parallel passages is far less than commonly supposed.--R.]

[503] Personam.

[504] Luke iii. 31.

[505] Matt. i. 6.

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Chapter III.--Of the Fact that Matthew, Together with Mark, Had

Specially in View the Kingly Character of Christ, Whereas Luke Dealt

with the Priestly.

5. For the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one true King and the one true

Priest, the former to rule us, and the latter to make expiation for us,

has shown us how His own figure bore these two parts together, which

were only separately commended [to notice] among the Fathers. [506]

This becomes apparent if (for example) we look to that inscription

which was affixed to His cross--"King of the Jews:" in connection also

with which, and by a secret instinct, Pilate replied, "What I have

written, I have written." [507] For it had been said aforetime in the

Psalms, "Destroy not the writing of the title." [508] The same becomes

evident, so far as the part of priest is concerned, if we have regard

to what He has taught us concerning offering and receiving. For thus it

is that He sent us beforehand a prophecy [509] respecting Himself,

which runs thus, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of

Melchisedek." [510] And in many other testimonies of the divine

Scriptures, Christ appears both as King and as Priest. Hence, also,

even David himself, whose son He is, not without good reason, more

frequently declared to be than he is said to be Abraham's son, and whom

Matthew and Luke have both alike held by,--the one viewing him as the

person from whom, through Solomon, His lineage can be traced down, and

the other taking him for the person to whom, through Nathan, His

genealogy can be carried up,--did represent the part of a priest,

although he was patently a king, when he ate the shew-bread. For it was

not lawful for any one to eat that, save the priests only. [511] To

this it must be added that Luke is the only one who mentions how Mary

was discovered by the angel, and how she was related to Elisabeth,

[512] who was the wife of Zacharias the priest. And of this Zacharias

the same evangelist has recorded the fact, that the woman whom he had

for wife was one of the daughters of Aaron, which is to say she

belonged to the tribe of the priests. [513]

6. Whereas, then, Matthew had in view the kingly character, and Luke

the priestly, they have at the same time both set forth pre-eminently

the humanity of Christ: for it was according to His humanity that

Christ was made both King and Priest. To Him, too, God gave the throne

of His father David, in order that of His kingdom there should be none

end. [514] And this was done with the purpose that there might be a

mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, [515] to make

intercession for us. Luke, on the other hand, had no one connected with

him to act as his summarist in the way that Mark was attached to

Matthew. And it may be that this is not without a certain solemn

significance. [516] For it is the right of kings not to miss the

obedient following of attendants; and hence the evangelist, who had

taken it in hand to give an account of the kingly character of Christ,

had a person attached to him as his associate who was in some fashion

to follow in his steps. But inasmuch as it was the priest's want to

enter all alone into the holy of holies, in accordance with that

principle, Luke, whose object contemplated the priestly office of

Christ, did not have any one to come after him as a confederate, who

was meant in some way to serve as an epitomizer of his narrative. [517]

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[506] Some editions insert antiquos, the ancient Fathers; but the mss.

omit it.--Migne.

[507] John xix. 19-22.

[508] Ps. lxxv. 1.

[509] Two mss. give prophetam ("prophet") instead of prophetiam

("prophecy").--Migne.

[510] Ps. cx. 4.

[511] 1 Sam. xxi. 6; Matt. xii. 3.

[512] The reading supported by the manuscripts is: Mariam commemorat ab

Angelo manifestatam cognatam fuisse Elisabeth. It is sometimes given

thus: Mariam commemorat manifeste cognatam, etc. = mentions that Mary

was clearly related to Elizabeth.

[513] Luke i. 36, 5.

[514] Luke i. 32.

[515] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[516] Sine aliquo sacramento.

[517] [Here we have a mystical meaning attached to an opinion

unwarranted by facts. Yet Augustin's mystical treatment of the

"Synoptic problem" is, with all its faults, not more fanciful and

extravagant than some of the modern "critical" solutions of the same

problem.--R.]

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Chapter IV.--Of the Fact that John Undertook the Exposition of Christ's

Divinity.

7. These three evangelists, however, were for the most part engaged

with those things which Christ did through the vehicle of the flesh of

man, and after the temporal fashion. [518] But John, on the other hand,

had in view that true divinity of the Lord in which He is the Father's

equal, and directed his efforts above all to the setting forth of the

divine nature in his Gospel in such a way as he believed to be adequate

to men's needs and notions. [519] Therefore he is borne to loftier

heights, in which he leaves the other three far behind him; so that,

while in them you see men who have their conversation in a certain

manner with the man Christ on earth, in him you perceive one who has

passed beyond the cloud in which the whole earth is wrapped, and who

has reached the liquid heaven from which, with clearest and steadiest

mental eye, he is able to look upon God the Word, who was in the

beginning with God, and by whom all things were made. [520] And there,

too, he can recognise Him who was made flesh in order that He might

dwell amongst us; [521] [that Word of whom we say,] that He assumed the

flesh, not that He was changed into the flesh. For had not this

assumption of the flesh been effected in such a manner as at the same

time to conserve the unchangeable Divinity, such a word as this could

never have been spoken,--namely, "I and the Father are one." [522] For

surely the Father and the flesh are not one. And the same John is also

the only one who has recorded that witness which the Lord gave

concerning Himself, when He said: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the

Father also;" and, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me;" [523]

"that they may be one, even as we are one;" [524] and, "Whatsoever the

Father doeth, these same things doeth the Son likewise." [525] And

whatever other statements there may be to the same effect, calculated

to betoken, to those who are possessed of right understanding, that

divinity of Christ in which He is the Father's equal, of all these we

might almost say that we are indebted for their introduction into the

Gospel narrative to John alone. For he is like one who has drunk in the

secret of His divinity more richly and somehow more familiarly than

others, as if he drew it from the very bosom of his Lord on which it

was his wont to recline when He sat at meat. [526]

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[518] Temporaliter.

[519] Quantum inter homines sufficere credidit.

[520] John i. 1, 3.

[521] John i. 14.

[522] John x. 30.

[523] John xiv. 9, 10.

[524] John xvii. 22.

[525] John v. 19.

[526] John xiii. 23.

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Chapter V.--Concerning the Two Virtues, of Which John is Conversant

with the Contemplative, the Other Evangelists with the Active.

8. Moreover, there are two several virtues (or talents) which have been

proposed to the mind of man. Of these, the one is the active, and the

other the contemplative: the one being that whereby the way is taken,

and the other that whereby the goal is reached; [527] the one that by

which men labour in order that the heart may be purified to see God,

and the other that by which men are disengaged [528] and God is seen.

Thus the former of these two virtues is occupied with the precepts for

the right exercise of the temporal life, whereas the latter deals with

the doctrine of that life which is everlasting. In this way, also, the

one operates, the other rests; for the former finds its sphere in the

purging of sins, the latter moves in the light [529] of the purged. And

thus, again, in this mortal life the one is engaged with the work of a

good conversation; while the other subsists rather on faith, and is

seen only in the person of the very few, and through the glass darkly,

and only in part in a kind of vision of the unchangeable truth. [530]

Now these two virtues are understood to be presented emblematically in

the instance of the two wives of Jacob. Of these I have discoursed

already up to the measure of my ability, and as fully as seemed to be

appropriate to my task, (in what I have written) in opposition to

Faustus the Manich�an. [531] For Lia, indeed, by interpretation means

"labouring," [532] whereas Rachel signifies "the first principle seen."

[533] And by this it is given us to understand, if one will only attend

carefully to the matter, that those three evangelists who, with

pre-eminent fulness, have handled the account of the Lord's temporal

doings and those of His sayings which were meant to bear chiefly upon

the moulding of the manners of the present life, were conversant with

that active virtue; and that John, on the other hand, who narrates

fewer by far of the Lord's doings, but records with greater carefulness

and with larger wealth of detail the words which He spoke, and most

especially those discourses which were intended to introduce us to the

knowledge of the unity of the Trinity and the blessedness of the life

eternal, formed his plan and framed his statement with a view to

commend the contemplative virtue to our regard.

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[527] Illa qua itur, ista qua pervenitur.

[528] Qua vacatur.

[529] Reading lumine; but one of the Vatican mss. gives in

illuminatione, in the enlightenment of the purged.

[530] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

[531] Book xxii. 52.

[532] Laborans.

[533] Visum principium. In various editions it is given as visus

principium. The mss. have visum principium. In the passage referred to

in the treatise against Faustus the Manich�an, Augustin appends the

explanation, sive verbum ex quo videtur principium, = the first

principle seen, or the word by which the first principle is seen. The

etymologies on which Augustin proceeds may perhaps be these: for Leah,

the Hebrew verb Laah, to be wearied (l'h); and for Rachel the Hebrew

forms Raah = see, and Chalal = begin (r'h ,chll). For another example

of extravagant allegorizing on the two wives of Jacob, see Justin

Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho, chap. cxl.--Tr.

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Chapter VI.--Of the Four Living Creatures in the Apocalypse, Which Have

Been Taken by Some in One Application, and by Others in Another, as Apt

Figures of the Four Evangelists.

9. For these reasons, it also appears to me, that of the various

parties who have interpreted the living creatures in the Apocalypse as

significant of the four evangelists, those who have taken the lion to

point to Matthew, the man to Mark, the calf to Luke, and the eagle to

John, have made a more reasonable application of the figures than those

who have assigned the man to Matthew, the eagle to Mark, and the lion

to John. [534] For, in forming their particular idea of the matter,

these latter have chosen to keep in view simply the beginnings of the

books, and not the full design of the several evangelists in its

completeness, which was the matter that should, above all, have been

thoroughly examined. For surely it is with much greater propriety that

the one who has brought under our notice most largely the kingly

character of Christ, should be taken to be represented by the lion.

Thus is it also that we find the lion mentioned in conjunction with the

royal tribe itself, in that passage of the Apocalypse where it is said,

"The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed." [535] For in Matthew's

narrative the magi are recorded to have come from the east to inquire

after the King, and to worship Him whose birth was notified to them by

the star. Thus, too, Herod, who himself also was a king, is [said there

to be] afraid of the royal child, and to put so many little children to

death in order to make sure that the one might be slain. [536] Again,

that Luke is intended under the figure of the calf, in reference to the

pre-eminent sacrifice made by the priest, has been doubted by neither

of the two [sets of interpreters]. For in that Gospel the narrator's

account commences with Zacharias the priest. In it mention is also made

of the relationship between Mary and Elisabeth. [537] In it, too, it is

recorded that the ceremonies proper to the earliest priestly service

were attended to in the case of the infant Christ; [538] and a careful

examination brings a variety of other matters under our notice in this

Gospel, by which it is made apparent that Luke's object was to deal

with the part of the priest. In this way it follows further, that Mark,

who has set himself neither to give an account of the kingly lineage,

nor to expound anything distinctive of the priesthood, whether on the

subject of the relationship or on that of the consecration, and who at

the same time comes before us as one who handles the things which the

man Christ did, appears to be indicated simply under the figure of the

man among those four living creatures. But again, those three living

creatures, whether lion, man, or calf, have their course upon this

earth; and in like manner, those three evangelists occupy themselves

chiefly with the things which Christ did in the flesh, and with the

precepts which He delivered to men, who also bear the burden of the

flesh, for their instruction in the rightful exercise of this mortal

life. Whereas John, on the other hand, soars like an eagle above the

clouds of human infirmity, and gazes upon the light of the unchangeable

truth with those keenest and steadiest eyes of the heart. [539]

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[534] [The latter application is that of Iren�us (Adv. H�r. iii.); but

the prevalent application is that of Jerome, which is accepted in

medi�val art. It differs from that of Augustin (see table below). As a

curious illustration of the fanciful character of such interpretations,

the reader may consult the following table, which gives the order of

the following living creatures in Rev. iv. 7, with some of the leading

"applications."

Rev. iv. 7. Iren�us. Augustin. Jerome. Lange,

Stier.

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--------------------- 1. Lion... John. Matthew.

Mark. Mark. 2. Calf... Luke. Luke. Luke.

Matthew. 3. Man... Matthew. Mark. Matthew. Luke.

4. Eagle... Mark. John. John. John.

No doubt further variations could be discovered. Comp. Schaff's Church

History, rev. ed. vol. i. 585-589.--R.]

[535] Rev. v. 5.

[536] Matt. ii. 1-18.

[537] Luke i. 5, 36.

[538] Luke ii. 22-24.

[539] See also Tract. 36, on John i. 5. [This figure of Augustin has

controlled all the subsequent symbolism respecting the Evangelist John,

and has been constantly cited by commentators.--R.]

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Chapter VII.--A Statement of Augustin's Reason for Undertaking This

Work on the Harmony of the Evangelists, and an Example of the Method in

Which He Meets Those Who Allege that Christ Wrote Nothing Himself, and

that His Disciples Made an Unwarranted Affirmation in Proclaiming Him

to Be God.

10. Those sacred chariots of the Lord, [540] however, in which He is

borne throughout the earth and brings the peoples under His easy yoke

and His light burden, are assailed with calumnious charges by certain

persons who, in impious vanity or in ignorant temerity, think to rob of

their credit as veracious historians those teachers by whose

instrumentality the Christian religion has been disseminated all the

world over, and through whose efforts it has yielded fruits so

plentiful that unbelievers now scarcely dare so much as to mutter their

slanders in private among themselves, kept in check by the faith of the

Gentiles and by the devotion of all the peoples. Nevertheless, inasmuch

as they still strive by their calumnious disputations to keep some from

making themselves acquainted with the faith, and thus prevent them from

becoming believers, while they also endeavour to the utmost of their

power to excite agitations among others who have already attained to

belief, and thereby give them trouble; and further, as there are some

brethren who, without detriment to their own faith, have a desire to

ascertain what answer can be given to such questions, either for the

advantage of their own knowledge or for the purpose of refuting the

vain utterances of their enemies, with the inspiration and help of the

Lord our God (and would that it might prove profitable for the

salvation of such men), we have undertaken in this work to demonstrate

the errors or the rashness of those who deem themselves able to prefer

charges, the subtilty of which is at least sufficiently observable,

against those four different books of the gospel which have been

written by these four several evangelists. And in order to carry out

this design to a successful conclusion, we must prove that the writers

in question do not stand in any antagonism to each other. For those

adversaries are in the habit of adducing this as the palmary [541]

allegation in all their vain objections, namely, that the evangelists

are not in harmony with each other.

11. But we must first discuss a matter which is apt to present a

difficulty to the minds of some. I refer to the question why the Lord

has written nothing Himself, and why He has thus left us to the

necessity of accepting the testimony of other persons who have prepared

records of His history. For this is what those parties--the pagans more

than any [542] --allege when they lack boldness enough to impeach or

blaspheme the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and when they allow Him--only

as a man, however--to have been possessed of the most distinguished

wisdom. In making that admission, they at the same time assert that the

disciples claimed more for their Master than He really was; so much

more indeed that they even called Him the Son of God, and the Word of

God, by whom all things were made, and affirmed that He and God are

one. And in the same way they dispose of all other kindred passages in

the epistles of the apostles, in the light of which we have been taught

that He is to be worshipped as one God with the Father. For they are of

opinion that He is certainly to be honoured as the wisest of men; but

they deny that He is to be worshipped as God.

12. Wherefore, when they put the question why He has not written in His

own person, it would seem as if they were prepared to believe regarding

Him whatever He might have written concerning Himself, but not what

others may have given the world to know with respect to His life,

according to the measure of their own judgment. Well, I ask them in

turn why, in the case of certain of the noblest of their own

philosophers, they have accepted the statements which their disciples

left in the records they have composed, while these sages themselves

have given us no written accounts of their own lives? For Pythagoras,

than whom Greece in those days [543] did not possess any more

illustrious personage in the sphere of that contemplative virtue, is

believed to have written absolutely nothing, whether on the subject of

his own personal history or on any other theme whatsoever. And as to

Socrates, to whom, on the other hand, they have adjudged a position of

supremacy above all others in that active virtue by which the moral

life is trained, so that they do not hesitate also to aver that he was

even pronounced to be the wisest of men by the testimony of their deity

Apollo,--it is indeed true that he handled the fables of �sop in some

few short verses, and thus made use of words and numbers of his own in

the task of rendering the themes of another. But this was all. And so

far was he from having the desire to write anything himself, that he

declared that he had done even so much only because he was constrained

by the imperial will of his demon, as Plato, the noblest of all his

disciples, tells us. That was a work, also, in which he sought to set

forth in fair form not so much his own thoughts, as rather the ideas of

another. What reasonable ground, therefore, have they for believing,

with regard to those sages, all that their disciples have committed to

record in respect of their history, while at the same time they refuse

to credit in the case of Christ what His disciples have written on the

subject of His life? And all the more may we thus argue, when we see

how they admit that all other men have been excelled by Him in the

matter of wisdom, although they decline to acknowledge Him to be God.

Is it, indeed, the case that those persons whom they do not hesitate to

allow to have been by far His inferiors, have had the faculty of making

disciples who can be trusted in all that concerns the narrative of

their careers, and that He failed in that capacity? But if that is a

most absurd statement to venture upon, then in all that belongs to the

history of that Person to whom they grant the honour of wisdom, they

ought to believe not merely what suits their own notions, but what they

read in the narratives of those who learned from this sage Himself

those various facts which they have left on record on the subject of

His life.

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[540] Has Domini sanctas quadrigas.

[541] Reading either palmam su� vanitatis objicere, or with several

mss. palmare, etc.

[542] Vel maxime pagani.

[543] Six mss. omit the tunc, at that time.--Migne.

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Chapter VIII.--Of the Question Why, If Christ is Believed to Have Been

the Wisest of Men on the Testimony of Common Narrative Report, He

Should Not Be Believed to Be God on the Testimony of the Superior

Report of Preaching.

13. Besides this, they ought to tell us by what means they have

succeeded in acquiring their knowledge of this fact that He was the

wisest of men, or how it has had the opportunity of reaching their

ears. If they have been made acquainted with it simply by current

report, then is it the case that common report forms a more trustworthy

informant [544] on the subject of His history than those disciples of

His who, as they have gone and preached of Him, have disseminated the

same report like a penetrating savour throughout the whole world? [545]

In fine, they ought to prefer the one kind of report to the other, and

believe that account of His life which is the superior of the two. For

this report, [546] indeed, which is spread abroad with a wonderful

clearness from that Church catholic [547] at whose extension through

the whole world those persons are so astonished, prevails in an

incomparable fashion over the unsubstantial rumours with which men like

them occupy themselves. This report, furthermore, which carries with it

such weight and such currency, [548] that in dread of it they can only

mutter their anxious and feeble snatches of paltry objections within

their own breasts, as if they were more afraid now of being heard than

wishful to receive credit, proclaims Christ to be the only-begotten Son

of God, and Himself God, [549] by whom all things were made. If,

therefore, they choose report as their witness, why does not their

choice fix on this special report, which is so pre-eminently lustrous

in its remarkable definiteness? And if they desire the evidence of

writings, why do they not take those evangelical writings which excel

all others in their commanding authority? On our side, indeed, we

accept those statements about their deities which are offered at once

in their most ancient writings and by most current report. But if these

deities are to be considered proper objects for reverence, why then do

they make them the subject of laughter in the theatres? And if, on the

other hand, they are proper objects for laughter, the occasion for such

laughter must be all the greater when they are made the objects of

worship in the theatres. It remains for us to look upon those persons

as themselves minded to be witnesses concerning Christ, who, by

speaking what they know not, divest themselves of the merit of knowing

what they speak about. Or if, again, they assert that they are

possessed of any books which they can maintain to have been written by

Him, they ought to produce them for our inspection. For assuredly those

books (if there are such) must be most profitable and most wholesome,

seeing they are the productions of one whom they acknowledge to have

been the wisest of men. If, however, they are afraid to produce them,

it must be because they are of evil tendency; but if they are evil,

then the wisest of men cannot have written them. They acknowledge

Christ, however, to be the wisest of men, and consequently Christ

cannot have written any such thing.

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[544] Instead of de illo nuntia fama est, fourteen mss. give de illo

fama nuntiata est = is it a more trustworthy report that has been

announced.--Migne.

[545] Quibus eum pr�dicantibus ipsa per totum mundum fama fragravit?

[546] Fama.

[547] De catholica ecclesia.

[548] Celebris.

[549] The words stand, as above, in the great majority of mss.: tam

celebris, ut eam timendo isti trepidas et tepidas contradictiunculas in

sinu suo rodant, jam plus metuentes audiri quam volentes credi, Filium

Dei Unigenitum et Deum pr�dicat Christum? In some mss. and editions the

sense is altered by inserting est after celebris, and substituting

nolentes for volentes, and pr�dicari for pr�dicat; so that it becomes =

that report is of such distinguished currency, that in dread of it they

can only mutter, etc....as now rather fearing to be heard than refusing

to admit the belief that Christ is proclaimed to be the only-begotten

Son of God, etc. See Migne.--Tr.

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Chapter IX.--Of Certain Persons Who Pretend that Christ Wrote Books on

the Arts of Magic.

14. But, indeed, these persons rise to such a pitch of folly as to

allege that the books which they consider to have been written by Him

contain the arts by which they think He wrought those miracles, the

fame of which has become prevalent in all quarters. And this fancy of

theirs betrays what they really love, and what their aims really are.

For thus, indeed, they show us how they entertain this opinion that

Christ was the wisest of men only for the reason that He possessed the

knowledge of I know not what illicit arts, which are justly condemned,

not merely by Christian discipline, but even by the administration of

earthly government itself. And, in good sooth, if there are people who

affirm that they have read books of this nature composed by Christ,

then why do they not perform with their own hand some such works as

those which so greatly excite their wonder when wrought by Him, by

taking advantage of the information which they have derived from these

books?

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Chapter X.--Of Some Who are Mad Enough to Suppose that the Books Were

Inscribed with the Names of Peter and Paul.

15. Nay more, as by divine judgment, some of those who either believe,

or wish to have it believed, that Christ wrote matter of that

description, have even wandered so far into error as to allege that

these same books bore on their front, in the form of epistolary

superscription, a designation addressed to Peter and Paul. And it is

quite possible that either the enemies of the name of Christ, or

certain parties who thought that they might impart to this kind of

execrable arts the weight of authority drawn from so glorious a name,

may have written things of that nature under the name of Christ and the

apostles. But in such most deceitful audacity they have been so utterly

blinded as simply to have made themselves fitting objects for laughter,

even with young people who as yet know Christian literature only in

boyish fashion, and rank merely in the grade of readers.

16. For when they made up their minds to represent Christ to have

written in such strain as that to His disciples, they bethought

themselves of those of His followers who might best be taken for the

persons to whom Christ might most readily be believed to have written,

as the individuals who had kept by Him on the most familiar terms of

friendship. And so Peter and Paul occurred to them, I believe, just

because in many places they chanced to see these two apostles

represented in pictures as both in company with Him. [550] For Rome, in

a specially honourable and solemn manner, [551] commends the merits of

Peter and of Paul, for this reason among others, namely, that they

suffered [martyrdom] on the same day. Thus to fall most completely into

error was the due desert of men who sought for Christ and His apostles

not in the holy writings, but on painted walls. Neither is it to be

wondered at, that these fiction-limners were misled by the painters.

[552] For throughout the whole period during which Christ lived in our

mortal flesh in fellowship with His disciples, Paul had never become

His disciple. Only after His passion, after His resurrection, after His

ascension, after the mission of the Holy Spirit from heaven, after many

Jews had been converted and had shown marvellous faith, after the

stoning of Stephen the deacon and martyr, and when Paul still bore the

name Saul, and was grievously persecuting those who had become

believers in Christ, did Christ call that man [by a voice] from heaven,

and made him His disciple and apostle. [553] How, then, is it possible

that Christ could have written those books which they wish to have it

believed that He did write before His death, and which were addressed

to Peter and Paul, as those among His disciples who had been most

intimate with Him, seeing that up to that date Paul had not yet become

a disciple of His at all?

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[550] Simul eos cum illo pictos viderent.

[551] The text gives diem celebrius solemniter, etc.; others give diem

celebrius et solemniter; and three mss. have diem celeberrimum

solemniter.--Migne.

[552] A pingentibus fingentes decepti sunt.

[553] Acts ix. 1-30.

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Chapter XI.--In Opposition to Those Who Foolishly Imagine that Christ

Converted the People to Himself by Magical Arts.

17. Moreover, let those who madly fancy that it was by the use of

magical arts that He was able to do the great things which He did, and

that it was by the practice of such rites that He made His name a

sacred thing to the peoples who were to be converted to Him, give their

attention to this question,--namely, whether by the exercise of magical

arts, and before He was born on this earth, He could also have filled

with the Holy Spirit those mighty prophets who aforetime declared those

very things concerning Him as things destined to come to pass, which we

can now read in their accomplishment in the gospel, and which we can

see in their present realization in the world. For surely, even if it

was by magical arts that He secured worship for Himself, and that, too,

after His death, it is not the case that He was a magician before He

was born. Nay, for the office of prophesying on the subject of His

coming, one nation had been most specially deputed; and the entire

administration of that commonwealth was ordained to be a prophecy of

this King who was to come, and who was to found a heavenly state [554]

drawn out of all nations.

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[554] Civitatem.

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Chapter XII.--Of the Fact that the God of the Jews, After the

Subjugation of that People, Was Still Not Accepted by the Romans,

Because His Commandment Was that He Alone Should Be Worshipped, and

Images Destroyed.

18. Furthermore, that Hebrew nation, which, as I have said, was

commissioned to prophesy of Christ, had no other God but one God, the

true God, who made heaven and earth, and all that therein is. Under His

displeasure they were ofttimes given into the power of their enemies.

And now, indeed, on account of their most heinous sin in putting Christ

to death, they have been thoroughly rooted out of Jerusalem itself,

which was the capital of their kingdom, and have been made subject to

the Roman empire. Now the Romans were in the habit of propitiating

[555] the deities of those nations whom they conquered by worshipping

these themselves, and they were accustomed to undertake the charge of

their sacred rites. But they declined to act on that principle with

regard to the God of the Hebrew nation, either when they made their

attack or when they reduced the people. I believe that they perceived

that, if they admitted the worship of this Deity, whose commandment was

that He only should be worshipped, and that images should be destroyed,

they would have to put away from them all those objects to which

formerly they had undertaken to do religious service, and by the

worship of which they believed their empire had grown. But in this the

falseness of their demons mightily deceived them. For surely they ought

to have apprehended the fact that it is only by the hidden will of the

true God, in whose hand resides the supreme power in all things, that

the kingdom was given them and has been made to increase, and that

their position was not due to the favour of those deities who, if they

could have wielded any influence whatever in that matter, would rather

have protected their own people from being over-mastered by the Romans,

or would have brought the Romans themselves into complete subjection to

them.

19. Certainly they cannot possibly affirm that the kind of piety and

manners exemplified by them became objects of love and choice on the

part of the gods of the nations which they conquered. They will never

make such an assertion, if they only recall their own early beginnings,

the asylum for abandoned criminals and the fratricide of Romulus. For

when Remus and Romulus established their asylum, with the intention

that whoever took refuge there, be the crime what it might be with

which he stood charged, should enjoy impunity in his deed, they did not

promulgate any precepts of penitence for bringing the minds of such

wretched men back to a right condition. By this bribe of impunity did

they not rather arm the gathered band of fearful fugitives against the

states to which they properly belonged, and the laws of which they

dreaded? Or when Romulus slew his brother, who had perpetrated no evil

against him, is it the case that his mind was bent on the vindication

of justice, and not on the acquisition of absolute power? And is it

true that the deities did take their delight in manners like these, as

if they were themselves enemies to their own states, in so far as they

favoured those who were the enemies of these communities? Nay rather,

neither did they by deserting them harm the one class, nor did they by

passing over to their side in any sense help the other. For they have

it not in their power to give kingship or to remove it. But that is

done by the one true God, according to His hidden counsel. And it is

not His mind to make those necessarily blessed to whom He may have

given an earthly kingdom, or to make those necessarily unhappy whom He

has deprived of that position. But He makes men blessed or wretched for

other reasons and by other means, and either by permission or by actual

gift distributes temporal and earthly kingdoms to whomsoever He

pleases, and for whatsoever period He chooses, according to the

fore-ordained order of the ages.

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[555] The text gives deos...colendos propitiare. Five mss. give

deos...colendo propitiare.--Migne.

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Chapter XIII.--Of the Question Why God Suffered the Jews to Be Reduced

to Subjection.

20. Hence also they cannot meet us fairly with this question: Why,

then, did the God of the Hebrews, whom you declare to be the supreme

and true God, not only not subdue the Romans under their power, but

even fail to secure those Hebrews themselves against subjugation by the

Romans? For there were open sins of theirs that went before them, and

on account of which the prophets so long time ago predicted that this

very thing would overtake them; and above all, the reason lay in the

fact, that in their impious fury they put Christ to death, in the

commission of which sin they were made blind [to the guilt of their

crime] through the deserts of other hidden transgressions. That His

sufferings also would be for the benefit of the Gentiles, was foretold

by the same prophetic testimony. Nor, in another point of view, did the

fact appear clearer, that the kingdom of that nation, and its temple,

and its priesthood, and its sacrificial system, and that mystical

unction which is called chrisma [556] in Greek, from which the name of

Christ takes its evident application, and on account of which that

nation was accustomed to speak of its kings as anointed ones, [557]

were ordained with the express object of prefiguring Christ, than has

the kindred fact become apparent, that after the resurrection of the

Christ who was put to death began to be preached unto the believing

Gentiles, all those things came to their end, all unrecognised as the

circumstance was, whether by the Romans, through whose victory, or by

the Jews, through whose subjugation, it was brought about that they did

thus reach their conclusion.

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[556] Chrism.

[557] Christos.

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Chapter XIV.--Of the Fact that the God of the Hebrews, Although the

People Were Conquered, Proved Himself to Be Unconquered, by

Overthrowing the Idols, and by Turning All the Gentiles to His Own

Service.

21. Here indeed we have a wonderful fact, which is not remarked by

those few pagans who have remained such,--namely, that this God of the

Hebrews who was offended by the conquered, and who was also denied

acceptance by the conquerors, is now preached and worshipped among all

nations. This is that God of Israel of whom the prophet spake so long

time since, when he thus addressed the people of God: "And He who

brought thee out, the God of Israel, shall be called (the God) of the

whole earth." [558] What was thus prophesied has been brought to pass

through the name of the Christ, who comes to men in the form of a

descendant of that very Israel who was the grandson of Abraham, with

whom the race of the Hebrews began. [559] For it was to this Israel

also that it was said, "In thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth

be blessed." [560] Thus it is shown that the God of Israel, the true

God who made heaven and earth, and who administers human affairs justly

and mercifully in such wise that neither does justice exclude mercy

with Him, nor does mercy hinder justice, was not overcome Himself when

His Hebrew people suffered their overthrow, in virtue of His permitting

the kingdom and priesthood of that nation to be seized and subverted by

the Romans. For now, indeed, by the might of this gospel of Christ, the

true King and Priest, the advent of which was prefigured by that

kingdom and priesthood, the God of Israel Himself is everywhere

destroying the idols of the nations. And, in truth, it was to prevent

that destruction that the Romans refused to admit the sacred rites of

this God in the way that they admitted those of the gods of the other

nations whom they conquered. Thus did He remove both kingdom and

priesthood from the prophetic nation, because He who was promised to

men through the agency of that people had already come. And by Christ

the King He has brought into subjection to His own name that Roman

empire by which the said nation was overcome; and by the strength and

devotion of Christian faith, He has converted it so as to effect a

subversion of those idols, the honour ascribed to which precluded His

worship from obtaining entrance.

22. I am of opinion that it was not by means of magical arts that

Christ, previous to His birth among men, brought it about that those

things which were destined to come to pass in the course of His

history, were pre-announced by so many prophets, and prefigured also by

the kingdom and priesthood established in a certain nation. For the

people who are connected with that now abolished kingdom, and who in

the wonderful providence of God are scattered throughout all lands,

have indeed remained without any unction from the true King and Priest;

in which anointing [561] the import of the name of Christ is plainly

discovered. But notwithstanding this, they still retain remnants of

some of their observances; while, on the other hand, not even in their

state of overthrow and subjugation have they accepted those Roman rites

which are connected with the worship of idols. Thus they still keep the

prophetic books as the witness of Christ; and in this way in the

documents of His enemies we find proof presented [562] of the truth of

this Christ who is the subject of prophecy. What, then, do these

unhappy men disclose themselves to be, by the unworthy method in which

they laud [563] the name of Christ? If anything relating to the

practice of magic has been written under His name, while the doctrine

of Christ is so vehemently antagonistic to such arts, these men ought

rather in the light of this fact to gather some idea of the greatness

of that name, by the addition of which even persons who live in

opposition to His precepts endeavour to dignify their nefarious

practices. For just as, in the course of the diverse errors of men,

many persons have set up their varied heresies against the truth under

the cover of His name, so the very enemies of Christ think that, for

the purposes of gaining acceptance for opinions which they propound in

opposition to the doctrine of Christ, they have no weight of authority

at their service unless they have the name of Christ.

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[558] Et qui eruit te, Deus Israel, univers� terr� vocabitur. Isa. liv.

5. [Compare the Hebrew, from which the Latin citation varies.--R.]

[559] In his Retractations (ii. 16) Augustin alludes to this sentence,

and says that the word Hebrews (Hebr�i) may be derived from Abraham, as

if the original form had been Abrah�i, but that it is more correct to

take it from Heber, so that Hebr�i is for Heber�i. He refers us also to

his discussion in the City of God, xvi. 11.

[560] Gen. xxviii. 14.

[561] Chrism.

[562] The text gives probetur veritas Christi, etc.; six mss. give

profertur veritas, etc.--Migne.

[563] Or adduce--male laudando.

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Chapter XV.--Of the Fact that the Pagans, When Constrained to Laud

Christ, Have Launched Their Insults Against His Disciples.

23. But what shall be said to this, if those vain eulogizers of Christ,

and those crooked slanderers of the Christian religion, lack the daring

to blaspheme Christ, for this particular reason that some of their

philosophers, as Porphyry of Sicily [564] has given us to understand in

his books, consulted their gods as to their response on the subject of

[the claims of] Christ, and were constrained by their own oracles to

laud Christ? Nor should that seem incredible. For we also read in the

Gospel that the demons confessed Him; [565] and in our prophets it is

written in this wise: "For the gods of the nations are demons." [566]

Thus it happens, then, that in order to avoid attempting aught in

opposition to the responses of their own deities, they turn their

blasphemies aside from Christ, and pour them forth against His

disciples. It seems to me, however, that these gods of the Gentiles,

whom the philosophers of the pagans may have consulted, if they were

asked to give their judgment on the disciples of Christ, as well as on

Christ Himself, would be constrained to praise them in like manner.

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[564] The philosopher of the Neo-Platonic school, better known as one

of the earliest and most learned antagonists of Christianity. Though a

native either of Tyre or Batanea, he is called here, as also again in

the Retractations, ii. 31, a Sicilian, because, according to Jerome and

Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. vi. 19), it was in Sicily that he wrote his

treatise in fifteen books against the Christian religion.--Tr.

[565] Luke iv. 41.

[566] Ps. xcvi. 5. [Comp 1 Cor. x. 20, where "demons" is the more

correct rendering (so Revised Version margin and American revisers'

text).--R.]

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Chapter XVI.--Of the Fact That, on the Subject of the Destruction of

Idols, the Apostles Taught Nothing Different from What Was Taught by

Christ or by the Prophets.

24. Nevertheless these persons argue still to the effect that this

demolition of temples, and this condemnation of sacrifices, and this

shattering of all images, are brought about, not in virtue of the

doctrine of Christ Himself, but only by the hand of His apostles, who,

as they contend, taught something different from what He taught. They

think by this device, while honouring and lauding Christ, to tear the

Christian faith in pieces. For it is at least true, that it is by the

disciples of Christ that at once the works and the words of Christ have

been made known, on which this Christian religion is established, with

which a very few people of this character are still in antagonism, who

do not now indeed openly assail it, but yet continue even in these days

to utter their mutterings against it. But if they refuse to believe

that Christ taught in the way indicated, let them read the prophets,

who not only enjoined the complete destruction of the superstitions of

idols, but also predicted that this subversion would come to pass in

Christian times. And if these spoke falsely, why is their word

fulfilled with so mighty a demonstration? But if they spoke truly, why

is resistance offered to such divine power? [567]

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[567] Or, to such power in interpreting the divine mind--tant�

divinitati resistatur.

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Chapter XVII.--In Opposition to the Romans Who Rejected the God of

Israel Alone.

25. However, here is a matter which should meet with more careful

consideration at their hands,--namely, what they take the God of Israel

to be, and why they have not admitted Him to the honours of worship

among them, in the way that they have done with the gods of other

nations that have been made subject to the imperial power of Rome? This

question demands an answer all the more, when we see that they are of

the mind that all the gods ought to be worshipped by the man of wisdom.

Why, then, has He been excluded from the number of these others? If He

is very mighty, why is He the only deity that is not worshipped by

them? If He has little or no might, why are the images of other gods

broken in pieces by all the nations, while He is now almost the only

God that is worshipped among these peoples? From the grasp of this

question these men shall never be able to extricate themselves, who

worship both the greater and the lesser deities, whom they hold to be

gods, and at the same time refuse to worship this God, who has proved

Himself stronger than all those to whom they do service. If He is [a

God] of great virtue, [568] why has He been deemed worthy only of

rejection? And if He is [a God] of little or no power, why has He been

able to accomplish so much, although rejected? If He is good, why is He

the only one separated from the other good deities? And if He is evil,

why is He, who stands thus alone, not subjugated by so many good

deities? If He is truthful, why are His precepts scorned? And if He is

a liar, why are His predictions fulfilled?

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[568] Or, power--virtutis.

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Chapter XVIII.--Of the Fact that the God of the Hebrews is Not Received

by the Romans, Because His Will is that He Alone Should Be Worshipped.

26. In fine, they may think of Him as they please. Still, we may ask

whether it is the case that the Romans refuse to consider evil deities

as also proper objects of worship,--those Romans who have erected fanes

to Pallor and Fever, and who enjoin both that the good demons are to

been treated, [569] and that the evil demons are to be propitiated.

Whatever their opinion, then, of Him may be, the question still is, Why

is He the only Deity whom they have judged worthy neither of being

called upon for help, nor of being propitiated? What God is this, who

is either one so unknown, that He is the only one not discovered as yet

among so many gods, or who is one so well known that He is now the only

one worshipped by so many men? There remains, then, nothing which they

can possibly allege in explanation of their refusal to admit the

worship of this God, except that His will was that He alone should be

worshipped; and His command was, that those gods of the Gentiles that

they were worshipping at the time should cease to be worshipped. But an

answer to this other question is rather to be required of them, namely,

what or what manner of deity they consider this God to be, who has

forbidden the worship of those other gods for whom they erected temples

and images,--this God, who has also been possessed of might so vast

that His will has prevailed more in effecting the destruction of their

images than theirs has availed to secure the non-admittance of His

worship. And, indeed, the opinion of that philosopher of theirs is

given in plain terms, whom, even on the authority of their own oracle,

they have maintained to have been the wisest of all men. For the

opinion of Socrates is, that every deity whatsoever ought to be

worshipped just in the manner in which he may have ordained that he

should be worshipped. Consequently it became a matter of the supremest

necessity with them to refuse to worship the God of the Hebrews. For if

they were minded to worship Him in a method different from the way in

which He had declared that He ought to be worshipped, then assuredly

they would have been worshipping not this God as He is, but some

figment of their own. And, on the other hand, if they were willing to

worship Him in the manner which He had indicated, then they could not

but perceive that they were not at liberty to worship those other

deities whom He interdicted them from worshipping. Thus was it,

therefore, that they rejected the service of the one true God, because

they were afraid that they might offend the many false gods. For they

thought that the anger of those deities would be more to their injury,

than the goodwill of this God would be to their profit.

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[569] The text gives invitandos; others read imitandos, to be imitated.

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Chapter XIX.--The Proof that This God is the True God.

27. But that must have been a vain necessity and a ridiculous timidity.

[570] We ask now what opinion regarding this God is formed by those men

whose pleasure it is that all gods ought to be worshipped. For if He

ought not to be worshipped, how are all worshipped when He is not

worshipped? And if He ought to be worshipped, it cannot be that all

others are to be worshipped along with Him. For unless He is worshipped

alone, He is really not worshipped at all. Or may it perhaps be the

case, that they will allege Him to be no God at all, while they call

those gods who, as we believe, have no power to do anything except so

far as permission is given them by His judgment,--have not merely no

power to do good to any one, but no power even to do harm to any,

except to those who are judged by Him, who possesses all power, to

merit so to be harmed? But, as they themselves are compelled to admit,

those deities have shown less power than He has done. For if those are

held to be gods whose prophets, when consulted by men, have returned

responses which, that I may not call them false, were at least most

convenient for their private interests, how is not He to be regarded as

God whose prophets have not only given the congruous answer on subjects

regarding which they were consulted at the special time, but who also,

in the case of subjects respecting which they were not consulted, and

which related to the universal race of man and all nations, have

announced prophetically so long time before the event those very things

of which we now read, and which indeed we now behold? If they gave the

name of god to that being under whose inspiration the Sibyl sung of the

fates [571] of the Romans, how is not He (to be called) God, who, in

accordance with the announcement aforetime given, has shown us how the

Romans and all nations are coming to believe in Himself through the

gospel of Christ, as the one God, and to demolish all the images of

their fathers? Finally, if they designate those as gods who have never

dared through their prophets to say anything against this God, how is

not He (to be designated) God, who not only commanded by the mouth of

His prophets the destruction of their images, but who also predicted

that among all the Gentiles they would be destroyed by those who should

be enjoined to abandon their idols and to worship Him alone, and who,

on receiving these injunctions, should be His servants? [572]

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[570] Or, Away with that vain necessity and ridiculous timidity--Sed

fuerit ista vana necessitas, etc.

[571] Reading fata. Seven mss. give facta = deeds.

[572] [This reference to the destruction of idols has been used to fix

the date of the Harmony; see Introductory Notice of translator. The

polemic character of the larger part of Book i. seems due to the

circumstances of that particular period in North Africa.--R.]

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Chapter XX.--Of the Fact that Nothing is Discovered to Have Been

Predicted by the Prophets of the Pagans in Opposition to the God of the

Hebrews.

28. Or let them aver, if they are able, that some Sibyl of theirs, or

any one whatever among their other prophets, announced long ago that it

would come to pass that the God of the Hebrews, the God of Israel,

would be worshipped by all nations, declaring, at the same time, that

the worshippers of other gods before that time had rightly rejected

Him; and again, that the compositions of His prophets would be in such

exalted authority, [573] that in obedience to them the Roman government

itself would command the destruction of images, the said seers at the

same time giving warning against acting upon such ordinances;--let

them, I say, read out any utterances like these, if they can, from any

of the books of their prophets. For I stop not to state that those

things which we can read in their books repeat a testimony on behalf of

our religion, that is, the Christian religon, which they might have

heard from the holy angels and from our prophets themselves; just as

the very devils were compelled to confess Christ when He was present in

the flesh. But I pass by these matters, regarding which, when we bring

them forward, their contention is that they were invented by our party.

Most certainly, however, they may themselves be pressed to adduce

anything which has been prophesied by the seers of their own gods

against the God of the Hebrews; as, on our side, we can point to

declarations so remarkable at once for number and for weight recorded

in the books of our prophets against their gods, in which also we can

both note the command and recite the prediction and demonstrate the

event. And over the realization of these things, that comparatively

small number of heathens who have remained such are more inclined to

grieve than they are ready to acknowledge that God who has had the

power to foretell these things as events destined to be made good;

whereas in their dealings with their own false gods, who are genuine

demons, they prize nothing else so highly as to be informed by their

responses of something which is to take place with them. [574]

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[573] Reading futuras etiam litteras...in auctoritate ita sublimi. Six

mss. give futurum...sublimari, but with substantially the same sense.

[574] Nihil aliud pro magno appetant quam cum aliquid eorum responsis

sibi futurum esse didicerint.

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Chapter XXI.--An Argument for the Exclusive Worship of This God, Who,

While He Prohibits Other Deities from Being Worshipped, is Not Himself

Interdicted by Other Divinities from Being Worshipped.

29. Seeing, then, that these things are so, why do not these unhappy

men rather apprehend the fact that this God is the true God, whom they

perceive to be placed in a position so thoroughly separated from the

company of their own deities, that, although they are compelled to

acknowledge Him to be God, those very persons who profess that all gods

ought to be worshipped are nevertheless not permitted to worship Him

along with the rest? Now, since these deities and this God cannot be

worshipped together, why is not He selected who forbids those others to

be worshipped; and why are not those deities abandoned, who do not

interdict Him from being worshipped? Or if they do indeed forbid His

worship, let the interdict be read. For what has greater claims to be

recited to their people in their temples, in which the sound of no such

thing has ever been heard? And, in good sooth, the prohibition directed

by so many against one ought to be more notable [575] and more potent

than the prohibition launched by one against so many. For if the

worship of this God is impious, then those gods are profitless, who do

not interdict men from that impiety; but if the worship of this God is

pious, then, as in that worship the commandment is given that these

others are not to be worshipped, their worship is impious. If, again,

those deities forbid His worship, but only so diffidently that they

rather fear to be heard [576] than dare to prohibit, who is so unwise

as not to draw his own inference from the fact, who fails to perceive

that this God ought to be chosen, who in so public a manner prohibits

their worship, who commanded that their images should be destroyed, who

foretold that demolition, who Himself effected it, in preference to

those deities of whom we know not that they ordained abstinence from

His worship, of whom we do not read that they foretold such an event,

and in whom we do not see power sufficient to have it brought about? I

put the question, let them give the answer: Who is this God, who thus

harasses all the gods of the Gentiles, who thus betrays all their

sacred rites, who thus renders them extinct?

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[575] Reading notior; others give potior = preferable. [The text of

Migne reads notior et potentior, but five mss. read notior et potior.

The argument favours the former reading, and the latter can readily be

accounted for.--R.]

[576] Some read audere timeant = fear to dare. But the mss. give more

correctly audiri timeant = fear to be heard; i.e., the demons were

afraid that, if they interdicted His worship, the true God might be

made known by their own hand.--Migne.

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Chapter XXII.--Of the Opinion Entertained by the Gentiles Regarding Our

God.

30. But why do I interrogate men whose native wit has deserted them in

answering the question as to who this God is? Some say that He is

Saturn. I fancy the reason of that is found in the sanctification of

the Sabbath; for those men assign that day to Saturn. But their own

Varro, than whom they can point to no man of greater learning among

them, thought that the God of the Jews was Jupiter, and he judged that

it mattered not what name was employed, provided the same subject was

understood under it; in which, I believe, we see how he was subdued by

His supremacy. For, inasmuch as the Romans are not accustomed to

worship any more exalted object than Jupiter, of which fact their

Capitol is the open and sufficient attestation, and deem him to be the

king of all gods; when he observed that the Jews worshipped the supreme

God, he could not think of any object under that title other than

Jupiter himself. But whether men call the God of the Hebrews Saturn, or

declare Him to be Jupiter, let them tell us when Saturn dared to

prohibit the worship of a second deity. He did not venture to interdict

the worship even of this very Jupiter, who is said to have expelled him

from his kingdom,--the son thus expelling the father. And if Jupiter,

as the more powerful deity and the conqueror, has been accepted by his

worshippers, then they ought not to worship Saturn, the conquered and

expelled. But neither, on the other hand, did Jove put his worship

under the ban. Nay, that deity whom he had power to overcome, he

nevertheless suffered to continue a god.

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Chapter XXIII.--Of the Follies Which the Pagans Have Indulged in

Regarding Jupiter and Saturn.

31. These narratives of yours, say they, are but fables which have to

be interpreted by the wise, or else they are fit only to be laughed at;

but we revere that Jupiter of whom Maro says that

"All things are full of Jove,"

--Virgil's Eclogues, iii. v. 60;

that is to say, the spirit of life [577] that vivifies all things. It

is not without some reason, therefore, that Varro thought that Jove was

worshipped by the Jews; for the God of the Jews says by His prophet, "I

fill heaven and earth." [578] But what is meant by that which the same

poet names Ether? How do they take the term? For he speaks thus:

"Then the omnipotent father Ether, with fertilizing showers,

Came down into the bosom of his fruitful spouse."

--Virgil's Georgics, ii. 325.

They say, indeed, that this Ether is not spirit, [579] but a lofty body

in which the heaven is stretched above the air. [580] Is liberty

conceded to the poet to speak at one time in the language of the

followers of Plato, as if God was not body, but spirit, and at another

time in the language of the Stoics, as if God was a body? What is it,

then, that they worship in their Capitol? If it is a spirit, or if

again it is, in short, the corporeal heaven itself, then what does that

shield of Jupiter there which they style the �gis? The origin of that

name, indeed, is explained by the circumstance that a goat [581]

nourished Jupiter when he was concealed by his mother. Or is this a

fiction of the poets? But are the capitols of the Romans, then, also

the mere creations of the poets? And what is the meaning of that,

certainly not poetical, but unmistakeably farcical, variability of

yours, in seeking your gods according to the ideas of philosophers in

books, and revering them according to the notions of poets in your

temples?

32. But was that Euhemerus also a poet, who declares both Jupiter

himself, and his father Saturn, and Pluto and Neptune his brothers, to

have been men, in terms so exceedingly plain that their worshippers

ought all the more to render thanks to the poets, because their

inventions have not been intended so much to disparage them as rather

to dress them up? Albeit Cicero [582] mentions that this same Euhemerus

was translated into Latin by the poet Ennius. [583] Or was Cicero

himself a poet, who, in counselling the person with whom he debates in

his Tusculan Disputations, addresses him as one possessing knowledge of

things secret, in the following terms: "If, indeed, I were to attempt

to search into antiquity, and produce from thence the subjects which

the writers of Greece have given to the world, it would be found that

even those deities who are reckoned gods of the higher orders have gone

from us into heaven. Ask whose sepulchres are pointed out in Greece:

call to mind, since you have been initiated, the things which are

delivered in the mysteries: then, doubtless, you will comprehend how

widely extended this belief is." [584] This author certainly makes

ample acknowledgment of the doctrine that those gods of theirs were

originally men. He does, indeed, benevolently surmise that they made

their way into heaven. But he did not hesitate to say in public, that

even the honour thus given them in general repute [585] was conferred

upon them by men, when he spoke of Romulus in these words: "By good

will and repute we have raised to the immortal gods that Romulus who

founded this city." [586] How should it be such a wonderful thing,

therefore, to suppose that the more ancient men did with respect to

Jupiter and Saturn and the others what the Romans have done with

respect to Romulus, and what, in good truth, they have thought of doing

even in these more recent times also in the case of C�sar? And to these

same Virgil has addressed the additional flattery of song, saying:

"Lo, the star of C�sar, descendant of Dione, arose."

--Eclogue, ix. ver. 47.

Let them see to it, then, that the truth of history do not turn out to

exhibit to our view sepulchres erected for their false gods here upon

the earth!and let them take heed lest the vanity of poetry, instead of

fixing, may be but feigning [587] stars for their deities there in

heaven. For, in reality, that one is not the star of Jupiter, neither

is this one the star of Saturn; but the simple fact is, that upon these

stars, which were set from the foundation of the world, the names of

those persons were imposed after their death by men who were minded to

honour them as gods on their departure from this life. And with respect

to these we may, indeed, ask how there should be such ill desert in

chastity, or such good desert in voluptuousness, that Venus should have

a star, and Minerva be denied one among those luminaries which revolve

along with the sun and moon?

33. But it may be said that Cicero, the Academic sage, who has been

bold enough to make mention of the sepulchres of their gods, and to

commit the statement to writing, is a more doubtful authority than the

poets; although he did not presume to offer that assertion simply as

his own personal opinion, but put it on record as a statement contained

among the traditions of their own sacred rites. Well, then, can it also

be maintained that Varro either gives expression merely to an invention

of his own, as a poet might do, or puts the matter only dubiously, as

might be the case with an Academician, because he declares that, in the

instance of all such gods, the matters of their worship had their

origin either in the life which they lived, or in the death which they

died, among men? Or was that Egyptian priest, Leon, [588] either a poet

or an Academician, who expounded the origin of those gods of theirs to

Alexander of Macedon, in a way somewhat different indeed from the

opinion advanced by the Greeks, but nevertheless so far accordant

therewith as to make out their deities to have been originally men?

34. But what is all this to us? [589] Let them assert that they worship

Jupiter, and not a dead man; let them maintain that they have dedicated

their Capitol not to a dead man, but to the Spirit that vivifies all

things and fills the world. And as to that shield of his, which was

made of the skin of a she-goat in honour of his nurse, let them put

upon it whatever interpretation they please. What do they say, however,

about Saturn? [590] What is it that they worship under the name of

Saturn? Is not this the deity that was the first to come down to us

from Olympus (of whom the poet sings):

"Then from Olympus' height came down

Good Saturn, exiled from his crown

By Jove, his mightier heir:

He brought the race to union first

Erewhile, on mountain-tops dispersed,

And gave them statutes to obey,

And willed the land wherein he lay

Should Latium's title bear."

--Virgil's �neid, viii. 320-324, Conington's trans.

Does not his very image, made as it is with the head covered, present

him as one under concealment? [591] Was it not he that made the

practice of agriculture known to the people of Italy, a fact which is

expressed by the reaping-hook? [592] No, say they; for you may see

whether the being of whom such things are recorded was a man, [593] and

indeed one particular king: we, however, interpret Saturn to be

universal Time, as is signified also by his name in Greek: for he is

called Chronus, [594] which word, with the aspiration thus given it, is

also the vocable for time: whence, too, in Latin he gets the name of

Saturn, as if it meant that he is sated [595] with years. But now, what

we are to make of people like these I know not, who, in their very

effort to put a more favourable meaning upon the names and the images

of their gods, make the confession that the very god who is their major

deity, and the father of the rest, is Time. For what else do they thus

betray but, in fact, that all those gods of theirs are only temporal,

seeing that the very parent of them all is made out to be Time?

35. Accordingly, their more recent philosophers of the Platonic school,

who have flourished in Christian times, have been ashamed of such

fancies, and have endeavoured to interpret Saturn in another way,

affirming that he received the name Chronos [596] in order to signify,

as it were, the fulness of intellect; their explanation being, that in

Greek fulness [597] is expressed by the term choros, [598] and

intellect or mind by the term nous; [599] which etymology seems to be

favoured also by the Latin name, on the supposition that the first part

of the word (Saturnus) came from the Latin, and the second part from

the Greek: so that he got the title Saturnus as an equivalent to satur,

nous. [600] For they saw how absurd it was to have that Jupiter

regarded as a son of Time, whom they either considered, or wished to

have considered, eternal deity. Furthermore, however, according to this

novel interpretation, which it is marvellous that Cicero and Varro

should have suffered to escape their notice, if their ancient

authorities really had it, they call Jupiter the son of Saturn, thus

denoting him, it may be, as the spirit that proceedeth forth from that

supreme mind--the spirit which they choose to look upon as the soul of

this world, so to speak, filling alike all heavenly and all earthly

bodies. Whence comes also that saying of Maro, which I have cited a

little ago, namely, "All things are full of Jove"? Should they not,

then, if they are possessed of the ability, alter the superstitions

indulged in by men, just as they alter their interpretation; and either

erect no images at all, or at least build capitols to Saturn rather

than to Jupiter? For they also maintain that no rational soul can be

produced gifted with wisdom, except by participation in that supreme

and unchangeable wisdom of his; and this affirmation they advance not

only with respect to the soul of a man, but even with respect to that

same soul of the world which they also designate Jove. Now we not only

concede, but even very particularly proclaim, that there is a certain

supreme wisdom of God, by participation in which every soul whatsoever

that is constituted truly wise acquires its wisdom. But whether that

universal corporeal mass, which is called the world, has a kind of

soul, or, so to speak, its own soul, that is to say, a rational life by

which it can govern its own movements, as is the case with every sort

of animal, is a question both vast and obscure. That is an opinion

which ought not to be affirmed, unless its truth is clearly

ascertained; neither ought it to be rejected, unless its falsehood is

as clearly ascertained. And what will it matter to man, even should

this question remain for ever unsolved, since, in any case, no soul

becomes wise or blessed by drawing from any other soul but from that

one supreme and immutable wisdom of God?

36. The Romans, however, who have founded a Capitol in honour of

Jupiter, but none in honour of Saturn, as also these other nations

whose opinion it has been that Jupiter ought to be worshipped

pre-eminently and above the rest of the gods, have certainly not agreed

in sentiment with the persons referred to; who, in accordance with that

mad view of theirs, would dedicate their loftiest citadels [601] rather

to Saturn, if they had any power in these things, and who most

particularly would annihilate those mathematicians and

nativity-spinners [602] by whom this Saturn, whom their opponents would

designate the maker of the wise, has been placed with the character of

a deity of evil among the other stars. But this opinion, nevertheless,

has prevailed so mightily against them in the mind of humanity, that

men decline even to name that god, and call him Ancient [603] rather

than Saturn; and that in so fearful a spirit of superstition, that the

Carthaginians have now gone very near to change the designation of

their town, and call it the town of the Ancient [604] more frequently

than the town of Saturn. [605]

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[577] Or, the breathed air--spiritum.

[578] Jer. xxiii. 24.

[579] Spiritum, breath.

[580] A�rem.

[581] Alluding to the derivation of the word �gis = aigis, a goatskin,

from the Greek aix = goat.

[582] See the first book of his De Natura Deorum, c. 42. Compare also

Lactantius, De Falsa Religione, i. 11; and Varro, De Re Rustica, i. 48.

[583] The father of Roman literature, born B.C. 239 at Rudi� in

Calabria, both a poet and a man of learning, and well versed, among

other things, in Oscan, Latin, and Greek--linguistic accomplishments

beyond his day. Of his writings we now possess only fragments,

preserved by Cicero, Macrobius, Aulus Gellius, and others.

[584] Tusculan Disputations, Book i. 13.

[585] Honorem opinionis.

[586] From the Third Oration against Catiline, � 1.

[587] Non figat sed fingat.

[588] On this Leo or Leon, see also Augustin's City of God, viii. 5.

Reference is often made to him by early Christian writers as a thinker

agreeing so far with the principles of Euhemerus (in whose time, or

perhaps somewhat before it, he flourished) as to teach that the gods of

the old heathen world were originally men. He is mentioned by Arnobius,

Adversus Gentes, iv. 29; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, i. 23;

Tertullian, De Corona, c. 7; Tatian, etc.

[589] Reading, with Migne, Sed quid ad nos? Dicant se Jovem, etc.

Others give, Sed quid ad nos si decant, etc. = But what is it to us

although they say that they worship, etc. The si, however, is wanting

in the mss.

[590] Reading, with Migne, Quid dicunt de Saturno? Quem, etc. Others

give, Quid dicunt de Saturno qui = What do those say about Saturn who

worship Saturn? The mss. have quem.

[591] Quasi latentem indicat, in reference to the story introduced in

the Virgilian passage, that the country got its name, Latium, from the

disappearance of the god.

[592] The statue of Saturn represented him with a sickle or

pruning-knife in his hand.

[593] Migne's text gives, on the authority of mss., the reading, Nam

videris si fuit ille homo, etc. Others edit, Nam tametsi fuerit ille,

etc. = For although he may have been a man...yet we interpret, etc.

[594] For Kronos.

[595] Saturetur--saturated, abundantly furnished.

[596] Chronos, Kronos.

[597] Or satiety.

[598] Choros.

[599] Nous.

[600] Full, mind.

[601] Reading arces. Some editions give artes = arts.

[602] Genethliacos.

[603] Senex.

[604] Vicus Senis.

[605] Vicus Saturni.

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Chapter XXIV.--Of the Fact that Those Persons Who Reject the God of

Israel, in Consequence Fail to Worship All the Gods; And, on the Other

Hand, that Those Who Worship Other Gods, Fail to Worship Him.

37. It is well understood, therefore, what these worshippers of images

are convicted in reality of revering, and what they attempt to colour

over. [606] But even these new interpreters of Saturn must be required

to tell us what they think of the God of the Hebrews. For to them also

it seemed right to worship all the gods, as is done by the heathen

nations, because their pride made them ashamed to humble themselves

under Christ for the remission of their sins. What opinion, therefore,

do they entertain regarding the God of Israel? For if they do not

worship Him then they do not worship all gods; and if they do worship

Him, they do not worship Him in the way that He has ordained for His

own worship, because they worship others also whose worship He has

interdicted. Against such practices He issued His prohibition by the

mouth of those same prophets by whom He also announced beforehand the

destined occurrence of those very things which their images are now

sustaining at the hands of the Christians. For whatever the explanation

may be, whether it be that the angels were sent to those prophets to

show them figuratively, and by the congruous forms of visible objects,

the one true God, the Creator of all things, to whom the whole universe

is made subject, and to indicate the method in which He enjoined His

own worship to proceed; or whether it was that the minds of some among

them were so mightily elevated by the Holy Spirit, as to enable them to

see those things in that kind of vision in which the angels themselves

behold objects: in either case it is the incontestable fact, that they

did serve that God who has prohibited the worship of other gods; and,

moreover, it is equally certain, that with the faithfulness of piety,

in the kingly and in the priestly office, they ministered at once for

the good of their country, and in the interest of those sacred

ordinances which were significant of the coming of Christ as the true

King and Priest.

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[606] Reading colorare, as in the mss. Some editions give colere =

revere.

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Chapter XXV.--Of the Fact that the False Gods Do Not Forbid Others to

Be Worshipped Along with Themselves. That the God of Israel is the True

God, is Proved by His Works, Both in Prophecy and in Fulfilment.

38. But further, in the case of the gods of the Gentiles (in their

willingness to worship whom they exhibit their unwillingness to worship

that God who cannot be worshipped together with them), let them tell us

the reason why no one is found in the number of their deities who

thinks of interdicting the worship of another; while they institute

them in different offices and functions, and hold them to preside each

one over objects which pertain properly to his own special province.

For if Jupiter does not prohibit the worship of Saturn, because he is

not to be taken merely for a man, who drove another man, namely his

father, out of his kingdom, but either for the body of the heavens, or

for the spirit that fills both heaven and earth, and because thus he

cannot prevent that supernal mind from being worshipped, from which he

is said to have emanated: if, on the same principle also, Saturn cannot

interdict the worship of Jupiter, because he is not [to be supposed to

be merely] one who was conquered by that other in rebellion,--as was

the case with a person of the same name, by the hand of some one or

other called Jupiter, from whose arms he was fleeing when he came into

Italy,--and because the primal mind favours the mind that springs from

it: yet Vulcan at least might [be expected to] put under the ban the

worship of Mars, the paramour of his wife, and Hercules [might be

thought likely to interdict] the worship of Juno, his persecutor. What

kind of foul consent must subsist among them, if even Diana, the chaste

virgin, fails to interdict the worship, I do not say merely of Venus,

but even of Priapus? For if the same individual decides to be at once a

hunter and a farmer, he must be the servant of both these deities; and

yet he will be ashamed to do even so much as erect temples for them

side by side. But they may aver, that by interpretation Diana means a

certain virtue, be it what they please; and they may tell us that

Priapus really denotes the deity of fecundity, [607] --to such an

effect, at any rate, that Juno may well be ashamed to have such a

coadjutor in the task of making females fruitful. They may say what

they please; they may put any explanation upon these things which in

their wisdom they think fit: only, in spite of all that, the God of

Israel will confound all their argumentations. For in prohibiting all

those deities from being worshipped, while His own worship is hindered

by none of them, and in at once commanding, foretelling, and effecting

destruction for their images and sacred rites, He has shown with

sufficient clearness that they are false and lying deities, and that He

Himself is the one true and truthful God.

39. Moreover, to whom should it not seem strange that those

worshippers, now become few in number, of deities both numerous and

false, should refuse to do homage to Him of whom, when the question is

put to them as to what deity He is; they dare not at least assert,

whatever answer they may think to give, that He is no God at all? For

if they deny His deity, they are very easily refuted by His works, both

in prophecy and in fulfilment. I do not speak of those works which they

deem themselves at liberty not to credit, such as His work in the

beginning, when He made heaven and earth, and all that is in them.

[608] Neither do I specify here those events which carry us back into

the remotest antiquity, such as the translation of Enoch, [609] the

destruction of the impious by the flood, and the saving of righteous

Noah and his house from the deluge, by means of the [ark of] wood.

[610] I begin the statement of His doings among men with Abraham. To

this man, indeed, was given by an angelic oracle an intelligible

promise, which we now see in its realization. For to him it was said,

"In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." [611] Of his seed, then,

sprang the people of Israel, whence came the Virgin Mary, who was the

mother of Christ; and that in Him all the nations are blessed, let them

now be bold enough to deny if they can. This same promise was made also

to Isaac the son of Abraham. [612] It was given again to Jacob the

grandson of Abraham. This Jacob was also called Israel, from whom that

whole people derived both its descent and its name so that indeed the

God of this people was called the God of Israel: not that He is not

also the God of the Gentiles, whether they are ignorant of Him or now

know Him; but that in this people He willed that the power of His

promises should be made more conspicuously apparent. For that people,

which at first was multiplied in Egypt, and after a time was delivered

from a state of slavery there by the hand of Moses, with many signs and

portents, saw most of the Gentile nations subdued under it, and

obtained possession also of the land of promise, in which it reigned in

the person of kings of its own, who sprang from the tribe of Judah.

This Judah, also, was one of the twelve sons of Israel, the grandson of

Abraham. And from him were descended the people called the Jews, who,

with the help of God Himself, did great achievements, and who also,

when He chastised them, endured many sufferings on account of their

sins, until the coming of that Seed to whom the promise was given, in

whom all the nations were to be blessed, and [for whose sake] they were

willingly to break in pieces the idols of their fathers.

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[607] Reading fecunditatis. Foeditatis, foulness, also occurs.

[608] Gen. i. 1.

[609] Gen. v. 24.

[610] Gen. vii.

[611] Gen. xxii. 18.

[612] Gen. xxvi. 4.

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Chapter XXVI.--Of the Fact that Idolatry Has Been Subverted by the Name

of Christ, and by the Faith of Christians According to the Prophecies.

40. For truly what is thus effected by Christians is not a thing which

belongs only to Christian times, but one which was predicted very long

ago. Those very Jews who have remained enemies to the name of Christ,

and regarding whose destined perfidy these prophetic writings have not

been silent, do themselves possess and peruse the prophet who says: "O

Lord my God, and my refuge in the day of evil, the Gentiles shall come

unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers

have worshipped mendacious idols, and there is no profit in them."

[613] Behold, that is now being done; behold, now the Gentiles are

coming from the ends of the earth to Christ, uttering things like

these, and breaking their idols! Of signal consequence, too, is this

which God has done for His Church in its world-wide extension, in that

the Jewish nation, which has been deservedly overthrown and scattered

abroad throughout the lands, has been made to carry about with it

everywhere the records of our prophecies, so that it might not be

possible to look upon these predictions as concocted by ourselves; and

thus the enemy of our faith has been made a witness to our truth. How,

then, can it be possible that the disciples of Christ have taught what

they have not learned from Christ, as those foolish men in their silly

fancies object, with the view of getting the superstitious worship of

heathen gods and idols subverted? Can it be said also that those

prophecies which are still read in these days, in the books of the

enemies of Christ, were the inventions of the disciples of Christ?

41. Who, then, has effected the demolition of these systems but the God

of Israel? For to this people was the announcement made by those divine

voices which were addressed to Moses: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God

is one God." [614] "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or

any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the

earth beneath." [615] And again, in order that this people might put an

end to these things wherever it received power to do so, this

commandment was also laid upon the nation: "Thou shalt not bow down to

their gods, nor serve them; thou shalt not do after their works, but

thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images."

[616] But who shall say that Christ and Christians have no connection

with Israel, seeing that Israel was the grandson of Abraham, to whom

first, as afterwards to his son Isaac, and then to his grandson Israel

himself, that promise was given, which I have already mentioned,

namely: "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed"? That prediction we

see now in its fulfilment in Christ. For it was of this line that the

Virgin was born, concerning whom a prophet of the people of Israel and

of the God of Israel sang in these terms: "Behold, a virgin shall

conceive, and bear a son; and they shall call [617] His name Emmanuel."

For by interpretation, Emmanuel means, "God with us." [618] This God of

Israel, therefore, who has interdicted the worship of other gods, who

has interdicted the making of idols, who has commanded their

destruction, who by His prophet has predicted that the Gentiles from

the ends of the earth would say, "Surely our fathers have worshipped

mendacious idols, in which there is no profit;" this same God is He

who, by the name of Christ and by the faith of Christians, has ordered,

promised, and exhibited the overthrow of all these superstitions. In

vain, therefore, do these unhappy men, knowing that they have been

prohibited from blaspheming the name of Christ, even by their own gods,

that is to say, by the demons who fear the name of Christ, seek to make

it out, that this kind of doctrine is something strange to Him, in the

power of which the Christians dispute against idols, and root out all

those false religions, wherever they have the opportunity.

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[613] Jer. xvi. 19.

[614] Deut. vi. 4. [See Revised Version, text and margin, for the

variations in the rendering of the Hebrew. Comp. Mark xii. 29 for

similar variations in the passage as cited in the New Testament.--R.]

[615] Exod. xx. 4.

[616] Exod. xxiii. 24. [Simulacra eorum. The Revised Version renders

"their pillars," with "obelisks" in the margin.--R.]

[617] Vocabunt.

[618] Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23.

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Chapter XXVII.--An Argument Urging It Upon the Remnant of Idolaters

that They Should at Length Become Servants of This True God, Who

Everywhere is Subverting Idols.

42. Let them now give their answer with respect to the God of Israel,

to whom, as teaching and enjoining such things, witness is borne not

only by the books of the Christians, but also by those of the Jews.

Regarding Him, let them ask the counsel of their own deities, who have

prevented the blaspheming of Christ. Concerning the God of Israel, let

them give a contumelious response if they dare. But whom are they to

consult? or where are they to ask counsel now? Let them peruse the

books of their own authorities. If they consider the God of Israel to

be Jupiter, as Varro has written (that I may speak for the time being

in accordance with their own way of thinking), why then do they not

believe that the idols are to be destroyed by Jupiter? If they deem Him

to be Saturn, [619] why do they not worship Him? Or why do they not

worship Him in that manner in which, by the voice of those prophets

through whom He has made good the things which He has foretold, He has

ordained His worship to be conducted? Why do they not believe that

images are to be destroyed by Him, and the worship of other gods

forbidden? If He is neither Jove nor Saturn (and surely, if He were one

of these, He would not speak out so mightily against the sacred rites

of their Jove and Saturn), who then is this God, who, with all their

consideration for other gods, is the only Deity not worshipped by them,

and who, nevertheless, so manifestly brings it about that He shall

Himself be the sole object of worship, to the overthrow of all other

gods, and to the humiliation of everything proud and highly exalted,

which has lifted itself up against Christ in behalf of idols,

persecuting and slaying Christians? But, in good truth, men are now

asking into what secret recesses these worshippers withdraw, when they

are minded to offer sacrifice; or into what regions of obscurity they

thrust back these same gods of theirs, to prevent their being

discovered and broken in pieces by the Christians. Whence comes this

mode of dealing, if not from the fear of those laws and those rulers by

whose instrumentality the God of Israel discovers His power, and who

are now made subject to the name of Christ. And that it should be so He

promised long ago, when He said by the prophet: "Yea, all kings of the

earth shall worship Him: all nations shall serve Him." [620]

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[619] Reading Si Saturnum putant. Others read, Si Saturnum Deum putant

= if they deem Saturn to be God, etc.

[620] Ps. lxxii. 11.

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Chapter XXVIII.--Of the Predicted Rejection of Idols.

43. It cannot be questioned that what was predicted at sundry times by

His prophets is now being realized,--namely, the announcement that He

would disclaim His impious people (not, indeed, the people as a whole,

because even of the Israelites many have believed in Christ; for His

apostles themselves belonged to that nation), and would humble every

proud and injurious person, so that He should Himself alone be exalted,

that is to say, alone be manifested to men as lofty and mighty; until

idols should be cast away by those who believe, and be concealed by

those who believe not; when the earth is broken by His fear, that is to

say, when the men of earth are subdued by fear, to wit, by fearing His

law, or the law of those who, being at once believers in His name and

rulers among the nations, shall interdict such sacrilegious practices.

44. For these things, which I have thus briefly stated in the way of

introduction, and with a view to their readier apprehension, are thus

expressed by the prophet: And now, O house of Jacob, come ye, and let

us walk in the light of the Lord. For He has disclaimed His people the

house of Israel, because the country was replenished, as from the

beginning, with their soothsayings as with those of strangers, and many

strange children were born to them. For their country was replenished

with silver and gold, neither was there any numbering of their

treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither was there any

numbering of their chariots: their land also is full of the

abominations of the works of their own hands, and they have worshipped

that which their own fingers have made. And the mean man [621] has

bowed himself, and the great man [622] has humbled himself; and I will

not forgive it them. And now enter ye into the rocks, and hide

yourselves in the earth from before the fear of the Lord, and from the

majesty of His power, when He arises to crush the earth: for the eyes

of the Lord are lofty, and man is low; and the haughtiness of men shall

be humbled, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the

day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is injurious and

proud, and upon every one that is lifted up and humbled, [623] and they

shall be brought low; and upon every cedar of Lebanon of the high ones

and the lifted up, [624] and upon every tree of the Lebanon of Bashan,

[625] and upon every mountain, and upon every high hill, [626] and upon

every ship of the sea, and upon every spectacle of the beauty of ships.

And the contumely of men shall be humbled and shall fall, and the Lord

alone shall be exalted in that day; [627] and all things made by hands

they shall hide in dens, and in holes of the rocks, and in caves of the

earth, from before the fear of the Lord, and from the majesty of His

power, when He arises to crush the earth: for in that day a man shall

cast away the abominations of gold and silver, the vain and evil things

which they made for worship, in order to go into the clefts of the

solid rock, and into the holes of the rocks, from before the fear of

the Lord, and from the majesty of His power, when He arises to break

the earth in pieces. [628]

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[621] Homo.

[622] Vir.

[623] The text gives humiliatum; but elatum seems to be required,

corresponding with the LXX meteoron.

[624] Reading cedrum Libani excelsorum et elatorum, which is given by

the mss., and is accordant with the LXX. hupselon kai meteoron. Some

editions give cedrum Libani excelsam et elatam = Every high and

elevated cedar of Lebanon.

[625] The LXX. here has kai epi pan dendron balanou Basan = And upon

every tree of the acorn of Bashan. For the balanou Augustin adopts

Libani, as if he read in the Greek Libanou.

[626] The fifteenth verse of our version is wholly omitted.

[627] [Ver. 18, though very relevant, is omitted: "And the idols shalt

utterly pass away."--R.]

[628] Isa. ii. 5-21. [The variations from the Hebrew are quite

numerous; compare the English versions.-- R.]

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Chapter XXIX.--Of the Question Why the Heathen Should Refuse to Worship

the God of Israel; Even Although They Deem Him to Be Only the Presiding

Divinity of the Elements?

45. What do they say of this God of Sabaoth, which term, by

interpretation, means the God of powers or of armies, inasmuch as the

powers and the armies of the angels serve Him? What do they say of this

God of Israel; for He is the God of that people from whom came the seed

wherein all the nations were to be blessed? Why is He the only deity

excluded from worship by those very persons who contend that all the

gods ought to be worshipped? Why do they refuse their belief to Him who

both proves other gods to be false gods, and also overthrows them? I

have heard one of them declare that he had read, in some philosopher or

other, the statement that, from what the Jews did in their sacred

observances, he had come to know what God they worshipped. "He is the

deity," said he, "that presides over those elements of which this

visible and material universe is constructed;" when in the Holy

Scriptures of His prophets it is plainly shown that the people of

Israel were commanded to worship that God who made heaven and earth,

and from whom comes all true wisdom. But what need is there for further

disputation on this subject, seeing that it is quite sufficient for my

present purpose to point out how they entertain any kind of

presumptuous opinions regarding that God whom yet they cannot deny to

be a God? If, indeed, He is the deity that presides over the elements

of which this world consists, why is He not worshipped in preference to

Neptune, who presides over the sea only? Why not, again, in preference

to Silvanus, who presides over the fields and woods only? Why not in

preference to the Sun, who presides over the day only, or who also

rules over the entire heat of heaven? Why not in preference to the

Moon, who presides over the night only, or who also shines pre-eminent

for power over moisture? Why not in preference to Juno, who is supposed

to hold possession of the air only? For certainly those deities,

whoever they may be, who preside over the parts, must necessarily be

under that Deity who wields the presidency over all the elements, and

over the entire universe. But this Deity prohibits the worship of all

those deities. Why, then, is it that these men, in opposition to the

injunction of One greater than those deities, not only choose to

worship them, but also decline, for their sakes, to worship Him? Not

yet have they discovered any constant and intelligible judgment to

pronounce on this God of Israel; neither will they ever discover any

such judgment, until they find out that He alone is the true God, by

whom all things were created.

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Chapter XXX.--Of the Fact That, as the Prophecies Have Been Fulfilled,

the God of Israel Has Now Been Made Known Everywhere.

46. Thus it was with a certain person named Lucan, one of their great

declaimers in verse. For a long time, as I believe, he endeavored to

find out, by his own cogitations, or by the perusal of the books of his

own fellow-countrymen, [629] who the God of the Jews was; and failing

to prosecute his inquiry in the way of piety, he did not succeed. Yet

he chose rather to speak of Him as the uncertain God whom he did not

find out, than absolutely to deny the title of God to that Deity of

whose existence he perceived proofs so great. For he says:

"And Jud�a, devoted to the worship

Of an uncertain God." [630]

--Lucan, Book ii. towards the end.

And as yet this God, the holy and true God of Israel, had not done by

the name of Christ among all nations works so great as those which have

been wrought after Lucan's times up to our own day. But now who is so

obdurate as not to be moved, who so dull [631] as not to be inflamed,

seeing that the saying of Scripture is fulfilled, "For there is not one

that is hid from the heat thereof;" [632] and seeing also that those

other things which were predicted so long time ago in this same Psalm

from which I have cited one little verse, are now set forth in their

accomplishment in the clearest light? For under this term of the

"heavens" the apostles of Jesus Christ were denoted, because God was to

preside in them with a view to the publishing of the gospel. Now,

therefore, the heavens have declared the glory of God, and the

firmament has proclaimed the works of His hands. Day unto day has given

forth speech, and night unto night has shown knowledge. Now there is no

speech or language where their voices are not heard. Their sound has

gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Now hath He set His tabernacle in the sun, that is, in manifestation;

which tabernacle is His Church. For in order to do so (as the words

proceed in the passage) He came forth from His chamber like a

bridegroom; that is to say, the Word, wedded with the flesh of man,

came forth from the Virgin's womb. Now has He rejoiced as a strong man,

and has run His race. Now has His going forth been made from the height

of heaven, and His return even to the height of heaven. [633] And

accordingly, with the completest propriety, there follows upon this the

verse which I have already mentioned: "And there is not one that is hid

from the heat thereof [or, His heat]." And still these men make choice

of their little, weak, prating objections, which are like stubble to be

reduced to ashes in that fire, rather than like gold to be purged of

its dross by it; while at once the fallacious monuments of their false

gods have been brought to nought, and the veracious promises of that

uncertain God have been proved to be sure.

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[629] Per suorum libros.

[630] [...Et dedita sacris Incerti Jud�a Dei.--R.]

[631] Reading torpidus; for which others give tepidus, cool.

[632] Ps. xix. 6.

[633] [Ps. xix. 1-6, partly in citation, partly in allegorizing

paraphrase.--R.]

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Chapter XXXI.--The Fulfilment of the Prophecies Concerning Christ.

47. Wherefore let those evil applauders of Christ, who refuse to become

Christians, desist from making the allegation that Christ did not teach

that their gods were to be abandoned, and their images broken in

pieces. For the God of Israel, regarding whom it was declared aforetime

that He should be called the God of the whole earth, is now indeed

actually called the God of the whole earth. By the mouth of His

prophets He predicted that this would come to pass, and by Christ He

did bring it eventually to pass at the fit time. Assuredly, if the God

of Israel is now named the God of the whole earth, what He has

commanded must needs be made good; for He who has given the commandment

is now well known. But, further, that He is made known by Christ and in

Christ, in order that His Church may be extended throughout the world,

and that by its instrumentality the God of Israel may be named the God

of the whole earth, those who please may read a little earlier in the

same prophet. That paragraph may also be cited by me. It is not so long

as to make it requisite for us to pass it by. Here there is much said

about the presence, the humility, and the passion of Christ, and about

the body of which He is the Head, that is, His Church, where it is

called barren, like one that did not bear. For during many years the

Church, which was destined to subsist among all the nations with its

children, that is, with its saints, was not apparent, as Christ

remained yet unannounced by the evangelists to those to whom He had not

been declared by the prophets. Again, it is said that there shall be

more children for her who is forsaken than for her who has a husband,

under which name of a husband the Law was signified, or the King whom

the people of Israel first received. For neither had the Gentiles

received the Law at the period at which the prophet spake; nor had the

King of Christians yet appeared to the nations, although from these

Gentile nations a much more fruitful and numerous multitude of saints

has now proceeded. It is in this manner, therefore, that Isaiah speaks,

commencing with the humility [634] of Christ, and turning afterwards to

an address to the Church, on to that verse which we have already

instanced, where he says: And He who brought thee out, the same God of

Israel, shall be called the God of the whole earth. [635] Behold, says

he, my Servant shall deal prudently, and shall be exalted and honoured

exceedingly. As many shall be astonied at Thee; so shall Thy marred

visage, nevertheless, be seen by all, and Thine honour by men. For so

shall many nations be astonied at Him, and the kings shall shut their

mouths. For they shall see to whom it has not been told of Him; and

those who have not heard shall understand. O Lord, who hath believed

our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We have

proclaimed before Him as a servant, [636] as a root in a thirsty soil;

He hath no form nor comeliness. And we have seen Him, and He had

neither beauty nor seemliness; but His countenance is despised, and His

state rejected by all men: a man stricken, and acquainted with the

bearing of infirmities; on account of which His face is turned aside,

injured, and little esteemed. He bears our infirmities, and is in

sorrows for us. And we did esteem Him to be in sorrows, and to be

stricken and in punishment. But He was wounded for our transgressions,

and He was enfeebled for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace

was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep,

have gone astray, and the Lord hath given Him up for our sins. And

whereas He was evil entreated, He opened not His mouth; He was brought

as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before him who shears it is

dumb, so He opened not His mouth. In humility was His judgment taken.

Who shall declare His generation? For His life shall be cut off out of

the land; by the iniquities of my people is He led to death. Therefore

shall I give the wicked for His sepulture, and the rich on account of

His death; because He did no iniquity, neither was any deceit in His

mouth. The Lord is pleased to clear Him in regard to His stroke. [637]

If ye shall give your soul for your offences, ye shall see the seed of

the longest life. And the Lord is pleased to take away His soul from

sorrows, to show Him the light, and to set Him forth in sight, [638]

and to justify the righteous One who serves many well; and He shall

bear their sins. Therefore shall He have many for His inheritance, and

shall divide the spoils of the strong; for which reason His soul was

delivered over to death, and He was numbered with the transgressors,

and He bare the sins of many, and was delivered for their iniquities.

Rejoice, O barren, thou that dost not bear: exult, and cry aloud, thou

that dost not travail with child; for more are the children of the

desolate than those of her who has a husband. For the Lord hath said,

Enlarge the place of thy tent, and fix thy courts; [639] there is no

reason why thou shouldst spare: lengthen thy cords, and strengthen Thy

stakes firmly. Yea, again and again break thou forth on the right hand

and on the left. For thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and thou

shall inhabit the cities which were desolate. There is nothing for thee

to fear. For thou shall prevail, and be not thou confounded as if thou

shall be put to shame. For thou shall forget thy confusion for ever:

thou shall not remember the shame of thy widowhood, since I who made

thee am the Lord; the Lord is His name: and He who brought thee out,

the very God of Israel, shall be called the God of the whole earth.

[640]

48. What can be said in opposition to this evidence, and this

expression of things both foretold and fulfilled? If they suppose that

His disciples have given a false testimony on the subject of the

divinity of Christ, will they also doubt the passion of Christ? No:

they are not accustomed to believe that He rose from the dead; but, at

the same time, they are quite ready to believe that He suffered all

that men are wont to suffer, because they wish Him to be held to be a

man and nothing more. According to this, then, He was led like a sheep

to the slaughter; He was numbered with the transgressors; He was

wounded for our sins; by His stripes were we healed; His face was

marred, and little esteemed, and smitten with the palms, and defiled

with the spittle; His position was disfigured on the cross; He was led

to death by the iniquities of the people Israel; He is the man who had

no form nor comeliness when He was buffeted with the fists, when He was

crowned with the thorns, when He was derided as He hung (upon the

tree); He is the man who, as the lamb is dumb before its shearer,

opened not His mouth, when it was said to Him by those who mocked Him,

"Prophesy to us, thou Christ." [641] Now, however, He is exalted

verily, now He is honoured exceedingly; truly many nations are now

astonied at Him. [642] Now the kings have shut their mouth, by which

they were wont to promulgate the most ruthless laws against the

Christians. Truly those now see to whom it was not told of Him, and

those who have not heard understand. [643] For those Gentile nations to

whom the prophets made no announcement, do now rather see for

themselves how true these things are which were of old reported by the

prophets; [644] and those who have not heard Isaiah speak in his own

proper person, now understand from his writings the things which he

spoke concerning Him. For even in the said nation of the Jews, who

believed the report of the prophets, or to whom was that arm of the

Lord revealed, which is this very Christ who was announced by them,

[645] seeing that by their own hands they perpetrated those crimes

against Christ, the commission of which had been predicted by the

prophets whom they possessed? But now, indeed, He possesses many by

inheritance; and He divides the spoils of the strong, since the devil

and the demons have now been cast out and given up, and the possessions

once held by them have been distributed by Him among the fabrics of His

churches and for other necessary services.

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[634] Reading humilitate; some editions give humanitate, the humanity.

[635] Isa. liv 5.

[636] Puer.

[637] Purgare deus illum de plaga.

[638] Figurare per sensum = set forth in sensible figure.

[639] Reading aulas tuas confige; others give caulas = thy folds.

[640] Isa. lii. 13-liv. 5. [The variations from the Hebrew, especially

in some of the more obscure passages, are worthy of notice. Compare the

Revised Version, text and margin, in loco.--R.]

[641] Matt. xxvi., xxvii.; Mark xiv., xv.; Luke xxii., xxiii.; John

xviii., xix.

[642] [Isa. lii. 15 (in the Revised Version): "So shall He sprinkle

many nations," with margin, "Or, startle."--R.]

[643] Rom. xv. 16, 21.

[644] Magis ips� vident quam vera nuntiata sint per prophetas.

[645] John xii. 37, 38; Rom. x. 16.

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Chapter XXXII.--A Statement in Vindication of the Doctrine of the

Apostles as Opposed to Idolatry, in the Words of the Prophecies.

49. What, then, do these men, who are at once the perverse applauders

of Christ and the slanderers of Christians, say to these facts? Can it

be that Christ, by the use of magical arts, caused those predictions to

be uttered so long ago by the prophets? or have His disciples invented

them? Is it thus that the Church, in her extension among the Gentile

nations, though once barren, has been made to rejoice now in the

possession of more children than that synagogue had which, in its Law

or its King, had received, as it were, a husband? or is it thus that

this Church has been led to enlarge the place of her tent, and to

occupy all nations and tongues, so that now she lengthens her cords

beyond the limits to which the rights of the empire of Rome extend,

yea, even on to the territories of the Persians and the Indians and

other barbarous nations? or that, on the right hand by means of true

Christians, and on the left hand by means of pretended Christians, His

name is being made known among such a multitude of peoples? or that His

seed is made to inherit the Gentiles, so as now to inhabit cities which

had been left desolate of the true worship of God and the true

religion? or that His Church has been so little daunted by the threats

and furies of men, even at times when she has been covered with the

blood of martyrs, like one clad in purple array, that she has prevailed

over persecutors at once so numerous, so violent, and so powerful? or

that she has not been confounded, like one put to shame, when it was a

great crime to be or to become a Christian? or that she is made to

forget her confusion for ever, because, where sin had abounded, grace

did much more abound? [646] or that she is taught not to remember the

shame of her widowhood, because only for a little was she forsaken and

subjected to opprobrium, while now she shines forth once more with such

eminent glory? or, in fine, is it only a fiction concocted by Christ's

disciples, that the Lord who made her, and brought her forth from the

denomination of the devil and the demons, the very God of Israel is now

called the God of the whole earth; all which, nevertheless, the

prophets, whose books are now in the hands of the enemies of Christ,

foretold so long before Christ became the Son of man?

50. From this, therefore, let them understand that the matter is not

left obscure or doubtful even to the slowest and dullest minds: from

this, I say, let these perverse applauders of Christ and execrators of

the Christian religion understand that the disciples of Christ have

learned and taught, in opposition to their gods, precisely what the

doctrine of Christ contains. For the God of Israel is found to have

enjoined in the books of the prophets that all these objects which

those men are minded to worship should be held in abomination and be

destroyed, while He Himself is now named the God of the whole earth,

through the instrumentality of Christ and the Church of Christ, exactly

as He promised so long time ago. For if, indeed, in their marvellous

folly, they fancy that Christ worshipped their gods, and that it was

only through them that He had power to do things so great as these, we

may well ask whether the God of Israel also worshipped their gods, who

has now fulfilled by Christ what He promised with respect to the

extension of His own worship through all the nations, and with respect

to the detestation and subversion of those other deities? [647] Where

are their gods? Where are the vaticinations of their fanatics, and the

divinations of their prophets? [648] Where are the auguries, or the

auspices, or the soothsayings, [649] or the oracles of demons? Why is

it that, out of the ancient books which constitute the records of this

type of religion, nothing in the form either of admonition or of

prediction is advanced to oppose the Christian faith, or to controvert

the truth of those prophets of ours, who have now come to be so well

understood among all nations? "We have offended our gods," they say in

reply, "and they have deserted us for that reason: that explains it

also why the Christians have prevailed against us, and why the bliss of

human life, exhausted [650] and impaired, goes to wreck among us." We

challenge them, however, to take the books of their own seers, and read

out to us any statement purporting that the kind of issue which has

come upon them would be brought on them by the Christians: nay, we

challenge them to recite any passages in which, if not Christ (for they

wish to make Him out to have been a worshipper of their own gods), at

least this God of Israel, who is allowed to be the subverter of other

deities, is held up as a deity destined to be rejected and worthy of

detestation. But never will they produce any such passage, unless,

perchance, it be some fabrication of their own. And if ever they do

cite any such statement, the fact that it is but a fiction of their own

will betray itself in the unnoticeable manner in which a matter of so

grave importance is found adduced; whereas, in good truth, before what

has been predicted should have come to pass, it behoved to have been

proclaimed in the temples of the gods of all nations, with a view to

the timeous preparation and warning of all who are now minded [651] to

be Christians.

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[646] Rom. v. 20.

[647] Deut. vii. 5.

[648] Pythonum.

[649] Aruspicia.

[650] Reading defessa; others give depressa, crushed.

[651] Others read nolunt, who refuse.

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Chapter XXXIII.--A Statement in Opposition to Those Who Make the

Complaint that the Bliss of Human Life Has Been Impaired by the

Entrance of Christian Times.

51. Finally, as to the complaint which they make with respect to the

impairing of the bliss of human life by the entrance of Christian

times, if they only peruse the books of their own philosophers, who

reprehend those very things which are now being taken out of their way

in spite of all their unwillingness and murmuring, they will indeed

find that great praise is due to the times of Christ. For what

diminution is made in their happiness, unless it be in what they most

basely and luxuriously abused, to the great injury of their Creator? or

unless, perchance, it be the case that evil times originate in such

circumstances as these, in which throughout almost all states the

theatres are failing, and with them, too, the dens of vice and the

public profession of iniquity: yea, altogether the forums and cities in

which the demons used to be worshipped are falling. How comes it, then,

that they are falling, unless it be in consequence of the failure of

those very things, in the lustful and sacrilegious use of which they

were constructed? Did not their own Cicero, when commending a certain

actor of the name of Roscius, call him a man so clever as to be the

only one worthy enough to make it due for him to come upon the stage;

and yet, again, so good a man as to be the only one so worthy as to

make it due for him not to approach it? [652] What else did he disclose

with such remarkable clearness by this saying, but the fact that the

stage was so base there, that a person was under the greater obligation

not to connect himself with it, in proportion as he was a better man

than most? And yet their gods were pleased with such things of shame as

he deemed fit only to be removed to a distance from good men. But we

have also an open confession of the same Cicero, where he says that he

had to appease Flora, the mother of sports, by frequent celebration;

[653] in which sports such an excess of vice is wont to be exhibited,

that, in comparison with them, others are respectable, from engaging in

which, nevertheless, good men are prohibited. Who is this mother Flora,

and what manner of goddess is she, who is thus conciliated and

propitiated by a practice of vice indulged in with more than usual

frequency and with looser reins? How much more honourable now was it

for a Roscius to step upon the stage, than for a Cicero to worship a

goddess of this kind! If the gods of the Gentile nations are offended

because the supplies are lessened which are instituted for the purpose

of such celebrations, it is apparent of what character those must be

who are delighted with such things. But if, on the other hand, the gods

themselves in their wrath diminish these supplies, their anger yields

us better services than their placability. Wherefore let these men

either confute their own philosophers, who have reprehended the same

practices on the side of wanton men; or else let them break in pieces

those gods of theirs who have made such demands upon their worshippers,

if indeed they still find any such deities either to break in pieces or

to conceal. But let them cease from their blasphemous habit of charging

Christian times with the failure of their true prosperity,--a

prosperity, indeed, so used by them that they were sinking into all

that is base and hurtful,--lest thereby they be only putting us all the

more emphatically in mind of reasons for the ampler praise of the power

of Christ.

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[652] See Cicero's Oration in behalf of Roscius.

[653] See Cicero, Against Verres, 5.

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Chapter XXXIV.--Epilogue to the Preceding.

52. Much more might I say on this subject, were it not that the

requirements of the task which I have undertaken compel me to conclude

this book, and revert to the object originally proposed. When, indeed,

I took it in hand to solve those problems of the Gospels which meet us

where the four evangelists, as it seems to certain critics, fail to

harmonize with each other, by setting forth to the best of my ability

the particular designs which they severally have in view, I was met

first by the necessity of discussing a question which some are

accustomed to bring before us,--the question, namely, as to the reason

why we cannot produce any writings composed by Christ Himself. For

their aim is to get Him credited with the writing of some other

composition, I know not of what sort, which may be suitable to their

inclinations, and with having indulged in no sentiments of antagonism

to their gods, but rather with having paid respect to them in a kind of

magical worship; and their wish is also to get it believed that His

disciples not only gave a false account of Him when they declared Him

to be the God by whom all things were made, while He was really nothing

more than a man, although certainly a man of the most exalted wisdom,

but also that they taught with regard to these gods of theirs something

different from what they had themselves learned from Him. This is how

it happens that we have been engaged preferentially in pressing them

with arguments concerning the God of Israel, who is now worshipped by

all nations through the medium of the Church of the Christians, who is

also subverting their sacrilegious vanities the whole world over,

exactly as He announced by the mouth of the prophets so long ago, and

who has now fulfilled those predictions by the name of Christ, in whom

He had promised that all nations should be blessed. And from all this

they ought to understand that Christ could neither have known nor

taught anything else with regard to their gods than what was enjoined

and foretold by the God of Israel through the agency of these prophets

of His by whom He promised, and ultimately sent, this very Christ, in

whose name, according to the promise given to the fathers, when all

nations were pronounced blessed, it has come to pass that this same God

of Israel should be called the God of the whole earth. By this, too,

they ought to see that His disciples did not depart from the doctrine

of their Master when they forbade the worship of the gods of the

Gentiles, with the view of preventing us from addressing our

supplications to insensate images, or from having fellowship with

demons, or from serving the creature rather than the Creator with the

homage of religious worship.

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Chapter XXXV.--Of the Fact that the Mystery of a Mediator Was Made

Known to Those Who Lived in Ancient Times by the Agency of Prophecy, as

It is Now Declared to Us in the Gospel.

53. Wherefore, seeing that Christ Himself is that Wisdom of God by whom

all things were created, and considering that no rational

intelligences, whether of angels or of men, receive wisdom except by

participation in this Wisdom wherewith we are united by that Holy

Spirit through whom charity is shed abroad in our hearts [654] (which

Trinity at the same time constitutes one God), Divine Providence,

having respect to the interests of mortal men whose time-bound life was

held engaged in things which rise into being and die, [655] decreed

that this same Wisdom of God, assuming into the unity of His person the

(nature of) man, in which He might be born according to the conditions

of time, and live and die and rise again, should utter and perform and

bear and sustain things congruous to our salvation; and thus, in

exemplary fashion, show at once to men on earth the way for a return to

heaven, and to those angels who are above us, the way to retain their

position in heaven. [656] For unless, also, in the nature of the

reasonable soul, and under the conditions of an existence in time,

something came newly into being,--that is to say, unless that began to

be which previously was not,--there could never be any passing from a

life of utter corruption and folly into one of wisdom and true

goodness. And thus, as truth in the contemplative lives in the

enjoyment of things eternal, while faith in the believing is what is

due to things which are made, man is purified through that faith which

is conversant with temporal things, in order to his being made capable

of receiving the truth of things eternal. For one of their noblest

intellects, the philosopher Plato, in the treatise which is named the

Tim�us, speaks also to this effect: "As eternity is to that which is

made, so truth to faith." Those two belong to the things

above,--namely, eternity and truth; these two belong to the things

below,--namely, that which is made and faith. In order, therefore, that

we may be called off from the lowest objects, and led up again to the

highest, and in order also that what is made may attain to the eternal,

we must come through faith to truth. And because all contraries are

reduced to unity by some middle factor, and because also the iniquity

of time alienated us from the righteousness of eternity, there was need

of some mediatorial righteousness of a temporal nature; which

mediatizing factor might be temporal on the side of those lowest

objects, but also righteous on the side of these highest, [657] and

thus, by adapting itself to the former without cutting itself off from

the latter, might bring back those lowest objects to the highest.

Accordingly, Christ was named the Mediator between God and men, who

stood between the immortal God and mortal man, as being Himself both

God and man, [658] who reconciled man to God, who continued to be what

He (formerly) was, but was made also what He (formerly) was not. And

the same Person is for us at once the (centre of the) said faith in

things that are made, and the truth in things eternal.

54. This great and unutterable mystery, this kingdom and priesthood,

was revealed by prophecy to the men of ancient time, and is now

preached by the gospel to their descendants. For it behoved that, at

some period or other, that should be made good among all nations which

for a long time had been promised through the medium of a single

nation. Accordingly, He who sent the prophets before His own descent

also despatched the apostles after His ascension. Moreover, in virtue

of the man [659] assumed by Him, He stands to all His disciples in the

relation of the head to the members of His body. Therefore, when those

disciples have written matters which He declared and spake to them, it

ought not by any means to be said that He has written nothing Himself;

since the truth is, that His members have accomplished only what they

became acquainted with by the repeated statements of the Head. For all

that He was minded to give for our perusal on the subject of His own

doings and sayings, He commanded to be written by those disciples, whom

He thus used as if they were His own hands. Whoever apprehends this

correspondence of unity and this concordant service of the members, all

in harmony in the discharge of diverse offices under the Head, will

receive the account which he gets in the Gospel through the narratives

constructed by the disciples, in the same kind of spirit in which he

might look upon the actual hand of the Lord Himself, which He bore in

that body which was made His own, were he to see it engaged in the act

of writing. For this reason let us now rather proceed to examine into

the real character of those passages in which these critics suppose the

evangelists to have given contradictory accounts (a thing which only

those who fail to understand the matter aright can fancy to be the

case); so that, when these problems are solved, it may also be made

apparent that the members in that body have preserved a befitting

harmony in the unity of the body itself, not only by identity in

sentiment, but also by constructing records consonant with that

identity.

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[654] Rom. v. 5.

[655] In rebus orientibus et occidentibus occupata tenebatur.

[656] Fieret et deorsum hominibus exemplum redeundi et eis qui sursum

sunt angelis exemplum manendi.

[657] Reading qu� medietas temporalis esset de imis, justa de summis.

Another version gives qu� medietas temporalis esset de imis mixta et

summis = which temporal mediatizing factor might be made up of the

lowest and the highest objects together, or = which might be a temporal

mediatizing factor made up, etc.

[658] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[659] Hominem.

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Book II.

In this book Augustin undertakes an orderly examination of the Gospel

according to Matthew, on to the narrative of the Supper, and institutes

a comparison between it and the other gospels by Mark, Luke, and John,

with the view of demonstrating a complete harmony between the four

evangelists throughout all these sections.

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The Prologue.

1. Whereas, in a discourse of no small length and of imperative

importance, which we have finished within the compass of one book, we

have refuted the folly of those who think that the disciples who have

given us these Gospel histories deserve only to be disparagingly

handled, for the express reason that no writings are produced by us

with the claim of being compositions which have proceeded immediately

from the hand of that Christ whom they refuse indeed to worship as God,

but whom, nevertheless, they do not hesitate to pronounce worthy to be

honoured as a man far surpassing all other men in wisdom; and as,

further, we have confuted those who strive to make Him out to have

written in a strain suiting their perverted inclinations, but not in

terms calculated, by their perusal and acceptance, to set men right, or

to turn them from their perverse ways, let us now look into the

accounts which the four evangelists have given us of Christ, with the

view of seeing how self-consistent they are, and how truly in harmony

with each other. And let us do so in the hope that no offence, even of

the smallest order may be felt in this line of things in the Christian

faith by those who exhibit more curiosity than capacity, in so far as

they think that a study of the evangelical books, conducted not in the

way of a merely cursory perusal, but in the form of a more than

ordinarily careful investigation, has disclosed to them certain matters

of an inapposite and contradictory nature, and in so far as their

notion is, that these things are to be held up as objections in the

spirit of contention, rather than pondered in the spirit of

consideration.

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Chapter I.--A Statement of the Reason Why the Enumeration of the

Ancestors of Christ is Carried Down to Joseph, While Christ Was Not

Born of that Man's Seed, But of the Virgin Mary.

2. The evangelist Matthew has commenced his narrative in these terms:

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son

of Abraham." [660] By this exordium he shows with sufficient clearness

that his undertaking is to give an account of the generation of Christ

according to the flesh. For, according to this, Christ is the Son of

man,--a title which He also gives very frequently to Himself, [661]

thereby commending to our notice what in His compassion He has

condescended to be on our behalf. For that heavenly and eternal

generation, in virtue of which He is the only-begotten Son of God,

before every creature, because all things were made by Him, is so

ineffable, that it is of it that the word of the prophet must be

understood when he says, "Who shall declare His generation?" [662]

Matthew therefore traces out the human generation of Christ, mentioning

His ancestors from Abraham downwards, and carrying them on to Joseph

the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born. For it was not held

allowable to consider him dissociated from the married estate which was

entered into with Mary, on the ground that she gave birth to Christ,

not as the wedded wife of Joseph, but as a virgin. For by this example

an illustrious recommendation is made to faithful married persons of

the principle, that even when by common consent they maintain their

continence, the relation can still remain, and can still be called one

of wedlock, inasmuch as, although there is no connection between the

sexes of the body, there is the keeping of the affections of the mind;

particularly so for this reason, that in their case we see how the

birth of a son was a possibility apart from anything of that carnal

intercourse which is to be practised with the purpose of the

procreation of children only. Moreover, the mere fact that he had not

begotten Him by act of his own, was no sufficient reason why Joseph

should not be called the father of Christ; for indeed he could be in

all propriety the father of one whom he had not begotten by his own

wife, but had adopted from some other person.

3. Christ, it is true, was also supposed to be the son of Joseph in

another way, as if He had been born simply of that man's seed. But this

supposition was entertained by persons whose notice the virginity of

Mary escaped. For Luke says: "And Jesus Himself began to be about

thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph." [663]

This Luke, however, instead of naming Mary His only parent, had not the

slightest hesitation in also speaking of both parties as His parents,

when he says: "And the boy grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom,

and the grace of God was in Him: and His parents went to Jerusalem

every year at the feast of the passover." [664] But lest any one may

fancy that by the "parents" here are rather to be understood the blood

relations of Mary along with the mother herself, what shall be said to

that preceding word of the same Luke, namely, "And His father [665] and

mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him"? [666]

Since, then, he also makes the statement that Christ was born, not in

consequence of Joseph's connection with the mother, but simply of Mary

the virgin, how can he call him His father, unless it be that we are to

understand him to have been truly the husband of Mary, without the

intercourse of the flesh indeed, but in virtue of the real union of

marriage; and thus also to have been in a much closer relation the

father of Christ, in so far as He was born of his wife, than would have

been the case had He been only adopted from some other party? And this

makes it clear that the clause,"as was supposed," [667] is inserted

with a view to those who are of opinion that He was begotten by Joseph

in the same way as other men are begotten.

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[660] Matt. i. 1.

[661] Matt. viii. 20, ix. 6.

[662] Isa. liii. 8.

[663] Luke iii. 23. [Revised Version, "And Jesus Himself, when He began

to teach, was about," etc. The Latin, erat incipiens, conveys the same

sense.--R.]

[664] Luke ii. 40, 41.

[665] Et erat pater ejus, etc., instead of Joseph, etc. [The correct

text in Luke ii. 33 is undoubtedly that given by Augustin. Compare

critical editions of the Greek text. So Revised Version, "And His

father and His mother," etc.--R.]

[666] Luke ii. 33.

[667] [Compare Revised Version, where the parenthesis is correctly

given.--R.]

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Chapter II.--An Explanation of the Sense in Which Christ is the Son of

David, Although He Was Not Begotten in the Way of Ordinary Generation

by Joseph the Son of David.

4. Thus, too, even if one were able to demonstrate that no descent,

according to the laws of blood, could be claimed from David for Mary,

we should have warrant enough to hold Christ to be the son of David, on

the ground of that same mode of reckoning by which also Joseph is

called His father. But seeing that the Apostle Paul unmistakably tells

us that "Christ was of the seed of David according to the flesh," [668]

how much more ought we to accept without any hesitation the position

that Mary herself also was descended in some way, according to the laws

of blood, from the lineage of David? Moreover, since this woman's

connection with the priestly family also is a matter not left in

absolute obscurity, inasmuch as Luke inserts the statement that

Elisabeth, whom he records to be of the daughters of Aaron, [669] was

her cousin, [670] we ought most firmly to hold by the fact that the

flesh of Christ sprang from both lines; to wit, from the line of the

kings, and from that of the priests, in the case of which persons there

was also instituted a certain mystical unction which was symbolically

expressive among this people of the Hebrews. In other words, there was

a chrism; which term makes the import of the name of Christ patent, and

presents it as something indicated so long time ago by an intimation so

very intelligible.

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[668] Rom. i. 3.

[669] Luke i. 5.

[670] Luke i. 36.

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Chapter III.--A Statement of the Reason Why Matthew Enumerates One

Succession of Ancestors for Christ, and Luke Another.

5. Furthermore, as to those critics who find a difficulty in the

circumstance that Matthew enumerates one series of ancestors, beginning

with David and travelling downwards to Joseph, [671] while Luke

specifies a different succession, tracing it from Joseph upwards as far

as to David, [672] they might easily perceive that Joseph may have had

two fathers,--namely, one by whom he was begotten, and a second by whom

he may have been adopted. [673] For it was an ancient custom also among

that people to adopt children with the view of making sons for

themselves of those whom they had not begotten. For, leaving out of

sight the fact that Pharaoh's daughter [674] adopted Moses (as she was

a foreigner), Jacob himself adopted his own grandsons, the sons of

Joseph, in these very intelligible terms: "Now, therefore, thy two sons

which were born unto thee before I came unto thee, are mine: Ephraim

and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon: and thy issue which

thou begettest after them shall be thine." [675] Whence also it came to

pass that there were twelve tribes of Israel, although the tribe of

Levi was omitted, which did service in the temple; for along with that

one the whole number was thirteen, the sons of Jacob themselves being

twelve. Thus, too, we can understand how Luke, in the genealogy

contained in his Gospel, has named a father for Joseph, not in the

person of the father by whom he was begotten, but in that of the father

by whom he was adopted, tracing the list of the progenitors upwards

until David is reached. For, seeing that there is a necessity, as both

evangelists give a true narrative,--to wit, both Matthew and

Luke,--that one of them should hold by the line of the father who begat

Joseph, and the other by the line of the father who adopted him, whom

should we suppose more likely to have preserved the lineage of the

adopting father, than that evangelist who has declined to speak of

Joseph as begotten by the person whose son he has nevertheless reported

him to be? For it is more appropriate that one should have been called

the son of the man by whom he was adopted, than that he should be said

to have been begotten by the man of whose flesh he was not descended.

Now when Matthew, accordingly, used the phrases, "Abraham begat Isaac,"

"Isaac begat Jacob," and so on, keeping steadily by the term "begat,"

until he said at the close, "and Jacob begat Joseph," he gave us to

know with sufficient clearness, that he had traced out the order [676]

of ancestors on to that father by whom Joseph was not adopted, but

begotten.

6. But even although Luke had said that Joseph was begotten by Heli,

that expression ought not to disturb us to such an extent as to lead us

to believe anything else than that by the one evangelist the father

begetting was mentioned, and by the other the father adopting. For

there is nothing absurd in saying that a person has begotten, not after

the flesh, it may be, but in love, one whom he has adopted as a son.

Those of us, to wit, to whom God has given power to become His sons, He

did not beget of His own nature and substance, as was the case with His

only Son; but He did indeed adopt us in His love. And this phrase the

apostle is seen repeatedly to employ just in order to distinguish from

us the only-begotten Son who is before every creature, by whom all

things were made, who alone is begotten of the substance of the Father;

who, in accordance with the equality of divinity, is absolutely what

the Father is, and who is declared to have been sent with the view of

assuming to Himself the flesh proper to that race to which we too

belong according to our nature, in order that by His participation in

our mortality, through His love for us, He might make us partakers of

His own divinity in the way of adoption. For the apostle speaks thus:

"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of

a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law,

that we might receive [677] the adoption of sons." [678] And yet we are

also said to be born of God,--that is to say, in so far as we, who

already were men, have received power to be made the sons of God,--to

be made such, moreover, by grace, and not by nature. For if we were

sons by nature, we never could have been aught else. But when John

said, "To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them

that believe on His name," he proceeded at once to add these words,

"which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the

will of man, but of God." [679] Thus, of the same persons he said,

first, that having received power they became the sons of God, which is

what is meant by that adoption which Paul mentions; and secondly, that

they were born of God. And in order the more plainly to show by what

grace this is effected, he continued thus: "And the Word was made

flesh, and dwelt among us," [680] --as if he meant to say, What wonder

is it that those should have been made sons of God, although they were

flesh, on whose behalf the only Son was made flesh, although He was the

Word? Howbeit there is this vast difference between the two cases, that

when we are made the sons of God we are changed for the better; but

when the Son of God was made the son of man, He was not indeed changed

into the worse, but He did certainly assume to Himself what was below

Him. James also speaks to this effect: "Of His own will begat He us by

the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits [681] of

His creatures." [682] And to preclude our supposing, as it might appear

from the use of this term "begat," that we are made what He is Himself,

he here points out very plainly, that what is conceded to us in virtue

of this adoption, is a kind of headship [683] among the creatures.

7. It would be no departure from the truth, therefore, even had Luke

said that Joseph was begotten by the person by whom he was really

adopted. Even in that way he did in fact beget him, not indeed to be a

man, but certainly to be a son; just as God has begotten us to be His

sons, whom He had previously made to the effect of being men. But He

begat only one to be not simply the Son, which the Father is not, but

also God, which the Father in like manner is. At the same time, it is

evident that if Luke had employed that phraseology, it would be

altogether a matter of dubiety as to which of the two writers mentioned

the father adopting, and which the father begetting of his own flesh;

just as, on the other hand, although neither of them had used the word

"begat," and although the former evangelist had called him the son of

the one person, and the latter the son of the other, it would

nevertheless be doubtful which of them named the father by whom he was

begotten, and which the father by whom he was adopted. As the case

stands now, however,--the one evangelist saying that "Jacob begat

Joseph," and the other speaking of "Joseph who was the son of

Heli,"--by the very distinction which they have made between the

expressions, they have elegantly indicated the different objects which

they have taken in hand. But surely it might easily suggest itself, as

I have said, to a man of piety decided enough to make him consider it

right to seek some worthier explanation than that of simply crediting

the evangelist with stating what is false; it might, I repeat, readily

suggest itself to such a person to examine what reasons there might be

for one man being (supposed) capable of having two fathers. This,

indeed, might have suggested itself even to those detractors, were it

not that they preferred contention to consideration.

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[671] Matt. i. 1-16.

[672] Luke iii. 23-38.

[673] In the Retractations (ii. 16), Augustin alludes to this passage

with the view of correcting his statement regarding the adoption. He

tells us that, in speaking of the two several fathers whom Joseph may

have had, he should not have said that there "was one by whom Joseph

was begotten, and another by whom he may have been adopted," but should

rather have put it thus: "one by whom he was begotten, and another unto

whom he was adopted" (alteri instead of ab altero adoptatus). And the

reason indicated for the correction is the probability that the father

who begat Joseph was the mother's second husband, who, according to the

Levirate law, had married her on the death of his brother without

issue. [That Luke gives the lineage of Mary, who was the daughter of

Heli, has been held by many scholars. Weiss, in his edition of Meyer's

Commentary, claims that this is the only grammatical view: see

Robinson's Greek Harmony, rev. ed. pp. 207, 208. Augustin passes over

this solution apparently because he was more concerned to press the

priestly lineage of Mary.--R.]

[674] Ex. ii. 10.

[675] Gen. xlviii. 5, 6.

[676] Reading ordinem; others have originem, descent.

[677] Reciperemus. Most of the older mss. give recipiamus, may receive.

[678] Gal. iv. 4, 5.

[679] John i. 12, 13.

[680] John i. 14.

[681] Initium, beginning.

[682] Jas. i. 18.

[683] Principatum.

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Chapter IV.--Of the Reason Why Forty Generations (Not Including Christ

Himself) are Found in Matthew, Although He Divides Them into Three

Successions of Fourteen Each.

8. The matter next to be introduced, moreover, is one requiring, in

order to its right apprehension and contemplation, a reader of the

greatest attention and carefulness. For it has been acutely observed

that Matthew, who had proposed to himself the task of commending the

kingly character in Christ, named, exclusive of Christ Himself, forty

men in the series of generations. Now this number denotes the period in

which, in this age and on this earth, it behoves us to be ruled by

Christ in accordance with that painful discipline whereby "God

scourgeth," as it is written, "every son that He receiveth;" [684] and

of which also an apostle says that "we must through much tribulation

enter into the kingdom of God." [685] This discipline is also signified

by that rod of iron, concerning which we read this statement in a

Psalm: "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron;" [686] which words

occur after the saying, "Yet I am set king by Him upon His holy hill of

Zion!" [687] For the good, too, are ruled with a rod of iron, as it is

said of them: "The time is come that judgment should begin at the house

of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be to them that

obey not the gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saved,

where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" [688] To the same

persons the sentence that follows also applies: "Thou shall dash them

in pieces like a potter's vessel." For the good, indeed, are ruled by

this discipline, while the wicked are crushed by it. And these two

different classes of persons are mentioned here as if they were the

same, on account of the identity of the signs [689] employed in

reference to the wicked in common with the good.

9. That this number, then, is a sign of that laborious period in which,

under the discipline of Christ the King, we have to fight against the

devil, is also indicated by the fact that both the law and the prophets

solemnized a fast of forty days,--that is to say, a humbling of the

soul,--in the person of Moses and Elias, who fasted each for a space of

forty days. [690] And what else does the Gospel narrative shadow forth

under the fast of the Lord Himself, during which forty days He was also

tempted of the devil, [691] than that condition of temptation which

appertains to us through all the space of this age, and which He bore

in the flesh which He condescended to take to Himself from our

mortality? After the resurrection also, it was His will to remain with

His disciples on the earth not longer than forty days, [692] continuing

to mingle for that space of time with this life of theirs in the way of

human intercourse, and partaking along with them of the food needful

for mortal men, although He Himself was to die no more; and all this

was done with the view of signifying to them through these forty days,

that although His presence should be hidden from their eyes, He would

yet fulfil what He promised when He said, "Lo, I am with you, even to

the end of the world." [693] And in explanation of the circumstance

that this particular number should denote this temporal and earthly

life, what suggests itself most immediately in the meantime, although

there may be another and subtler method of accounting for it, is the

consideration that the seasons of the years also revolve in four

successive alternations, and that the world itself has its bounds

determined by four divisions, which Scripture sometimes designates by

the names of the winds,--East and West, Aquilo [or North] and Meridian

[or South]. [694] But the number forty is equivalent to four times ten.

Furthermore, the number ten itself is made up by adding the several

numbers in succession from one up to four together.

10. In this way, then, as Matthew undertook the task of presenting the

record of Christ as the King who came into this world, and into this

earthly and mortal life of men, for the purpose of exercising rule over

us who have to struggle with temptation, he began with Abraham, and

enumerated forty men. For Christ came in the flesh from that very

nation of the Hebrews with a view to the keeping of which as a people

distinct from the other nations, God separated Abraham from his own

country and his own kindred. [695] And the circumstance that the

promise contained an intimation of the race from which He was destined

to come, served very specially to make the prediction and announcement

concerning Him something all the clearer. Thus the evangelist did

indeed mark out fourteen generations in each of three several members,

stating that from Abraham until David there were fourteen generations,

and from David until the carrying away into Babylon other fourteen

generations, and another fourteen from that period on to the nativity

of Christ. [696] But he did not then reckon them all up in one sum,

counting them one by one, and saying that thus they make up forty-two

in all. For among these progenitors there is one who is enumerated

twice, namely Jechonias, with whom a kind of deflection was made in the

direction of extraneous nations at the time when the transmigration

into Babylon took place. [697] When the enumeration, moreover, is thus

bent from the direct order of progression, and is made to form, if we

may so say, a kind of corner for the purpose of taking a different

course, what meets us at that corner is mentioned twice over,--namely,

at the close of the preceding series, and at the head of the deflection

specified. And this, too, was a figure of Christ as the one who was, in

a certain sense, to pass from the circumcision to the uncircumcision,

or, so to speak, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and to be, as it were, the

corner-stone to all who believe on Him, whether on the one side or on

the other. Thus was God making preparations then in a figurative manner

for things which were to come in truth. For Jechonias himself, with

whose name the kind of corner which I have in view was prefigured, is

by interpretation the "preparation of God." [698] In this way,

therefore, there are really not forty-two distinct generations named

here, which would be the proper sum of three times fourteen; but, as

there is a double enumeration of one of the names, we have here forty

generations in all, taking into account the fact that Christ Himself is

reckoned in the number, who, like the kingly president over this

[significant] number forty, superintends the administration of this

temporal and earthly life of ours.

11. And inasmuch as it was Matthew's intention to set forth Christ as

descending with the object of sharing this mortal state with us, he has

mentioned those same generations from Abraham on to Joseph, and on to

the birth of Christ Himself, in the form of a descending scale, and at

the very beginning of his Gospel. Luke, on the other hand, details

those generations not at the commencement of his Gospel, but at the

point of Christ's baptism, and gives them not in the descending, but in

the ascending order, ascribing to Him preferentially the character of a

priest in the expiation of sins, as where the voice from heaven

declared Him, and where John himself delivered his testimony in these

terms: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!"

[699] Besides, in the process by which he traces the genealogy upwards,

he passes Abraham and carries us back to God, to whom, purified and

atoned for, we are reconciled. Of merit, too, He has sustained in

Himself the origination of our adoption; for we are made the sons of

God through adoption, by believing on the Son of God. Moreover, on our

account the Son of God was pleased to be made the son of man by the

generation which is proper to the flesh. And the evangelist has shown

clearly enough that he did not name Joseph the son of Heli on the

ground that he was begotten of him, but only on the ground that he was

adopted by him. For he has spoken of Adam also as the son of God, who,

strictly speaking, was made by God, but was also, as it may be said,

constituted a son in paradise by the grace which afterwards he lost

through his transgression.

12. In this way, it is the taking of our sins upon Himself by the Lord

Christ that is signified in the genealogy of Matthew, while in the

genealogy of Luke it is the abolition of our sins by the Lord Christ

that is expressed. In accordance with these ideas, the one details the

names in the descending scale, and the other in the ascending. For when

the apostle says, "God sent His Son in the likeness of the flesh of

sin," [700] he refers to the taking of our sins upon Himself by Christ.

But when he adds, "for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh," [701] he

expresses the expiation of sins. Consequently Matthew traces the

succession downwards from David through Solomon, in connection with

whose mother it was that he sinned; while Luke carries the genealogy

upwards to the same David through Nathan, [702] by which prophet God

took away [703] his sin. [704] The number, also, which Luke follows

does most certainly best indicate the taking away of sins. For inasmuch

as in Christ, who Himself had no sin, there is assuredly no iniquity

allied to the iniquities of men which He bore in His flesh, the number

adopted by Matthew makes forty when Christ is excepted. On the

contrary, inasmuch as, by clearing us of all sin and purging us, He

places us in a right relation to His own and His Father's righteousness

(so that the apostle's word is made good: "But he that is joined to the

Lord is one spirit" [705] ), in the number used by Luke we find

included both Christ Himself, with whom the enumeration begins, and

God, with whom it closes; and the sum becomes thus seventy-seven, which

denotes the thorough remission and abolition of all sins. This perfect

removal of sins the Lord Himself also clearly represented under the

mystery of this number, when He said that the person sinning ought to

be forgiven not only seven times, but even unto seventy times seven.

[706]

13. A careful inquiry will make it plain that it is not without some

reason that this latter number is made to refer to the purging of all

sins. For the number ten is shown to be, as one may say, the number of

justice [righteousness] in the instance of the ten precepts of the law.

Moreover, sin is the transgression of the law. And the transgression

[707] of the number ten is expressed suitably in the eleven; whence

also we find instructions to have been given to the effect that there

should be eleven curtains of haircloth constructed in the tabernacle;

[708] for who can doubt that the haircloth has a bearing upon the

expression of sin? Thus, too, inasmuch as all time in its revolution

runs in spaces of days designated by the number seven, we find that

when the number eleven is multiplied by the number seven, we are

brought with all due propriety to the number seventy-seven as the sign

of sin in its totality. In this enumeration, therefore, we come upon

the symbol for the full remission of sins, as expiation is made for us

by the flesh of our Priest, with whose name the calculation of this

number starts here; and as reconciliation is also effected for us with

God, with whose name the reckoning of this number is here brought to

its conclusion by the Holy Spirit, who appeared in the form of a dove

on the occasion of that baptism in connection with which the number in

question is mentioned. [709]

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[684] Heb. xii. 6.

[685] Acts xiv. 22.

[686] Ps. ii. 9.

[687] Ps. ii. 6.

[688] 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

[689] Sacramenta.

[690] Exod. xxxiv. 28; 1 Kings xix. 8.

[691] Matt. iv. 1, 2.

[692] Acts i. 3.

[693] Matt. xxviii. 20.

[694] Zech. xiv. 4.

[695] Gen. xii. 1, 2.

[696] Matt. i. 17.

[697] [It is more probable that David should be reckoned twice, in

making out the series. Augustin passes over the more serious difficulty

arising from the omissions in the genealogy given by Matthew. These

omissions, however, show that the evangelist had some purpose in his

use of the number "fourteen." Of any design to emphasize the number

"forty" there is no evidence.--R.]

[698] Pr�paratio Dei.

[699] John i. 29.

[700] Rom. viii. 3. [Comp. Revised Version margin.--R.]

[701] Ut de peccato damnaret peccatum in carne. [Revised Version, "And

as an offering for sin," etc.--R.]

[702] 2 Sam. xii. 1-14.

[703] Expiavit.

[704] In his Retractations (ii. 16) Augustin refers to this sentence in

order to chronicle a correction. He tells us that, instead of saying

that "Luke carries the genealogy upwards to the same David through

Nathan, by which prophet God took away his sin," he should have said

"by a prophet of which name," etc., because although the name was the

same, the progenitor was a different person from the prophet Nathan.

[705] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

[706] Matt. xviii. 22. [Augustin apparently follows the rendering:

"seventy times and seven" (see Revised Version margin), accepted by

Meyer and many others. His whole argument turns upon the presence of

the number "eleven" as a factor.--R.]

[707] Transgressio, overstepping.

[708] Exod. xxvi. 7.

[709] Luke iii. 22.

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Chapter V.--A Statement of the Manner in Which Luke's Procedure is

Proved to Be in Harmony with Matthew's in Those Matters Concerning the

Conception and the Infancy or Boyhood of Christ, Which are Omitted by

the One and Recorded by the Other.

14. After the enumeration of the generations, Matthew proceeds thus:

Now the birth of Christ [710] was on this wise. Whereas His mother Mary

was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with

child of the Holy Ghost. [711] What Matthew has omitted to state here

regarding the way in which that came to pass, has been set forth by

Luke after his account of the conception of John. His narrative is to

the following effect: And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent

from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to

a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's

name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou

that art full of grace, [712] the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou

among women. And when she saw [713] these things, she was troubled at

his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should

be. And the angel said unto her: Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found

favour with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring

forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and

shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give

unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign in the

house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then

said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come

upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee:

therefore also that holy thing which shall be born [714] shall be

called the Son of God; [715] and then follow matters not belonging to

the question at present in hand. Now all this Matthew has recorded

[summarily], when he tells us of Mary that "she was found with child of

the Holy Ghost." Neither is there any contradiction between the two

evangelists, in so far as Luke has set forth in detail what Matthew has

omitted to notice; for both bear witness that Mary conceived by the

Holy Ghost. And in the same way there is no want of concord between

them, when Matthew, in his turn, connects with the narrative something

which Luke leaves out. For Matthew proceeds to give us the following

statement: Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing

to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But

while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord

appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear

not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her

is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt

call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins. Now

all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the

Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and

shall bring forth a son; and His name shall be called [716] Emmanuel,

which, being interpreted, is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised

from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto

him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her

first-born son; [717] and he called His name Jesus. Now when Jesus was

born in Bethlehem of Jud�a, in the days of Herod the king, and so

forth. [718]

15. With respect to the city of Bethlehem, Matthew and Luke are at one.

But Luke explains in what way and for what reason Joseph and Mary came

to it; whereas Matthew gives no such explanation. On the other hand,

while Luke is silent on the subject of the journey of the magi from the

east, Matthew furnishes an account of it. That narrative he constructs

as follows, in immediate connection with what he has already offered:

Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where

is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the

east, and are come to worship Him. Now, when Herod the king had heard

these things, he was troubled. [719] And in this manner the account

goes on, down to the passage where of these magi it is written that,

"being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod,

they departed into their own country another way." [720] This entire

section is omitted by Luke, just as Matthew fails to mention some other

circumstances which are mentioned by Luke: as, for example, that the

Lord was laid in a manger; and that an angel announced His birth to the

shepherds; and that there was with the angel a multitude of the

heavenly host praising God; and that the shepherds came and saw that

that was true which the angel had announced to them; and that on the

day of His circumcision He received His name; as also the incidents

reported by the same Luke to have occurred after the days of the

purification of Mary were fulfilled,--namely, their taking Him to

Jerusalem, and the words spoken in the temple by Simeon or Anna

concerning Him, when, filled with the Holy Ghost, they recognized Him.

Of all these things Matthew says nothing.

16. Hence, a subject which deserves inquiry is the question concerning

the precise time when these events took place which are omitted by

Matthew and given by Luke, and those, on the other hand, which have

been omitted by Luke and given by Matthew. For after his account of the

return of the magi who had come from the east to their own country,

Matthew proceeds to tell us how Joseph was warned by an angel to flee

into Egypt with the young child, to prevent His being put to death by

Herod; and then how Herod failed to find Him, but slew the children

from two years old and under; thereafter, how, when Herod was dead,

Joseph returned from Egypt, and, on hearing that Archelaus reigned in

Jud�a instead of his father Herod, went to reside with the boy in

Galilee, at the city Nazareth. All these facts, again, are passed over

by Luke. Nothing, however, like a want of harmony can be made out

between the two writers merely on the ground that the latter states

what the former omits, or that the former mentions what the latter

leaves unnoticed. But the real question is as to the exact period at

which these things could have taken place which Matthew has linked on

to his narrative; to wit, the departure of the family into Egypt, and

their return from it after Herod's death, and their residence at that

time in the town of Nazareth, the very place to which Luke tells us

that they went back after they had performed in the temple all things

regarding the boy according to the law of the Lord. Here, accordingly,

we have to take notice of a fact which will also hold good for other

like cases, and which will secure our minds against similar agitation

or disturbance in subsequent instances. I refer to the circumstance

that each evangelist constructs his own particular narrative on a kind

of plan which gives it the appearance of being the complete and orderly

record of the events in their succession. For, preserving a simple

silence on the subject of those incidents of which he intends to give

no account, he then connects those which he does wish to relate with

what he has been immediately recounting, in such a manner as to make

the recital seem continuous. At the same time, when one of them

mentions facts of which the other has given no notice, the order of

narrative, if carefully considered, will be found to indicate the point

at which the writer by whom the omissions are made has taken the leap

in his account, and thus has attached the facts, which it was his

purpose to introduce, in such a manner to the preceding context as to

give the appearance of a connected series, in which the one incident

follows immediately on the other, without the interposition of anything

else. On this principle, therefore, we understand that where he tells

us how the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, and

how they went back to their own country by another way, Matthew has

simply omitted all that Luke has related respecting all that happened

to the Lord in the temple, and all that was said by Simeon and Anna;

while, on the other hand, Luke has omitted in the same place all notice

of the journey into Egypt, which is given by Matthew, and has

introduced the return to the city of Nazareth as if it were immediately

consecutive.

17. If any one wishes, however, to make up one complete narrative out

of all that is said or left unsaid by these two evangelists

respectively, on the subject of Christ's nativity and infancy or

boyhood, he may arrange the different statements in the following

order:--Now the birth of Christ was on this wise. [721] There was, in

the days of Herod the king of Jud�a, a certain priest named Zacharias,

of the course of Abia; and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and

her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God,

walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both

were well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he

executed the priest's office before God, in the order of his course,

according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn

incense when he went into the temple of the Lord: and the whole

multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right

side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him he was

troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear

not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall

bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have

joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be

great in the sight of the Lord: and he shall drink neither wine nor

strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his

mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the

Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of

Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the

disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people perfect

[722] for the Lord. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I

know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And

the angel, answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the

presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these

glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, [723] and not able to

speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou

hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried in

the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and

they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: and he beckoned

unto them, and remained speechless. And it came to pass that, as soon

as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his

own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid

herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the

days wherein He looked upon me, to take away my reproach among men. And

in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of

Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was

Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the

angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art full of grace,

[724] the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she

saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what

manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear

not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. Behold, thou shalt

conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name

Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest;

and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David:

and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom

there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this

be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her,

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall

overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of

thee shall be called the Son of God. [725] And, behold, thy cousin

Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is

the sixth month with her who is called [726] barren. For with God

nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the

Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from

her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with

haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias,

and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard

the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was

filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and

said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy

womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come

to me? for, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine

ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed art thou that

didst believe, [727] for there shall be a performance of those things

which were told thee from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify

the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath

regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth

all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done

to me great things, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on them that

fear Him, from generation to generation. He hath made [728] strength

with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their

heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted them of

low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He

hath sent empty away. He hath holpen [729] His servant Israel, in

remembrance of his mercy: as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and

to his seed for ever. And Mary abode with her about three months, and

returned to her own house. [730] Then it proceeds thus:--She was found

with child of the Holy Ghost. [731] Then Joseph her husband, being a

just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to

put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the

angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou

son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which

is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a

son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people

from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled

which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin

shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call

His name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us. Then

Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had

bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and knew her not. [732]

Now [733] Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, and

she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her relatives [734]

heard that the Lord magnified His mercy with her; and they

congratulated her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they

came to circumcise the child; and they called [735] him Zacharias,

after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so;

but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of

thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his

father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table,

and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his

mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue, and he spake and praised

God. And fear came on all them that dwelt round about them: and all

these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of

Jud�a. And all they that had heard them laid them up in their heart,

saying, What manner of child, thinkest thou, shall this be? For the

hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with

the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of

Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up

an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; as He

spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the

world began; (to give) salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of

all that hate us: to perform mercy with our fathers, and to remember

His holy covenant, the oath which He sware to Abraham our father that

He would give to us; in order that, being saved out of the hand of our

enemies, we might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness

before Him, all our days. And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet

of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to

prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people, for

the remission [736] of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God;

whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to

them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet

into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,

and was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel. And it

came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from C�sar

Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. [737] This first taxing

[738] was made when Syrinus [739] was governor of Syria. And all went

to be taxed, [740] every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up

from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Jud�a, unto the city of

David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and

lineage of David, to be taxed [741] with Mary his espoused wife, being

great with child. And so it was, that while they were there, the days

were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth

her first-born son, and wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes, and laid Him

in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there

were in the same country shepherds watching and keeping the vigils of

the night over their flock. And, lo, the angel of the Lord stood by

them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were

sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I

bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For

unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is

Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the

babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly

there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God,

and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of

goodwill. [742] And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from

them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even

unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the

Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary

and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it,

they understood [743] the saying which had been told them concerning

this child. And all they that heard it, wondered also at those things

which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things,

and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying

and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it

was told unto them. And when eight days were accomplished for the

circumcising of the child, His name was called Jesus, which was so

named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb. [744] And then

it proceeds thus: [745] Behold, there came wise men from the east to

Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we

have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him. Now when

Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all

Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and

scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should

be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Jud�a; for thus it is

written by the prophet, And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art

not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a

Governor that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had

privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently the time of

the star which appeared unto them. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and

said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have

found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star which

they had seen in the east went before them, until it came and stood

over where the young child was. And when they saw the star, they

rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the

house, they found [746] the child with Mary His mother, and fell down

and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they

presented unto Him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being

warned of God in a dream that they should not return unto Herod, they

departed into their own country another way. [747] Then, after this

account of their return, the narrative goes on thus: [748] When the

days of her (His mother's) purification, according to the law of Moses,

were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the

Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth

the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice

according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of

turtle-doves, or two young pigeons. And, behold, there was a man in

Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout,

waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was in him.

And it had been revealed unto him [749] by the Holy Ghost, that he

should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came

by the Spirit into the temple. And when His parents brought in the

child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law, then took he

Him up in his arms, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart

in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,

which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to

lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel. And His

father and mother [750] marvelled at those things which were spoken of

Him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, Behold,

this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and

for a sign that shall be spoken against; and a sword shall pierce

through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be

revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of

Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived

with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of

about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but

served God with fastings and prayers day and night. And she, coming in

that instant, gave thanks [751] also unto the Lord, and spake of Him to

all them that looked for the redemption of Jerusalem. [752] And when

they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, [753]

behold, [754] the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream,

saying, Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and flee into

Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek

the young child to destroy Him. When he arose, he took the young child

and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt, and was there until

the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the

Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son. Then

Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding

wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in

Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under,

according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and great mourning, [755]

Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because

they are not. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord

appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the

young child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they

are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took

the young child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But

when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Jud�a, in the room of his

father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned of God in a

dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee; and came and dwelt in

a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by

the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene. [756] And [757] the child

grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was in

Him. And His parents went to Jerusalem every year, at the feast of the

passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem,

after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as

they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and His

parents [758] knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to have been in

the company, went a day's journey; and they sought Him among their

kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found Him not, they turned

back again to Jerusalem seeking Him. And it came to pass, that after

three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the

doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that

heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And when

they saw Him, they were amazed. And His mother said to Him, Son, why

hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee

sorrowing. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye

not that I must be about my Father's business? [759] And they

understood not the saying which He spake unto them. And He went down

with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; and His

mother kept all these sayings in her heart. [760] And Jesus increased

in wisdom and age, [761] and in favour with God and men. [762]

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[710] [The omission of "Jesus" is an early variation of the Latin text

of the Gospel.--R.]

[711] Matt. i. 18.

[712] Gratia plena. [Comp. Revised Version margin.--R.]

[713] Qu� cum vidisset. Others read audisset, heard. [The better Greek

mss. omit the clause. The variation in the Latin text here was probably

due to the later gloss of the scribes.--R.]

[714] Various editions insert ex te, of thee; but the words are omitted

in three Vatican mss., and most of the Gallican. See Migne's note.

[Omitted in the Greek text, according to the best authorities.--R.]

[715] Luke i. 26-34. [Ver. 34 is differently rendered in the text of

the Revised Version. The Latin of Augustin would perhaps admit of the

same sense, but is more naturally explained as above.--R.]

[716] Vocabitur. The mss. give vocabunt, they shall call; one ms. gives

vocabis, thou shalt call. [The proper reading is probably vocabunt; at

all events, this accords with the Greek text. The variations can be

accounted for by the presence of vocabitur and vocabis in previous part

of the paragraph.--R.]

[717] [The best Greek mss. read "a son" in Matt. i. 23. In Luke ii. 7

"first-born" occurs.--R.]

[718] Matt. i. 19-21.

[719] Matt. ii. 1-3.

[720] Matt. ii. 12.

[721] Matt. i. 18; Luke i. 5. [In this extended citation from the

Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the Latin text given by Augustin is in

many cases, more closely reproduced in the Revised Version than in the

Authorized. The translator has, as usual, taken the language of the

latter, except in a few places, where the difference seemed more

important and striking.--R.]

[722] Perfectum.

[723] [Tacens; the fair equivalent of the original Greek phrase

properly rendered "silent'" in the Revised Version.--R.]

[724] Gratia plena.

[725] [Compare above on � 14.--R.]

[726] Vocatur.

[727] Beata qu� credidisti.

[728] Fecit.

[729] Undertaken--suscepit.

[730] Luke i. 5-36.

[731] Matt. i. 18. [The discovery of Mary's condition probably

occurred, as the order of Augustin implies, after the return of Mary

from the visit to Elizabeth. But it is altogether uncertain whether it

preceded the birth of John the Baptist.--R.]

[732] Matt. i. 18-25. [The last clause of ver. 25 is omitted here, but

given in �14. Possibly the variation was intentional.--R.]

[733] Luke i. 57.

[734] Cognati.

[735] [Vocabunt, "would have called," answering to the Greek imperfect

of arrested action.--R.]

[736] In remissionem.

[737] Describeretur, registered. [Revised Version, "should be

enrolled."--R.]

[738] Descriptio prima [This is now the accepted sense of the phrase in

Luke ii. 2; Comp. Revised Version.--R.]

[739] Reading pr�side Syri� Syrino; in some mss. it is a pr�side, etc.,

and sub pr�side also occurs.

[740] Profiterentur, to make their declaration.

[741] Profiteretur, make his declaration.

[742] Hominibus bon� voluntatis. [Comp Revised Version.--R.]

[743] Cognoverunt.

[744] Luke i. 57-ii. 21.

[745] Matt. ii. 1. [It is here assumed that the visit of the Magi

preceded the presentation in the temple. But this order cannot be

positively established. The two events must be placed near together. In

chap. xi. Augustin implies that there was an interval of some length.

The traditional date of the Epiphany (Jan. 6) is clearly too early,

since it assumes an interval of twenty-seven days.--R.]

[746] Invenerunt.

[747] Matt. ii. 1-12.

[748] Luke ii. 22.

[749] Responsum acceperat.

[750] Pater ejus et mater. ["Joseph" was early substituted. Augustin

follows the text now accepted on the authority of the best Greek

mss.--R.]

[751] Confitebatur, made acknowledgment.

[752] Reading redemptionem Jerusalem; for which some editions gave

redemptionem Israel.

[753] Luke ii. 22-39.

[754] Matt. ii. 13.

[755] [The briefer reading, here accepted, is more correctly rendered

in the Revised Version.--R.]

[756] Matt. ii. 13-23.

[757] Luke ii. 40.

[758] Parentes ejus. ["Joseph and His mother" is the later reading,

followed in the Authorized Version.--R.]

[759] In his qu� Patris mei sunt. [Comp. Revised Version.--R.]

[760] Reading, with the mss., conservabat omnia verba h�c in corde suo.

Some editions insert conferens, pondering them.

[761] �tate. [So Revised Version margin.--R.]

[762] Luke ii. 40-52.

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Chapter VI.--On the Position Given to the Preaching of John the Baptist

in All the Four Evangelists.

18. Now at this point commences the account of the preaching of John,

which is presented by all the four. For after the words which I have

placed last in the order of his narrative thus far,--the words with

which he introduces the testimony from the prophet, namely, He shall be

called a Nazarene,--Matthew proceeds immediately to give us this

recital: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the

wilderness of Jud�a," [763] etc. And Mark, who has told us nothing of

the nativity or infancy or youth of the Lord, has made his Gospel begin

with the same event,--that is to say, with the preaching of John. For

it is thus that he sets out: The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus

Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophet Isaiah, [764]

Behold, I send a messenger [765] before Thy face, which shall prepare

Thy way before Thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare

ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. John was in the

wilderness baptizing, and preaching the baptism of repentance for the

remission of sins, [766] etc. Luke, again, follows up the passage in

which he says, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and age, [767] and in

favour with God and man," by a section in which he speaks of the

preaching of John in these terms: Now in the fifteenth year of the

reign of Tiberius C�sar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Jud�a, and

Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of

Itur�a and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of

Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God

came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness, [768] etc. The

Apostle John, too, the most eminent of the four evangelists, after

discoursing of the Word of God, who is also the Son, antecedent to all

the ages of creaturely existence, inasmuch as all things were made by

Him, has introduced in the immediate context his account of the

preaching and testimony of John, and proceeds thus: There was a man

sent from God, whose name was John. [769] This will be enough at once

to make it plain that the narratives concerning John the Baptist given

by the four evangelists are not at variance with one another. And there

will be no occasion for requiring or demanding that to be done in all

detail in this instance which we have already done in the case of the

genealogies of the Christ who was born of Mary, to the effect of

proving how Matthew and Luke are in harmony with each other, of showing

how we might construct one consistent narrative out of the two, and of

demonstrating on behoof of those of less acute perception, that

although one of these evangelists may mention what the other omits, or

omit what the other mentions, he does not thereby make it in any sense

difficult to accept the veracity of the account given by the other. For

when a single example [of this method of harmonizing] has been set

before us, whether in the way in which it has been presented by me, or

in some other method in which it may more satisfactorily be exhibited,

every man can understand that, in all other similar passages, what he

has seen done here may be done again.

19. Accordingly, let us now study, as I have said, the harmony of the

four evangelists in the narratives regarding John the Baptist. Matthew

proceeds in these terms: In those days came John the Baptist, preaching

in the wilderness of Jud�a. [770] Mark has not used the phrase "In

those days," because he has given no recital of any series of events at

the head of his Gospel immediately before this narrative, so that he

might be understood to speak in reference to the dates of such events

under the terms, "In those days." [771] Luke, on the other hand, with

greater precision has defined those times of the preaching or baptism

of John, by means of the notes of the temporal power. For he says: Now,

in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius C�sar, Pontius Pilate

being governor of Jud�a, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his

brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis,

and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high

priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the

wilderness. [772] We ought not, however, to understand that what was

actually meant by Matthew when He said, "In those days," was simply the

space of days literally limited to the specified period of these

powers. On the contrary, it is apparent that he intended the note of

time which was conveyed in the phrase "In those days," to be taken to

refer to a much longer period. For he first gives us the account of the

return of Christ from Egypt after the death of Herod,--an incident,

indeed, which took place at the time of His infancy or childhood, and

with which, consequently, Luke's statement of what befell Him in the

temple when He was twelve years of age is quite consistent. [773] Then,

immediately after this narrative of the recall of the infant or boy out

of Egypt, Matthew continues thus in due order: "Now, in those days came

John the Baptist." And thus under that phrase he certainly covers not

merely the days of His childhood, but all the days intervening between

His nativity and this period at which John began to preach and to

baptize. At this period, moreover, Christ is found already to have

attained to man's estate; [774] for John and he were of the same age;

[775] and it is stated that He was about [776] thirty years of age when

He was baptized by the former.

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[763] Matt. iii. 1.

[764] In Isaia propheta. [So the Greek text, according to the best mss.

Comp. Revised Version--R.]

[765] Angelum.

[766] Mark i. 1-4.

[767] �tate.

[768] Luke iii. 1, 2.

[769] John i. 6.

[770] Matt. iii. 1.

[771] Mark i. 4.

[772] Luke iii. 1-3.

[773] Luke ii. 42-50.

[774] Juvenilis �tas. For juvenilis �tas, the mss. give regularly

juvenalis �tas.

[775] Co�vi.

[776] Ferme.

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Chapter VII.--Of the Two Herods.

20. But with respect to the mention of Herod, it is well understood

that some are apt to be influenced by the circumstance that Luke has

told us how, in the days of John's baptizing, and at the time when the

Lord, being then a grown man, was also baptized, Herod was tetrarch of

Galilee; [777] whereas Matthew tells us that the boy [778] Jesus

returned from Egypt after the death of Herod. Now these two accounts

cannot both be true, unless we may also suppose that there were two

different Herods. But as no one can fail to be aware that this is a

perfectly possible case, what must be the blindness in which those

persons pursue their mad follies, who are so quick to launch false

charges against the truth of the Gospels; and how miserably

inconsiderate must they be, not to reflect that two men may have been

called by the same name? Yet this is a thing of which examples abound

on all sides. For this latter Herod is understood to have been the son

of the former Herod: just as Archelaus also was, whom Matthew states to

have succeeded to the throne of Jud�a on the death of his father; and

as Philip was, who is introduced by Luke as the brother of Herod the

tetrarch, and as himself tetrarch of Itur�a. For the Herod who sought

the life of the child Christ was king; whereas this other Herod, his

son, was not called king, but tetrarch, which is a Greek word,

signifying etymologically one set over the fourth part of a kingdom.

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[777] Luke iii. 1-21.

[778] Puerum.

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Chapter VIII.--An Explanation of the Statement Made by Matthew, to the

Effect that Joseph Was Afraid to Go with the Infant Christ into

Jerusalem on Account of Archelaus, and Yet Was Not Afraid to Go into

Galilee, Where Herod, that Prince's Brother, Was Tetrarch.

21. Here again, however, it may happen that a difficulty will be found,

and that some, seeing that Matthew has told us how Joseph was afraid to

go into Jud�a with the child on his return, expressly for the reason

that Archelaus the son reigned there in place of his father Herod, may

be led to ask how he could have gone into Galilee, where, as Luke bears

witness, there was another son of that Herod, namely, Herod the

tetrarch. But such a difficulty can only be founded on the fancy that

the times indicated as those in which there was such apprehension on

the child's account were identical with the times dealt with now by

Luke: whereas it is conspicuously evident that there is a change in the

periods, because we no longer find Archelaus represented as king in

Jud�a; but in place of him we have Pontius Pilate, who also was not the

king of the Jews, but only their governor, in whose times the sons of

the elder Herod, acting under Tiberius C�sar, held not the kingdom, but

the tetrarchy. And all this certainly had not come to pass at the time

when Joseph, in fear of the Archelaus who was then reigning in Jud�a,

betook himself, together with the child, into Galilee, where was also

his city Nazareth.

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Chapter IX.--An Explanation of the Circumstance that Matthew States

that Joseph's Reason for Going into Galilee with the Child Christ Was

His Fear of Archelaus, Who Was Reigning at that Time in Jerusalem in

Place of His Father, While Luke Tells Us that the Reason for Going into

Galilee Was the Fact that Their City Nazareth Was There.

22. Or may a question perchance be raised as to how Matthew tells us

that His parents went with the boy Jesus into Galilee, because they

were unwilling to go into Jud�a in consequence of their fear of

Archelaus; whereas it would rather appear that the reason for their

going into Galilee was, as Luke has not failed to indicate, the

consideration that their city was Nazareth of Galilee? Well, but we

must observe, that when the angel said to Joseph in his dreams in

Egypt, "Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and go into the

land of Israel," [779] the words were understood at first by Joseph in

a way that made him consider himself commanded to journey into Jud�a.

For that was the first interpretation that could have been put upon the

phrase, "the land of Israel." But again, after ascertaining that

Archelaus, the son of Herod, was reigning there, he declined to expose

himself to such danger, inasmuch as this phrase, "the land of Israel,"

was capable also of being so understood as to cover Galilee too,

because the people of Israel were occupants of that territory as well

as the other. At the same time, this question also admits of being

solved in another manner. For it might have appeared to the parents of

Christ that they were called to take up their residence along with the

boy, concerning whom such information had been conveyed to them through

the responses of angels, just in Jerusalem itself, where was the temple

of the Lord: and it may thus be, that when they came back out of Egypt,

they would have gone directly thither in that belief, and have taken up

their abode there, had it not been that they were terrified at the

presence of Archelaus. And certainly they did not receive any such

instructions from heaven to take up their residence there as would have

made it their imperative duty to set at nought the fears they

entertained of Archelaus.

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[779] Matt. ii. 19, 20.

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Chapter X.--A Statement of the Reason Why Luke Tells Us that "His

Parents Went to Jerusalem Every Year at the Feast of the Passover"

Along with the Boy; While Matthew Intimates that Their Dread of

Archelaus Made Them Afraid to Go There on Their Return from Egypt.

23. Or does any one put to us this question, How was it, then, that His

parents went up to Jerusalem every year during the boyhood of Christ,

as Luke's narrative bears, if they were prevented from going there by

the fear of Archelaus? Well, I should not deem it any very difficult

task to solve this question, even although none of the evangelists has

given us to understand how long Archelaus reigned there. For it might

have been the case that, simply for that one day, and with the

intention of returning forthwith, they went up on the day of the feast,

without attracting any notice among the vast multitudes then assembled,

to the city where, nevertheless, they were afraid to make their

residence on other days. And thus they might at once have saved

themselves from the appearance of being so irreligious as to neglect

the observance of the feast, and have avoided drawing attention upon

themselves by a continued sojourn. But further, although all the

evangelists have omitted to tell us what was the length of the reign of

Archelaus, we have still open to us this obvious method of explaining

the matter, namely, to understand the custom to which Luke refers, when

he says that they were in the habit of going to Jerusalem every year,

[780] as one prosecuted at a time when Archelaus was no more an object

of fear. But if the reign of Archelaus should be made out to have

lasted for a somewhat longer period on the authority of any

extra-evangelical history which appears to deserve credit, the

consideration which I have indicated above should still prove quite

sufficient,--namely, the supposition that the fear which the parents of

the child entertained of a residence in Jerusalem was, nevertheless,

not of such a nature as to lead them to neglect the observance of the

sacred festival to which they were under obligation in the fear of God,

and which they might very easily go about in a manner that would not

attract public attention to them. For surely it is nothing incredible

that, by taking advantage of favourable opportunities, whether by day

or by hour, men may (safely venture to) approach places in which they

nevertheless are afraid to be found tarrying.

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[780] Luke ii. 4.

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Chapter XI.--An Examination of the Question as to How It Was Possible

for Them to Go Up, According to Luke's Statement, with Him to Jerusalem

to the Temple, When the Days of the Purification of the Mother of

Christ Were Accomplished, in Order to Perform the Usual Rites, If It is

Correctly Recorded by Matthew, that Herod Had Already Learned from the

Wise Men that the Child Was Born in Whose Stead, When He Sought for

Him, He Slew So Many Children.

24. Hereby also we see how another question is solved, if any one

indeed finds a difficulty in it. I allude to the question as to how it

was possible, on the supposition that the elder Herod was already

anxious (to obtain information regarding Him), and agitated by the

intelligence received from the wise men concerning the birth of the

King of the Jews, for them, when the days of the purification of His

mother were accomplished, to go up in any safety with Him to the

temple, in order to see to the performance of those things which were

according to the law of the Lord, and which are specified by Luke.

[781] For who can fail to perceive that this solitary day might very

easily have escaped the notice of a king, whose attention was engaged

with a multitude of affairs? Or if it does not appear probable that

Herod, who was waiting in the extremest anxiety to see what report the

wise men would bring back to him concerning the child, should have been

so long in finding out how he had been mocked, that, only after the

mother's purification was already past, and the solemnities proper to

the first-born were performed with respect to the child in the temple,

nay more, only after their departure into Egypt, did it come into his

mind to seek the life of the child, and to slay so many little

ones;--if, I say, any one finds a difficulty in this, I shall not pause

to state the numerous and important occupations by which the king's

attention may have been engaged, and for the space of many days either

wholly diverted from such thoughts, or prevented from following them

out. For it is not possible to enumerate all the cases which might have

made that perfectly possible. No one, however, is so ignorant of human

affairs as either to deny or to question that there may very easily

have been many such matters of importance (to preoccupy the king). For

to whom will not the thought occur, that reports, whether true or

false, of many other more terrible things may possibly have been

brought to the king, so that the person who had been apprehensive of a

certain royal child, who after a number of years might prove an

adversary to himself or to his sons, might be so agitated with the

terrors of certain more immediate dangers, as to have his attention

forcibly removed from that earlier anxiety, and engaged rather with the

devising of measures to ward off other more instantly threatening

perils? Wherefore, leaving all such considerations unspecified, I

simply venture on the assertion that, when the wise men failed to bring

back any report to him, Herod may have believed that they had been

misled by a deceptive vision of a star, and that, after their want of

success in discovering Him whom they had supposed to have been born,

they had been ashamed to return to him; and that in this way the king,

having his fears allayed, had given up the idea of asking after and

persecuting the child. Consequently, when they had gone with Him to

Jerusalem after the purification of His mother, and when those things

had been performed in the temple which are recounted by Luke, [782]

inasmuch as the words which were spoken by Simeon and Anna in their

prophesyings regarding Him, when publicity began to be given to them by

the persons who had heard them, were like to call back the king's mind

then to its original design, Joseph obeyed the warning conveyed to him

in the dream, and fled with the child and His mother into Egypt.

Afterwards, when the things which had been done and said in the temple

were made quite public, Herod perceived that he had been mocked; and

then, in his desire to get at the death of Christ, he slew the

multitude of children, as Matthew records. [783]

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[781] [Compare note on the relative position of the visit of the Magi

and the presentation in the temple, � 17.--R.]

[782] Luke ii. 22-39.

[783] Matt. ii. 3-16.

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Chapter XII.--Concerning the Words Ascribed to John by All the Four

Evangelists Respectively.

25. Moreover, Matthew makes up his account of John in the following

manner:--Now in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the

wilderness of Jud�a, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven

is at hand. For this is He that is spoken of by the prophet Esaias,

saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way

of the Lord, make His paths straight. [784] Mark also and Luke agree in

presenting this testimony of Isaiah as one referring to John. [785]

Luke, indeed, has likewise recorded some other words from the same

prophet, which follow those already cited, when he gives his narrative

of John the Baptist. The evangelist John, again, mentions that John the

Baptist did also personally advance this same testimony of Isaiah

regarding himself. [786] And, to a similar effect, Matthew here has

given us certain words of John which are unrecorded by the other

evangelists. For he speaks of him as "preaching in the wilderness of

Jud�a, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;"

which words of John have been omitted by the others. In what follows,

however, in immediate connection with that passage in Matthew's

Gospel,--namely, the sentence, "The voice of one crying in the

wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths

straight,"--the position is ambiguous; and it does not clearly appear

whether this is something recited by Matthew in his own person, or

rather a continuance of the words spoken by John himself, so as to lead

us to understand the whole passage to be the reproduction of John's own

utterance, in this way: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at

hand; for this is He that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah," and so

on. For it ought to create no difficulty against this latter view, that

he does not say, "For I am He that was spoken of by the prophet

Isaiah," but employs the phraseology, "For this is He that was spoken

of." For that, indeed, is a mode of speech [787] which the evangelists

Matthew and John are in the habit of using in reference to themselves.

Thus Matthew has adopted the phrase, "He found [788] a man sitting at

the receipt of custom," [789] instead of "He found me." John, too,

says, "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote

these things, and we know that his testimony is true," [790] instead of

"I am," etc., or, "My testimony is true." Yea, our Lord Himself very

frequently uses the words, "The Son of man," [791] or, "The Son of

God," [792] instead of saying, "I." So, again, He tells us that "it

behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day,"

[793] instead of saying, "It behoved me to suffer." Consequently it is

perfectly possible that the clause, "For this is He that was spoken of

by the prophet Isaiah," which immediately follows the saying, "Repent

ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," may be but a continuation of

what John the Baptist said of himself; so that only after these words

cited from the speaker himself will Matthew's own narrative proceed,

being thus resumed: "And the same John had his raiment of camel's

hair," and so forth. But if this is the case, then it need not seem

wonderful that, when asked what he had to say regarding himself, he

should reply, according to the narrative of the evangelist John, "I am

the voice of one crying in the wilderness," [794] as he had already

spoken in the same terms when enjoining on them the duty of repentance.

Accordingly, Matthew goes on to tell us about his attire and his mode

of living, and continues his account thus: And the same John had his

raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and his

meat was locusts and wild honey. Mark also gives us this same statement

almost in so many words. But the other two evangelists omit it.

26. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative, and says: Then went out

to him Jerusalem and all Jud�a, and all the region round about Jordan,

and were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he

saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said

unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the

wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and

think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for

I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children

unto Abraham. For now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees:

therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn

down and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto

repentance; but He that is to come after me is mightier than I, whose

shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit

and fire: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His

floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the

chaff with unquenchable fire. [795] This whole passage is also given by

Luke, who ascribes almost the same words to John. And where there is

any variation in the words, there is nevertheless no real departure

from the sense. Thus, for example, Matthew tells us that John said,

"And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our

father," where Luke puts it thus: "And begin not to say, We have

Abraham to our father." Again, in the former we have the words, "I

indeed baptize you with water unto repentance;" whereas the latter

brings in the questions put by the multitudes as to what they should

do, and represents John to have replied to them with a statement of

good works as the fruits of repentance,--all which is omitted by

Matthew. So, when Luke tells us what reply the Baptist made to the

people when they were musing in their hearts concerning Him, and

thinking whether He were the Christ, he gives us simply the words, "I

indeed baptize you with water," and does not add the phrase, "unto

repentance." Further, in Matthew the Baptist says, "But he that is to

come after me is mightier than I;" while in Luke he is exhibited as

saying, "But one mightier than I cometh." In like manner, according to

Matthew, he says, "whose shoes I am not worthy to bear;" but according

to the other, his words are, "the latchet of whose shoes I am not

worthy to unloose." The latter sayings are recorded also by Mark,

although he makes no mention of those other matters. For, after

noticing his attire and his mode of living, he goes on thus: "And

preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the

latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose: I

have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you in the Holy

Spirit." In the notice of the shoes, therefore, he differs from Luke in

so far as he has added the words, "to stoop down;" and in the account

of the baptism he differs from both these others in so far as he does

not say, "and in fire," but only, "in the Holy Spirit." For as in

Matthew, so also in Luke, the words are the same, and they are given in

the same order, "He shall baptize you in the Spirit and in fire,"--with

this single exception, that Luke has not added the adjective "Holy,"

[796] while Matthew has given it thus: "in the Holy Spirit and in

fire." [797] The statements made by these three are attested by the

evangelist John, when he says: "John bears witness [798] of Him, and

cries, saying, This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is

preferred before me; for He was before me." [799] For thus he indicates

that the thing was spoken by John at the time at which those other

evangelists record him to have uttered the words. Thus, too, he gives

us to understand that John was repeating and calling into notice again

something which he had already spoken, when he said, "This was He of

whom I spake, He that cometh after me."

27. If now the question is asked, as to which of the words we are to

suppose the most likely to have been the precise words used by John the

Baptist, whether those recorded as spoken by him in Matthew's Gospel,

or those in Luke's, or those which Mark has introduced, among the few

sentences which he mentions to have been uttered by him, while he omits

notice of all the rest, it will not be deemed worth while creating any

difficulty for oneself in a matter of that kind, by any one who wisely

understands that the real requisite in order to get at the knowledge of

the truth is just to make sure of the things really meant, whatever may

be the precise words in which they happen to be expressed. For although

one writer may retain a certain order in the words, and another present

a different one, there is surely no real contradiction in that. Nor,

again, need there be any antagonism between the two, although one may

state what another omits. For it is evident that the evangelists have

set forth these matters just in accordance with the recollection each

retained of them, and just according as their several predilections

prompted them to employ greater brevity or richer detail on certain

points, while giving, nevertheless, the same account of the subjects

themselves.

28. Thus, too, in what more pertinently concerns the matter in hand, it

is sufficiently obvious that, since the truth of the Gospel, conveyed

in that word of God which abides eternal and unchangeable above all

that is created, but which at the same time has been disseminated [800]

throughout the world by the instrumentality of temporal symbols, and by

the tongues of men, has possessed itself of the most exalted height of

authority, we ought not to suppose that any one of the writers is

giving an unreliable account, if, when several persons are recalling

some matter either heard or seen by them, they fail to follow the very

same plan, or to use the very same words, while describing,

nevertheless, the self-same fact. Neither should we indulge such a

supposition, although the order of the words may be varied; or although

some words may be substituted in place of others, which nevertheless

have the same meaning; or although something may be left unsaid, either

because it has not occurred to the mind of the recorder, or because it

becomes readily intelligible from other statements which are given; or

although, among other matters which (may not bear directly on his

immediate purpose, but which) he decides on mentioning rather for the

sake of the narrative, and in order to preserve the proper order of

time, one of them may introduce something which he does not feel called

upon to expound as a whole at length, but only to touch upon in part;

or although, with the view of illustrating his meaning, and making it

thoroughly clear, the person to whom authority is given to compose the

narrative makes some additions of his own, not indeed in the

subject-matter itself, but in the words by which it is expressed; or

although, while retaining a perfectly reliable comprehension of the

fact itself, he may not be entirely successful, however he may make

that his aim, in calling to mind and reciting anew with the most

literal accuracy the very words which he heard on the occasion.

Moreover, if any one affirms that the evangelists ought certainly to

have had that kind of capacity imparted to them by the power of the

Holy Spirit, which would secure them against all variation the one from

the other, either in the kind of words, or in their order, or in their

number, that person fails to perceive, that just in proportion as the

authority of the evangelists [under their existing conditions] is made

pre-eminent, the credit of all other men who offer true statements of

events ought to have been established on a stronger basis by their

instrumentality: so that when several parties happen to narrate the

same circumstance, none of them can by any means be rightly charged

with untruthfulness if he differs from the other only in such a way as

can be defended on the ground of the antecedent example of the

evangelists themselves. For as we are not at liberty either to suppose

or to say that any one of the evangelists has stated what is false, so

it will be apparent that any other writer is as little chargeable with

untruth, with whom, in the process of recalling anything for narration,

it has fared only in a way similar to that in which it is shown to have

fared with those evangelists. And just as it belongs to the highest

morality to guard against all that is false, so ought we all the more

to be ruled by an authority so eminent, to the effect that we should

not suppose ourselves to come upon what must be false, when we find the

narratives of any writers differ from each other in the manner in which

the records of the evangelists are proved to contain variations. At the

same time, in what most seriously concerns the faithfulness of

doctrinal teaching, we should also understand that it is not so much in

mere words, as rather truth in the facts themselves, that is to be

sought and embraced; for as to writers who do not employ precisely the

same modes of statement, if they only do not present discrepancies with

respect to the facts and the sentiments themselves, we accept them as

holding the same position in veracity. [801]

29. With respect, then, to those comparisons which I have instituted

between the several narratives of the evangelists, what do these

present that must be considered to be of a contradictory order? Are we

to regard in this light the circumstance that one of them has given us

the words, "whose shoes I am not worthy to bear," whereas the others

speak of the "unloosing of the latchet of the shoe"? For here, indeed,

the difference seems to be neither in the mere words, nor in the order

of the words, nor in any matter of simple phraseology, but in the

actual matter of fact, when in the one case the "bearing of the shoe"

is mentioned, and in the other the "unloosing of the shoe's latchet."

Quite fairly, therefore, may the question be put, as to what it was

that John declared himself unworthy to do--whether to bear the shoes,

or to unloose the shoe's latchet. For if only the one of these two

sentences was uttered by him, then that evangelist will appear to have

given the correct narrative who was in a position to record what was

said; while the writer who has given the saying in another form,

although he may not indeed have offered an [intentionally] false

account of it, may at any rate be taken to have made a slip of memory,

and will be reckoned thus to have stated one thing instead of another.

It is only seemly, however, that no charge of absolute unveracity

should be laid against the evangelists, and that, too, not only with

regard to that kind of unveracity which comes by the positive telling

of what is false, but also with regard to that which arises through

forgetfulness. Therefore, if it is pertinent to the matter to deduce

one sense from the words "to bear the shoes," and another sense from

the words "to unloose the shoe's latchet," what should one suppose the

correct interpretation to be put on the facts, but that John did give

utterance to both these sentences, either on two different occasions or

in one and the same connection? For he might very well have expressed

himself thus, "whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose, and

whose shoes I am not worthy to bear:" and then one of the evangelists

may have reproduced the one portion of the saying, and the rest of them

the other; while, notwithstanding this, all of them have really given a

veracious narrative. But further, if, when he spoke of the shoes of the

Lord, John meant nothing more than to convey the idea of His supremacy

and his own lowliness, then, whichever of the two sayings may have

actually been uttered by him, whether that regarding the unloosing of

the latchet of the shoes, or that respecting the bearing of the shoes,

the self-same sense is still correctly preserved by any writer who,

while making mention of the shoes in words of his own, has expressed at

the same time the same idea of lowliness, and thus has not made any

departure from the real mind [of the person of whom he writes]. It is

therefore a useful principle, and one particularly worthy of being

borne in mind, when we are speaking of the concord of the evangelists,

that there is no divergence [to be supposed] from truth, even when they

introduce some saying different from what was actually uttered by the

person concerning whom the narrative is given, provided that,

notwithstanding this, they set forth as his mind precisely what is also

so conveyed by that one among them who reproduces the words as they

were literally spoken. For thus we learn the salutary lesson, that our

aim should be nothing else than to ascertain what is the mind and

intention of the person who speaks.

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[784] Matt. iii. 1-3.

[785] Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4.

[786] John i. 23.

[787] Reading solet quippe esse talis locutio, etc. Some codices give

solet quippe esse quasi de aliis locutio = a mode of speech as if other

persons were meant.

[788] Invenit.

[789] Matt. ix. 9.

[790] John xxi. 24.

[791] Matt. ix. 6, xvi. 27.

[792] John v. 25.

[793] Luke xxiv. 46.

[794] John i. 23.

[795] Matt. iii. 4-12.

[796] Greek and Latin Bibles now, however, add the word Holy in Luke.

[The variation does not occur in early Greek mss.--R.]

[797] Matt. iii. 3-12; Mark i. 6-8; Luke iii. 7-17.

[798] Perhibet.

[799] John i. 15.

[800] Dispensato.

[801] Or, as abiding by the same truth--in eadem veritate constitisse

approbamus.

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Chapter XIII.--Of the Baptism of Jesus.

30. Matthew then continues his narrative in the following terms: "Then

cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and

comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be

so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he

suffered Him." [802] The others also attest the fact that Jesus came to

John. The three also mention that He was baptized. But they omit all

mention of one circumstance recorded by Matthew, namely, that John

addressed the Lord, or that the Lord made answer to John. [803]

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[802] Dimisit eum.

[803] Matt. iii. 13-15; Mark i. 9; Luke iii. 21; John i. 32-34.

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Chapter XIV.--Of the Words or the Voice that Came from Heaven Upon Him

When He Had Been Baptized.

31. Thereafter Matthew proceeds thus: "And Jesus, when He was baptized,

went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened

unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and

lighting upon Him; and, lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This incident is also recorded

in a similar manner by two of the others, namely Mark and Luke. But at

the same time, while preserving the sense intact, they use different

modes of expression in reproducing the terms of the voice which came

from heaven. For although Matthew tells us that the words were, "This

is my beloved Son," while the other two put them in this form, "Thou

art my beloved Son," these different methods of speech serve but to

convey the same sense, according to the principle which has been

discussed above. For the heavenly voice gave utterance only to one of

these sentences; but by the form of words thus adopted, namely, "This

is my beloved Son," it was the evangelist's intention to show that the

saying was meant to intimate specially to the hearers there [and not to

Jesus] the fact that He was the Son of God. With this view, he chose to

give the sentence, "Thou art my beloved Son," this turn, "This is my

beloved Son," as if it were addressed directly to the people. For it

was not meant to intimate to Christ a fact which He knew already; but

the object was to let the people who were present hear it, for whose

sakes indeed the voice itself was given. But furthermore now, with

regard to the circumstance that the first of them puts the saying thus,

"In whom I am well pleased," [804] the second thus, "In Thee I am well

pleased;" [805] and the third thus, "In Thee it has pleased me;" [806]

--if you ask which of these different modes represents what was

actually expressed by the voice, you may fix on whichever you will,

provided only that you understand that those of the writers who have

not reproduced the self-same form of speech have still reproduced the

identical sense intended to be conveyed. And these variations in the

modes of expression are also useful in this way, that they make it

possible for us to reach a more adequate conception of the saying than

might have been the case with only one form, and that they also secure

it against being interpreted in a sense not consonant with the real

state of the case. For as to the sentence, "In whom I am well pleased,"

[807] if any one thinks of taking it as if it meant that God is pleased

with Himself in the Son, he is taught a lesson of prudence by the other

turn which is given to the saying, "In Thee I am well pleased." [808]

And on the other hand, if, looking at this last by itself, any one

supposes the meaning to be, that in the Son the Father had favour with

men, he learns something from the third form of the utterance, "In Thee

it has pleased me." [809] From this it becomes sufficiently apparent,

that whichever of the evangelists may have preserved for us the words

as they were literally uttered by the heavenly voice, the others have

varied the terms only with the object of setting forth the same sense

more familiarly; so that what is thus given by all of them might be

understood as if the expression were: In Thee I have set my good

pleasure; that is to say, by Thee to do what is my pleasure. [810] But

once more, with respect to that rendering which is contained in some

codices of the Gospel according to Luke, and which bears that the words

heard in the heavenly voice were those that are written in the Psalm,

"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee;" [811] although it is

said not to be found in the more ancient Greek codices, yet if it can

be established by any copies worthy of credit, what results but that we

suppose both voices to have been heard from heaven, in one or other

verbal order?

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[804] In quo mihi complacui--well pleased with myself.

[805] In te complacui.

[806] In te complacuit mihi. Matt. iii. 16, 17; Mark i. 10, 11; Luke

iii. 22. [The Greek mss., of most weight, show no variation between

Mark and Luke in the last clause.--R.]

[807] In quo mihi complacui--as if = "in" whom I am well pleased with

myself.

[808] In te complacui.

[809] In te complacuit mihi.

[810] In te placitum meum constitui, hoc est, per te gerere quod mihi

placet. [Greek aorist points to a past act; hence "set my good

pleasure" is a better rendering of the verb, in all three accounts,

than "am well pleased."--R.]

[811] Ps. ii. 7.

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Chapter XV.--An Explanation of the Circumstance That, According to the

Evangelist John, John the Baptist Says, "I Knew Him Not;" While,

According to the Others, It is Found that He Did Already Know Him.

32. Again, the account of the dove given in the Gospel according to

John does not mention the time at which the incident happened, but

contains a statement of the words of John the Baptist as reporting what

he saw. In this section, the question rises as to how it is said, "And

I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same

said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and

remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit."

[812] For if he came to know Him only at the time when he saw the dove

descending upon Him, the inquiry is raised as to how he could have said

to Him, as He came to be baptized, "I ought rather to be baptized of

Thee." [813] For the Baptist addressed Him thus before the dove

descended. From this, however, it is evident that, although he did know

Him [in a certain sense] before this time,--for he even leaped in his

mother's womb when Mary visited Elisabeth, [814] --there was yet

something which was not known to him up to this time, and which he

learned by the descending of the dove,--namely, the fact that He

baptized in the Holy Spirit by a certain divine power proper to

Himself; so that no man who received this baptism from God, even

although he baptized some, should be able to say that that which he

imparted was his own, or that the Holy Spirit was given by him.

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[812] John i. 33.

[813] Matt. iii. 14.

[814] Luke i. 41.

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Chapter XVI.--Of the Temptation of Jesus.

33. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in these terms: "Then was Jesus

led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an

hungered. And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If thou be the Son

of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and

said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every

word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And so the account

continues, until we come to the words, Then the devil left [815] him:

and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." [816] This whole

narrative is given also in a similar manner by Luke, although not in

the same order. And this makes it uncertain which of the two latter

temptations took place first: whether it was that the kingdoms of the

world were shown Him first, and then that He Himself was taken up to

the pinnacle of the temple thereafter; or whether it was that this

latter act occurred first, and that the other scene followed it. It is,

however, a matter of no real consequence, provided it be clear that all

these incidents did take place. And as Luke sets forth the same events

and ideas in different words, attention need not ever be called to the

fact that no loss results thereby to truth. Mark, again, does indeed

attest the fact that He was tempted of the devil in the wilderness for

forty days and forty nights; but he gives no statement of what was said

to Him, or of the replies He made. At the same time, he does not fail

to notice the circumstance which is omitted by Luke, namely, that the

angels ministered unto Him. [817] John, however, has left out this

whole passage.

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[815] Reliquit.

[816] Matt. iv. 1-11.

[817] Mark i. 12, 13; Luke iv. 1-13.

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Chapter XVII.--Of the Calling of the Apostles as They Were Fishing.

34. Matthew's narrative is continued thus: "Now when Jesus had heard

that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee." [818] Mark

states the same fact, as also does Luke, [819] only Luke says nothing

in the present section as to John being cast into prison. The

evangelist John, again, tells us that, before Jesus went into Galilee,

Peter and Andrew were with Him one day, and that on that occasion the

former had this name, Peter, given him, while before that period he was

called Simon. Likewise John tells us, that on the day following, when

Jesus was now desirous of going forth unto Galilee, He found Philip,

and said to him that he should follow Him. Thus, too, the evangelist

comes to give the narrative about Nathanael. [820] Further, he informs

us that on the third day, when He was yet in Galilee, Jesus wrought the

miracle of the turning of the water into wine at Cana. [821] All these

incidents are left unrecorded by the other evangelists, who continue

their narratives at once with the statement of the return of Jesus into

Galilee. Hence we are to understand that there was an interval here of

several days, during which those incidents took place in the history of

the disciples which are inserted at this point by John. [822] Neither

is there anything contradictory here to that other passage where

Matthew tells us how the Lord said to Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon

this rock will I build my Church." [823] But we are not to understand

that that was the time when he first received this name; but we are

rather to suppose that this took place on the occasion when it was said

to him, as John mentions, "Thou shall be called Cephas, which is, by

interpretation, A stone." [824] Thus the Lord could address him at that

later period by this very name, when He said, "Thou art Peter." For He

does not say then, "Thou shalt be called Peter," but, "Thou art Peter;"

because on a previous occasion he had already been spoken to in this

manner, "Thou shalt be called."

35. After this, Matthew goes on with his narrative in these terms: "And

leaving the city of Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capharnaum, which is

upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim;" and so

forth, until we come to the conclusion of the sermon which He delivered

on the mount. In this section of the narrative, Mark agrees with him in

attesting the calling of the disciples Peter and Andrew, and a little

after that, the calling of James and John. But whereas Matthew

introduces in this immediate context his account of that lengthened

sermon which He delivered on the mount, after He cured a multitude, and

when great crowds followed Him, Mark has inserted other matters at this

point, touching His teaching in the synagogue, and the people's

amazement at His doctrine. Then, too, he has stated what Matthew also

states, although not till after that lengthened sermon has been given,

namely, that "He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the

scribes." He has likewise given us the account of the man out of whom

the unclean spirit was cast; and after that the story of Peter's

mother-in-law. In these things, moreover, Luke is in accord with him.

[825] But Matthew has given us no notice of the evil spirit here. The

story of Peter's mother-in-law, however, he has not omitted, only he

brings it in at a later stage. [826]

36. In this paragraph, moreover, which we are at present considering,

the same Matthew follows up his account of the calling of those

disciples to whom, when they were engaged in fishing, He gave the

command to follow Him, by a narrative to the effect that He went about

Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel, and

healing all manner of sickness; and that when multitudes had gathered

about Him, He went up into a mountain, and delivered that lengthened

sermon [already alluded to]. Thus the evangelist gives us ground for

understanding that those incidents which are recorded by Mark after the

election of those same disciples, took place at the period when He was

going about Galilee, and teaching in their synagogues. We are at

liberty also to suppose that what happened to Peter's mother-in-law

came in at this point; and that he has mentioned at a later stage what

he has passed over here, although he has not indeed brought up at that

later point, for direct recital, everything else which is omitted at

the earlier. [827]

37. The question may indeed be raised as to how John gives us this

account of the calling of the disciples, which is to the effect that,

certainly not in Galilee, but in the vicinity of the Jordan, Andrew

first of all became a follower of the Lord, together with another

disciple whose name is not declared; that, in the second place, Peter

got that name from Him; and thirdly, that Philip was called to follow

Him; whereas the other three evangelists, in a satisfactory concord

with each other, Matthew and Mark in particular being remarkably at one

here, tell us that the men were called when they were engaged in

fishing. Luke, it is true, does not mention Andrew by name.

Nevertheless, we can gather that he was in that same vessel, from the

narrative of Matthew and Mark, who furnish a concise history of the

manner in which the affair was gone about. Luke, however, presents us

with a fuller and clearer exposition of the circumstances, and gives us

also an account of the miracle which was performed there in the haul of

fishes, and of the fact that previous to that the Lord spake to the

multitudes when He was seated in the boat. There may also seem to be a

discrepancy in this respect, that Luke records the saying, "From

henceforth thou shalt catch men," [828] as if it had been addressed by

the Lord to Peter alone, while the others have exhibited it as spoken

to both the brothers. [829] But it may very well be the case that these

words were spoken first to Peter himself, when he was seized with

amazement at the immense multitude of fishes which were caught, and

this will then be the incident introduced by Luke; and that they were

addressed to the two together somewhat later, which [second utterance]

will be the one noticed by the other two evangelists. Therefore the

circumstance which we have mentioned with regard to John's narrative

deserves to be carefully considered; for it may indeed be supposed to

bring before us a contradiction of no slight importance. For if it be

the case that in the vicinity of the Jordan, and before Jesus went into

Galilee, two men, on hearing the testimony of John the Baptist,

followed Jesus; that of these two disciples the one was Andrew, who at

once went and brought his own brother Simon to Jesus; and that on this

occasion that brother received the name Peter, by which he was

thereafter to be called,--how can it be said by the other evangelists

that He found them engaged in fishing in Galilee, and called them there

to be His disciples? [830] How can these diverse accounts be

reconciled, unless it be that we are to understand that those men did

not gain such a view of Jesus on the occasion connected with the

vicinity of the Jordan as would lead them to attach themselves to Him

for ever, but that they simply came to know who He was, and, after

their first wonder at His Person, returned to their former engagements?

38. For [it is noticeable that] again in Cana of Galilee, after He had

turned the water into wine, this same John tells us how His disciples

believed on Him. The narrative of that miracle proceeds thus: "And the

third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of

Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called and His disciples to the

marriage." [831] Now, surely, if it was on this occasion that they

believed on Him, as the evangelist tells us a little further on, they

were not yet His disciples at the time when they were called to the

marriage. This, however, is a mode of speech of the same kind with what

is intended when we say that the Apostle Paul was born in Tarsus of

Cilicia; [832] for certainly he was not an apostle at that period. In

like manner are we told here that the disciples of Christ were invited

to the marriage, by which we are to understand, not that they were

already disciples, but only that they were to be His disciples. For, at

the time when this narrative was prepared and committed to writing,

they were the disciples of Christ in fact; and that is the reason why

the evangelist, as the historian of past times, has thus spoken of

them.

39. But further, as to John's statement, that "after this He went down

to Capharnaum, He and His mother, and His brethren and His disciples;

and they continued there not many days;" [833] it is uncertain whether

by this period these men had already attached themselves to Him, in

particular Peter and Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee. For Matthew first

of all tells us that He came and dwelt in Capharnaum, [834] and then

that He called them from their boats as they were engaged in fishing.

On the other hand, John says that His disciples came with Him to

Capharnaum. Now it may be the case that Matthew has but gone over here

something he had omitted in its proper order. For he does not say,

"After this, walking by the sea of Galilee, He saw two brethren," but,

without any indication of the strict consecution of time, simply, "And

walking by the sea of Galilee, He saw two brethren," [835] and so

forth: consequently it is quite possible that he has recorded at this

later period not something which took place actually at that later

time, but only something which he had omitted to introduce before; so

that the men may be understood in this way to have come along with Him

to Capharnaum, to which place John states that He did come, He and His

mother and His disciples: or should we rather suppose that these were a

different body of disciples, as He [may already have] had a follower in

Philip, whom He called in this particular manner, by saying to him,

"Follow me"? For in what order all the twelve apostles were called is

not apparent from the narratives of the evangelists. Indeed, not only

is the succession of the various callings left unrecorded; but even the

fact of the calling is not mentioned in the case of all of them, the

only vocations specified being those of Philip, and Peter and Andrew,

and the sons of Zebedee, and Matthew the publican, who was also called

Levi. [836] The first and only person, however, who received a separate

name from Him was Peter. [837] For He did not give the sons of Zebedee

their names individually, but He called them both together the sons of

thunder. [838]

40. Besides, we ought certainly to note the fact that the evangelical

and apostolical Scriptures do not confine this designation of His

"disciples" to those twelve alone, but give the same appellation to all

those who believed on Him, and were educated under His instruction for

the kingdom of heaven. Out of the whole number of such He chose twelve,

whom He also named apostles, as Luke mentions. For a little further on

he says: And He came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the

concourse [839] of His disciples and a great multitude of people. [840]

And surely he would not speak of a "concourse" [or "crowd"] of

disciples if he referred only to twelve men. In other passages of the

Scriptures also the fact is plainly apparent, that all those were

called His disciples who were instructed by Him in what pertained to

eternal life.

41. But the question may be asked, how He called the fishermen from

their boats two by two, namely, calling Peter and Andrew first, and

then going forward a little and calling other two, namely the sons of

Zebedee, according to the narratives of Matthew and Mark; whereas

Luke's version of the matter is, that both their boats were filled with

the immense haul of fishes. And his statement bears further, that

Peter's partners, to wit, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were

summoned to the men's help when they were unable to drag out their

crowded nets, and that all who were there were astonished at the

enormous draught of fishes which had been taken; and that when Jesus

said to Peter, "Fear not, from henceforth thou shall catch men,"

although the words had been addressed to Peter alone, they all

nevertheless followed Him when they had brought their ships to land.

[841] Well, we are to understand by this, that what Luke introduces

here was what took place first, and that these men were not called by

the Lord on this occasion, but only that the prediction was uttered to

Peter by himself, that he would be a fisher of men. That saying,

moreover, was not intended to convey that they would never thereafter

be catchers of fish. For we read that even after the Lord's

resurrection they were engaged again in fishing. [842] The words,

therefore, imported simply that thereafter he would catch men, and they

did not bear that henceforth he would not catch fish. And in this way

we are at perfect liberty to suppose that they returned to the catching

of fish, according to their habit; so that those incidents which are

related by Matthew and Mark might easily take place at a period

subsequent to this. I refer to what occurred at the time when He called

the disciples two by two, and Himself gave them the command to follow

Him, at first addressing Peter and Andrew, and then the others, namely,

the two sons of Zebedee. For on that occasion they did not follow Him

only after they had drawn up their ships on shore, as with the

intention of returning to them, but they went after Him immediately, as

after one who summoned and commanded them to follow Him.

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[818] Matt. iv. 12.

[819] Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14.

[820] John i. 39, etc.

[821] John ii. 1-11.

[822] [The interval between the temptation and the return to Galilee,

referred to by the Synoptists, was at least nine months; possibly more

than a year. Augustin implies, in � 42, that this journey was a

different one.--R.]

[823] Matt. xvi. 18.

[824] John i. 42.

[825] Matt. iv. 13, vii. 29; Mark i. 16-31; Luke iv. 31-39.

[826] Matt. viii. 14, 15.

[827] [There is here a partial recognition of the fact, now widely

received, that the order of Mark is the most exact. No harmony can be

successfully constructed on the order of Matthew.--R.]

[828] Luke v. 10.

[829] Matt. iv. 10; Mark i. 17.

[830] Matt. iv. 13-23; Mark i. 16-20; Luke v. 1-11; John i. 35-44.

[831] John ii. 1, 2.

[832] Acts xxii. 3.

[833] John ii. 12.

[834] Matt. iv. 13.

[835] Matt. iv. 18.

[836] Matt. iv. 18-22, ix. 9; Mark i. 16-20, ii. 14; Luke v. 1-11; John

i. 35-44.

[837] John i. 42.

[838] Mark iii. 17.

[839] Turba.

[840] Luke vi. 17.

[841] Luke v. 1-11.

[842] John xxi. 3.

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Chapter XVIII.--Of the Date of His Departure into Galilee.

42. Furthermore, we must consider the question how the evangelist John,

before there is any mention of the casting of John the Baptist into

prison, tells us that Jesus went into Galilee. For, after relating how

He turned the water into wine at Cana of Galilee, and how He came down

to Capernaum with His mother and His disciples, and how they abode

there not many days, he tells us that He went up then to Jerusalem on

account of the passover; that after this He came into the land of Jud�a

along with His disciples, and tarried there with them, and baptized;

and then in what follows at this point the evangelist says: "And John

also was baptizing in �non, near to Salim, because there was much water

there; and they came, and were baptized: for John was not yet cast into

prison." [843] On the other hand, Matthew says: "Now when He had heard

that John was cast into prison, Jesus departed into Galilee." [844] In

like manner, Mark's words are: "Now, after that John was put in prison,

Jesus came into Galilee." [845] Luke, again, says nothing indeed about

the imprisonment of John; but notwithstanding this, after his account

of the baptism and temptation of Christ, he also makes a statement to

the same effect with that of these other two, namely, that Jesus went

into Galilee. For he has connected the several parts of his narrative

here in this way: "And when all the temptation was ended, the devil

departed from Him for a season; and Jesus returned in the power of the

Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of Him through all the

region round about." [846] From all this, however, we may gather, not

that these three evangelists have made any statement opposed to the

evangelist John, but only that they have left unrecorded the Lord's

first advent in Galilee after His baptism; on which occasion also He

turned the water into wine there. For at that period John had not yet

been cast into prison. And we are also to understand that these three

evangelists have introduced into the context of these narratives an

account of another journey of His into Galilee, which took place after

John's imprisonment, regarding which return into Galilee the evangelist

John himself furnishes the following notice: "When, therefore, Jesus

knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus makes and baptizes more

disciples than John (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His

disciples), he left Jud�a, and departed again into Galilee." [847] So,

then, we perceive that by that time John had been already cast into

prison; and further, that the Jews had heard that He was making and

baptizing more disciples than John had made and baptized.

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[843] John ii. 13, iii. 22-24.

[844] Matt. iv. 12.

[845] Mark i. 14.

[846] Luke iv. 13, 14.

[847] John iv. 1-3.

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Chapter XIX.--Of the Lengthened Sermon Which, According to Matthew, He

Delivered on the Mount.

43. Now, regarding that lengthened sermon which, according to Matthew,

the Lord delivered on the mount, let us at present see whether it

appears that the rest of the evangelists stand in no manner of

antagonism to it. Mark, it is true, has not recorded it at all, neither

has he preserved any utterances of Christ's in any way resembling it,

with the exception of certain sentences which are not given

connectedly, but occur here and there, and which the Lord repeated in

other places. Nevertheless, he has left a space in the text of his

narrative indicating the point at which we may understand this sermon

to have been spoken, although it has been left unrecited. That is the

place where he says: "And He was preaching in their synagogues, and in

all Galilee, and was casting out devils." [848] Under the head of this

preaching, in which he says Jesus engaged in all Galilee, we may also

understand that discourse to be comprehended which was delivered on the

mount, and which is detailed by Matthew. For the same Mark continues

his account thus: "And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him; and

kneeling down to Him, said, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

[849] And he goes on with the rest of the story of the cleansing of

this leper, in such a manner as to make it intelligible to us that the

person in question is the very man who is mentioned by Matthew as

having been healed at the time when the Lord came down from the mount

after the delivery of His discourse. For this is how Matthew gives the

history there: "Now, when He was come down from the mountain, great

multitudes followed Him; and, behold, there came a leper, and

worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;"

[850] and so on.

44. This leper is also referred to by Luke, [851] not indeed in this

order, but after the manner in which the writers are accustomed to act,

recording at a subsequent point things which have been omitted at a

previous stage, or bringing in at an earlier point occurrences which

took place at a later period, according as they had incidents suggested

to their minds by the heavenly influence, with which indeed they had

become acquainted before, but which they were afterwards prompted to

commit to writing as they came up to their recollection. This same

Luke, however, has also left us a version of his own of that copious

discourse of the Lord, in a passage which he commences just as the

section in Matthew begins. For in the latter the words run thus:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;"

[852] while in the former they are put thus: "Blessed be ye poor: for

yours is the kingdom of God." [853] Then, too, much of what follows in

Luke's narrative is similar to what we have in the other. And finally,

the conclusion given to the sermon is repeated in both Gospels in its

entire identity,--namely, the story of the wise man who builds upon the

rock, and the foolish man who builds upon the sand; the only difference

being, that Luke speaks only of the stream beating against the house,

and does not mention also the rain and the wind, as they occur in

Matthew. Accordingly, it might very readily be believed that he has

there introduced the self-same discourse of the Lord, but that at the

same time he has omitted certain sentences which Matthew has inserted;

that he has also brought in other sayings which Matthew has not

mentioned; and that, in a similar manner, he has expressed certain of

these utterances in somewhat different terms, but without detriment to

the integrity of the truth.

45. This we might very well suppose to have been the case, as I have

said, were it not that a difficulty is felt to attach to the

circumstance that Matthew tells us how this discourse was delivered on

a mount by the Lord in a sitting posture; while Luke says that it was

spoken on a plain by the Lord in a standing posture. This difference,

accordingly, makes it seem as if the former referred to one discourse,

and the latter to another. And what should there be, indeed, to hinder

[us from supposing] Christ to have repeated elsewhere some words which

He had already spoken, or from doing a second time certain things which

He had already done on some previous occasion? However, that these two

discourses, of which the one is inserted by Matthew and the other by

Luke, are not separated by a long space of time, is with much

probability inferred from the fact that, at once in what precedes and

in what follows them, both the evangelists have related certain

incidents either similar or perfectly identical, so that it is not

unreasonably felt that the narrations of the writers who introduce

these things are occupied with the same localities and days. For

Matthew's recital proceeds in the following terms: "And there followed

Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and

from Jerusalem, and from Jud�a, and from beyond Jordan. And seeing the

multitudes, He went up into a mountain; and when He was set, His

disciples came unto Him: and He opened His mouth, and taught them,

saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of

heaven;" [854] and so forth. Here it may appear that His desire was to

free Himself from the great crowds of people, and that for this reason

He went up into the mountain, as if He meant to withdraw Himself from

the multitudes, and seek an opportunity of speaking with His disciples

alone. And this seems to be certified also by Luke, whose account is to

the following effect: "And it came to pass in those days, that He went

out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples: and of them He

chose twelve, whom also He named apostles; Simon, whom He also named

Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon, who is called

Zelotes, Judas the brother of James, and Judas Scarioth, which was the

traitor. And He came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the

company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all

Jud�a and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre [855] and Sidon,

which had come to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and

they that were vexed with unclean spirits were healed. [856] And the

whole multitude sought to touch Him; for there went virtue out of Him,

and healed them all. And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and

said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of heaven;" [857]

and so on. Here the relation permits us to understand that, after

selecting on the mountain twelve disciples out of the larger body, whom

He also named apostles (which incident Matthew has omitted), He then

delivered that discourse which Matthew has introduced, and which Luke

has left unnoticed,--that is to say, the one on the mount; and that

thereafter, when He had now come down, He spoke in the plain a second

discourse similar to the first, on which Matthew is silent, but which

is detailed by Luke; and further, that both these sermons were

concluded in the same manner. [858]

46. But, again, as regards what Matthew proceeds to state after the

termination of that discourse--namely this, "And it came to pass, when

Jesus had ended these sayings, the people [859] were astonished at His

doctrine," [860] --it may appear that the speakers there were those

multitudes of disciples out of whom He had chosen the twelve. Moreover,

when the evangelist goes on immediately in these terms, "And when He

was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him; and,

behold, there came a leper and worshipped Him," [861] we are at

libertyto suppose that that incident took place subsequently to both

discourses,--not only after the one which Matthew records, but also

after the one which Luke inserts. For it is not made apparent what

length of time elapsed after the descent from the mountain. But

Matthew's intention was simply to indicate the fact itself, that after

that descent there were great multitudes of people with the Lord on the

occasion when He cleansed the leper, and not to specify what period of

time had intervened. And this supposition may all the more readily be

entertained, since [we find that] Luke tells us how the same leper was

cleansed at a time when the Lord was now in a certain city,--a

circumstance which Matthew has not cared to mention.

47. After all, however, this explanation may also be

suggested,--namely, that in the first instance the Lord, along with His

disciples and no others, was on some more elevated portion of the

mountain, and that during the period of His stay there He chose out of

the number of His followers those twelve; that then He came down in

company with them, not indeed from the mountain itself, but from that

said altitude on the mountain, into the plain--that is to say, into

some level spot which was found on the slope of the mountain, and which

was capable of accommodating great multitudes; and that thereafter,

when He had seated Himself, His disciples took up their position next

Him, and in these circumstances He delivered both to them and to the

other multitudes who were present one discourse, which Matthew and Luke

have both recorded, their modes of narrating it being indeed different,

but the truth being given with equal fidelity by the two writers in all

that concerns the facts and sayings which both of them have recounted.

For we have already prefaced our inquiry with the position, which

indeed ought of itself to have been obvious to all without the need of

any one to give them counsel to that effect beforehand, that there is

not [necessarily] any antagonism between writers, although one may omit

something which another mentions; nor, again, although one states a

fact in one way, and another in a different method, provided that the

same truth is set forth in regard to the objects and sayings

themselves. In this way, therefore, Matthew's sentence, "Now when He

was come down from the mountain," may at the same time be understood to

refer also to the plain, which there might very well have been on the

slope of the mountain. And thereafter Matthew tells the story of the

cleansing of the leper, which is also given in a similar manner by Mark

and Luke.

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[848] Mark i. 39.

[849] Mark i. 40.

[850] Matt. viii. 1, 2.

[851] Luke v. 12, 13. [It seems altogether more probable that the

healing of the leper occurred, before the Sermon on the Mount, at the

time indicated by Luke.--R.]

[852] Matt. v. 3.

[853] Luke vi. 20.

[854] Matt. iv. 25, etc.

[855] Various mss. and editions insert et before the Tyri = both of

Tyre, although it is wanting in the Greek.

[856] Qui vexabantur a spiritibus immundis curabantur.

[857] Luke vi. 12-20.

[858] [The explanation suggested in � 47 is altogether more

probable.--R.]

[859] Turb�, multitudes.

[860] Matt. vii. 28.

[861] Matt. viii. 1, 2.

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Chapter XX.--An Explanation of the Circumstance that Matthew Tells Us

How the Centurion Came to Jesus on Behalf of His Servant, While Luke's

Statement is that the Centurion Despatched Friends to Him.

48. After these things, Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the

following terms: "And when Jesus was entered into Capharnaum, there

came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant

lieth at home sick of the palsy, and he is grievously tormented;" and

so forth, on to the place where it is said, "And his servant was healed

in the self-same hour." [862] This case of the centurion's servant is

related also by Luke; only Luke does not bring it in, as Matthew does,

after the cleansing of the leper, whose story he has recorded as

something suggested to his recollection at a later stage, but

introduces it after the conclusion of that lengthened sermon already

discussed. For he connects the two sections in this way: "Now when He

had ended all His sayings in the audience of the people, He entered

into Capharnaum; and a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto

him, was sick and ready to die;" and so forth, until we come to the

verse where it is said that he was healed. [863] Here, then, we notice

that it was not till after He had ended all His words in the hearing of

the people that Christ entered Capharnaum; by which we are to

understand simply that He did not make that entrance before He had

brought these sayings to their conclusion; and we are not to take it as

intimating the length of that period of time which intervened between

the delivery of these discourses and the entrance into Capharnaum. In

this interval that leper was cleansed, whose case is recorded by

Matthew in its own proper place, but is given by Luke only at a later

point. [864]

49. Accordingly, let us proceed to consider whether Matthew and Luke

are at one in the account of this servant. Matthew's words, then, are

these: "There came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, My

servant lieth at home sick of the palsy." [865] Now this seems to be

inconsistent with the version presented by Luke, which runs thus: "And

when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him the elders of the Jews,

beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant. And when they

came to Jesus, they besought Him instantly, saying, That he was worthy

for whom He should do this: for he loveth our nation, and he hath built

us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when He was now not far

from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him,

Lord, trouble not Thyself; for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest

enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come

unto Thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed." [866]

For if this was the manner in which the incident took place, how can

Matthew's statement, that there "came to Him a certain centurion," be

correct, seeing that the man did not come in person, but sent his

friends? The apparent discrepancy, however, will disappear if we look

carefully into the matter, and observe that Matthew has simply held by

a very familiar mode of expression. For not only are we accustomed to

speak of one as coming [867] even before he actually reaches the place

he is said to have approached, [868] whence, too, we speak of one as

making small approach or making great approach [869] to what he is

desirous of reaching; but we also not unfrequently speak of that

access, [870] for the sake of getting at which the approach is made, as

reached even although the person who is said to reach another may not

himself see the individual whom he reaches, inasmuch as it may be

through a friend that he reaches the person whose favour is necessary

to him. This, indeed, is a custom which has so thoroughly established

itself, that even in the language of every-day life now those men are

called Perventores [871] who, in the practice of canvassing, [872] get

at the inaccessible ears, as one may say, of any of the men of

influence, by the intervention of suitable personages. If, therefore,

access [873] itself is thus familiarly said to be gained by the means

of other parties, how much more may an approach [874] be said to take

place, although it be by means of others, which always remains

something short of actual access! For it is surely the case, that a

person may be able to do very much in the way of approach, but yet may

have failed to succeed in actually reaching what he sought to get at.

Consequently it is nothing out of the way for Matthew,--a fact, indeed,

which may be understood by any intelligence,--when thus dealing with an

approach on the part of the centurion to the Lord, which was effected

in the person of others, to have chosen to express the matter in this

compendious method, "There came a centurion to Him."

50. At the same time, however, we must be careful enough to discern a

certain mystical depth in the phraseology adopted by the evangelist,

which is in accordance with these words of the Psalm, "Come ye to Him,

and be ye lightened." [875] For in this way, inasmuch as the Lord

Himself commended the faith of the centurion, in which indeed his

approach was really made to Jesus, in such terms that He declared, "I

have not found so great faith in Israel," the evangelist wisely chose

to speak of the man himself as coming to Jesus, rather than to bring in

the persons through whom he had conveyed his words. And furthermore,

Luke has unfolded the whole incident to us just as it occurred, in a

form constraining us to understand from his narrative in what manner

another writer, who was also incapable of making any false statement,

might have spoken of the man himself as coming. It is in this way, too,

that the woman who suffered from the issue of blood, although she took

hold merely of the hem of His garment, did yet touch the Lord more

effectually than those multitudes did by whom He was thronged. [876]

For just as she touched the Lord the more effectually, in so far as she

believed the more earnestly, so the centurion also came the more really

to the Lord, inasmuch as he believed the more thoroughly. And now, as

regards the rest of this paragraph, it would be a superfluous task to

go over in detail the various matters which are recounted by the one

and omitted by the other. For, according to the principle brought under

notice at the outset, there is not to be found in these peculiarities

any actual antagonism between the writers.

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[862] Matt. viii. 5-13.

[863] Luke vii. 1-10.

[864] [But see note on � 44.--R.]

[865] Matt. viii. 5, 6.

[866] Luke vii. 3-7.

[867] Accessisse, approaching.

[868] Accessisse, come to.

[869] Parum accessit vel multum accessit.

[870] Perventio, arrival.

[871] Reachers, comers at.

[872] Ambitionis arte.

[873] Perventio.

[874] Coming at--accessus.

[875] Accedite ad eum et illuminamini. Ps. xxxiv. 5.

[876] Luke vii. 42-48.

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Chapter XXI.--Of the Order in Which the Narrative Concerning Peter's

Mother-In-Law is Introduced.

51. Matthew proceeds in the following terms: "And when Jesus was come

into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

And He touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and

ministered unto them." [877] Matthew has not indicated the date of this

incident; that is to say, he has specified neither before what event

nor after what occurrence it took place. For we are certainly under no

necessity of supposing that, because it is recorded after a certain

event, it must also have happened in actual matter of fact after that

event. And unquestionably, in this case, we are to understand that he

has introduced for record here something which he had omitted to notice

previously. For Mark brings in this narrative before his account of

that cleansing of the leper which he would appear to have placed after

the delivery of the sermon on the mount; [878] which discourse,

however, he has left unrelated. And thus, too, Luke [879] inserts this

story of Peter's mother-in-law after an occurrence [880] which it

follows likewise in Mark's version, but also before that lengthened

discourse, which has been reproduced by him, and which may appear to be

one with the sermon which Matthew states to have been delivered on the

mount. For of what consequence is it in what place any of them may give

his account; or what difference does it make whether he inserts the

matter in its proper order, or brings in at a particular point what was

previously omitted, or mentions at an earlier stage what really

happened at a later, provided only that he contradicts neither himself

nor a second writer in the narrative of the same facts or of others?

For as it is not in one's own power, however admirable and trustworthy

may be the knowledge he has once obtained of the facts, to determine

the order in which he will recall them to memory (for the way in which

one thing comes into a person's mind before or after another is

something which proceeds not as we will, but simply as it is given to

us), it is reasonable enough to suppose that each of the evangelists

believed it to have been his duty to relate what he had to relate in

that order in which it had pleased God to suggest to his recollection

the matters he was engaged in recording. At least this might hold good

in the case of those incidents with regard to which the question of

order, whether it were this or that, detracted nothing from evangelical

authority and truth.

52. But as to the reason why the Holy Spirit, who divideth to every man

severally as He will, [881] and who therefore undoubtedly, with a view

to the establishing of their books on so distinguished an eminence of

authority, also governs and rules the minds of the holy men themselves

in the matter of suggesting the things they were to commit to writing,

has left one historian at liberty to construct his narrative in one

way, and another in a different fashion, that is a question which any

one may look into with pious consideration, and for which, by divine

help, the answer also may possibly be found. That, however, is not the

object of the work which we have taken in hand at present. The task we

have proposed to ourselves is simply to demonstrate that not one of the

evangelists contradicts either himself or his fellow-historians,

whatever be the precise order in which he may have had the ability or

may have preferred to compose his account of matters belonging to the

doings and sayings of Christ; and that, too, at once in the case of

subjects identical with those recorded by others, and in the case of

subjects different from these. For this reason, therefore, when the

order of times is not apparent, we ought not to feel it a matter of any

consequence what order any of them may have adopted in relating the

events. But wherever the order is apparent, if the evangelist then

presents anything which seems to be inconsistent with his own

statements, or with those of another, we must certainly take the

passage into consideration, and endeavour to clear up the difficulty.

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[877] Matt. viii. 14, 15.

[878] Cf. what is said above (chap. xix. 43) as to the note of time

implied in the statement (Mark i. 39), that He preached in their

synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. [The order of

Mark is probably correct.--R.]

[879] Luke iv. 38, 39.

[880] Referring, apparently, to the casting out of the unclean spirit

(Mark i. 23, etc.; Luke iv. 33, etc.).

[881] 1 Cor. xii. 11.

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Chapter XXII.--Of the Order of the Incidents Which are Recorded After

This Section and of the Question Whether Matthew, Mark, and Luke are

Consistent with Each Other in These.

53. Matthew, accordingly, continues his narration thus: "Now when the

even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with

devils; and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that

were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the

prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our

sicknesses." [882] That this belongs in date to the same day, he

indicates with sufficient clearness by these words which he subjoins,

"Now when the even was come." In a similar manner, after concluding his

account of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law with the sentence, "And

she ministered unto them," Mark has appended the following statement:

"And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were

diseased, and them that were possessed of the devils. And all the city

was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick of

divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils

to speak, because they knew Him. And in the morning, rising up a great

while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place."

[883] Here Mark appears to have preserved the order in such wise, that

after the statement conveyed in the words "And at even," he gives this

note of time: "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day."

And although there is no absolute necessity for supposing either that,

when we have the words "And at even," the reference must be to the

evening of the very same day, or that when the phrase "In the morning"

meets us, it must mean the morning [884] after the self-same night;

still, however that may be, this order in the occurrences may fairly

appear to have been preserved with a view to an orderly arrangement of

the times. Moreover, Luke, too, after relating the story of Peter's

mother-in-law, while he does not indeed say expressly, "And at even,"

has at least used a phrase which conveys the same sense. For he

proceeds thus: "Now when the sun had set, [885] all they that had any

sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands

on every one of them, and healed them. And devils also came out of

many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And He,

rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that He was

Christ. And when it was day, He departed and went into a desert place."

[886] Here, again, we see precisely the same order of times preserved

as we discovered in Mark. But Matthew, who appears to have introduced

the story of Peter's mother-in-law not according to the order in which

the incident itself took place, but simply in the succession in which

he had it suggested to his mind after previous omission, has first

recorded what happened on that same day, to wit, when even was come;

and thereafter, instead of subjoining the notice of the morning, goes

on with his account in these terms: "Now when Jesus saw great

multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side

of the lake." [887] This, then, is something new, differing from what

is given in the context by Mark and Luke, who, after the notice of the

even, bring in the mention of the morning. Consequently, as regards

this verse in Matthew, "Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him,

He gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the lake," we

ought simply to understand that he has introduced here another fact

which he has had brought to mind at this point,--namely, the fact that

on a certain day, when Jesus had seen great multitudes about Him, He

gave instructions to cross to the other side of the lake.

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[882] Matt. viii. 16-18.

[883] Mark i. 31-35.

[884] Diluculum, dawn.

[885] Occidisset.

[886] Luke iv. 40-42.

[887] Matt. viii. 18.

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Chapter XXIII.--Of the Person Who Said to the Lord, "I Will Follow Thee

Whithersoever Thou Goest;" And of the Other Things Connected Therewith,

and of the Order in Which They are Recorded by Matthew and Luke.

54. He next appends the following statement: "And a certain scribe came

and said unto Him, Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever thou

goest;" and so on, down to the words, "Let the dead bury their dead."

[888] We have a narrative in similar terms also in Luke. But he inserts

it only after a variety of other matters, and without any explicit note

of the order of time, but after the fashion of one only bethinking

himself of the incident at that point. He leaves us also uncertain

whether he brings it in there as something previously omitted, or as an

anticipatory notice of something which in actual fact took place

subsequently to those incidents by which it is followed in the history.

For he proceeds thus: "And it came to pass, that as they went in the

way, a certain man said unto Him, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou

goest." [889] And the Lord's answer is given here in precisely the same

terms as we find recited in Matthew. Now, although Matthew tells us

that this took place at the time when He gave commandment to depart

unto the other side of the lake, and Luke, on the other hand, speaks of

an occasion when they "went in the way," there is no necessary

contradiction in that. For it may be the case that they went in the way

just in order to come to the lake. Again, in what is said about the

person who begged to be allowed first to bury his father, Matthew and

Luke are thoroughly at one. For the mere fact that Matthew has

introduced first the words of the man who made the request regarding

his father, and that he has put after that the saying of the Lord,

"Follow me," whereas Luke puts the Lord's command, "Follow me," first,

and the declaration of the petitioner second, is a matter of no

consequence to the sense itself. Luke has also made mention of yet

another person, who said, "Lord, I will follow Thee, but let me first

bid them farewell which are at home at my house;" [890] of which

individual Matthew says nothing. And thereafter Luke proceeds to

another subject altogether, and not to what followed in the actual

order of time. The passage runs: "And after these things, the Lord

appointed other seventy-two also." [891] That this occurred "after

these things" is indeed manifest; but at what length of time after

these things the Lord did so is not apparent. Nevertheless, in this

interval that took place which Matthew subjoins next in succession. For

the same Matthew still keeps up the order of time, and continues his

narrative, as we shall now see.

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[888] Matt. viii. 19-22.

[889] Luke ix. 57.

[890] Luke ix. 61.

[891] Septuaginta duo. Luke x. 1. [An early variation in the Greek

text; comp. Revised Version margin.--R.]

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Chapter XXIV.--Of the Lord's Crossing the Lake on that Occasion on

Which He Slept in the Vessel, and of the Casting Out of Those Devils

Whom He Suffered to Go into the Swine; And of the Consistency of the

Accounts Given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke of All that Was Done and Said

on These Occasions.

55. "And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him.

And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea." And so the story

goes on, until we come to the words, "And He came into His own city."

[892] Those two narratives which are told by Matthew in continuous

succession,--namely, that regarding the calm upon the sea after Jesus

was roused from His sleep and had commanded the winds, and that

concerning the persons who were possessed with the fierce devil, and

who brake their bands and were driven into the wilderness,--are given

also in like manner by Mark and Luke. [893] Some parts of these stories

are expressed, indeed, in different terms by the different writers, but

the sense remains the same. This is the case, for example, when Matthew

represents the Lord to have said, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little

faith?" [894] while Mark's version is, "Why are ye fearful? Is it that

ye have no faith?" [895] For Mark's word refers to that perfect faith

which is like a grain of mustard seed; and so he, too, speaks in effect

of the "little faith." Luke, again, puts it thus: "Where is your

faith?" [896] Accordingly, the whole utterance may perhaps have gone

thus: "Why are ye fearful? Where is your faith, O ye of little faith?"

And so one of them records one part, and another another part, of the

entire saying. The same may be the case with the words spoken by the

disciples when they awoke Him. Matthew gives us: "Lord, save us: we

perish." [897] Mark has: "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?"

[898] And Luke says simply, "Master, we perish." [899] These different

expressions, however, convey one and the same meaning on the part of

those who were awaking the Lord, and who were wishful to secure their

safety. Neither need we inquire which of these several forms is to be

preferred as the one actually addressed to Christ. For whether they

really used the one or the other of these three phraseologies, or

expressed themselves in different words, which are unrecorded by any

one of the evangelists, but which were equally well adapted to give the

like representation of what was meant, what difference does it make in

the fact itself? At the same time, it may also possibly have been the

case that, when several parties in concert were trying to awake Him,

all these various modes of expression had been used, one by one person,

and another by another. In the same way, too, we may deal with the

exclamation on the stilling of the tempest, which, according to

Matthew, was, "What manner of man is this, that the winds and the sea

obey Him?" [900] according to Mark, "What man, thinkest thou, is this,

[901] that both the wind and the sea obey Him?" [902] and according to

Luke, "What man, thinkest thou, is this? [903] for He commandeth both

the winds and the sea, [904] and they obey Him." Who can fail to see

that the sense in all these forms is quite identical? For the

expression, "What man, thinkest thou, is this?" has precisely the same

import with the other, "What manner of man is this?" [905] And where

the words "He commandeth" are omitted, it can at least be understood as

a matter of course that the obedience is rendered to the person

commanding.

56. Moreover, with respect to the circumstance that Matthew states that

there were two men who were afflicted with the legion of devils which

received permission to go into the swine, whereas Mark and Luke

instance only a single individual, we may suppose that one of these

parties was a person of some kind of superior notability and repute,

whose case was particularly lamented by that district, and for whose

deliverance there was special anxiety. With the intention of indicating

that fact, two of the evangelists have judged it proper to make mention

only of the one person, in connection with whom the fame of this deed

had been spread abroad the more extensively and remarkably. Neither

should any scruple be excited by the different forms in which the words

uttered by the possessed [906] have been reproduced by the various

evangelists. For we may either resolve them all into one and the same

thing, or suppose them all to have been actually spoken. Nor, again,

should we find any difficulty in the circumstance that with Matthew the

address is couched in the plural number, but with Mark and Luke in the

singular. For these latter two tell us at the same time, that when the

man was asked what was his name, he answered that he was Legion,

because the devils were many. Nor, once more, is there any discrepancy

between Mark's statement that the herd of swine was round about the

mountain, [907] and Luke's, that they were on the mountain. [908] For

the herd of swine was so great that one portion of it might be on the

mountain, and another only round about it. For, as Mark has expressly

informed us, there were about two thousand swine.

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[892] Matt. viii. 23-ix. 1.

[893] Mark iv. 36; Luke viii. 22-37.

[894] Matt. viii. 16.

[895] Mark iv. 40. [The variations in the Greek text are numerous.

Augustin gives necdum, which represents the rending followed in the

Revised Version.--R.]

[896] Luke viii. 25.

[897] Matt. viii. 25.

[898] Mark iv. 38.

[899] Luke viii. 24.

[900] Matt. viii. 27.

[901] Quis putas est iste.

[902] Mark iv. 41. [The Greek text in Mark and Luke has nothing

corresponding to "thinkest thou." The Authorized Version, given above,

has an unnecessary variation; "that," "that," "for." The Greek particle

is the same, and Augustin gives quia three times.--R.]

[903] Quis putas hic est.

[904] Mari.

[905] Qualis est hic.

[906] Or, the devils--d�monum.

[907] Circa montem. [The correct Greek text is rendered "on the

mountain side" in the Revised Version.--R.]

[908] In monte.

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Chapter XXV.--Of the Man Sick of the Palsy to Whom the Lord Said, "Thy

Sins are Forgiven Thee," And "Take Up Thy Bed;" And in Especial, of the

Question Whether Matthew and Mark are Consistent with Each Other in

Their Notice of the Place Where This Incident Took Place, in So Far as

Matthew Says It Happened "In His Own City," While Mark Says It Was in

Capharnaum.

57. Hereupon Matthew proceeds with his recital, still preserving the

order of time, and connects his narrative in the following

manner:--"And He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into

His own city. And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy,

lying on a bed;" and so on down to where it is said, "But when the

multitude saw it, they marvelled; and glorified God, which had given

such power unto men." [909] Mark and Luke have also told the story of

this paralytic. Now, as regards Matthew's stating that the Lord said,

"Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;" while Luke makes

the address run, not as "son," but as "man,"--this only helps to bring

out the Lord's meaning more explicitly. For these sins were [thus said

to be] forgiven to the "man," inasmuch as the very fact that he was a

man would make it impossible for him to say, "I have not sinned;" and

at the same time, that mode of address served to indicate that He who

forgave sins to man was Himself God. Mark, again, has given the same

form of words as Matthew, but he has left out the terms, "Be of good

cheer." It is also possible, indeed, that the whole saying ran thus:

"Man, be of good cheer: son, thy sins are forgiven thee;" or thus:

"Son, be of good cheer: man, thy sins are forgiven thee;" or the words

may have been spoken in some other congruous order.

58. A difficulty, however, may certainly arise when we observe how

Matthew tells the story of the paralytic after this fashion: "And He

entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city. And,

behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed;"

whereas Mark speaks of the incident as taking place not in His own

city, which indeed is called Nazareth, but in Capharnaum. His narrative

is to the following effect:--"And again He entered into Capharnaum

after some days; and it was noised that He was in the house. And

straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no

room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and He spake a

word [910] unto them. And they came unto Him, bringing one sick of the

palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto

Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was: and when they

had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy

lay. And when Jesus saw their faith;" and so forth. [911] Luke, on the

other hand, does not mention the place in which the incident happened,

but gives the tale thus: "And it came to pass on a certain day that He

was sitting teaching, [912] and there were Pharisees and doctors of the

law also sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and

Jud�a, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal

them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a

palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before

Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in

because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him

down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And

when He saw their faith, He said, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee;" and

so forth. [913] The question, therefore, remains one between Mark and

Matthew, in so far as Matthew writes of the incident as taking place in

the Lord's city; [914] while Mark locates it in Capharnaum. This

question would be more difficult to solve if Matthew mentioned Nazareth

by name. But, as the case stands, when we reflect that the state of

Galilee itself might have been called Christ's city, [915] because

Nazareth was in Galilee, just as the whole region which was made up of

so many cities [916] is yet called a Roman state; [917] when, further,

it is considered that so many nations are comprehended in that city, of

which it is written, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of

God;" [918] and also that God's ancient people, though dwelling in so

many cities, have yet been spoken of as one house, the house of Israel,

[919] --who can doubt that [it may be fairly said that] Jesus wrought

this work in His own city [or, state], inasmuch as He did it in the

city of Capharnaum, which was a city of that Galilee to which He had

returned when He crossed over again from the country of the Gerasenes,

so that when He came into Galilee He might correctly be said to have

come into His own city [or, state], in which ever town of Galilee He

might happen to be? This explanation may be vindicated more

particularly on the ground that Capharnaum itself held a position of

such eminence in Galilee that it was reckoned to be a kind of

metropolis. But even were it altogether illegitimate to take the city

of Christ in the sense either of Galilee itself, in which Nazareth was

situated, or of Capharnaum, which was distinguished as in a certain

sense the capital of Galilee, we might still affirm that Matthew has

simply passed over all that happened after Jesus came into His own city

until He reached Capharnaum, and that he has simply tacked on the

narrative of the healing of the paralytic at this point; just as the

writers do in many instances, leaving unnoticed much that intervenes,

and, without any express indication of the omissions they are making,

proceeding precisely as if what they subjoin, followed actually in

literal succession. [920]

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[909] Matt. ix. 1-8.

[910] Loquebatur verbum. ["Was speaking the word" is probably the

meaning.--R.]

[911] Mark ii. 1-12.

[912] Et ipse sedebat docens.

[913] Luke v. 17-26.

[914] Or, state--civitate.

[915] Or, state--civitas.

[916] Civitatibus.

[917] Civitas, city.

[918] Ps. lxxxvii. 3.

[919] Isa. v. 7; Jer. iii. 20; Ezek. iii. 4.

[920] [The true solution of the difficulty is simple. Our Lord had

already left Nazareth and made Capernaum His headquarters (comp. Luke

iv. 30, 31). But Augustin identifies that incident with a subsequent

visit to Nazareth (see ch. xlii.).--R.]

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Chapter XXVI.--Of the Calling of Matthew, and of the Question Whether

Matthew's Own Account is in Harmony with Those of Mark and Luke When

They Speak of Levi the Son of Alphaeus.

59. Matthew next continues his narrative in the following terms:--"And

as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew, sitting

at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow me. And he

arose and followed Him." [921] Mark gives this story also, and keeps

the same order, bringing it in after the notice of the healing of the

man who was sick of the palsy. His version runs thus: "And He went

forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto Him,

and He taught them. And as He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alph�us

sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he

arose, and followed Him." [922] There is no contradiction here; for

Matthew is the same person with Levi. Luke also introduces this after

the story of the healing of the same man who was sick of the palsy. He

writes in these terms: "And after these things He went forth, and saw a

publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said

unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him." [923]

Now, from this it will appear to be the most reasonable explanation to

say that Matthew records these things here in the form of things

previously passed over, and now brought to mind. For certainly we must

believe that Matthew's calling took place before the delivery of the

sermon on the mount. For Luke tells us that on this mountain on that

occasion the election was made of all these twelve, whom Jesus also

named apostles, out of the larger body of the disciples. [924]

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[921] Matt. ix. 9.

[922] Mark ii. 13, 14.

[923] Luke v. 27, 28.

[924] Luke vi. 13. [This fact shows that the order of Matthew is not

chronological. Indeed, as Augustin goes on, he is led more and more to

accept the order of the other evangelists.--R.]

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Chapter XXVII.--Of the Feast at Which It Was Objected at Once that

Christ Ate with Sinners, and that His Disciples Did Not Fast; Of the

Circumstance that the Evangelists Seem to Give Different Accounts of

the Parties by Whom These Objections Were Alleged; And of the Question

Whether Matthew and Mark and Luke are Also in Harmony with Each Other

in the Reports Given of the Words of These Persons, and of the Replies

Returned by the Lord.

60. Matthew, accordingly, goes on to say: "And it came to pass, as He

sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and

sat down with Jesus and His disciples;" and so on, down to where we

read, "But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved."

[925] Here Matthew has not told us particularly in whose house it was

that Jesus was sitting at meat along with the publicans and sinners.

This might make it appear as if he had not appended this notice in its

strict order here, but had introduced at this point, in the way of

reminiscence, something which actually took place on a different

occasion, were it not that Mark and Luke, who repeat the account in

terms thoroughly similar, have made it plain that it was in the house

of Levi--that is to say, Matthew--that Jesus sat at meat, and all these

sayings were uttered which follow. For Mark states the same fact,

keeping also the same order, in the following manner: "And it came to

pass, as He sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat

also together with Jesus." [926] Accordingly, when he says, "in his

house," he certainly refers to the person of whom he was speaking

directly before, and that was Levi. To the same effect, after the

words, "He saith unto him, Follow me; and he left all, rose up, and

followed Him," [927] Luke has appended immediately this statement: "And

Levi made Him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great

company of publicans and of others that sat down with them." And thus

it is manifest in whose house it was that these things took place.

61. Let us next look into the words which these three evangelists have

all brought in as having been addressed to the Lord, and also into the

replies which were made by Him. Matthew says: "And when the Pharisees

saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with

publicans and sinners?" [928] This reappears very nearly in the same

words in Mark: "How is it that He eateth and drinketh with publicans

and sinners?" [929] Only we find thus that Matthew has omitted one

thing which Mark inserts--namely, the addition "and drinketh." But of

what consequence can that be, since the sense is fully given, the idea

suggested being that they were partaking of a repast in company? Luke,

on the other hand, seems to have recorded this scene somewhat

differently. For his version proceeds thus: "But their scribes and

Pharisees murmured against His disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and

drink with publicans and sinners?" [930] But his intention in this

certainly is not [931] to indicate that their Master was not referred

to on that occasion, but to intimate that the objection was levelled

against all of them together, both Himself and His disciples; the

charge, however, which was to be taken to be meant both of Him and of

them, being addressed directly not to Him, but to them. For the fact is

that Luke himself, no less than the others, represents the Lord as

making the reply, and saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but

sinners to repentance." [932] And He would not have returned that

answer to them, had not their words, "Why do ye eat and drink?" been

directed very specially to Himself. For the same reason, Matthew and

Mark have told us that the objection which was brought against Him was

stated immediately to His disciples, because, when the allegation was

addressed to the disciples, the charge was thereby laid all the more

seriously against the Master whom these disciples were imitating and

following. One and the same sense, therefore, is conveyed; and it is

expressed all the better in consequence of these variations employed in

some of the terms, while the matter of fact itself is left intact. In

like manner we may deal with the accounts of the Lord's reply.

Matthew's runs thus: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they

that are sick; but go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have

mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but

sinners." [933] Mark and Luke have also preserved for us the same sense

in almost the same words, with this exception, that they both fail to

introduce that quotation from the prophet, "I will have mercy, and not

sacrifice." Luke, again, after the words, "I came not to call the

righteous, but sinners," has added the term, "unto repentance." This

addition serves to bring out the sense more fully, so as to preclude

any one from supposing that sinners are loved by Christ, purely for the

very reason that they are sinners. For this similitude also of the sick

indicates clearly what God means by the calling of sinners,--that it is

like the physician with the sick,--and that its object verily is that

men should be saved from their iniquity as from disease; which healing

is effected by repentance.

62. In the same way, we may subject what is said about the disciples of

John to examination. Matthew's words are these: "Then came to Him the

disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft?" [934]

The purport of Mark's version is similar: "And the disciples of John

and the Pharisees [935] used to fast. [936] And they come and say unto

Him, Why do the disciples of John and the Pharisees [937] fast, but thy

disciples fast not?" [938] The only semblance of a discrepancy that can

be found here, is in the possibility of supposing that the mention of

the Pharisees as having spoken along with the disciples of John is an

addition of Mark's, while Matthew states only that the disciples of

John expressed themselves to the above effect. But the words which were

actually uttered by the parties, according to Mark's version, rather

indicate that the speakers and the persons spoken of were not the same

individuals. I mean, that the persons who came to Jesus were the guests

who were then present, that they came because the disciples of John and

the Pharisees were fasting, and that they uttered the above words with

respect to these parties. In this way, the evangelist's phrase, "they

come," would not refer to the persons regarding whom he had just thrown

in the remark, "And the disciples of John and the Pharisees were

fasting." But the case would be, that as those parties were fasting,

some others here, who are moved by that fact, come to Him, and put this

question to Him, "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees

fast, but thy disciples fast not?" This is more clearly expressed by

Luke. For, evidently with the same idea in his mind, after stating what

answer the Lord returned in the words in which He spoke about the

calling of sinners under the similitude of those who are sick, he

proceeds thus: "And they said unto Him, Why do the disciples of John

fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the

Pharisees, but thine eat and drink?" [939] Here, then, we see that, as

was the case with Mark, Luke has mentioned one party as speaking to

this intent in relation to other parties. How comes it, therefore, that

Matthew says, "Then came to Him the disciples of John, saying, Why do

we and the Pharisees fast?" The explanation may be, that those

individuals were also present, and that all these various parties were

eager to advance this charge, as they severally found opportunity. And

the sentiments which sought expression on this occasion have been

conveyed by the three evangelists under varied terms, but yet without

any divergence from a true statement of the fact itself.

63. Once more, we find that Matthew and Mark have given similar

accounts of what was said about the children of the bridegroom not

fasting as long as the bridegroom is with them, with this exception,

that Mark has named them the children of the bridals, [940] while

Matthew has designated them the children of the bridegroom. [941] That,

however, is a matter of no moment. For by the children of the bridals

we understand at once those connected with the bridegroom, and those

connected with the bride. The sense, therefore, is obvious and

identical, and neither different nor contradictory. Luke, again, does

not say, "Can the children of the bridegroom fast?" but, "Can ye make

the children of the bridegroom fast, while the bridegroom is with

them?" By expressing it in this method, the evangelist has elegantly

opened up the self-same sense in a way calculated to suggest something

else. For thus the idea is conveyed, that those very persons who were

speaking would try to make the children of the bridegroom mourn and

fast, inasmuch as they would [seek to] put the bridegroom to death.

Moreover, Matthew's phrase, "mourn," is of the same import as that used

by Mark and Luke, namely, "fast." For Matthew also says further on,

"Then shall they fast," and not, "Then shall they mourn." But by the

use of this phrase, he has indicated that the Lord spoke of that kind

of fasting which pertains to the lowliness of tribulation. In the same

way, too, the Lord may be understood to have pictured out a different

kind of fasting, which stands related to the rapture of a mind dwelling

in the heights of things spiritual, and for that reason estranged in a

certain measure from the meats that are for the body, when He made use

of those subsequent similitudes touching the new cloth and the new

wine, by which He showed that this kind of fasting is an incongruity

for sensual [942] and carnal people, who are taken up with the cares of

the body, and who consequently still remain in the old mind. These

similitudes are also embodied in similar terms by the other two

evangelists. And it should be sufficiently evident that there need be

no real discrepancy, although one may introduce something, whether

belonging to the subject-matter itself, or merely to the terms in which

that subject is expressed, which another leaves out; provided only that

there be neither any departure from a genuine identity in sense, nor

any contradiction created between the different forms which may be

adopted for expressing the same thing.

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[925] Matt. ix. 10-17.

[926] Mark ii. 15.

[927] Luke v. 27-29.

[928] Matt. ix. 11.

[929] Mark ii. 16.

[930] Luke v. 30.

[931] Non utique magistrum eorum nolens illic intelligi, with most mss.

The reading volens occurs in some = not meaning their Master to be

referred to, he intimates, etc.

[932] Luke v. 32.

[933] Omitting in poenitentiam = unto repentance. [These words should

be omitted in Matthew and Mark, according to the Greek mss. Revised

Version.--R.]

[934] Matt. ix. 14.

[935] Pharis�i, not Pharis�orum. [So the Greek text.--R.]

[936] Or, as Augustin's reasoning implies that he understood it, were

fasting--erant jejunantes. [So Revised Version.--R.]

[937] Pharis�orum.

[938] Mark ii. 18.

[939] Luke v. 33.

[940] Filios nuptiarum.

[941] Filios sponsi.

[942] Animalibus.

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Chapter XXVIII.--Of the Raising of the Daughter of the Ruler of the

Synagogue, and of the Woman Who Touched the Hem of His Garment; Of the

Question, Also, as to Whether the Order in Which These Incidents are

Narrated Exhibits Any Contradiction in Any of the Writers by Whom They

are Reported; And in Particular, of the Words in Which the Ruler of the

Synagogue Addressed His Request to the Lord.

64. Still keeping by the order of time, Matthew next continues to the

following effect: "While He spake these things unto them, behold, there

came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even

now dead; but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live;" and

so on, until we come to the words, "and the maid arose. And the fame

hereof went abroad into all that land." [943] The other two, namely,

Mark and Luke, in like manner give this same account, only they do not

keep by the same order now. For they bring up this narrative in a

different place, and insert it in another connection; to wit, at the

point where He crosses the take and returns from the country of the

Gerasenes, after casting out the devils and permitting them to go into

the swine. Thus Mark introduces it, after he has related what took

place among the Gerasenes, in the following manner: "And when Jesus was

passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered

unto Him: and He was nigh unto the sea. And there cometh one of the

rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, he fell

at His feet," etc. [944] By this, then, we are certainly to understand

that the occurrence in connection with the daughter of the ruler of the

synagogue did take place after Jesus had passed across the lake again

in the ship. [945] It does not, however, appear from the words

themselves how long after that passage this thing happened. But that

some time did elapse is clear. For had there not been an interval, no

period would be left within which those circumstances might fall which

Matthew has just related in the matter of the feast in his house.

These, indeed, he has told after the fashion of the evangelists, as if

they were the story of another person's doings. But they are the story

really of what took place in his own case, and at his own house. And

after that narrative, what follows in the immediate context is nothing

else than this notice of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue.

For he has constructed the whole recital in such a manner, that the

mode of transition from one thing to the other has itself indicated

with sufficient clearness that the words immediately following give the

narrative of what actually took place in immediate consecution. For

after mentioning, in connection with the former incident, those words

which Jesus spake with respect to the new cloth and the new wine, he

has subjoined these other words, without any interruption in the

narrative, namely, "While He spake these things unto them, behold,

there came a certain ruler." And this shows that, if the person

approached Him while He was speaking these things, nothing else either

done or said by Him could have intervened. In Mark's account, on the

other hand, the place is quite apparent, as we have already pointed

out, where other things [left unrecorded by him] might very well have

come in. The case is much the same also with Luke, who, when he

proceeds to follow up his version of the story of the miracle wrought

among the Gerasenes, by giving his account of the daughter of the ruler

of the synagogue, does not pass on to that in any such way as to place

it in antagonism with Matthew's version, who, by his words, "While He

yet spake these things," gives us plainly to understand that the

occurrence took place after those parables about the cloth and the

wine. For when he has concluded his statement of what happened among

the Gerasenes, Luke passes to the next subject in the following manner;

"And it came to pass that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly

received Him; for they were all waiting for Him. And, behold, there

came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue, and he

fell down at Jesus' feet," and so on. [946] Thus we are given to

understand that the crowd did indeed receive Jesus forthwith on the

said occasion: for He was the person for whose return they were

waiting. But what is conveyed in the words which are directly added,

"And, behold, there came a man whose name was Jairus," is not to be

taken to have occurred literally in immediate succession. On the

contrary, the feast with the publicans, as Matthew records it, took

place before that. For Matthew connects this present incident with that

feast in such a way as to make it impossible for us to suppose that any

other sequence of events can be the correct order. [947]

65. In this narrative, then, which we have undertaken to consider at

present, all these three evangelists indeed are unquestionably at one

in the account which they give of the woman who was afflicted with the

issue of blood. Nor is it a matter of any real consequence, that

something which is passed by in silence by one of them is related by

another; or that Mark says, "Who touched my clothes?" while Luke says,

"Who touched me?" For the one has only adopted the phrase in use and

wont, whereas the other has given the stricter expression. But for all

that, both of them convey the same meaning. For it is more usual with

us to say, "You are tearing me," [948] than to say, "You are tearing my

clothes;" as, notwithstanding the term, the sense we wish to convey is

obvious enough.

66. At the same time, however, there remains the fact that Matthew

represents the ruler of the synagogue to have spoken to the Lord of his

daughter, not merely as one likely to die, or as dying, or as on the

very point of expiring, but as even then dead; while these other two

evangelists report her as now nigh unto death, but not yet really dead,

and keep so strictly to that version of the circumstances, that they

tell us how the persons came at a later stage with the intelligence of

her actual death, and with the message that for this reason the Master

ought not now to trouble Himself by coming, with the purpose of laying

His hand upon her, and so preventing her from dying,--the matter not

being put as if He was one possessed of ability to raise the once dead

to life. It becomes necessary for us, therefore, to investigate this

fact lest it may seem to exhibit any contradiction between the

accounts. And the way to explain it is to suppose that, by reason of

brevity in the narrative, Matthew has preferred to express it as if the

Lord had been really asked to do what it is clear He did actually do,

namely, raise the dead to life. For what Matthew directs our attention

to, is not the mere words spoken by the father about his daughter, but

what is of more importance, his mind and purpose. Thus he has given

words calculated to represent the father's real thoughts. For he had so

thoroughly despaired of his child's case, that not believing that she

whom he had just left dying, could possibly now be found yet in life,

his thought rather was that she might be made alive again. Accordingly

two of the evangelists have introduced the words which were literally

spoken by Jairus. But Matthew has exhibited rather what the man

secretly wished and thought. Thus both petitions were really addressed

to the Lord; namely, either that He should restore the dying damsel, or

that, if she was already dead, He might raise her to life again. But as

it was Matthew's object to tell the whole story in short compass, he

has represented the father as directly expressing in his request what,

it is certain, had been his own real wish, and what Christ actually

did. It is true, indeed, that if those two evangelists, or one of them,

had told us that the father himself spake the words which the parties

who came from his house uttered,--namely, that Jesus should not now

trouble Himself, because the damsel had died,--then the words which

Matthew has put into his mouth would not be in harmony with his

thoughts. But, as the case really stands, it is not said that he gave

his consent to the parties who brought that report, and who bade the

Master no more think of coming now. And together with this, we have to

observe, that when the Lord addressed him in these terms, "Fear not:

believe only, and she shall be made whole," [949] He did not find fault

with him on the ground of his want of belief, but really encouraged him

to a yet stronger faith. For this ruler had faith like that which was

exhibited by the person who said, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine

unbelief." [950]

67. Seeing, then, that the case stands thus, from these varied and yet

not inconsistent modes of statement adopted by the evangelists, we

evidently learn a lesson of the utmost utility, and of great

necessity,--namely, that in any man's words the thing which we ought

narrowly to regard is only the writer's thought which was meant to be

expressed, and to which the words ought to be subservient; and further,

that we should not suppose one to be giving an incorrect statement, if

he happens to convey in different words what the person really meant

whose words he fails to reproduce literally. And we ought not to let

the wretched cavillers at words fancy that truth must be tied somehow

or other to the jots and tittles of letters; whereas the fact is, that

not in the matter of words only, but equally in all other methods by

which sentiments are indicated, the sentiment itself, and nothing else,

is what ought to be looked at.

68. Moreover, as to the circumstance that some codices of Matthew's

Gospel contain the reading, "For the woman [951] is not dead, but

sleepeth," while Mark and Luke certify that she was a damsel of the age

of twelve years, we may suppose that Matthew has followed the Hebrew

mode of speech here. For in other passages of Scripture, as well as

here, it is found that not only those who had already known a man, but

all females in general, including untouched virgins, are called women.

[952] That is the case, for instance, where it is written of Eve, "He

made it [953] into a woman;" [954] and again, in the book of Numbers,

where the women [955] who have not known a man by lying with him, that

is to say, the virgins, are ordered to be saved from being put to

death. [956] Adopting the same phraseology, Paul, too, says of Christ

Himself, that He was "made of a woman." [957] And it is better,

therefore, to understand the matter according to these analogies, than

to suppose that this damsel of twelve years of age was already married,

or had known a man. [958]

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[943] Matt. ix. 18-26.

[944] Mark v. 21-43.

[945] [The events can be arranged in the order of Mark, with the

exception of the passage, chap. ii. 15-22. This must be placed, as

Augustin says, after the return from "the country of the Gerasenes."

Comp. � 89.--R.]

[946] Luke viii. 40-56.

[947] [This is one of the rare cases where the order of Matthew is more

exact than that of Mark and Luke. But the former evangelist has

dislocated a long series of events in the same connection. See

above.--R.]

[948] Conscindis.

[949] Luke viii. 50.

[950] Mark ix. 24.

[951] Mulier.

[952] Mulieres.

[953] Eam, her.

[954] Gen. ii. 22.

[955] Mulieres.

[956] Num. xxxi. 18.

[957] Gal. ii. 4.

[958] [The curious variation in text noted above was probably due to

the scribe's confounding the "damsel" with the "woman" who had just

been spoken of.--R.]

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Chapter XXIX.--Of the Two Blind Men and the Dumb Demoniac Whose Stories

are Related Only by Matthew.

69. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And

when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed Him, crying and

saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us;" and so on, down to the

verse where we read, "But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils

through the prince of the devils." [959] Matthew is the only one who

introduces this account of the two blind men and the dumb demoniac. For

those two blind men, whose story is given also by the others, [960] are

not the two before us here. Nevertheless there is such similarity in

the occurrences, that if Matthew himself had not recorded the latter

incident as well as the former, it might have been thought that the one

which he relates at present has also been given by these other two

evangelists. There is this fact, therefore, which we ought to bear

carefully in mind,--namely, that there are some occurrences which

resemble each other. For we have a proof of this in the circumstance

that the very same evangelist mentions both incidents here. And thus,

if at any time we find any such occurrences narrated individually by

the several evangelists, and discover some contradiction in the

accounts, which seems not to admit of being solved [on the principle of

harmonizing], it may occur to us that the explanation simply is, that

this [apparently contradictory] circumstance did not take place [on

that particular occasion], but that what did happen then was only

something resembling it, or something which was gone about in a similar

manner.

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[959] Matt. ix. 27-34. [The view of Augustin is that now generally

accepted by harmonists.--R.]

[960] Mark x. 46-52; Luke xviii. 35-43.

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Chapter XXX.--Of the Section Where It is Recorded, that Being Moved

with Compassion for the Multitudes, He Sent His Disciples, Giving Them

Power to Work Cures, and Charged Them with Many Instructions, Directing

Them How to Live; And of the Question Concerning the Proof of Matthew's

Harmony Here with Mark and Luke, Especially on the Subject of the

Staff, Which Matthew Says the Lord Told Them They Were Not to Carry,

While According to Mark It is the Only Thing They Were to Carry; And

Also of the Wearing of the Shoes and Coats.

70. As to the events next related, it is true that their exact order is

not made apparent by Matthew's narrative. For after the notices of the

two incidents in connection with the blind men and the dumb demoniac,

he continues in the following manner: "And Jesus went about all the

cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the

kingdom of the gospel, [961] and healing every sickness and every

disease. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion

on them, because they were troubled and prostrate, [962] as sheep

having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly

is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of

the harvest, that He will send forth [963] labourers into His harvest.

And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them

power against unclean spirits;" and so forth, down to the words,

"Verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." [964] This whole

passage which we have now mentioned shows how He gave many counsels to

His disciples. But whether Matthew has subjoined this section in its

historical order, or has made its order dependent only on the

succession in which it came up to his own mind, as has already been

said, is not made apparent. Mark appears to have handled this paragraph

in a succinct method, and to have entered upon its recital in the

following terms: "And He went round about the villages, teaching in

their circuit: [965] and He called unto Him the twelve, and began to

send them by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits;"

and so on, down to where we read, "Shake off the dust from your feet

for a testimony against them." [966] But before narrating this

incident, Mark has inserted, immediately after the story of the raising

of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, an account of what took

place on that occasion on which, in His own country, the people were

astonished at the Lord, and asked from whence He had such wisdom and

such capabilities, [967] when they perceived His judgment: which

account is given by Matthew after these counsels to the disciples, and

after a number of other matters. [968] It is uncertain, therefore,

whether what thus happened in His own country has been recorded by

Matthew in the succession in which it came to mind, after having been

omitted at first, or whether it has been introduced by Mark in the way

of an anticipation; and which of them, in short, has kept the order of

actual occurrence, and which of them the order of his own recollection.

Luke, again, in immediate succession to the mention of the raising of

the daughter of Jairus to life, subjoins this paragraph, bearing on the

power and the counsels given to the disciples, and that indeed with as

great brevity as Mark. [969] This evangelist, however, does not, any

more than the others, introduce the subject in such a way as to produce

the impression that it comes in also in the strictly historical order.

Moreover, with regard to the names of the disciples, Luke, who gives

their names in another place, [970] --that is to say, in the earlier

passage, where they are [represented as being] chosen on the

mountain,--is not at variance in any respect with Matthew, with the

exception of the single instance of the name of Judas the brother of

James, whom Matthew designates Thadd�us, although some codices also

read Lebb�us. [971] But who would ever think of denying that one man

may be known under two or three names?

71. Another question which it is also usual to put is this: How comes

it that Matthew and Luke have stated that the Lord said to His

disciples that they were not to take a staff with them, whereas Mark

puts the matter in this way: "And He commanded them that they should

take nothing for their journey, save a staff only;" [972] and proceeds

further in this strain, "no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:"

thereby making it quite evident that his narrative belongs to the same

place and circumstances with which the narratives of those others deal

who have mentioned that the staff was not to be taken? Now this

question admits of being solved on the principle of understanding that

the staff which, according to Mark, was to be taken, bears one sense,

and that the staff which, according to Matthew and Luke, was not to be

taken with them, is to be interpreted in a different sense; just in the

same way as we find the term "temptation" used in one meaning, when it

is said, "God tempteth no man," [973] and in a different meaning where

it is said, "The Lord your God tempteth [proveth] you, to know whether

ye love Him." [974] For in the former case the temptation of seduction

is intended; but in the latter the temptation of probation. Another

parallel occurs in the case of the term "judgment," which must be taken

in one way, where it is said, "They that have done good unto the

resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the

resurrection of judgment;" [975] and in another way, where it is said,

"Judge me, O God, and discern [976] my cause, in respect of an ungodly

nation." [977] For the former refers to the judgment of damnation, and

the latter to the judgment of discrimination.

72. And there are many other words which do not retain one uniform

signification, but are introduced so as to suit a variety of

connections, and thus are understood in a variety of ways, and

sometimes, indeed, are adopted along with an explanation. We have an

example in the saying, "Be not children [978] in understanding; howbeit

in malice be ye little children, that in understanding ye may be

perfect." [979] For here is a sentence which, in a brief and pregnant

form, might have been expressed thus: "Be ye not children; howbeit be

ye children." The same is the case with the words, "If any man among

you thinketh himself to be wise in this world, let him become a fool

that he may be wise." [980] For what else is the statement there but

this: "Let him not be wise, that he may be wise"? Moreover, the

sentences are sometimes so put as to exercise the judgment of the

inquirer. An instance of this kind occurs in what is said in the

Epistle to the Galatians: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so ye

will fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be

something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But it is meet

that every man should prove his own work; and then shall he have

rejoicing in himself, and not in another. For every man shall bear his

own burden." [981] Now, unless the word "burden" can be taken in

different senses, without doubt one would suppose that the same writer

contradicts himself in what he says here, and that, too, when the words

are placed in such close neighbourhood in one paragraph. [982] For when

he has just said, "One shall bear another's burdens," after the lapse

of a very brief interval he says, "Every man shall bear his own

burden." But the one refers to the burdens which are to be borne in

sharing in one's infirmity, the other to the burdens borne in the

rendering of an account of our own actions to God: the former are

burdens to be borne in our [duties of] fellowship with brethren; the

latter are those peculiar to ourselves, and borne by every man for

himself. And in the same way, once more, the "rod" of which the apostle

spoke in the words, "Shall I come unto you with a rod?" [983] is meant

in a spiritual sense; while the same term bears the literal meaning

when it occurs of the rod applied to a horse, or used for some other

purpose of the kind, not to mention, in the meantime, also other

metaphorical significations of this phrase.

73. Both these counsels, therefore, must be accepted as having been

spoken by the Lord to the apostles; namely, at once that they should

not take a staff, and that they should take nothing save a staff only.

For when He said to them, according to Matthew, "Provide neither gold

nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor scrip for your journey,

neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff," He added

immediately, "for the workman is worthy of his meat." And by this He

makes it sufficiently obvious why it is that He would have them provide

and carry none of these things. He shows that His reason was, not that

these things are not necessary for the sustenance of this life, but

because He was sending them in such a manner as to declare plainly that

these things were due to them by those very persons who were to hear

believingly the gospel preached by them; just as wages are the

soldier's due, and as the fruit of the vine is the right of the

planters, and the milk of the flock the right of the shepherds. For

which reason Paul also speaks in this wise: "Who goeth a warfare any

time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the

fruit thereof? who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the

flock?" [984] For under these figures he was speaking of those things

which are necessary to the preachers of the gospel. And so, a little

further on, he says: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it

a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others are

partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we

have not used this power." [985] This makes it apparent that by these

instructions the Lord did not mean that the evangelists should not seek

their support in any other way than by depending on what was offered

them by those to whom they preached the gospel (otherwise this very

apostle acted contrary to this precept when he acquired a livelihood

for himself by the labours of his own hands, because he would not be

chargeable to any of them [986] ), but that He gave them a power in the

exercise of which they should know such things to be their due. Now,

when any commandment is given by the Lord, there is the guilt of

non-obedience if it is not observed; but when any power is given, any

one is at liberty to abstain from its use, and, as it were, to recede

from his right. Accordingly, when the Lord spake these things to the

disciples, He did what that apostle expounds more clearly a little

further on, when he says, "Do ye not know that they who minister in the

temple [987] live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at

the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained,

that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have

used none of these things." [988] When he says, therefore, that the

Lord ordained it thus, but that he did not use the ordinance, he

certainly indicates that it was a power to use that was given him, and

not a necessity of service that was imposed upon him.

74. Accordingly, as our Lord ordained what the apostle declares Him to

have ordained,--namely, that those who preach the gospel should live of

the gospel,--He gave these counsels to the apostles in order that they

might be without the care of providing [989] or of carrying with them

things necessary for this life, whether great or the very smallest;

consequently He introduced this term, "neither a staff," with the view

of showing that, on the part of those who were faithful to Him, all

things were due to His ministers, who themselves, too, required nothing

superfluous. And thus, when He added the words, "For the workman is

worthy of his meat," He indicated quite clearly, and made it thoroughly

plain, how and for what reason it was that He spake all these things.

It is this kind of power, therefore, that the Lord denoted under the

term "staff," when He said that they should "take nothing" for their

journey, save a staff only. For the sentence might also have been

briefly expressed in this way: "Take with you none of the necessaries

of life, neither a staff, save a staff only." So that the phrase

"neither a staff" may be taken to be equivalent to "not even the

smallest things;" while the addition, "save a staff only," may be

understood to mean that, in virtue of that power which they received

from the Lord, and which was signified by the name "staff" [or, "rod"],

even those things which were not carried with them would not be wanting

to them. Our Lord therefore used both phrases. But inasmuch as one and

the same evangelist has not recorded them both, the writer who has told

us that the rod, as introduced in the one sense, was to be taken, is

supposed to be in antagonism to him who has told us that the rod, as

occurring again in the other sense, was not to be taken. After this

explanation of the matter, however, no such supposition ought to be

entertained.

75. In like manner, also, when Matthew tells us that the shoes were not

to be carried with them on the journey, what is intended is the

checking of that care which thinks that such things must be carried

with them, because otherwise they might be unprovided. Thus, too, the

import of what is said regarding the two coats is, that none of them

should think of taking with him another coat in addition to the one in

which he was clad, as if he was afraid that he might come to be in

want, while all the time the power (which was received from the Lord)

made him sure of getting what was needful. To the same effect, when

Mark says that they were to be shod with sandals or soles, he gives us

to understand that this matter of the shoe has some sort of mystical

significance, the point being that the foot is to be neither covered,

nor yet left bare to the ground; by which the idea may be conveyed that

the gospel was neither to be concealed, nor yet made to depend on the

good things of earth. And as to the fact that what is forbidden is

neither the carrying nor the possessing of two coats, but more

distinctly the putting of them on,--the words being, "and not put on

two coats,"--what counsel is conveyed to them therein but this, that

they ought to walk not in duplicity, but in simplicity?

76. Thus it is not by any means to be made a matter of doubt that the

Lord Himself spake all these words, some of them with a literal import,

and others of them with a figurative, although the evangelists may have

introduced them only in part into their writings,--one inserting one

section, and another giving a different portion. Certain passages, at

the same time, have been recorded in identical terms either by some two

of them, or by some three, or even by all the four together. And yet

not even when this is the case can we take it for granted that

everything has been committed to writing which was either uttered or

done by Him. Moreover, if any one fancies that the Lord could not in

the course of the same discourse have used some expressions with a

figurative application and others with a literal, let him but examine

His other addresses, and he will see how rash and inconsiderate such a

notion is. For, then (to mention but a single instance which occurs

meantime to my mind), when Christ gives the counsel not to let the left

hand know what the right hand doeth, [990] he may suppose himself under

the necessity of accepting in the same figurative sense at once the

almsgivings themselves referred to, and the other instructions offered

on that occasion.

77. In good truth, I must repeat here once more an admonition which it

behoves the reader to keep in mind, so as not to be requiring that kind

of advice so very frequently, namely, that in various passages of His

discourses, the Lord has reiterated much which He had uttered already

on other occasions. It is needful, indeed, to call this fact to mind,

lest, when it happens that the order of such passages does not appear

to fit in with the narrative of another of the evangelists, the reader

should fancy that this establishes some contradiction between them;

whereas he ought really to understand it to be due to the fact that

something is repeated a second time in that connection which had been

already expressed elsewhere. And this is a remark that should be held

applicable not only to His words, but also to His deeds. For there is

nothing to hinder us from believing that the same thing may have taken

place more than once. But for a man to impeach the gospel simply

because he does not believe in the repeated occurrence of some

incident, which no one [at least] can prove to be an impossible event,

betrays mere sacrilegious vanity.

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[961] Regnum evangelii.

[962] Vexati et jacentes.

[963] The mss. read ejicias: some editions have mittat, send.

[964] Matt. ix. 35-x. 42.

[965] In circuitu docens.

[966] Mark vi. 6-11.

[967] Virtutes.

[968] Matt. xiii. 54.

[969] Luke ix. 1-6.

[970] The Ratisbon edition and nineteen mss. read alio nomine, by

another name instead of alio loco.--Migne.

[971] In five mss. Lebd�um, Lebdeus, is given instead of Lebbeus, but

wrongly, as appears from the Greek text of Matt. x. 3.--Migne. [The

Vulgate (Matt x. 3) reads Thadd�us, now accepted by critical editors;

so Revised Version. The Authorized Version follows a composite reading

(with two early uncials and Syriac versions): "Lebb�us, whose surname

was Thadd�us." A harmonistic gloss--R.]

[972] Mark vi. 8. [In Matt. x. 10, Luke ix. 3, the later authorities

substitute the plural "staves," probably to avoid the seeming

discrepancy. The better sustained reading in both passages is

"staff."--R.]

[973] Jas. i. 13.

[974] Deut. xiii. 3.

[975] Judicii. John v. 29.

[976] Discerne.

[977] Ps. xliii. 1.

[978] Pueri.

[979] Parvuli estote ut sensibus perfecti sitis. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

[980] 1 Cor. iii. 18.

[981] Gal. vi. 2-5.

[982] [Augustin fails to notice that the word "burden" represents

different Greek words in Gal. vi. 2-5. His argument here resembles the

method of modern expositors who explain the discrepancies of the

Authorized Version without consulting the original.--R.]

[983] 1 Cor. iv. 21.

[984] 1 Cor. ix. 7.

[985] 1 Cor. ix. 11, 12.

[986] 1 Thess. ii. 9.

[987] In templo operantur.

[988] 1 Cor. ix. 13-15.

[989] [Ut securi non possiderent.--R.]

[990] Matt. vi. 3.

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Chapter XXXI.--Of the Account Given by Matthew and Luke of the Occasion

When John the Baptist Was in Prison, and Despatched His Disciples on a

Mission to the Lord.

78. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And it

came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve

disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

Now, when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two

of his disciples, and said unto Him, Art thou He that should come, or

do we look for another?" and so on, until we come to the words, "And

Wisdom is justified of her children." [991] This whole section relating

to John the Baptist, touching the message which he sent to Jesus, and

the tenor of the reply which those whom he despatched received, and the

terms in which the Lord spoke of John after the departure of these

persons, is introduced also by Luke. [992] The order, however, is not

the same. But it is not made clear which of them gives the order of his

own recollections, and which keeps by the historical succession of the

things themselves. [993]

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[991] Matt. xi. 1-19.

[992] Luke vii. 18-35.

[993] [The order of Luke seems to be more exact. Matt. xii., xiii, must

be distributed through an earlier part of the history.--R.]

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Chapter XXXII.--Of the Occasion on Which He Upbraided the Cities

Because They Repented Not, Which Incident is Recorded by Luke as Well

as by Matthew; And of the Question Regarding Matthew's Harmony with

Luke in the Matter of the Order.

79. Thereafter Matthew goes on as follows: "Then began He to upbraid

the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they

repented not;" and so on, down to where we read, "It shall be more

tolerable for the land of Sodom at the day of judgment, than for you."

[994] This section likewise is given by Luke, who reports it also as an

utterence from the lips of the Lord in connection with a certain

continuous discourse which He delivered. This circumstance makes it the

rather appear that Luke has recorded these words in the strict

consecution in which they were spoken by the Lord, while Matthew has

kept by the order of his own recollections. Or if it is supposed that

Matthew's words, "Then began He to upbraid the cities," must be taken

in such a way as to imply that the intention was to express, by the

term "then," the precise point of time at which the saying was uttered,

and not to signify in a somewhat broader way the period at which many

of these things were done and spoken, then I say that any one

entertaining that idea may equally well believe these sentences to have

been pronounced on two different occasions. For if it is the fact that

even in one and the same evangelist some things are found which the

Lord utters twice over, as is the case with this very Luke in the

instance of the counsel not to take a scrip for the journey, and so

with other things in like manner which we find to have been spoken by

the Lord in two different places, [995] --why should it seem strange if

some other word of the Lord, which was originally uttered on two

separate occasions, may happen also to be recorded by two several

evangelists, each of whom gives it in the order in which it was

actually spoken, and if thus the order seems to be different in the

two, simply because the sentences were uttered both on the occasion

noticed by the one, and on that referred to by the other?

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[994] Matt. xi. 20-24.

[995] Luke ix. 3, x. 4. [The view of Augustin is now generally

accepted. The occasions when the sayings were uttered are distinguished

in the accounts of Matthew and Luke --R.]

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Chapter XXXIII.--Of the Occasion on Which He Calls Them to Take His

Yoke and Burden Upon Them, and of the Question as to the Absence of Any

Discrepancy Between Matthew and Luke in the Order of Narration.

80. Matthew proceeds thus: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I

make my acknowledgment to Thee, [996] O Father, Lord of heaven and

earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent," and

so on, down to where we read, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is

light." [997] This passage is also noticed by Luke, but only in part.

For he does not give us the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour,"

and the rest. It is, however, quite legitimate to suppose that all this

may have been said on one occasion by the Lord, and yet that Luke has

not recorded the whole of what was said on that occasion. For Matthew's

phrase is, that "at that time Jesus answered and said;" by which is

meant the time after His upbraiding of the cities. Luke, on the other

hand, interposes some matters, although they are not many, after that

upbraiding of the cities; and then he subjoins this sentence: "In that

hour He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, [998] and said." [999] Thus, too,

we see that even if Matthew's expression had been, not "at that time,"

but "in that very hour," still what Luke inserts in the interval is so

little that it would not appear an unreasonable thing to give it as all

spoken in the same hour.

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[996] Confiteor tibi. [Comp. Revised Version.--R.]

[997] Matt. xi. 25-30.

[998] Spiritu sancto.

[999] Luke x. 21.

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Chapter XXXIV.--Of the Passage in Which It is Said that the Disciples

Plucked the Ears of Corn and Ate Them; And of the Question as to How

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are in Harmony with Each Other with Respect to

the Order of Narration There.

81. Matthew continues his history in the following terms: "At that time

Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn; and His disciples were

an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat;" and so

forth, on to the words, "For the Son of man is Lord even of the

Sabbath-day." [1000] This is also given both by Mark and by Luke, in a

way precluding any idea of antagonism. [1001] At the same time, these

latter do not employ the definition "at that time." That fact,

consequently, may perhaps make it the more probable that Matthew has

retained the order of actual occurrence here, and that the others have

kept by the order of their own recollections; unless, indeed, this

phrase "at that time" is to be taken in a broader sense, that is to

say, as indicating the period at which these many and various incidents

took place. [1002]

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[1000] Matt. xii. 1-8.

[1001] Mark ii. 23-28; Luke vi. 1-5.

[1002] [Clearly the Sabbath controversies must be placed before the

Sermon on the Mount, as indicated by the order of Mark and Luke.--R.]

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Chapter XXXV.--Of the Man with the Withered Hand, Who Was Restored on

the Sabbath-Day; And of the Question as to How Matthew's Narrative of

This Incident Can Be Harmonized with Those of Mark and Luke, Either in

the Matter of the Order of Events, or in the Report of the Words Spoken

by the Lord and by the Jews.

82. Matthew continues his account thus: "And when He was departed

thence, He went into their synagogue: and, behold, there was a man

which had his hand withered;" and so on, down to the words, "And it was

restored whole, like as the other." [1003] The restoring of this man

who had the withered hand is also not passed over in silence by Mark

and Luke. [1004] Now, the circumstance that this day is also designated

a Sabbath might possibly lead us to suppose that both the plucking of

the ears of corn and the healing of this man took place on the same

day, were it not that Luke has made it plain that it was on a different

Sabbath that the cure of the withered hand was wrought. Accordingly,

when Matthew says, "And when He was departed thence, He came into their

synagogue," the words do indeed import that the said coming did not

take place until after He had departed from the previously mentioned

locality; but, at the same time, they leave the question undecided as

to the number of days which may have elapsed between His passing from

the aforesaid corn-field and His coming into their synagogue; and they

express nothing as to His going there in direct and immediate

succession. And thus space is offered us for getting in the narrative

of Luke, who tells us that it was on another Sabbath that this man's

hand was restored. But it is possible that a difficulty may be felt in

the circumstance that Matthew has told us how the people put this

question to the Lord, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?"

wishing thereby to find an occasion for accusing Him; and that in reply

He set before them the parable of the sheep in these terms: "What man

shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into

a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out?

How much, then, is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to

do well on the Sabbath-days;" [1005] whereas Mark and Luke rather

represent the people to have had this question put to them by the Lord,

"Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day, or to do evil? to save

life, or to kill?" [1006] We solve this difficulty, however, by the

supposition that the people in the first instance asked the Lord, "Is

it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?" that thereupon, knowing the

thoughts of the men who were thus seeking an occasion for accusing Him,

He set the man whom He had been on the point of healing in their midst,

and addressed to them the interrogations which Mark and Luke mention to

have been put; that, as they remained silent, He next put before them

the parable of the sheep, and drew the conclusion that it was lawful to

do good on the Sabbath-day; and that, finally, when He had looked round

about on them with anger, as Mark tells us, being grieved for the

hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch forth thine

hand."

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[1003] Matt. xii. 9-13.

[1004] Mark iii. 1-5; Luke vi. 6-10.

[1005] Matt. xii. 10-12.

[1006] Mark iii. 4; Luke vi. 9.

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Chapter XXXVI.--Of Another Question Which Demands Our Consideration,

Namely, Whether, in Passing from the Account of the Man Whose Withered

Hand Was Restored, These Three Evangelists Proceed to Their Next

Subjects in Such a Way as to Create No Contradictions in Regard to the

Order of Their Narrations.

83. Matthew continues his narrative, connecting it in the following

manner with what precedes: "But the Pharisees went out and held a

council against Him, how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew

it, He withdrew Himself from thence: and great multitudes followed Him,

and He healed them all; and charged them that they should not make Him

known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet

Esaias, saying;" and so forth, down to where it is said, "And in His

name shall the Gentiles trust." [1007] He is the only one that records

these facts. The other two have advanced to other themes. Mark, it is

true, seems to some extent to have kept by the historical order: for he

tells us how Jesus, on discovering the malignant disposition which was

entertained toward Him by the Jews, withdrew to the sea along with His

disciples, and that then vast multitudes flocked to Him, and He healed

great numbers of them. [1008] But, at the same time, it is not quite

clear at what precise point He begins to pass to a new subject,

different from what would have followed in strict succession. He leaves

it uncertain whether such a transition is made at the point where he

tells us how the multitudes gathered about Him (for if that was the

case now, it might equally well have been the case at some other time),

or at the point where He says that "He goeth up into a mountain." It is

this latter circumstance that Luke also appears to notice when he says,

"And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to

pray." [1009] For by the expression "in those days," he makes it plain

enough that the incident referred to did not occur in immediate

succession upon what precedes. [1010]

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[1007] Matt. xii. 14-21. [Sperabunt, "hope," as in Revised

Version.--R.]

[1008] Mark iii. 7-12.

[1009] Luke vi. 12.

[1010] [The Sermon on the Mount was delivered during the withdrawal

here referred to.--R.]

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Chapter XXXVII.--Of the Consistency of the Accounts Given by Matthew

and Luke Regarding the Dumb and Blind Man Who Was Possessed with a

Devil.

84. Matthew then goes on with his recital in the following fashion:

"Then was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb;

and He healed him, insomuch that he both spake and saw." [1011] Luke

introduces this narrative, not in the same order, but after a number of

other matters. He also speaks of the man only as dumb, and not as blind

in addition. [1012] But it is not to be inferred, from the mere

circumstance of his silence as to some portion or other of the account,

that he speaks of an entirely different person. For he has likewise

recorded what followed [immediately after that cure], as it stands also

in Matthew.

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[1011] Matt. xii. 22.

[1012] Luke xi. 14.

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Chapter XXXVIII.--Of the Occasion on Which It Was Said to Him that He

Cast Out Devils in the Power of Beelzebub, and of the Declarations

Drawn Forth from Him by that Circumstance in Regard to the Blasphemy

Against the Holy Spirit, and with Respect to the Two Trees; And of the

Question Whether There is Not Some Discrepancy in These Sections

Between Matthew and the Other Two Evangelists, and Particularly Between

Matthew and Luke.

85. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And

all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But

when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out

devils but in Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their

thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself

shall be brought to desolation;" and so on, down to the words, "By thy

words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be

condemned." [1013] Mark does not bring in this allegation against

Jesus, that He cast out devils in [the power of] Beelzebub, in

immediate sequence on the story of the dumb man; but after certain

other matters, recorded by himself alone, he introduces this incident

also, either because he recalled it to mind in a different connection,

and so appended it there, or because he had at first made certain

omissions in his history, and after noticing these, took up this order

of narration again. [1014] On the other hand, Luke gives an account of

these things almost in the same language as Matthew has employed.

[1015] And the circumstance that Luke here designates the Spirit of God

as the finger of God, does not betray any departure from a genuine

identity in sense; but it rather teaches us an additional lesson,

giving us to know in what manner we are to interpret the phrase "the

finger of God" wherever it occurs in the Scriptures. Moreover, with

regard to other matters which are left unmentioned in this section both

by Mark and by Luke, no difficulty can be raised by these. Neither can

that be the case with some other circumstances which are related by

them in somewhat different terms, for the sense still remains the same.

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[1013] Matt. xii. 23-37.

[1014] Mark iii. 22-30.

[1015] Luke xi. 14-26.

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Chapter XXXIX.--Of the Question as to the Manner of Matthew's Agreement

with Luke in the Accounts Which are Given of the Lord's Reply to

Certain Persons Who Sought a Sign, When He Spoke of Jonas the Prophet,

and of the Ninevites, and of the Queen of the South, and of the Unclean

Spirit Which, When It Has Gone Out of the Man, Returns and Finds the

House Garnished.

86. Matthew goes on and relates what followed thus: "Then certain of

the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see

a sign of thee;" and so on, down to where we read, "Even so shall it be

also unto this wicked generation." [1016] These words are recorded also

by Luke in this connection, although in a somewhat different order.

[1017] For he has mentioned the fact that they sought of the Lord a

sign from heaven at an earlier point in his narrative, which makes it

follow immediately on his version of the miracle wrought on the dumb

man. He has not, however, recorded there the reply which was given to

them by the Lord. But further on, after [telling us how] the people

were gathered together, he states that this answer was returned to the

persons who, as he gives us to understand, were mentioned by him in

those earlier verses as seeking of Him a sign from heaven. And that

reply he also subjoins, only after introducing the passage regarding

the woman who said to the Lord, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee."

[1018] This notice of the woman, moreover, he inserts after relating

the Lord's discourse concerning the unclean spirit that goes out of the

man, and then returns and finds the house garnished. In this way, then,

after the notice of the woman, and after his statement of the reply

which was made to the multitudes on the subject of the sign which they

sought from heaven, he brings in the similitude of the prophet Jonas;

and then, directly continuing the Lord's discourse, he next instances

what was said concerning the Queen of the South and the Ninevites. Thus

he has rather related something which Matthew has passed over in

silence, than omitted any of the facts which that evangelist has

narrated in this place. And furthermore, who can fail to perceive that

the question as to the precise order in which these words were uttered

by the Lord is a superfluous one? For this lesson also we ought to

learn, on the unimpeachable authority of the evangelists,--namely, that

no offence against truth need be supposed on the part of a writer,

although he may not reproduce the discourse of some speaker in the

precise order in which the person from whose lips it proceeded might

have given it; the fact being, that the mere item of the order, whether

it be this or that, does not affect the subject-matter itself. And by

his present version Luke indicates that this discourse of the Lord was

of greater length than we might otherwise have supposed; and he records

certain topics handled in it, which resemble those which are mentioned

by Matthew in his recital of the sermon which was delivered on the

mount. [1019] So that we take these words to have been spoken twice

over, to wit, on that previous occasion, and again on this one. But on

the conclusion of this discourse Luke proceeds to another subject, as

to which it is uncertain whether, in the account which he gives of it,

he has kept by the order of actual occurrence. For he connects it in

this way: "And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine

with him." [1020] He does not say, however, "as He spake these words,"

but only "as He spake." For if he had said, "as He spake these words,"

the expression would of course have compelled us to suppose that the

incidents referred to, besides being recorded by him in this order,

also took place on the Lord's part in that same order.

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[1016] Matt. xii. 38.

[1017] Luke xi. 16-37.

[1018] Luke xi. 27.

[1019] Matt. v.-vii.

[1020] Luke xi. 37.

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Chapter XL.--Of the Question as to Whether There is Any Discrepancy

Between Matthew on the One Hand, and Mark and Luke on the Other, in

Regard to the Order in Which the Notice is Given of the Occasion on

Which His Mother and His Brethren Were Announced to Him.

87. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms:

"While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren

stood without, desiring to speak to Him;" and so on, down to the words,

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the

same is my brother, and sister, and mother." [1021] Without doubt, we

ought to understand this to have occurred in immediate sequence on the

preceding incidents. For he has prefaced his transition to this

narrative by the words, "While He yet talked to the people;" and what

does this term "yet" refer to, but to the very matter of which He was

speaking on that occasion? For the expression is not, "When He talked

to the people, Behold, His mother and His brethren;" but, "While He was

yet speaking," etc. And that phraseology compels us to suppose that it

was at the very time when He was still engaged in speaking of those

things which were mentioned immediately above. For Mark has also

related what our Lord said after His declaration on the subject of the

blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He gives it thus: "And there came

His mother and His brethren," [1022] omitting certain matters which

meet us in the context connected with that discourse of the Lord, and

which Matthew has introduced there with greater fulness than Mark, and

Luke, again, with greater fulness than Matthew. On the other hand, Luke

has not kept the historical order in the report which he offers of this

incident, but has given it by anticipation, and has narrated it as he

recalled it to memory, at a point antecedent to the date of its literal

occurrence. But furthermore, he has brought it in in such a manner that

it appears dissociated from any close connection either with what

precedes it or with what follows it. For, after reporting certain of

the Lord's parables, he has introduced his notice of what took place

with His mother and His brethren in the following manner: "Then came to

Him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the

press." [1023] Thus he has not explained at what precise time it was

that they came to Him. And again, when he passes off from this subject,

he proceeds in these terms: "Now it came to pass on one of the days,

that He went into a ship with His disciples." [1024] And certainly,

when he employs this expression, "it came to pass on one of the days,"

he indicates clearly enough that we are under no necessity of supposing

that the day meant was the very day on which this incident took place,

or the one following in immediate succession. Consequently, neither in

the matter of the Lord's words, nor in that of the historical order of

the occurrences related, does Matthew's account of the incident which

occurred in connection with the mother and the brethren of the Lord,

exhibit any want of harmony with the versions given of the same by the

other two evangelists.

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[1021] Matt. xii. 46-50.

[1022] Mark iii. 31-35.

[1023] Luke viii. 19.

[1024] Luke viii. 22.

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Chapter XLI.--Of the Words Which Were Spoken Out of the Ship on the

Subject of the Sower, Whose Seed, as He Sowed It, Fell Partly on the

Wayside, Etc.; And Concerning the Man Who Had Tares Sowed Over and

Above His Wheat; And Concerning the Grain of Mustard Seed and the

Leaven; As Also of What He Said in the House Regarding the Treasure Hid

in the Field, and the Pearl, and the Net Cast into the Sea, and the Man

that Brings Out of His Treasure Things New and Old; And of the Method

in Which Matthew's Harmony with Mark and Luke is Proved Both with

Respect to the Things Which They Have Reported in Common with Him, and

in the Matter of the Order of Narration.

88. Matthew continues thus: "In that day went Jesus out of the house,

and sat by the seaside: and great multitudes were gathered together

unto Him, so that He went into a ship and sat, and the whole multitude

stood on the shore. And He spake many things unto them in parables,

saying;" and so on, down to the words, "Therefore every scribe which is

instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an

householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and

old." [1025] That the things narrated in this passage took place

immediately after the incident touching the mother and the brethren of

the Lord, and that Matthew has also retained that historical order in

his version of these events, is indicated by the circumstance that, in

passing from the one subject to the other, he has expressed the

connection by this mode of speech: "In that day went Jesus out of the

house, and sat by the sea-side; and great multitudes were gathered

together unto Him." For by adopting this phrase, "in that day" (unless

perchance the word "day," in accordance with a use and wont of the

Scriptures, may signify simply "time"), he intimates clearly enough

either that the thing now related took place in immediate succession on

what precedes, or that much at least could not have intervened. This

inference is confirmed by the fact that Mark keeps by the same order.

[1026] Luke, on the other hand, after his account of what happened with

the mother and the brethren of the Lord, passes to a different subject.

But at the same time, in making that transition, he does not institute

any such connection as bears the appearance of a want of consistency

with this order. [1027] Consequently, in all those passages in which

Mark and Luke have reported in common with Matthew the words which were

spoken by the Lord, there is no questioning their harmony with one

another. Moreover, the sections which are given by Matthew only are

even much more beyond the range of controversy. And in the matter of

the order of narration, although it is presented somewhat differently

by the various evangelists, according as they have proceeded severally

along the line of historical succession, or along that of the

succession of recollection, I see as little reason for alleging any

discrepancy of statement or any contradiction between any of the

writers. [1028]

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[1025] Matt. xiii. 1-52.

[1026] Mark iv. 1-34.

[1027] Luke viii. 22.

[1028] [The discourse in parables must be placed before the voyage to

the country of the Gadarenes; comp. Mark iv. 36, and Augustin remark in

� 89.--R.]

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Chapter XLII.--Of His Coming into His Own Country, and of the

Astonishment of the People at His Doctrine, as They Looked with

Contempt Upon His Lineage; Of Matthew's Harmony with Mark and Luke in

This Section; And in Particular, of the Question Whether the Order of

Narration Which is Presented by the First of These Evangelists Does Not

Exhibit Some Want of Consistency with that of the Other Two.

89. Matthew thence proceeds as follows: "And it came to pass that, when

Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence: and when He was

come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogues;" [1029]

and so on, down to the words, "And He did not many mighty works there

because of their unbelief." [1030] Thus he passes from the above

discourse containing the parables, on to this passage, in such a way as

not to make it absolutely necessary for us to take the one to have

followed in immediate historical succession upon the other. All the

more may we suppose this to be the case, when we see how Mark passes on

from these parables to a subject which is not identical with Matthew's

directly succeeding theme, but quite different from that, and agreeing

rather with what Luke introduces; and how he has constructed his

narrative in such a manner as to make the balance of credibility rest

on the side of the supposition, that what followed in immediate

historical sequence was rather the occurrences which these two latter

evangelists both insert in near connection [with the

parables],--namely, the incidents of the ship in which Jesus was

asleep, and the miracle performed in the expulsion of the devils in the

country of the Gerasenes, [1031] --two events which Matthew has already

recalled and introduced at an earlier stage of his record. [1032] At

present, therefore, we have to consider whether [Matthew's report of]

what the Lord spoke, and what was said to Him in His own country, is in

concord with the accounts given by the other two, namely, Mark and

Luke. For, in widely different and dissimilar sections of his history,

John mentions words, either spoken to the Lord or spoken by Him, [1033]

which resemble those recorded in this passage by the other three

evangelists.

90. Now Mark, indeed, gives this passage in terms almost precisely

identical with those which meet us in Matthew; with the one exception,

that what he says the Lord was called by His fellow-townsmen is, "the

carpenter, and the son of Mary," [1034] and not, as Matthew tells us,

the "carpenter's son." Neither is there anything to marvel at in this,

since He might quite fairly have have been designated by both these

names. For in taking Him to be the son of a carpenter, they naturally

also took Him to be a carpenter. Luke, on the other hand, sets forth

the same incident on a wider scale, and records a variety of other

matters which took place in that connection. And this account he brings

in at a point not long subsequent to His baptism and temptation, thus

unquestionably introducing by anticipation what really happened only

after the occurrence of a number of intervening circumstances. In this,

therefore, every one may see an illustration of a principle of prime

consequence in relation to this most weighty question concerning the

harmony of the evangelists, which we have undertaken to solve by the

help of God,--the principle, namely, that it is not by mere ignorance

that these writers have been led to make certain omissions, and that it

is as little through simple ignorance of the actual historical order of

events that they have [at times] preferred to keep by the order in

which these events were recalled to their own memory. The correctness

of this principle may be gathered most clearly from the fact that, at a

point antecedent to any account given by him of anything done by the

Lord at Capharnaum, Luke has anticipated the literal date, and has

inserted this passage which we have at present under consideration, and

in which we are told how His fellow-citizens at once were astonished at

the might of the authority which was in Him, and expressed their

contempt for the meanness of His family. For he tells us that He

addressed them in these terms: "Ye will surely say unto me, Physician,

heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here

in thy country;" [1035] while, so far as the narrative of this same

Luke is concerned, we have not yet read of Him as having done anything

at Capharnaum. Furthermore, as it will not take up much time, and as,

besides, it is both a very simple and a highly needful matter to do so,

we insert here the whole context, showing the subject from which and

the method in which the writer has come to give the contents of this

section. After his statement regarding the Lord's baptism and

temptation, he proceeds in these terms: "And when the devil had ended

all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season. And Jesus

returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a

fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their

synagogues, and was magnified of all. And He came to Nazareth, where He

had been brought up: and, as his custom was, He went into the synagogue

on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered

unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when He had opened the

book, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord

is upon me, because He hath anointed me. He hath sent me to preach the

gospel to the poor, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and sight

to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the

accepted year of the Lord, and the day of retribution. And when He had

closed the book, He gave it again to the minister, and sat down: and

the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.

And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in

your ears. And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words

which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's

son? And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb,

Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capharnaum,

do also here in thy country." [1036] And so he continues with the rest,

until this entire section in his narrative is gone over. What,

therefore, can be more manifest, than that he has knowingly introduced

this notice at a point antecedent to its historical date, seeing it

admits of no question that he knows and refers to certain mighty deeds

done by Him before this period in Capharnaum, which, at the same time,

he is aware he has not as yet narrated in detail? For certainly he has

not made such an advance with his history from his notice of the Lord's

baptism, as that he should be supposed to have forgotten the fact that

up to this point he has not mentioned any of the things which took

place in Capharnaum; the truth being, that he has just begun here,

after the baptism, to give us his narrative concerning the Lord

personally. [1037]

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[1029] Three mss., however, give in synagoga eorum--in their

synagogue--as in our version.

[1030] Matt. xiii. 53-58.

[1031] Mark iv. 35, v. 17; Luke viii. 22-37. [On the variations in the

name, see critical editions of Greek text. Comp. Revised Version. The

Latin versions generally read "Gerasenes" in all three accounts.--R.]

[1032] Matt. viii. 23-34.

[1033] John vi. 42.

[1034] Mark vi. 1-6.

[1035] Luke iv. 23.

[1036] Luke iv. 13-23.

[1037] [The question of the identity of the visits to Nazareth is still

an open one. But there are some points ignored by Augustin which

indicate that Luke refers to an earlier visit.--R.]

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Chapter XLIII.--Of the Mutual Consistency of the Accounts Which are

Given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke of What Was Said by Herod on Hearing

About the Wonderful Works of the Lord, and of Their Concord in Regard

to the Order of Narration.

91. Matthew continues: "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the

fame of Jesus, and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist: he

is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth

themselves in him." [1038] Mark gives the same passage, and in the same

manner, but not in the same order. [1039] For, after relating how the

Lord sent forth the disciples with the charge to take nothing with them

on the journey save a staff only, and after bringing to its close so

much of the discourse which was then delivered as has been recorded by

him, he has subjoined this section. He does not, however, connect it in

such a way as to compel us to suppose that what it narrates took place

actually in immediate sequence on what precedes it in the history. And

in this, indeed, Matthew is at one with him. For Matthew's expression

is, "at that time," not "on that day," or "at that hour." Only there is

this difference between them, that Mark refers not to Herod himself as

the utterer of the words in question, but to the people, his statement

being this: "They said [1040] that John the Baptist was risen from the

dead;" whereas Matthew makes Herod himself the speaker, the phrase

being: "He said unto his servants." Luke, again, keeping the same order

of narration as Mark, and introducing it also indeed, like Mark, in no

such way as to compel us to suppose that his order must have been the

order of actual occurrence, presents his version of the same passage in

the following terms: "Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by

Him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John

was risen from the dead; and of some, that Elias had appeared; and of

others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said,

John have I beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things? And

he desired to see Him." [1041] In these words Luke also attests Mark's

statement, at least, so far as concerns the affirmation that it was not

Herod himself, but other parties, who said that John was risen from the

dead. But as regards his mentioning how Herod was perplexed, and his

bringing in thereafter those words of the same prince: "John have I

beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things?" we must either

understand that after the said perplexity he became persuaded in his

own mind of the truth of what was asserted by others, when he spoke to

his servants, in accordance with the version given by Matthew, which

runs thus: "And he said to his servants, This is John the Baptist: he

is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth

themselves in him;" or we must suppose that these words were uttered in

a manner betraying that he was still in a state of perplexity. For had

he said, "Can this be John the Baptist?" or, "Can it chance that this

is John the Baptist?" there would have been no need of saying anything

about a mode of utterance by which he might have revealed his dubiety

and perplexity. But seeing that these forms of expression are not

before us, his words may be taken to have been pronounced in either of

two ways: so that we may either suppose him to have been convinced by

what was said by others, and so to have spoken the words in question

with a real belief [in John's reappearance]; or we may imagine him to

have been still in that state of hesitancy of which mention is made by

Luke. Our explanation is favoured by the fact that Mark, who had

already told us how it was by others that the statement was made as to

John having risen from the dead, does not fail to let us know also that

in the end Herod himself spoke to this effect: "It is John whom I

beheaded: he is risen from the dead." [1042] For these words may also

be taken to have been pronounced in either of two ways,--namely, as the

utterances either of one corroborating a fact, or of one in doubt.

Moreover, while Luke passes on to a new subject after the notice which

he gives of this incident, those other two, Matthew and Mark, take

occasion to tell us at this point in what way John was put to death by

Herod.

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[1038] Matt. xiv. 1, 2.

[1039] Mark vi. 14-16.

[1040] Dicebant; so that the reading elegon is followed instead of

elegen in Mark vi. 14. [Westcott and Hort give the plural in their

text, following the Vatican codex and some other authorities.--R.]

[1041] Luke ix. 7-9.

[1042] [Augustin gives the reading followed in the Revised Version

("John whom I beheaded, he is risen"). The translator gives the words

of the Authorized Version.--R.]

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Chapter XLIV.--Of the Order in Which the Accounts of John's

Imprisonment and Death are Given by These Three Evangelists.

92. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms:

"For Herod laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for

Herodias' sake, his brother's wife;" and so on, down to the words, "And

his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and

told Jesus." [1043] Mark gives this narrative in similar terms. [1044]

Luke, on the other hand, does not relate it in the same succession, but

introduces it in connection with his statement of the baptism wherewith

the Lord was baptized. Hence we are to understand him to have acted by

anticipation here, and to have taken the opportunity of recording at

this point an event which took place actually a considerable period

later. For he has first reported those words which John spake with

regard to the Lord--namely, that "His fan is in His hand, and that He

will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His

garner; but the chaff He will burn up with fire unquenchable;" and

immediately thereafter he has appended his statement of an incident

which the evangelist John demonstrates not to have taken place in

direct historical sequence. For this latter writer mentions that, after

Jesus had been baptized, He went into Galilee at the period when He

turned the water into wine; and that, after a sojourn of a few days in

Capharnaum, He left that district and returned to the land of Jud�a,

and there baptized a multitude about the Jordan, previous to the time

when John was imprisoned. [1045] Now what reader, unless he were all

the better versed [1046] in these writings, would not take it to be

implied here that it was after the utterance of the words with regard

to the fan and the purged floor that Herod became incensed against

John, and cast him into prison? Yet, that the incident referred to here

did not, as matter of fact, occur in the order in which it is here

recorded, we have already shown elsewhere; and, indeed, Luke himself

puts the proof into our hands. [1047] For if [he had meant that] John's

incarceration took place immediately after the utterance of those

words, then what are we to make of the fact that in Luke's own

narrative the baptism of Jesus is introduced subsequently to his notice

of the imprisonment of John? Consequently it is manifest that,

recalling the circumstance in connection with the present occasion, he

has brought it in here by anticipation, and has thus inserted it in his

history at a point antecedent to a number of incidents, of which it was

his purpose to leave us some record, and which, in point of time, were

antecedent to this mishap that befell John. But it is as little the

case that the other two evangelists, Matthew and Mark, have placed the

fact of John's imprisonment in that position in their narratives which,

as is apparent also from their own writings, belonged to it in the

actual order of events. For they, too, have told us how it was on

John's being cast into prison that the Lord went into Galilee; [1048]

and then, after [relating] a number of things which He did in Galilee,

they come to Herod's admonition or doubt as to the rising again from

the dead of that John whom he beheaded; [1049] and in connection with

this latter occasion, they give us the story of all that occurred in

the matter of John's incarceration and death.

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[1043] Matt. xiv. 3-12.

[1044] Mark vi. 17-29.

[1045] John ii. 1, 12, iii. 22-24.

[1046] The reading in the mss. and in Migne's text is, quis autem non

putet qui minus in his litteris eruditus est; for which some give, quis

autem non putet nisi qui minus, etc.

[1047] Luke iii. 15-21.

[1048] Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14.

[1049] Matt. xiv. 1, 2; Mark vi. 14-16.

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Chapter XLV.--Of the Order and the Method in Which All the Four

Evangelists Come to the Narration of the Miracle of the Five Loaves.

93. After stating how the report of John's death was brought to Christ,

Matthew continues his account, and introduces it in the following

connection: "When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a

desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they

followed Him on foot out of the cities. And He went forth, and saw a

great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He

healed their sick." [1050] He mentions, therefore, that this took place

immediately after John had suffered. Consequently it was after this

that those things took place which have been previously

recorded--namely, the circumstances which alarmed Herod, and induced

him to say, "John have I beheaded." [1051] For it must surely be

understood that these incidents occurred subsequently which report

carried to the ears of Herod, so that he became anxious, and was in

perplexity as to who that person possibly could be of whom he heard

things so remarkable, when he had himself put John to death. Mark,

again, after relating how John suffered, mentions that the disciples

who had been sent forth returned to Jesus, and told Him all that they

had done and taught; and that the Lord (a fact which he alone records)

directed them to rest for a little while in a desert place, and that He

went on board a vessel with them, and departed; and that the crowds of

people, when they perceived that movement, went before them to that

place; and that the Lord had compassion on them, and taught them many

things; and that, when the hour was now advancing, it came to pass that

all who were present were made to eat of the five loaves and the two

fishes. [1052] This miracle has been recorded by all the four

evangelists. For in like manner, Luke, who has given an account of the

death of John at a much earlier stage in his narrative, [1053] in

connection with the occasion of which we have spoken, in the present

context tells us first of Herod's perplexity as to who the Lord could

be, and immediately thereafter appends statements to the same effect

with those in Mark,--namely, that the apostles returned to Him, and

reported to Him all that they had done; and that then He took them with

Him and departed into a desert place, and that the multitudes followed

Him thither, and that He spake to them concerning the kingdom of God,

and restored those who stood in need of healing. Then, too, he mentions

that, when the day was declining, the miracle of the five loaves was

wrought. [1054]

94. But John, again, who differs greatly from those three in this

respect, that he deals more with the discourses which the Lord

delivered than with the works which He so marvellously wrought, after

recording how He left Jud�a and departed the second time into Galilee,

which departure is understood to have taken place at the time to which

the other evangelists also refer when they tell us that on John's

imprisonment He went into Galilee,--after recording this, I say, John

inserts in the immediate context of his narrative the considerable

discourse which He spake as He was passing through Samaria, on the

occasion of His meeting with the Samaritan woman whom He found at the

well; and then he states that two days after this He departed thence

and went into Galilee, and that thereupon He came to Cana of Galilee,

where He had turned the water into wine, and that there He healed the

son of a certain nobleman. [1055] But as to other things which the rest

have told us He did and said in Galilee, John is silent. At the same

time, however, he mentions something which the others have left

unnoticed,--namely, the fact that He went up to Jerusalem on the day of

the feast, and there wrought the miracle on the man who had the

infirmity of thirty-eight years standing, and who found no one by whose

help he might be carried down to the pool in which people afflicted

with various diseases were healed. [1056] In connection with this, John

also relates how He spake many things on that occasion. He tells us,

further, that after these events He departed across the sea of Galilee,

which is also the sea of Tiberias, and that a great multitude followed

Him; that thereupon He went away to a mountain, and there sat with His

disciples,--the passover, a feast of the Jews, being then nigh; that

then, on lifting up His eyes and seeing a very great company, He fed

them with the five loaves and the two fishes; [1057] which notice is

given us also by the other evangelists. And this makes it certain that

he has passed by those incidents which form the course along which

these others have come to introduce the notice of this miracle into

their narratives. Nevertheless, while different methods of narration,

as it appears, are prosecuted, and while the first three evangelists

have thus left unnoticed certain matters which the fourth has recorded,

we see how those three, on the one hand, who have been keeping nearly

the same course, have found a direct meeting-point with each other at

this miracle of the five loaves; and how this fourth writer, on the

other hand, who is conversant above all with the profound teachings of

the Lord's discourses, in relating some other matters on which the rest

are silent, has sped round in a certain method upon their track, and,

while about to soar off from their pathway after a brief space again

into the region of loftier subjects, has found a meeting-point with

them in the view of presenting this narrative of the miracle of the

five loaves, which is common to them all.

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[1050] Matt. xiv. 13, 14.

[1051] Luke ix. 9.

[1052] Mark vi. 30-44.

[1053] Luke iii. 20.

[1054] Luke ix. 10-17.

[1055] John iv. 3, 5, 43-54.

[1056] [Augustin here passes over one of the most difficult questions

in connection with the Gospel history. The length of our Lord's

ministry turns upon the feast referred to in John v. If it was

passover, then John refers to four passovers; and our Lord's ministry

extended over three years and a few weeks. If some other feast is

meant, the ministry covered but two years and a few weeks.--R.]

[1057] John v.-vi. 13.

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Chapter XLVI.--Of the Question as to How the Four Evangelists Harmonize

with Each Other on This Same Subject of the Miracle of the Five Loaves.

95. Matthew then proceeds and carries on his narrative in due

consecution to the said incident connected with the five loaves in the

following manner: "And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him,

saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the

multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves

victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them

to eat;" and so forth, down to where we read, "And the number of those

who ate was five thousand men, besides women and children." [1058] This

miracle, therefore, which all the four evangelists record, [1059] and

in which they are supposed to betray certain discrepancies with each

other, must be examined and subjected to discussion, in order that we

may also learn from this instance some rules which will be applicable

to all other similar cases in the form of principles regulating modes

of statement in which, however diverse they may be, the same sense is

nevertheless retained, and the same veracity in the expression of

matters of fact is preserved. And, indeed, this investigation ought to

begin not with Matthew, although that would be in accordance with the

order in which the evangelists stand, but rather with John, by whom the

narrative in question is told with such particularity as to record even

the names of the disciples with whom the Lord conversed on this

subject. For he gives the history in the following terms: "When Jesus

than lifted up His eyes, and saw a very great company come unto Him, He

saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And

this He said to prove him; for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip

answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for

them, that every one of them may take a little. One of His disciples,

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here,

which hath five barley loaves, and two fishes; but what are they among

so many? Jesus said therefore, Make the men sit down. Now there was

much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five

thousand. Jesus then took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He

distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set

down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. And when they

were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that

remain, that they be not lost. Therefore they gathered them together,

and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves,

which remained over and above unto them that had eaten." [1060]

96. The inquiry which we have here to handle does not concern itself

with a statement given by this evangelist, in which he specifies the

kind of loaves; for he has not omitted to mention, what has been

omitted by the others, that they were barley loaves. Neither does the

question deal with what he has left unnoticed,--namely, the fact that,

in addition to the five thousand men, there were also women and

children, as Matthew tells us. And it ought now by all means to be a

settled matter, and one kept regularly in view in all such

investigations, that no one should find any difficulty in the mere

circumstance that something which is unrecorded by one writer is

related by another. But the question here is as to how the several

matters narrated by these writers may be [shown to be] all true, so

that the one of them, in giving his own peculiar version, does not put

out of court the account offered by the other. For if the Lord,

according to the narrative of John, on seeing the multitudes before

Him, asked Philip,with the view of proving him, whence bread might be

got to be given to them, a difficulty may be raised as to the truth of

the statement which is made by the others,--namely, that the disciples

first said to the Lord that He should send the multitudes away, in

order that they might go and purchase food for themselves in the

neighbouring localities, and that He made this reply to them, according

to Matthew: "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." [1061] With

this last Mark and Luke also agree, only that they leave out the words,

"They need not depart." We are to suppose, therefore, that after these

words the Lord looked at the multitude, and spoke to Philip in the

terms which John records, but which those others have omitted. Then the

reply which, according to John, was made by Philip, is mentioned by

Mark as having been given by the disciples,--the intention being, that

we should understand Philip to have returned this answer as the

mouthpiece of the rest; although they may also have put the plural

number in place of the singular, according to very frequent usage. The

words here actually ascribed to Philip--namely, "Two hundred pennyworth

of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a

little" [1062] --have their counterpart in this version by Mark, "Shall

we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?"

[1063] The expression, again, which the same Mark relates to have been

used by the Lord, namely, "How many loaves have ye?" has been passed by

without notice by the rest. On the other hand, the statement occurring

in John, to the effect that Andrew made the suggestion about the five

loaves and the two fishes, appears in the others, who use here the

plural number instead of the singular, as a notice referring the

suggestion to the disciples generally. And, indeed, Luke has coupled

Philip's reply together with Andrew's answer in one sentence. For when

he says, "We have no more but five loaves and two fishes," he reports

Andrew's response; but when he adds, "except we should go and buy meat

for all this people," he seems to carry us back to Philip's reply, only

that he has left unnoticed the "two hundred pennyworth." At the same

time, that [sentence about the going and buying meat] may also be

understood to be implied in Andrew's own words. For after saying,

"There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two fishes," he

likewise subjoined, "But what are they among so many?" And this last

clause really means the same as the expression in question, namely,

"except we should go and buy meat for all this people."

97. From all this variety of statement which is found in connection

with a genuine harmony in regard to the matters of fact and the ideas

conveyed, it becomes sufficiently clear that we have the wholesome

lesson inculcated upon us, that what we have to look to in studying a

person's words is nothing else than the intention of the speakers; in

setting forth which intention all truthful narrators ought to take the

utmost pains when they record anything, whether it may relate to man,

or to angels, or to God. For the subjects' mind and intention admit of

being expressed in words which should leave no appearance of any

discrepancies as regards the matter of fact.

98. In this connection, it is true, we ought not to omit to direct the

reader's attention to certain other matters which may turn out to be of

a kindred nature with those already considered. One of these is found

in the circumstance that Luke has stated that they were ordered to sit

down by fifties, whereas Mark's version is that it was by hundreds and

by fifties. This difference, however, creates no real difficulty. The

truth is, that the one has reported simply a part, and the other has

given the whole. For the evangelist who has introduced the notice of

the hundreds as well as the fifties has just mentioned something which

the other has left unmentioned. But there is no contradiction between

them on that account. If, indeed, the one had noticed only the fifties,

and the other only the hundreds, they might certainly have seemed to be

in some antagonism with each other, and it might not have been easy to

make it plain that both instructions were actually uttered, although

only the one has been specified by the former writer, and the other by

the latter. And yet, even in such a case, who will not acknowledge that

when the matter was subjected to more careful consideration, the

solution should have been discovered? This I have instanced now for

this reason, that matters of that kind do often present themselves,

which, while they really contain no discrepancies, appear to do so to

persons who pay insufficient attention to them, and pronounce upon them

inconsiderately.

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[1058] Matt. xiv. 15-21.

[1059] Mark vi. 34-44; Luke ix. 12-17.

[1060] John vi. 5-13.

[1061] Matt. xiv. 16.

[1062] John vi. 7.

[1063] Mark vi. 37.

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Chapter XLVII.--Of His Walking Upon the Water, and of the Questions

Regarding the Harmony of the Evangelists Who Have Narrated that Scene,

and Regarding the Manner in Which They Pass Off from the Section

Recording the Occasion on Which He Fed the Multitudes with the Five

Loaves.

99. Matthew goes on with his account in the following terms: "And when

He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to

pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the ship

was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was

contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night He came unto them,

walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea,

they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit;" and so on, down to the

words, "They came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the

Son of God." [1064] In like manner, Mark, after narrating the miracle

of the five loaves, gives his account of this same incident in the

following terms: "And when it was late, the ship was in the midst of

the sea, and He alone on the land. And He saw them toiling in rowing:

for the wind was contrary to them," and so on. [1065] This is similar

to Matthew's version, except that nothing is said as to Peter's walking

upon the waters. But here we must see to it, that no difficulty be

found in what Mark has stated regarding the Lord, namely, that, when He

walked upon the waters, He would also have passed by them. For in what

way could they have understood this, were it not that He was really

proceeding in a different direction from them, as if minded to pass

those persons by like strangers, who were so far from recognizing Him

that they took Him to be a spirit? Who, however, is so obtuse as not to

perceive that this bears a mystical significance? At the same time,

too, He came to the help of the men in their perturbation and outcry,

and said to them, "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." What is

the explanation, therefore, of His wish to pass by those persons whom

nevertheless He thus encouraged when they were in terror, but that that

intention to pass them by was made to serve the purpose of drawing

forth those cries to which it was meet to bear succour?

100. Furthermore, John still tarries for a little space with these

others. For, after his recital of the miracle of the five loaves, he

also gives us some account of the vessel that laboured, and of the

Lord's act in walking upon the sea. This notice he connects with his

preceding narrative in the following manner: "When Jesus therefore

perceived that they would come and take Him by force and make Him a

king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone. And when it

became late, His disciples went down unto the sea; and when they had

entered into a ship, they came over the sea to Capharnaum: and it was

now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason

of a great wind that blew," and so on. [1066] In this there cannot

appear to be anything contrary to the records preserved in the other

Gospels, unless it be the circumstance that Matthew tells us how, when

the multitudes were sent away, He went up into a mountain, in order

that there He might pray alone; while John states that He was on a

mountain with those same multitudes whom He fed with the five loaves.

[1067] But seeing that John also informs us how He departed into a

mountain after the said miracle, to preclude His being taken possession

of by the multitudes, who wished to make Him a king, it is surely

evident that they had come down from the mountain to more level ground

when those loaves were provided for the crowds. And consequently there

is no contradiction between the statements made by Matthew and John as

to His going up again to the mountain. The only difference is, that

Matthew uses the phrase "He went up," while John's term is "He

departed." And there would be an antagonism between these two, only if

in departing He had not gone up. Nor, again, is any want of harmony

betrayed by the fact that Matthew's words are, "He went up into a

mountain apart to pray;" whereas John puts it thus: "When He perceived

that they would come to make Him a king, He departed again into a

mountain Himself alone." Surely the matter of the departure is in no

way a thing antagonistic to the matter of prayer. For, indeed, the

Lord, who in His own person transformed the body of our humiliation in

order that He might make it like unto the body of His own glory, [1068]

hereby taught us also the truth that the matter of departure should be

to us in like manner grave matter for prayer. Neither, again, is there

any defect of consistency proved by the circumstance that Matthew has

told us first how He commanded His disciples to embark in the little

ship, and to go before Him unto the other side of the lake until He

sent the multitudes away, and then informs us that, after the

multitudes were sent away, He Himself went up into a mountain alone to

pray; while John mentions first that He departed unto a mountain alone,

and then proceeds thus: "And when it became late, His disciples came

down unto the sea; and when they had entered into a ship," etc. For who

will not perceive that, in recapitulating the facts, John has spoken of

something as actually done at a later point by the disciples, which

Jesus had already charged them to do before His own departure unto the

mountain; just as it is a familiar procedure in discourse, to revert in

some fashion or other to any matter which otherwise would have been

passed over? But inasmuch as it may not be specifically noted that a

reversion, especially when done briefly and instantaneously, is made to

something omitted, the auditors are sometimes led to suppose that the

occurrence which is mentioned at the later stage also took place

literally at the later period. In this way the evangelist's statement

really is, that to those persons whom he had described as embarking in

the ship and coming across the sea to Capharnaum, the Lord came,

walking toward them upon the waters, as they were toiling in the deep;

which approach of the Lord of course took place at the earlier point,

during the said voyage in which they were making their way to

Capharnaum. [1069]

101. On the other hand, Luke, after the record of the miracle of the

five loaves, passes to another subject, and diverges from this order of

narration. For he makes no mention of that little ship, and of the

Lord's pathway over the waters. But after the statement conveyed in

these words, "And they did all eat, and were filled, and there was

taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets," he has

subjoined the following notice: "And it came to pass, as He was alone

praying, His disciples were with Him; and He asked them, saying, Who

say the people that I am?" [1070] Thus he relates in this succession

something new, which is not given by those three who have left us the

account of the manner in which the Lord walked upon the waters, and

came to the disciples when they were on the voyage. It ought not,

however, on this account, to be supposed that it was on that same

mountain to which Matthew has told us He went up in order to pray

alone, that He said to His disciples, "Who say the people that I am?"

For Luke, too, seems to harmonize with Matthew in this, because his

words are, "as He was alone praying;" while Matthew's were, "He went up

unto a mountain alone to pray." But it must by all means be held to

have been on a different occasion that He put this question, since [it

is said here, both that] He prayed alone, and [that] the disciples were

with Him. Thus Luke, indeed, has mentioned only the fact of His being

alone, but has said nothing of His being without His disciples, as is

the case with Matthew and John, since [according to these latter] they

left Him in order to go before Him to the other side of the sea. For

with unmistakeable plainness Luke has added the statement that "His

disciples also were with Him." Consequently, in saying that He was

alone, he meant his statement to refer to the multitudes, who did not

abide with Him.

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[1064] Matt. xiv. 23-33.

[1065] Mark vi. 47-54.

[1066] John vi. 15-21.

[1067] Reading in monte fuisse cum eisdem turbis quas de quinque

panibus pavit. According to Migne, this is the reading of several mss.

of the better class; some twelve other mss. give in monte fuisse cum

easdem turbas, etc. = "He was on a mountain when He fed," etc. Some

editions have also in montem fugisse cum easdem, etc. = "He departed to

a mountain when He fed," etc.

[1068] Phil. iii. 21.

[1069] [The difficulty in regard to the course of the ship did not

suggest itself to Augustin, nor does he allude to the position of

Bethsaida. Luke ix. 10 seems to place it on one side of the lake and

Mark vi. 45 on the other. A contrary wind would blow them across the

lake, unless they were trying to get to some point on the eastern

shore; from which shore they certainly started, after the feeding of

the five thousand.--R.]

[1070] Luke ix. 17, 18.

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Chapter XLVIII.--Of the Absence of Any Discrepancy Between Matthew and

Mark on the One Hand, and John on the Other, in the Accounts Which the

Three Give Together of What Took Place After the Other Side of the Lake

Was Reached.

102. Matthew proceeds as follows: "And when they were gone over, they

came into the land of Genesar. And when the men of that place had

knowledge of Him, they sent out unto all that country round about, and

brought unto Him all that were diseased, and besought Him that they

might only touch the hem of His garment: and as many as touched were

made perfectly whole. Then came to Him scribes and Pharisees from

Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the

elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread," and so on,

down to the words, "But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man."

[1071] This is also related by Mark, in a way which precludes the

raising of any question about discrepancies. For anything expressed

here by the one in a form differing from that used by the other,

involves at least no departure from identity in sense. John, on the

other hand, fixing his attention, as his wont is, upon the Lord's

discourses, passes on from the notice of the ship, which the Lord

reached by walking upon the waters, to what took place after they

disembarked upon the land, and mentions that He took occasion from the

eating of the bread to deliver many lessons, dealing pre-eminently with

divine things. After this address, too, his narrative is again borne on

to one subject after another, in a sublime strain. [1072] At the same

time, this transition which he thus makes to different themes does not

involve any real want of harmony, although he exhibits certain

divergencies from these others, with the order of events presented by

the rest of the evangelists. For what is there to hinder us from

supposing at once that those persons, whose story is given by Matthew

and Mark, were healed by the Lord, and that He delivered this discourse

which John recounts to the people who followed Him across the sea? Such

a supposition is made all the more reasonable by the fact that

Capharnaum, to which place they are said, according to John, to have

crossed, is near the lake of Genesar; and that, again, is the district

into which they came, according to Matthew, on landing.

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[1071] Matt. xiv. 34-xv. 20.

[1072] John vi. 22-72.

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Chapter XLIX.--Of the Woman of Canaan Who Said, "Yet the Dogs Eat of

the Crumbs Which Fall from Their Masters' Tables," And of the Harmony

Between the Account Given by Matthew and that by Luke.

103. Matthew, accordingly, proceeds with his narrative, after the

notice of that discourse which the Lord delivered in the presence of

the Pharisees on the subject of the unwashed hands. Preserving also the

order of the succeeding events, as far as it is indicated by the

transitions from the one to the other, he introduces this account into

the context in the following manner: "And Jesus went thence, and

departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of

Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have

mercy on me, O Lord, Thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed

with a devil. But He answered her not a word," and so on, down to the

words, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.

And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." [1073] This story

of the woman of Canaan is recorded also by Mark, who keeps the same

order of events, and gives no occasion to raise any question as to a

want of harmony, unless it be found in the circumstance that he tells

us how the Lord was in the house at the time when the said woman came

to Him with the petition on behalf of her daughter. [1074] Now we might

readily suppose that Matthew has simply omitted mention of the house,

while nevertheless relating the same occurrence. But inasmuch as he

states that the disciples made the suggestion to Him in these terms,

"Send her away, for she crieth after us," he seems to imply distinctly

that the woman gave utterance to these cries of entreaty behind the

Lord as He walked on. In what sense, then, could it have been "in the

house," unless we are to take Mark to have intimated the fact, that she

had gone into the place where Jesus then was, when he mentioned at the

beginning of the narrative that He was in the house? But when Matthew

says that "He answered her not a word," he has given us also to

understand what neither of the two evangelists has related

explicitly,--namely, the fact that during that silence which He

maintained Jesus went out of the house. And in this manner all the

other particulars are brought into a connection which from this point

onwards presents no kind of appearance of discrepancy. For as to what

Mark records with respect to the answer which the Lord gave her, to the

effect that it was not meet to take the children's bread and cast it

unto the dogs, that reply was returned only after the interposition of

certain sayings which Matthew has not left unrecorded. That is to say,

[we are to suppose that] there came in first the request which the

disciples addressed to Him in regard to the woman's case, and the

answer He gave them, to the effect that He was not sent but unto the

lost sheep of the house of Israel; that next there was her own

approach, or, in other words, her coming after Him, and worshipping

Him, saying, "Lord, help me;" and that then, after all these incidents,

those words were spoken which have been recorded by both the

evangelists.

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[1073] Matt. xv. 21-28.

[1074] Mark vii. 24-30.

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Chapter L.--Of the Occasion on Which He Fed the Multitudes with the

Seven Loaves, and of the Question as to the Harmony Between Matthew and

Mark in Their Accounts of that Miracle.

104. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And

when Jesus had departed from thence, He came nigh unto the sea of

Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great

multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind,

dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and

He healed them; insomuch that the multitudes wondered, when they saw

the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the

blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel. Then Jesus called

His disciples unto Him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude,

because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat,"

and so on, down to the words, "And they that did eat were four thousand

men, besides women and children." [1075] This other miracle of the

seven loaves and the few little fishes is recorded also by Mark, and

that too in almost the same order; the exception being that he inserts

before it a narrative given by no other,--namely, that relating to the

deaf man whose ears the Lord opened, when He spat and said, "Effeta,"

that is, Be opened. [1076]

105. In the case of this miracle of the seven loaves, it is certainly

not a superfluous task to call attention to the fact that these two

evangelists, Matthew and Mark, have thus introduced it into their

narrative. For if one of them had recorded this miracle, who at the

same time had taken no notice of the instance of the five loaves, he

would have been judged to stand opposed to the rest. For in such

circumstances, who would not have supposed that there was only the one

miracle wrought in actual fact, and that an incomplete and unveracious

version of it had been given by the writer referred to, or by the

others, or by all of them together; so [that we must have imagined]

either that the one evangelist, by a mistake on his own part, had been

led to mention seven loaves instead of five; or that the other two,

whether as having both presented an incorrect statement, or as having

been misled through a slip of memory, had put the number five for the

number seven. In like manner, it might have been supposed that there

was a contradiction between the twelve baskets [1077] and the seven

baskets, [1078] and again, between the five thousand and the four

thousand, expressing the numbers of those who were fed. But now, since

those evangelists who have given us the account of the miracle of the

seven loaves have also not failed to mention the other miracle of the

five loaves, no difficulty can be felt by any one, and all can see that

both works were really wrought. This, accordingly, we have instanced,

in order that, if in any other passage we come upon some similar deed

of the Lord's, which, as told by one evangelist, seems so utterly

contrary to the version of it given by another that no method of

solving the difficulty can possibly be found, we may understand the

explanation to be simply this, that both incidents really took place,

and that they were recorded separately by the two several writers. This

is precisely what we have already recommended to attention in the

matter of the seating of the multitudes by hundreds and by fifties. For

were it not for the circumstance that both these numbers are found

noted by the one historian, we might have supposed that the different

writers had made contradictory statements. [1079]

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[1075] Matt. xv. 29-38.

[1076] Mark vii. 31-viii. 9.

[1077] Cophinis.

[1078] Sportis.

[1079] See above, chap. xlvi.

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Chapter LI.--Of Matthew's Declaration That, on Leaving These Parts, He

Came into the Coasts of Magedan; And of the Question as to His

Agreement with Mark in that Intimation, as Well as in the Notice of the

Saying About Jonah, Which Was Returned Again as an Answer to Those Who

Sought a Sign.

106. Matthew continues as follows: "And He sent away the multitude, and

took ship, and came into the coasts of Magedan;" and so on, down to the

words, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and

there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet

Jonas." [1080] This has already been recorded in another connection by

the same Matthew. [1081] Hence again and again we must hold by the

position that the Lord spake the same words on repeated occasions; so

that when any completely irreconcilable difference appears between

statements of His utterances, we are to understand the words to have

been spoken twice over. In this case, indeed, Mark also keeps the same

order; and after his account of the miracle of the seven loaves,

subjoins the same intimation as is given us in Matthew, only with this

difference, that Matthew's expression for the locality is not

Dalmanutha, as is read in certain codices, but Magedan. [1082] There is

no reason, however, for questioning the fact that it is the same place

that is intended under both names. For most codices, even of Mark's

Gospel, give no other reading than that of Magedan. [1083] Neither

should any difficulty be felt in the fact that Mark does not say, as

Matthew does, that in the answer which the Lord returned to those who

sought after a sign, He referred to Jonah, but mentions simply that He

replied in these terms: "There shall no sign be given unto it." For we

are given to understand what kind of sign they asked--namely, one from

heaven. And he has simply omitted to specify the words which Matthew

has introduced regarding Jonas.

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[1080] Matt. xv. 39-xvi. 4.

[1081] Matt. xii. 38.

[1082] Mark viii. 10-12.

[1083] ["Magdala," as the Authorized Version reads in Matthew, is

poorly supported, and was probably substituted by some ignorant scribe

for "Magadan" (comp. Revised Version). In Mark viii. 10, however, the

reading "Dalmanutha" is well attested. Augustin refers to Latin

codices.--R.]

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Chapter LII.--Of Matthew's Agreement with Mark in the Statement About

the Leaven of the Pharisees, as Regards Both the Subject Itself and the

Order of Narrative.

107. Matthew proceeds: "And He left them, and departed. And when His

disciples were come to the other side, they forgot to take bread. Then

Jesus said unto them, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the

Pharisees and of the Sadducees;" and so forth, down to where we read,

"Then understood they that He bade them not beware of the leaven of

bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

[1084] These words are recorded also by Mark, and that likewise in the

same order. [1085]

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[1084] Matt. xvi. 5-12.

[1085] Mark viii. 13-21.

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Chapter LIII.--Of the Occasion on Which He Asked the Disciples Whom Men

Said that He Was; And of the Question Whether, with Regard Either to

the Subject-Matter or the Order, There are Any Discrepancies Between

Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

108. Matthew continues thus: "And Jesus came into the coasts of C�sarea

Philippi; and He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I,

[1086] the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John

the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the

prophets;" and so on, down to the words, "And whatsoever thou shalt

loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." [1087] Mark relates this

nearly in the same order. But he has brought in before it a narrative

which is given by him alone,--namely, that regarding the giving of

sight to that blind man who said to the Lord, "I see men as trees

walking." [1088] Luke, again, also records this incident, inserting it

after his account of the miracle of the five loaves; [1089] and, as we

have already shown above, the order of recollection which is followed

in his case is not antagonistic to the order adopted by these others.

Some difficulty, however, may be imagined in the circumstance that

Luke's representation bears that the Lord put this question, as to whom

men held Him to be, to His disciples at a time when He was alone

praying, and when His disciples were also with Him; whereas Mark, on

the other hand, tells us that the question was put by Him to the

disciples when they were on the way. But this will be a difficulty only

to the man who has never prayed on the way. [1090]

109. I recollect having already stated that no one should suppose that

Peter received that name for the first time on the occasion when He

said to Him, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my

Church." For the time at which he did obtain this name was that

referred to by John, when he mentions that he was addressed in these

terms: "Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation,

Peter." [1091] Hence, too, we are as little to think that Peter got

this designation on the occasion to which Mark alludes, when he

recounts the twelve apostles individually by name, and tells us how

James and John were called the sons of thunder, merely on the ground

that in that passage he has recorded the fact that He surnamed him

Peter. [1092] For that circumstance is noticed there simply because it

was suggested to the writer's recollection at that particular point,

and not because it took place in actual fact at that specific time.

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[1086] Some editions omit the me in quem me dicum, etc., and make it =

Whom do men say that the Son of man is?

[1087] Matt. xvi. 13-19.

[1088] Mark viii. 22-29.

[1089] Luke ix. 18-20.

[1090] Adopting, with the Ratisbon mss., eum movet qui nunquam oravit

in via. Another reading is, eum movet qui putat nunquam, etc. = a

difficulty to the man who thinks He never prayed on the way.

[1091] John i. 42.

[1092] Mark iii. 16-19.

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Chapter LIV.--Of the Occasion on Which He Announced His Coming Passion

to the Disciples, and of the Measure of Concord Between Matthew, Mark,

and Luke in the Accounts Which They Give of the Same.

110. Matthew proceeds in the following strain: "Then charged He His

disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.

From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He

must go into Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief

priests, and scribes;" and so on, down to where we read, "Thou

savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

[1093] Mark and Luke add these passages in the same order. Only Luke

says nothing about the opposition which Peter expressed to the passion

of Christ.

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[1093] Matt. xvi. 20-23.

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Chapter LV.--Of the Harmony Between the Three Evangelists in the

Notices Which They Subjoin of the Manner in Which the Lord Charged the

Man to Follow Him Who Wished to Come After Him.

111. Matthew continues thus: "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If

any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his

cross, and follow me;" and so on, down to the words, "And then He shall

reward every man according to his work." [1094] This is appended also

by Mark, who keeps the same order. But he does not say of the Son of

man, who was to come with His angels, that He is to reward every man

according to his work. Nevertheless, he mentions at the same time that

the Lord spoke to this effect: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my

words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the

Son of man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the

holy angels." [1095] And this may be taken to bear the same sense as is

expressed by Matthew, when he says, that "He shall reward every man

according to his work." Luke [1096] also adds the same statements in

the same order, slightly varying the terms indeed in which they are

conveyed, but still showing a complete parallel with the others in

regard to the truthful reproduction of the self-same ideas. [1097]

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[1094] Matt. xvi. 24-27.

[1095] Mark viii. 34-38.

[1096] Luke ix. 25, 26.

[1097] The text gives, eadem tamen sententiarum veritate simillimus.

Another reading is, sententiam veritate simillimo.

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Chapter LVI.--Of the Manifestation Which the Lord Made of Himself, in

Company with Moses and Elias, to His Disciples on the Mountain; And of

the Question Concerning the Harmony Between the First Three Evangelists

with Regard to the Order and the Circumstances of that Event; And in

Especial, the Number of the Days, in So Far as Matthew and Mark State

that It Took Place After Six Days, While Luke Says that It Was After

Eight Days.

112. Matthew proceeds thus: "Verily I say unto you, There be some

standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of

man coming in His kingdom. And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter,

James, and John his brother, and brought them up into an high

mountain;" and so on, down to where we read, "Tell the vision to no man

until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." This vision of the

Lord upon the mount in the presence of the three disciples, Peter,

James, and John, on which occasion also the testimony of the Father's

voice was borne Him from heaven, is related by the three evangelists in

the same order, and in a manner expressing the same sense completely.

[1098] And as regards other matters, they may be seen by the readers to

be in accordance with those modes of narration of which we have given

examples in many passages already, and in which there are diversities

in expression without any consequent diversity in meaning.

113. But with respect to the circumstance that Mark, along with

Matthew, tells us how the event took place after six days, while Luke

states that it was after eight days, those who find a difficulty here

do not deserve to be set aside with contempt, but should be enlightened

by the offering of explanations. For when we announce a space of days

in these terms, "after so many days," sometimes we do not include in

the number the day on which we speak, or the day on which the thing

itself which we intimate beforehand or promise is declared to take

place, but reckon only the intervening days, on the real and full and

final expiry of which the incident in question is to occur. This is

what Matthew and Mark have done. Leaving out of their calculation the

day on which Jesus spoke these words, and the day on which He exhibited

that memorable spectacle on the mount, they have regarded simply the

intermediate days, and thus have used the expression, "after six days."

But Luke, reckoning in the extreme day at either end, that is to say,

the first day and the last day, has made it "after eight days," in

accordance with that mode of speech in which the part is put for the

whole.

114. Moreover, the statement which Luke makes with regard to Moses and

Elias in these terms, "And it came to pass, as they departed [1099]

from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here,"

and so forth, ought not to be considered antagonistic to what Matthew

and Mark have subjoined to the same effect, as if they made Peter offer

this suggestion while Moses and Elias were still talking with the Lord.

For they have not expressly said that it was at that time, but rather

they have simply left unnoticed the fact which Luke has added,--namely,

that it was as they went away that Peter made the suggestion to the

Lord with respect to the making of three tabernacles. At the same time,

Luke has appended the intimation that it was as they were entering the

cloud that the voice came from heaven,--a circumstance which is not

affirmed, but which is as little contradicted, by the others.

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[1098] Matt. xvi. 28-xvii. 9; Mark viii. 39-ix. 9; Luke ix. 27-36.

[1099] [Dum discederent. The Revised Version correctly renders the

Greek: "as they were parting."--R.]

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Chapter LVII.--Of the Harmony Between Matthew and Mark in the Accounts

Given of the Occasion on Which He Spoke to the Disciples Concerning the

Coming of Elias.

115. Matthew goes on thus: "And His disciples asked Him, saying, Why

then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and

said unto them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things.

But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not,

but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the

Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that He spake

unto them of John the Baptist." [1100] This same passage is given also

by Mark, who keeps also the same order; and although he exhibits some

diversity of expression, he makes no departure from a truthful

representation of the same sense. [1101] He has not, however, added the

statement, that the disciples understood that the Lord had referred to

John the Baptist in saying that Elias was come already.

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[1100] Matt. xvii. 10-13.

[1101] Mark ix. 10-12.

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Chapter LVIII.--Of the Man Who Brought Before Him His Son, Whom the

Disciples Were Unable to Heal; And of the Question Concerning the

Agreement Between These Three Evangelists Also in the Matter of the

Order of Narration Here.

116. Matthew goes on in the following terms: "And when He was come

[1102] to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down

before Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatic,

and sore vexed;" and so on, down to the words, "Howbeit this kind is

not cast out but by prayer and fasting." [1103] Both Mark and Luke

record this incident, and that, too, in the same order, without any

suspicion of a want of harmony. [1104]

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[1102] Venisset.

[1103] Matt. xvii. 14-20.

[1104] Mark ix. 16-28; Luke ix. 38-45.

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Chapter LIX.--Of the Occasion on Which the Disciples Were Exceeding

Sorry When He Spoke to Them of His Passion, as It is Related in the

Same Order by the Three Evangelists.

117. Matthew continues thus: "And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus

said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men;

and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again. And

they were exceeding sorry." [1105] Mark and Luke record this passage in

the same order. [1106]

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[1105] Matt. xvii. 21, 22.

[1106] Mark ix. 29-31; Luke ix. 44, 45.

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Chapter LX.--Of His Paying the Tribute Money Out of the Mouth of the

Fish, an Incident Which Matthew Alone Mentions.

118. Matthew continues in these terms: "And when they were come to

Capharnaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said to

him, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes;" and so on, down

to where we read: "Thou shall find a piece of money: that take, and

give unto them for me and thee." [1107] He is the only one who relates

this occurrence, after the interposition of which he follows again the

order which is pursued also by Mark and Luke in company with him.

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[1107] Matt. xvii. 23-27.

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Chapter LXI.--Of the Little Child Whom He Set Before Them for Their

Imitation, and of the Offences of the World; Of the Members of the Body

Causing Offences; Of the Angels of the Little Ones, Who Behold the Face

of the Father; Of the One Sheep Out of the Hundred Sheep; Of the

Reproving of a Brother in Private; Of the Loosing and the Binding of

Sins; Of The Agreement of Two, and the Gathering Together of Three; Of

the Forgiving of Sins Even Unto Seventy Times Seven; Of the Servant Who

Had His Own Large Debt Remitted, and Yet Refused to Remit the Small

Debt Which His Fellow-Servant Owed to Him; And of the Question as to

Matthew's Harmony with the Other Evangelists on All These Subjects.

119. The same Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following

terms: "In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who,

thinkest Thou, is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus

called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and

said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as

little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and so

on, down to the words, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also

unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother

their trespasses." [1108] Of this somewhat lengthened discourse which

was spoken by the Lord, Mark, instead of giving the whole, has

presented only certain portions, in dealing with which he follows

meantime the same order. He has also introduced some matters which

Matthew does not mention. [1109] Moreover, in this complete discourse,

so far as we have taken it under consideration, the only interruption

is that which is made by Peter, when he inquires how often a brother

ought to be forgiven. The Lord, however, was speaking in a strain which

makes it quite clear that even the question which Peter thus proposed,

and the answer which was returned to him, belong really to the same

address. Luke, again, records none of these things in the order here

observed, with the exception of the incident with the little child whom

He set before His disciples, for their imitation when they were

thinking of their own greatness. [1110] For if he has also narrated

some other matters of a tenor resembling those which are inserted in

this discourse, these are sayings which he has recalled for notice in

other connections, and on occasions different from the present: just as

John [1111] introduces the Lord's words on the subject of the

forgiveness of sins,--namely, those to the effect that they should be

remitted to him to whom the apostles remitted them, and that they

should be retained to him to whom they retained them, as spoken by the

Lord after His resurrection; while Matthew mentions that in the

discourse now under notice the Lord made this declaration, which,

however, the self-same evangelist at the same time affirms to have been

given on a previous occasion to Peter. [1112] Therefore, to preclude

the necessity of having always to inculcate the same rule, we ought to

bear in mind the fact that Jesus uttered the same word repeatedly, and

in a number of different places,--a principle which we have pressed so

often upon your attention already; and this consideration should save

us from feeling any perplexity, even although the order of the sayings

may be thought to create some difficulty.

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[1108] Matt. xviii.

[1109] Mark ix. 33-49.

[1110] Luke ix. 46-48.

[1111] John xx. 23.

[1112] Matt. xvi. 19.

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Chapter LXII.--Of the Harmony Subsisting Between Matthew and Mark in

the Accounts Which They Offer of the Time When He Was Asked Whether It

Was Lawful to Put Away One's Wife, and Especially in Regard to the

Specific Questions and Replies Which Passed Between the Lord and the

Jews, and in Which the Evangelists Seem to Be, to Some Small Extent, at

Variance.

120. Matthew continues giving his narrative in the following manner:

"And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He

departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Jud�a beyond Jordan;

and great multitudes followed Him; and He healed them there. [1113] The

Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him, and saying, Is it lawful

for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" And so on, down to the

words, "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." [1114] Mark

also records this, and observes the same order. At the same time, we

must certainly see to it that no appearance of contradiction be

supposed to arise from the circumstance that the same Mark tells us how

the Pharisees were asked by the Lord as to what Moses commanded them,

and that on His questioning them to that effect they returned the

answer regarding the bill of divorcement which Moses suffered them to

write; whereas, according to Matthew's version, it was after the Lord

had spoken those words in which He had shown them, out of the law, how

God made male and female to be one flesh, and how, therefore, those

[thus joined together of Him] ought not to be put asunder by man, that

they gave the reply, "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of

divorcement, and to put her away?" To this interrogation, also [as

Matthew puts it], He says again in reply, "Moses, because of the

hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from

the beginning it was not so." There is no difficulty, I repeat, in

this; for it is not the case that Mark makes no kind of mention of the

reply which was thus given by the Lord, but he brings it in after the

answer which was returned by them to His question relating to the bill

of divorcement.

121. As far as the order or method of statement here adopted is

concerned, we ought to understand that it in no way affects the truth

of the subject itself, whether the question regarding the permission to

write a bill of divorcement given by the said Moses, by whom also it is

recorded that God made male and female to be one flesh, [1115] was

addressed by these Pharisees to the Lord at the time when He was

forbidding the separation of husband and wife, and confirming His

declaration on that subject by the authority of the law; or whether the

said question was conveyed in the reply which the same persons returned

to the Lord, at the time when He asked them about what Moses had

commanded them. For His intention was not to offer them any reason for

the permission which Moses thus granted them until they had first

mentioned the matter themselves; which intention on His part is what is

indicated by the inquiry which Mark has introduced. On the other hand,

their desire was to use the authority of Moses in commanding the giving

of a bill of divorcement, for the purpose of stopping His mouth, so to

speak, in the matter of forbidding, as they believed He undoubtedly

would do, a man to put away his wife. For they had approached Him with

the view of saying what would tempt Him. And this desire of theirs is

what is indicated by Matthew, when, instead of stating how they were

interrogated first themselves, he represents them as having of their

own accord put the question about the precept of Moses, in order that

they might thereby, as it were, convict the Lord of doing what was

wrong in prohibiting the putting away of wives. Wherefore, since the

mind of the speakers, in the service of which the words ought to stand,

has been exhibited by both evangelists, it is no matter how the modes

of narration adopted by the two may differ, provided neither of them

fails to give a correct representation of the subject itself.

122. Another view of the matter may also be taken, namely, that, in

accordance with Mark's statement, when these persons began by

questioning the Lord on the subject of the putting away of a wife, He

questioned them in turn as to what Moses commanded them; and that, on

their replying that Moses suffered them to write a bill of divorcement

and put the wife away, He made His answer to them regarding the said

law which was given by Moses, reminding them how God instituted the

union of male and female, and addressing them in the words which are

inserted by Matthew, namely, "Have ye not read that He which made them

at the beginning made them male and female?" and so on. On hearing

these words, they repeated in the form of an inquiry what they had

already given utterance to when replying to His first interrogation,

namely the expression, "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of

divorcement, and to put her away?" Then Jesus showed that the reason

was the hardness of their heart; which explanation Mark brings in, with

a view to brevity, at an earlier point, as if it had been given in

reply to that former response of theirs, which Matthew has passed over.

And this he does as judging that no injury could be done to the truth

at whichever point the explanation might be introduced, seeing that the

words, with a view to which it was returned, had been uttered twice in

the same form; and seeing also that the Lord, in any case, had offered

the said explanation in reply to such words.

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[1113] [Augustin entirely ignores the most perplexing problem in the

Gospel history, namely, the proper distribution of the matter peculiar

to Luke and John, at this point in the narrative. The passages are:

Luke ix. 51-xviii. 14 and John vii. 2-xi. 54. These events cover about

six months, but Matthew and Mark omit all reference to them. The

difficulty is all the greater, since Luke inserts in his narrative many

things that evidently belong to an earlier period (e.g., chaps. xi.

14-xiii. 19). There are also peculiar difficulties connected with the

chronology of John x. and xi.--R.]

[1114] Matt. xix. 1-12.

[1115] Gen. ii. 24.

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Chapter LXIII.--Of the Little Children on Whom He Laid His Hands; Of

the Rich Man to Whom He Said, "Sell All that Thou Hast;" Of the

Vineyard in Which the Labourers Were Hired at Different Hours; And of

the Question as to the Absence of Any Discrepancy Between Matthew and

the Other Two Evangelists on These Subjects.

123. Matthew proceeds thus: "Then were there brought unto Him little

children, that He should put His hands on them, and pray; and the

disciples rebuked them;" and so on, down to where we read, "For many

are called, but few are chosen." [1116] Mark has followed the same

order here as Matthew. [1117] But Matthew is the only one who

introduces the section relating to the labourers who were hired for the

vineyard. Luke, on the other hand, first mentions what He said to those

who were asking each other who should be the greatest, and next

subjoins at once the passage concerning the man whom they had seen

casting out devils, although he did not follow Him; then he parts

company with the other two at the point where he tells us how He

stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem; [1118] and after the

interposition of a number of subjects, [1119] he joins them again in

giving the story of the rich man, to whom the word is addressed, "Sell

all that thou hast," [1120] which individual's case is related here by

the other two evangelists, but still in the succession which is

followed by all the narratives alike. For in the passage referred to in

Luke, that writer does not fail to bring in the story of the little

children, just as the other two do immediately before the mention of

the rich man. With regard, then, to the accounts which are given us of

this rich person, who asks what good thing he should do in order to

obtain eternal life, there may appear to be some discrepancy between

them, because the words were, according to Matthew, "Why askest thou me

about the good?" while according to the others they were, "Why callest

thou me good?" The sentence, "Why askest thou me about the good?" may

then be referred more particularly to what was expressed by the man

when he put the question, "What good thing shall I do?" For there we

have both the name "good" applied to Christ, and the question put.

[1121] But the address "Good Master" does not of itself convey the

question. Accordingly, the best method of disposing of it is to

understand both these sentences to have been uttered, "Why callest thou

me good?" and, "Why askest thou me about the good?"

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[1116] Matt. xix. 13-xx. 16.

[1117] Mark x. 13-31.

[1118] Luke ix. 46-51.

[1119] [Compare note on � 120.--R.]

[1120] Luke xviii. 18-30.

[1121] The Latin version is followed here. In Matt. xix. 17, where the

English version gives, "Why callest thou me good?" the Vulgate has,

Quid me interrogas de bono? [The Revised Version text agrees with the

Vulgate (in Matthew), following the most ancient Greek mss. But the

same authorities read "Master" instead of "good Master," differing from

the Vulgate. Augustin accepts the latter reading.--R.]

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Chapter LXIV.--Of the Occasions on Which He Foretold His Passion in

Private to His Disciples; And of the Time When the Mother of Zebedee's

Children Came with Her Sons, Requesting that One of Them Should Sit on

His Right Hand, and the Other on His Left Hand; And of the Absence of

Any Discrepancy Between Matthew and the Other Two Evangelists on These

Subjects.

124. Matthew continues his narrative in the following terms: "And

Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, and said

unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be

betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall

condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock,

and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall rise

again. Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons,

worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him;" and so on, down

to the words, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,

but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." [1122] Here

again Mark keeps the same order as Matthew, only he represents the sons

of Zebedee to have made the request themselves; while Matthew has

stated that it was preferred on their behalf not by their own personal

application, but by their mother, as she had laid what was their wish

before the Lord. Hence Mark has briefly intimated what was said on that

occasion as spoken by them, rather than by her [in their name]. And to

conclude with the matter, it is to them rather than to her, according

to Matthew no less than according to Mark, that the Lord returned His

reply. Luke, on the other hand, after narrating in the same order our

Lord's predictions to the twelve disciples on the subject of His

passion and resurrection, leaves unnoticed what the other two

evangelists immediately go on to record; and after the interposition of

these passages, he is joined by his fellow-writers again [at the point

where they report the incident] at Jericho. [1123] Moreover, as to what

Matthew and Mark have stated with respect to the princes of the

Gentiles exercising dominion over those who are subject to

them,--namely, that it should not be so with them [the disciples], but

that he who was greatest among them should even be a servant to the

others,--Luke also gives us something of the same tenor, although not

in that connection; [1124] and the order itself indicates that the same

sentiment was expressed by the Lord on a second occasion.

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[1122] Matt. xx. 17-28.

[1123] Luke xviii. 31-35.

[1124] Luke xxii. 24-27.

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Chapter LXV.--Of the Absence of Any Antagonism Between Matthew and

Mark, or Between Matthew and Luke, in the Account Offered of the Giving

of Sight to the Blind Men of Jericho.

125. Matthew continues thus: "And as they departed from Jericho, a

great multitude followed Him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the

wayside heard that Jesus passed by, and cried out, saying, Have mercy

on us, O Lord, thou Son of David;" and so on, down to the words, "And

immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him." [1125]

Mark also records this incident, but mentions only one blind man.

[1126] This difficulty is solved in the way in which a former

difficulty was explained which met us in the case of the two persons

who were tormented by the legion of devils in the territory of the

Gerasenes. [1127] For, that in this instance also of the two blind men

whom he [Matthew] alone has introduced here, one of them was of

pre-eminent note and repute in that city, is a fact made clear enough

by the single consideration, that Mark has recorded both his own name

and his father's; a circumstance which scarcely comes across us in all

the many cases of healing which had been already performed by the Lord,

unless that miracle be an exception, in the recital of which the

evangelist has mentioned by name Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue,

whose daughter Jesus restored to life. [1128] And in this latter

instance this intention becomes the more apparent, from the fact that

the said ruler of the synagogue was certainly a man of rank in the

place. Consequently there can be little doubt that this Bartim�us, the

son of Tim�us, had fallen from some position of great prosperity, and

was now regarded as an object of the most notorious and the most

remarkable wretchedness, because, in addition to being blind, he had

also to sit begging. And this is also the reason, then, why Mark has

chosen to mention only the one whose restoration to sight acquired for

the miracle a fame as widespread as was the notoriety which the man's

misfortune itself had gained.

126. But Luke, although he mentions an incident altogether of the same

tenor, is nevertheless to be understood as really narrating only a

similar miracle which was wrought in the case of another blind man, and

as putting on record its similarity to the said miracle in the method

of performance. For he states that it was performed when He was coming

nigh unto Jericho; [1129] while the others say that it took place when

He was departing from Jericho. Now the name of the city, and the

resemblance in the deed, favour the supposition that there was but one

such occurrence. But still, the idea that the evangelists really

contradict each other here, in so far as the one says, "As He was come

nigh unto Jericho," while the others put it thus, "As He came out of

Jericho," is one which no one surely will be prevailed on to accept,

unless those who would have it more readily credited that the gospel is

unveracious, than that He wrought two miracles of a similar nature and

in similar circumstances. [1130] But every faithful son of the gospel

will most readily perceive which of these two alternatives is the more

credible, and which the rather to be accepted as true; and, indeed,

every gainsayer too, when he is advised concerning the real state of

the case, will answer himself either by the silence which he will have

to observe, or at least by the tenor of his reflections should he

decline to be silent.

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[1125] Matt. xx. 29-34.

[1126] Mark x. 46-52.

[1127] See chap. xxiv. � 56.

[1128] Mark v. 22-43.

[1129] Luke xviii. 35-43.

[1130] [Various other solutions are suggested. Comp. Robinson's Greek

Harmony, rev. ed. pp. 234, 235.--R.]

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Chapter LXVI.--Of the Colt of the Ass Which is Mentioned by Matthew,

and of the Consistency of His Account with that of the Other

Evangelists, Who Speak Only of the Ass.

127. Matthew goes on with his narrative in the following terms: "And

when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto

the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them,

Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an

ass tied, and a colt with her;" and so on, down to the words, "Blessed

is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest."

[1131] Mark also records this occurrence, and inserts it in the same

order. [1132] Luke, on the other hand, tarries a space by Jericho,

recounting certain matters which these others have omitted,--namely,

the story of Zacch�us, the chief of the publicans, and some sayings

which are couched in parabolic form. After instancing these things,

however, this evangelist again joins company with the others in the

narrative relating to the ass on which Jesus sat. [1133] And let not

the circumstance stagger us, that Matthew speaks both of an ass and of

the colt of an ass, while the others say nothing of the ass. For here

again we must bear in mind the rule which we have already introduced in

dealing with the statements about the seating of the people by fifties

and by hundreds on the occasion on which the multitudes were fed with

the five loaves. [1134] Now, after this principle has been brought into

application, the reader should not feel any serious difficulty in the

present case. Indeed, even had Matthew said nothing about the colt,

just as his fellow-historians have taken no notice of the ass, the fact

should not have created any such perplexity as to induce the idea of an

insuperable contradiction between the two statements, when the one

writer speaks only of the ass, and the others only of the colt of the

ass. But how much less cause then for any disquietude ought there to

be, when we see that the one writer has mentioned the ass to which the

others have omitted to refer, in such a manner as at the same time not

to leave unnoticed also the colt of which the rest have spoken! In

fine, where it is possible to suppose both objects to have been

included in the occurrence, there is no real antagonism, although the

one writer may specify only the one thing, and another only the other.

How much less need there be any contradiction, when the one writer

particularizes the one object, and another instances both!

128. Again, although John tells us nothing as to the way in which the

Lord despatched His disciples to fetch these animals to Him,

nevertheless he inserts a brief allusion to this colt, and cites also

the word of the prophet which Matthew makes use of. [1135] In the case

also of this testimony from the prophet, the terms in which it is

reproduced by the evangelists, although they exhibit certain

differences, do not fail to express a sense identical in intention.

Some difficulty, however, may be felt in the fact that Matthew adduces

this passage in a form which represents the prophet to have made

mention of the ass; whereas this is not the case, either with the

quotation as introduced by John, or with the version given in the

ecclesiastical codices of the translation in common use. An explanation

of this variation seems to me to be found in the fact that Matthew is

understood to have written his Gospel in the Hebrew language. Moreover,

it is manifest that the translation which bears the name of the

Septuagint differs in some particulars from the text which is found in

the Hebrew by those who know that tongue, and by the several scholars

who have given us renderings of the same Hebrew books. And if an

explanation is asked for this discrepancy, or for the circumstance that

the weighty authority of the Septuagint translation diverges in many

passages from the rendering of the truth which is discovered in the

Hebrew codices, I am of opinion that no more probable account of the

matter will suggest itself, than the supposition that the Seventy

composed their version under the influence of the very Spirit by whose

inspiration the things which they were engaged in translating had been

originally spoken. This is an idea which receives confirmation also

from the marvellous consent which is asserted to have characterized

them. [1136] Consequently, when these translators, while not departing

from the real mind of God from which these sayings proceeded, and to

the expression of which the words ought to be subservient, gave a

different form to some matters in their reproduction of the text, they

had no intention of exemplifying anything else than the very thing

which we now admiringly contemplate in that kind of harmonious

diversity which marks the four evangelists, and in the light of which

it is made clear that there is no failure from strict truth, although

one historian may give an account of some theme in a manner different

indeed from another, and yet not so different as to involve an actual

departure from the sense intended by the person with whom he is bound

to be in concord and agreement. To understand this is of advantage to

character, with a view at once to guard against what is false, and to

pronounce correctly upon it; and it is of no less consequence to faith

itself, in the way of precluding the supposition that, as it were with

consecrated sounds, truth has a kind of defence provided for it which

might imply God's handing over to us not only the thing itself, but

likewise the very words which are required for its enunciation; whereas

the fact rather is, that the theme itself which is to be expressed is

so decidedly deemed of superior importance to the words in which it has

to be expressed, [1137] that we would be under no obligation to ask

about them at all, if it were possible for us to know the truth without

the terms, as God knows it, and as His angels also know it in Him.

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[1131] Matt. xxi. 1-9.

[1132] Mark xi. 1-10.

[1133] Luke xix. 1-38.

[1134] See above, chap. xlvi. � 98.

[1135] John xii. 14, 15.

[1136] [The reference here is to the story of Aristeas, to the effect

that the translators, though separated, produced identical versions.

Compare translator's remark in Introductory Notice.--R.]

[1137] Reading qu� dicenda est, sermonibus per quos dicenda. The

Ratisbon edition and twelve mss. give in both instances discenda = to

be learned, instead of dicenda = to be expressed. See Migne.

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Chapter LXVII.--Of the Expulsion of the Sellers and Buyers from the

Temple, and of the Question as to the Harmony Between the First Three

Evangelists and John, Who Relates the Same Incident in a Widely

Different Connection.

129. Matthew goes on with his narrative in the following terms: "And

when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is

this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of

Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them

that sold and bought in the temple;" and so on, down to where we read,

"But ye have made it a den of thieves." This account of the multitude

of sellers who were cast out of the temple is given by all the

evangelists; but John introduces it in a remarkably different order.

[1138] For, after recording the testimony borne by John the Baptist to

Jesus, and mentioning that He went into Galilee at the time when He

turned the water into wine, and after he has also noticed the sojourn

of a few days in Capharnaum, John proceeds to tell us that He went up

to Jerusalem at the season of the Jews' passover, and when He had made

a scourge of small cords, drove out of the temple those who were

selling in it. This makes it evident that this act was performed by the

Lord not on a single occasion, but twice over; but that only the first

instance is put on record by John, and the last by the other three.

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[1138] Matt. xxi. 10-13; Mark xi. 15-17; Luke xix. 45, 46; John ii.

1-17.

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Chapter LXVIII.--Of the Withering of the Fig-Tree, and of the Question

as to the Absence of Any Contradiction Between Matthew and the Other

Evangelists in the Accounts Given of that Incident, as Well as the

Other Matters Related in Connection with It; And Very Specially as to

the Consistency Between Matthew and Mark in the Matter of the Order of

Narration.

130. Matthew continues thus: "And the blind and the lame came to Him in

the temple, and He healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes

saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the

temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were sore

displeased, and said unto Him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus

saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and

sucklings Thou hast perfected praise? And He left them, and went out of

the city into Bethany; and He lodged there. Now in the morning, as He

returned into the city, He hungered. And when He saw a single [1139]

fig-tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon but

leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward

for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away. And when the

disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree

withered away! But Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto

you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which

is done to the fig-tree; but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain,

Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. And

all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall

receive." [1140]

131. Mark also records this occurrence in due succession. [1141] He

does not, however, follow the same order in his narrative. For first of

all, the fact which is related by Matthew, namely, that Jesus went into

the temple, and cast out those who sold and bought there, is not

mentioned at that point by Mark. On the other hand, Mark tells us that

He looked round about upon all things, and, when the eventide was now

come, went out into Bethany with the twelve. Next he informs us that on

another day, [1142] when they were coming from Bethany, He was hungry,

and cursed the fig-tree, as Matthew also intimates. Then the said Mark

subjoins the statement that He came into Jerusalem, and that, on going

into the temple, He cast out those who sold and bought there, as if

that incident took place not on the first day specified, but on a

different day. [1143] But inasmuch as Matthew puts the connection in

these terms, "And He left them, and went out of the city into Bethany,"

[1144] and tells us that it was when returning in the morning into the

city that He cursed the tree, it is more reasonable to suppose that he,

rather than Mark, has preserved the strict order of time so far as

regards the incident of the expulsion of the sellers and buyers from

the temple. For when he uses the phrase, "And He left them, and went

out," who can be understood by those parties whom He is thus said to

have left, but those with whom He was previously speaking,--namely, the

persons who were so sore displeased because the children cried out,

"Hosanna to the Son of David"? It follows, then, that Mark has omitted

what took place on the first day, when He went into the temple; and in

mentioning that He found nothing on the fig-tree but leaves, he has

introduced what He called to mind only there, but what really occurred

on the second day, as both evangelists testify. Then, further, his

account bears that the astonishment which the disciples expressed at

finding how the fig-tree had withered away, and the reply which the

Lord made to them on the subject of faith, and the casting of the

mountain into the sea, belonged not to this same second day on which He

said to the tree, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever," but to

a third day. For in connection with the second day, the said Mark has

recorded the incident of the casting of the sellers out of the temple,

which he had omitted to notice as belonging to the first day.

Accordingly, it is in connection with this second day that he tells us

how Jesus went out of the city, when even was come, and how, when they

passed by in the morning, the disciples saw the fig-tree dried up from

the roots, and how Peter, calling to remembrance, said unto Him,

"Master, behold the fig-tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

[1145] Then, too, he informs us that He gave the answer relating to the

power of faith. On the other hand, Matthew recounts these matters in a

manner importing that they all took place on this second day; that is

to say, both the word addressed to the tree, "Let no fruit grow on thee

from henceforward for ever," and the withering that ensued so speedily

in the tree, and the reply which He made on the subject of the power of

faith to His disciples when they observed that withering and marvelled

at it. From this we are to understand that Mark, on his side, has

recorded in connection with the second day what he had omitted to

notice as occurring really on the first,--namely, the incident of the

expulsion of the sellers and buyers from the temple. On the other hand,

Matthew, after mentioning what was done on the second day,--namely, the

cursing of the fig-tree as He was returning in the morning from Bethany

into the city,--has omitted certain facts which Mark has inserted,

namely, His coming into the city, and His going out of it in the

evening, and the astonishment which the disciples expressed at finding

the tree dried up as they passed by in the morning; and then to what

had taken place on the second day, which was the day on which the tree

was cursed, he has attached what really took place on the third

day,--namely, the amazement of the disciples at seeing the tree's

withered condition, and the declaration which they heard from the Lord

on the subject of the power of faith. [1146] These several facts

Matthew has connected together in such a manner that, were we not

compelled to turn our attention to the matter by Mark's narrative, we

should be unable to recognise either at what point or with regard to

what circumstances the former writer has left anything unrecorded in

his narrative. The case therefore stands thus: Matthew first presents

the facts conveyed in these words, "And He left them, and went out of

the city into Bethany; and He lodged there. Now in the morning, as He

returned into the city, He hungered; and when He saw a single fig-tree

in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only,

and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever; and

presently the fig-tree withered away." Then, omitting the other matters

which belonged to that same day, he has immediately subjoined this

statement, "And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How

soon is it withered away!" although it was on another day that they saw

this sight, and on another day that they thus marvelled. But it is

understood that the tree did not wither at the precise time when they

saw it, but presently when it was cursed. For what they saw was not the

tree in the process of drying up, but the tree already dried completely

up; and thus they learned that it had withered away immediately on the

Lord's sentence.

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[1139] Unam.

[1140] Matt. xxi. 14-22.

[1141] Consequenter.

[1142] Alia die.

[1143] Mark xi. 11-17.

[1144] Matt. xxi. 17.

[1145] Mark xi. 20, 21.

[1146] [The explanation of Augustin is still accepted by many. But the

order of Mark may be followed without any difficulty. The long

discourses occurred on the third day, and the blasted condition of the

fig-tree was first noticed on the morning of that day; these are the

main points.--R.]

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Chapter LXIX.--Of the Harmony Between the First Three Evangelists in

Their Accounts of the Occasion on Which the Jews Asked the Lord by What

Authority He Did These Things.

132. Matthew continues his narrative in the following terms: "And when

He was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the

people came unto Him as He was teaching, and said, By what authority

doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus

answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye

tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these

things. The baptism of John, whence was it?" and so on, down to the

words, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." [1147]

The other two, Mark and Luke, have also set forth this whole passage,

and that, too, in almost as many words. [1148] Neither does there

appear to be any discrepancy between them in regard to the order, the

only exception being found in the circumstance of which I have spoken

above,--namely, that Matthew omits certain matters belonging to a

different day, and has constructed his narrative with a connection

which, were our attention not called [otherwise] to the fact, might

lead to the supposition that he was still treating of the second day,

where Mark deals with the third. Moreover, Luke has not appended his

notice of this incident, as if he meant to go over the days in orderly

succession; but after recording the expulsion of the sellers and buyers

from the temple, he has passed by without notice all that is contained

in the statements above--His going out into Bethany, and His returning

to the city, and what was done to the fig-tree, and the reply touching

the power of faith which was made to the disciples when they marvelled.

And then, after all these omissions, he has introduced the next section

of his narrative in these terms: "And He taught daily in the temple.

But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people

sought to destroy Him; and could not find what they might do: for all

the people were very attentive to hear Him. And it came to pass, that

on one of these days, as He taught the people in the temple, and

preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon Him,

with the elders, and spake unto Him, saying, Tell us, by what authority

doest thou these things?" and so on; all which the other two

evangelists record in like manner. From this it is apparent that he is

in no antagonism with the others, even with regard to the order; since

what he states to have taken place "on one of those days," may be

understood to belong to that particular day on which they also have

reported it to have occurred. [1149]

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[1147] Matt. xxi. 23-27.

[1148] Mark xi. 27-33; Luke xix. 47-xx. 8.

[1149] [The order of occurrences during this day of public controversy

in the temple presents few difficulties. It was probably the Tuesday of

Passion Week. The day of the month is in dispute because of the still

mooted question, whether our Lord ate the last passover at the regular

time or one day earlier.--R.]

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Chapter LXX.--Of the Two Sons Who Were Commanded by Their Father to Go

into His Vineyard, and of the Vineyard Which Was Let Out to Other

Husbandmen; Of the Question Concerning the Consistency of Matthew's

Version of These Passages with Those Given by the Other Two

Evangelists, with Whom He Retains the Same Order; As Also, in

Particular, Concerning the Harmony of His Version of the Parable, Which

is Recorded by All the Three, Regarding the Vineyard that Was Let Out;

And in Reference Specially to the Reply Made by the Persons to Whom

that Parable Was Spoken, in Relating Which Matthew Seems to Differ

Somewhat from the Others.

133. Matthew goes on thus: "But what think ye? A certain man had two

sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my

vineyard. But he answered and said, I will not; but afterward he

repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And

he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not;" and so on, down to the

words, "And whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken; but

on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." [1150] Mark

and Luke do not mention the parable of the two sons to whom the order

was given to go and labour in the vineyard. But what is narrated by

Matthew subsequently to that,--namely, the parable of the vineyard

which was let out to the husbandmen, who persecuted the servants that

were sent to them, and afterwards put to death the beloved son, and

thrust him out of the vineyard,--is not left unrecorded also by those

two. And in detailing it they likewise both retain the same order, that

is to say, they bring it in after that declaration of their inability

to tell which was made by the Jews when interrogated regarding the

baptism of John, and after the reply which He returned to them in these

words: "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

[1151]

134. Now no question implying any contradiction between these accounts

rises here, unless it be raised by the circumstance that Matthew, after

telling us how the Lord addressed to the Jews this interrogation, "When

the lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those

husbandmen?" adds, that they answered and said, "He will miserably

destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other

husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." For

Mark does not record these last words as if they constituted the reply

returned by the men; but he introduces them as if they were really

spoken by the Lord immediately after the question which was put by Him,

so that in a certain way He answered Himself. For [in this Gospel] He

speaks thus: "What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will

come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto

others." But it is quite easy for us to suppose, either that the men's

words are subjoined herewithout the insertion of the explanatory clause

"they said," or "they replied," that being left to be understood; or

else that the said response is ascribed to the Lord Himself rather than

to these men, because when they answered with such truth, He also, who

is Himself the Truth, really gave the same reply in reference to the

persons in question.

135. More serious difficulty, however, may be created by the fact that

Luke not only does not speak of them as the parties who made that

answer (for he, as well as Mark, attributes these words to the Lord),

but even represents them to have given a contrary reply, and to have

said, "God forbid." For his narrative proceeds in these terms: "What

therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come

and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others.

And when they heard it, they said, God forbid. And He beheld them, and

said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders

rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?" [1152] How then

is it that, according to Matthew's version, the men to whom He spake

these words said, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will

let out this vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the

fruits in their seasons;" whereas, according to Luke, they gave a reply

inconsistent with any terms like these, when they said, "God forbid"?

And, in truth, what the Lord proceeds immediately to say regarding the

stone which was rejected by the builders, and yet was made the head of

the corner, is introduced in a manner implying that by this testimony

those were confuted who were gainsaying the real meaning of the

parable. For Matthew, no less than Luke, records that passage as if it

were intended to meet the gainsayers, when he says, "Did ye never read

in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is

become the head of the corner?" For what is implied by this question,

"Did ye never read," but that the answer which they had given was

opposed to the real intention [of the parable]? This is also indicated

by Mark, who gives these same words in the following manner: "And have

ye not read this scripture, The stone which the builders rejected is

become the head of the corner?" This sentence, therefore, appears to

occupy in Luke, rather than the others, the place which is properly

assignable to it as originally uttered. For it is brought in by him

directly after the contradiction expressed by those men when they said,

"God forbid." And the form in which it is cast by him,--namely, "What

is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected,

the same is become the head of the corner?"--is equivalent in sense to

the other modes of statement. For the real meaning of the sentence is

indicated equally well, whichever of the three phrases is used, "Did ye

never read?" or, "And have ye not read?" or, "What is this, then, that

is written?"

136. It remains, therefore, for us to understand that among the people

who were listening on that occasion, there were some who replied in the

terms related by Matthew, when he writes thus: "They say unto Him, He

will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard

unto other husbandmen;" and that there were also some who answered in

the way indicated by Luke, that is to say, with the words, "God

forbid." Accordingly, those persons who had replied to the Lord to the

former effect, were replied to by these other individuals in the crowd

with the explanation, "God forbid." But the answer which was really

given by the first of these two parties, to whom the second said in

return, "God forbid," has been ascribed both by Mark and by Luke to the

Lord Himself, on the ground that, as I have already intimated, the

Truth Himself spake by these men, whether as by persons who knew not

that they were wicked, in the same way that He spake also by Caiaphas,

who when he was high priest prophesied without realizing what he said,

[1153] or as by persons who did understand, and who had come by this

time both to knowledge and to belief. For there was also present on

this occasion that multitude of people at whose hand the prophecy had

already received a fulfilment, when they met Him in a mighty concourse

on His approach, and hailed Him with the acclaim, "Blessed is He that

cometh in the name of the Lord." [1154]

137. Neither should we stumble at the circumstance that the same

Matthew has stated that the chief priests and the elders of the people

came to the Lord, and asked Him by what authority He did these things,

and who gave Him this authority, on the occasion when He too, in turn,

interrogated them concerning the baptism of John, inquiring whence it

was, whether from heaven or of men; to whom also, on their replying

that they did not know, He said, "Neither do I tell you by what

authority I do those things." For he has followed up this with the

words introduced in the immediate context, "But what think ye? A

certain man had two sons," and so forth. Thus this discourse is brought

into a connection which is continued, uninterrupted by the

interposition either of any thing or of any person, down to what is

related regarding the vineyard which was let out to the husbandmen. It

may, indeed, be supposed that He spake all these words to the chief

priests and the elders of the people, by whom He had been interrogated

with regard to His authority. But then, if these persons had indeed

questioned Him with a view to tempt Him, and with a hostile intention,

they could not be taken for men who had believed, and who cited the

remarkable testimony in favour of the Lord which was taken from a

prophet; and surely it is only if they had the character of those who

believed, and not of those who were ignorant, that they could have

given a reply like this: "He will miserably destroy those wicked men,

and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen." This peculiarity

[of Matthew's account], however, should not by any means so perplex us

as to lead us to imagine that there were none who believed among the

multitudes who listened at this time to the Lord's parables. For it is

only for the sake of brevity that the same Matthew has passed over in

silence what Luke does not fail to mention,--namely, the fact that the

said parable was not spoken only to the parties who had interrogated

Him on the subject of His authority, but to the people. For the latter

evangelist puts it thus: "Then began He to speak to the people this

parable; A certain man planted a vineyard," and so on. Accordingly, we

may well understand that among the people then assembled there might

also have been persons who could listen to Him as those did who before

this had said, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and

that either these, or some of them, were the individuals who replied in

the words, "He will miserably destroy these wicked men, and will let

out his vineyard to other husbandmen." The answer actually returned by

these men, moreover, has been attributed to the Lord Himself by Mark

and Luke, not only because their words were really His words, inasmuch

[1155] as He is the Truth that ofttimes speaks even by the wicked and

the ignorant, moving the mind of man by a certain hidden instinct, not

in the merit of man's holiness, but by the right of His own proper

power; but also because the men may have been of a character admitting

of their being reckoned, not without reason, as already members in the

true body of Christ, so that what was said by them might quite

warrantably be ascribed to Him whose members they were. For by this

time He had baptized more than John, [1156] and had multitudes of

disciples, as the same evangelists repeatedly testify; and from among

these followers He also drew those five hundred brethren, to whom the

Apostle Paul tells us that He showed Himself after His resurrection.

[1157] And this explanation of the matter is supported by the fact that

the phrase which occurs in the version by this same Matthew,--namely,

"They say unto Him, [1158] He will miserably destroy those wicked

men,"--is not put in a form necessitating us to take the pronoun illi

in the plural number, as if it was intended to mark out the words

expressly as the reply made by the persons who had craftily questioned

Him on the subject of His authority; but the clause, "They say unto

Him," [1159] is so expressed that the term illi should be taken for the

singular pronoun, and not the plural, and should be held to signify

"unto Him," that is to say, unto the Lord Himself, as is made clear in

the Greek codices, [1160] without a single atom of ambiguity.

138. There is a certain discourse of the Lord which is given by the

evangelist John, and which may help us more readily to understand the

statement I thus make. It is to this effect: "Then said Jesus to those

Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then ye shall be

my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall

make you free. And they answered Him, We be Abraham's seed, and were

never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be free? [1161]

Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever

committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in

the house for ever; but the Son abideth for ever. If the Son,

therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye

are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no

place in you." [1162] Now surely it is not to be supposed that He spake

these words, "Ye seek to kill me" to those persons who had already

believed on Him, and to whom He had said, "If ye abide in my word, then

shall ye be my disciples indeed." But inasmuch as He had spoken in

these latter terms to the men who had already believed on Him, and as,

moreover, there was present on that occasion a multitude of people,

among whom there were many who were hostile to Him, even although the

evangelist does not tell us explicitly who those parties were who made

the reply referred to, the very nature of the answer which they gave,

and the tenor of the words which thereupon were rightly directed to

them by Him, make it sufficiently clear what specific persons were then

addressed, and what words were spoken to them in particular. Precisely,

therefore, as in the multitude thus alluded to by John there were some

who had already believed on Jesus, and also some who sought to kill

Him, in that other concourse which we are discussing at present there

were some who had craftily questioned the Lord on the subject of the

authority by which He did these things; and there were also others who

had hailed Him, not in deceit, but in faith, with the acclaim, "Blessed

is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And thus, too, there were

persons present who could say, "He will destroy those men, and will

give his vineyard to others." This saying, furthermore, may be rightly

understood to have been the voice of the Lord Himself, either in virtue

of that Truth which in His own Person He is Himself, or on the ground

of the unity which subsists between the members of His body and the

head. There were also certain individuals present who, when these other

parties gave that kind of answer, said to them, "God forbid," because

they understood the parable to be directed against themselves.

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[1150] Matt. xxi. 28-44.

[1151] Mark xii. 1-11; Luke xx. 9-18.

[1152] Luke xx. 15-17.

[1153] John xi. 49-51.

[1154] Ps. cxviii. 26; Matt. xxi. 9.

[1155] Keeping quia veritas est, for which the reading qui veritas est

= "who is the truth," also occurs.

[1156] John iv. 1.

[1157] 1 Cor. xv. 6.

[1158] Aiunt illi.

[1159] Aiunt illi.

[1160] That is to say, the aiunt illi is the rendering for legousin

auto. [This reading of the Greek text is abundantly attested.--R.]

[1161] Liberi eritis.

[1162] John viii. 31-37.

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Chapter LXXI.--Of the Marriage of the King's Son, to Which the

Multitudes Were Invited; And of the Order in Which Matthew Introduces

that Section as Compared with Luke, Who Gives Us a Somewhat Similar

Narrative in Another Connection.

139. Matthew goes on as follows: "And when the chief priests and

Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them:

and when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitude,

because they took Him for a prophet. And Jesus answered and spake unto

them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a

certain king which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his

servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would

not come;" and so on, down to the words, "For many are called, but few

are chosen." [1163] This parable concerning the guests who were invited

to the wedding is related only by Matthew. Luke also records something

which resembles it. But that is really a different passage, as the

order itself sufficiently indicates, although there is some similarity

between the two. [1164] The matters introduced, however, by Matthew

immediately after the parable concerning the vineyard, and the killing

of the son of the head of the house,--namely, the Jews' perception that

this whole discourse was directed against them, and their beginning to

contrive treacherous schemes against Him,--are attested likewise by

Mark and Luke, who also keep the same order in inserting them. [1165]

But after this paragraph they proceed to another subject, and

immediately subjoin a passage which Matthew has also indeed introduced

in due order, but only subsequently to this parable of the marriage,

which he alone has put on record here.

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[1163] Matt. xxi. 45-xxii. 14.

[1164] Luke xiv. 16-24.

[1165] Mark xii. 12; Luke xx. 19.

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Chapter LXXII.--Of the Harmony Characterizing the Narratives Given by

These Three Evangelists Regarding the Duty of Rendering to C�sar the

Coin Bearing His Image, and Regarding the Woman Who Had Been Married to

the Seven Brothers.

140. Matthew then continues in these terms: "Then went the Pharisees,

and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they send

out unto Him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we

know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither

carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men: tell

us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to

C�sar, or not?" and so on, down to the words, "And when the multitude

heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine." [1166] Mark and Luke

give a similar account of these two replies made by the Lord,--namely,

the one on the subject of the coin, which was prompted by the question

as to the duty of giving tribute to C�sar; and the other on the subject

of the resurrection, which was suggested by the case of the woman who

had married the seven brothers in succession. Neither do these two

evangelists differ in the matter of the order. [1167] For after the

parable which told of the men to whom the vineyard was let out, and

which also dealt with the Jews (against whom it was directed), and the

evil counsel they were devising (which sections are given by all three

evangelists together), these two, Mark and Luke, pass over the parable

of the guests who were invited to the wedding (which only Matthew has

introduced), and thereafter they join company again with the first

evangelist, when they record these two passages which deal with C�sar's

tribute, and the woman who was the wife of seven different husbands,

inserting them in precisely the same order, with a consistency which

admits of no question.

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[1166] Matt. xxii. 15-33.

[1167] Mark xii. 13-27; Luke xx. 20-40.

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Chapter LXXIII.--Of the Person to Whom the Two Precepts Concerning the

Love of God and the Love of Our Neighbour Were Commended; And of the

Question as to the Order of Narration Which is Observed by Matthew and

Mark, and the Absence of Any Discrepancy Between Them and Luke.

141. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms:

"But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to

silence, they were gathered together. And one of them, which was a

lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which

is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt

love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and

with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the

second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On

these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." [1168] This

is recorded also by Mark, and that too in the same order. Neither

should there be any difficulty in the statement made by Matthew, to the

effect that the person by whom the question was put to the Lord tempted

Him; whereas Mark [1169] says nothing about that, but tells us at the

end of the paragraph how the Lord said to the man, as to one who

answered discreetly, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." For it

is quite possible that, although the man approached Him with the view

of tempting Him, he may have been set right by the Lord's response. Or

we need not at any rate take the tempting referred to in a bad sense,

as if it were the device of one who sought to deceive an adversary; but

we may rather suppose it to have been the result of caution, as if it

were the act of one who wished to have further trial of a person who

was unknown to him. For it is not without a good purpose that this

sentence has been written, "He that is hasty to give credit is

light-minded, and shall be impaired." [1170]

142. Luke, on the other hand, not indeed in this order, but in a widely

different connection, introduces something which resembles this. [1171]

But whether in that passage he is actually recording this same

incident, or whether the person with whom the Lord [is represented to

have] dealt in a similar manner there on the subject of those two

commandments is quite another individual, is altogether uncertain. At

the same time, it may appear right to regard the person who is

introduced by Luke as a different individual from the one before us

here, not only on the ground of the remarkable divergence in the order

of narration, but also because he is there reported to have replied to

a question which was addressed to him by the Lord, and in that reply to

have himself mentioned those two precepts. The same opinion is further

confirmed by the fact that, after telling us how the Lord said to him,

"This do, and thou shall live,"--thus instructing him to do that great

thing which, according to his own answer, was contained in the

law,--the evangelist follows up what had passed with the statement,

"But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my

neighbour?" [1172] Thereupon, too [according to Luke], the Lord told

the story of the man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and

fell among robbers. Consequently, considering that this individual is

described at the outset as tempting Christ, and is represented to have

repeated the two commandments in his reply; and considering, further,

that after the counsel which was given by the Lord in the words, "This

do, and thou shalt live," he is not commended as good, but, on the

contrary, has this said of him, "But he, willing to justify himself,"

etc., whereas the person who is mentioned in parallel order both by

Mark and by Luke received a commendation so marked, that the Lord spake

to him in these terms, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God,"--the

more probable view is that which takes the person who appears on that

occasion to be a different individual from the man who comes before us

here.

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[1168] Matt. xxii. 34-40.

[1169] Another but evidently faulty reading is sometimes found

here,--namely, Lucas autem hoc tacet et in fine Marcus, etc. = whereas

Luke says nothing about that, and Mark tells us, etc.

[1170] Minorabitur. Ecclus. xix. 4.

[1171] Luke x. 25-37.

[1172] Luke x. 29.

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Chapter LXXIV.--Of the Passage in Which the Jews are Asked to Say Whose

Son They Suppose Christ to Be; And of the Question Whether There is Not

a Discrepancy Between Matthew and the Other Two Evangelists, in So Far

as He States the Inquiry to Have Been, "What Think Ye of Christ? Whose

Son is He?" And Tells Us that to This They Replied, "The Son of David;"

Whereas the Others Put It Thus, "How Say the Scribes that Christ is

David's Son?"

143. Matthew goes on thus: "Now when the Pharisees were gathered

together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son

is He? They say unto Him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How

then doth David in Spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my

Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy

footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son? And no man

was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day

forth ask Him any more questions." [1173] This is given also by Mark in

due course, and in the same order. [1174] Luke, again, only omits

mention of the person who asked the Lord which was the first

commandment in the law, and, after passing over that incident in

silence, observes the same order once more as the others, narrating

just as these, do this question which the Lord put to the Jews

concerning Christ, as to how He was David's son. [1175] Neither is the

sense at all affected by the circumstance that, as Matthew puts it,

when Jesus had asked them what they thought of Christ, and whose son He

was, they [the Pharisees] replied, "The son of David," and then He

proposed the further query as to how David then called Him Lord;

whereas, according to the version presented by the other two, Mark and

Luke, we do not find either that these persons were directly

interrogated, or that they made any answer. For we ought to take this

view of the matter, namely, that these two evangelists have introduced

the sentiments which were expressed by the Lord Himself after the reply

made by those parties, and have recorded the terms in which He spoke in

the hearing of those whom He wished profitably to instruct in His

authority, and to turn away from the teaching of the scribes, and whose

knowledge of Christ amounted then only to this, that He was made of the

seed of David according to the flesh, while they did not understand

that He was God, and on that ground also the Lord even of David. It is

in this way, therefore, that in the accounts given by these two

evangelists, the Lord is mentioned in a manner which makes it appear as

if He was discoursing on the subject of these erroneous teachers to men

whom He desired to see delivered from the errors in which these scribes

were involved. Thus, too, the question, which is presented by Matthew

in the form, "What say ye?" is to be taken not as addressed directly to

these [Pharisees], but rather as expressed only with reference to those

parties, and directed really to the persons whom He was desirous of

instructing.

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[1173] Matt. xxii. 41-46.

[1174] Mark xii. 35-37.

[1175] Luke xx. 41-44.

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Chapter LXXV.--Of the Pharisees Who Sit in the Seat of Moses, and

Enjoin Things Which They Do Not, and of the Other Words Spoken by the

Lord Against These Same Pharisees; Of the Question Whether Matthew's

Narrative Agrees Here with Those Which are Given by the Other Two

Evangelists, and in Particular with that of Luke, Who Introduces a

Passage Resembling This One, Although It is Brought in Not in This

Order, But in Another Connection.

144. Matthew proceeds with his account, observing the following order

of narration: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples,

saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all,

therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do

not ye after their works: for they say, and do not;" and so on, down to

the words, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed

is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." [1176] Luke also mentions a

similar discourse which was spoken by the Lord in opposition to the

Pharisees and the scribes and the doctors of the law, but reports it as

delivered in the house of a certain Pharisee, who had invited Him to a

feast. In order to relate that passage, he has made a digression from

the order which is followed by Matthew, about the point at which they

have both put on record the Lord's sayings respecting the sign of the

three days and nights in the history of Jonas, and the queen of the

south, and the unclean spirit that returns and finds the house swept.

[1177] And that paragraph is followed up by Matthew with these words:

"While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren

stood without, desiring to speak with Him." But in the version which

the third Gospel presents of the discourse then spoken by the Lord,

after the recital of certain sayings of the Lord which Matthew has

omitted to notice, Luke turns off from the order which he had been

observing in concert with Matthew, so that his immediately subsequent

narrative runs thus: "And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him

to dine with him: and He went in, and sat down to meat. And when the

Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before

dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the

outside of the cup and platter." [1178] And after this, Luke reports

other utterances which were directed against the said Pharisees and

scribes and teachers of the law, which are of a similar tenor to those

which Matthew also recounts in this passage which we have taken in hand

at present to consider. [1179] Wherefore, although Matthew records

these things in a manner which, while it is true indeed that the house

of that Pharisee is not mentioned by name, yet does not specify as the

scene where the words were spoken any place entirely inconsistent with

the idea of His having been in the house referred to; still the facts

that the Lord by this time [i.e. according to Matthew's Gospel] had

left Galilee and come into Jerusalem, and that the incidents alluded to

above, on to the discourse which is now under review, [1180] are so

arranged in the context after His arrival as to make it only reasonable

to understand them to have taken place in Jerusalem, whereas Luke's

narrative deals with what occurred at the time when the Lord as yet was

only journeying towards Jerusalem, are considerations which lead me to

the conclusion that these are not the same, but only two similar

discourses, of which the former evangelist has reported the one, and

the latter the other.

145. This is also a matter which requires some consideration,--namely,

the question how it is said here, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till

ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,"

[1181] when, according to this same Matthew, they had already expressed

themselves to this effect. [1182] Besides, Luke likewise tells us that

a reply containing these very words had previously been returned by the

Lord to the persons who had counselled Him to leave their locality,

because Herod sought to kill Him. That evangelist represents these

self-same terms, which Matthew records here, to have been employed by

Him in the declaration which He directed on that occasion against

Jerusalem itself. For Luke's narrative proceeds in the following

manner: "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto

Him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And He

said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and

I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected.

Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following;

for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent

unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a

hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold,

your house shall be left unto you desolate: and I say unto you, that ye

shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He

that cometh in the name of the Lord." [1183] There does not seem,

however, to be anything contradictory to the narration thus given by

Luke in the circumstance that the multitudes said, when the Lord was

approaching Jerusalem, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the

Lord." For, according to the order which is followed by Luke, He had

not yet come to the scene in question, and the words had not been

uttered. But since he does not tell us that He did actually leave the

place at that time, not to return to it until the period came when such

words would be spoken by them (for He continues on His journey until he

arrives at Jerusalem; and the saying, "Behold, I cast out devils, and I

do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected," is to

be taken to have been uttered by Him in a mystical and figurative

sense: for certainly He did not suffer at a time answering literally to

the third day after the present occasion; nay, He immediately goes on

to say, "Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day

following"), we are indeed constrained also to put a mystical

interpretation upon the sentence, "Ye shall not see me henceforth,

until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the

name of the Lord," and to understand it to refer to that advent of His

in which He is to come in His effulgent brightness; [1184] it being

thereby also implied, that what He expressed in the declaration, "I

cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day

I am perfected," bears upon His body, which is the Church. For devils

are cast out when the nations abandon their ancestral superstitions and

believe on Him; and cures are wrought when men renounce the devil and

this world, and live in accordance with His commandments, even unto the

consummation of the resurrection, in which there shall, as it were, be

realized that perfecting on the third day; that is to say, the Church

shall be perfected up to the measure of the angelic fulness through the

realized immortality of the body as well as the soul. Therefore the

order followed by Matthew is by no means to be understood to involve a

digression to another connection. But we are rather to suppose, either

that Luke has antedated the events which took place in Jerusalem, and

has introduced them at this point simply as they were here suggested to

his recollection, before his narrative really brings the Lord to

Jerusalem; or that the Lord, when drawing near the same city on that

occasion, did actually reply to the persons who counselled Him to be on

His guard against Herod, in terms resembling those in which Matthew

represents Him to have spoken also to the multitudes at a period when

He had already arrived in Jerusalem, and when all these events had

taken place which have been detailed above.

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[1176] Matt. xxiii.

[1177] Matt. xii. 39-46.

[1178] Luke xi. 29-39.

[1179] Luke xi. 40-52.

[1180] In Matt. xxiii.

[1181] Matt. xxiii. 39.

[1182] Matt. xxi. 9.

[1183] Luke xiii. 31-35.

[1184] In claritate.

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Chapter LXXVI.--Of the Harmony in Respect of the Order of Narration

Subsisting Between Matthew and the Other Two Evangelists in the

Accounts Given of the Occasion on Which He Foretold the Destruction of

the Temple.

146. Matthew proceeds with his history in the following terms: "And

Jesus went out and departed from the temple; and His disciples came to

Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto

them, See ye all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not

be left here one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down."

[1185] This incident is related also by Mark, and nearly in the same

order. But he brings it in after a digression of some small extent,

which is made with a view to mention the case of the widow who put the

two mites into the treasury, [1186] which occurrence is recorded only

by Mark and Luke. For [in proof that Mark's order is essentially the

same as Matthew's, we need only notice that] in Mark's version also,

after the account of the Lord's discussion with the Jews on the

occasion when He asked them how they held Christ to be David's son, we

have a narrative of what He said in warning them against the Pharisees

and their hypocrisy,--a section which Matthew has presented on the

amplest scale, introducing into it a larger number of the Lord's

sayings on that occasion. Then after this paragraph, which has been

handled briefly by Mark, and treated with great fulness by Matthew,

Mark, as I have said, introduces the passage about the widow who was at

once so extremely poor, and yet abounded so remarkably. And finally,

without interpolating anything else, he subjoins a section in which he

comes again into unison with Matthew,--namely, that relating to the

destruction of the temple. In like manner, Luke first states the

question which was propounded regarding Christ, as to how He was the

son of David, and then mentions a few of the words which were spoken in

cautioning them against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Thereafter he

proceeds, as Mark does, to tell the story of the widow who cast the two

mites into the treasury. And finally he appends the statement, [1187]

which appears also in Matthew and Mark, on the subject of the destined

overthrow of the temple. [1188]

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[1185] Matt. xxiv. 1, 2. According to Migne, certain codices add here

the clause, "when the disciples were asking the Lord privately what was

the sign of His coming."

[1186] Mark xii. 41-xiii. 2.

[1187] Luke xx. 16-xxi. 6.

[1188] [Many harmonists insert at this point the events narrated in

John xii. 20-50. Augustin does not express an opinion in regard to this

passage.--R.]

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Chapter LXXVII.--Of the Harmony Subsisting Between the Three

Evangelists in Their Narratives of the Discourse Which He Delivered on

the Mount of Olives, When the Disciples Asked When the Consummation

Should Happen.

147. Matthew continues in the following strain: "And as He sat upon the

mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell

us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy

coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered, and said unto

them, Take heed that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my

name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many;" and so on, down to

where we read, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment,

but the righteous into life eternal." We have now, therefore, to

examine this lengthened discourse as it meets us in the three

evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. For they all introduce it in

their narratives, and that, too, in the same order. [1189] Here, as

elsewhere, each of these writers gives some matters which are peculiar

to himself, in which, nevertheless, we have not to apprehend any

suspicion of inconsistency. But what we have to make sure of is the

proof that, in those passages which are exact parallels, they are

nowhere to be regarded as in antagonism with each other. For if

anything bearing the appearance of a contradiction meets us here, the

simple affirmation that it is something wholly distinct, and uttered by

the Lord in similar terms indeed, but on a totally different occasion,

cannot be deemed a legitimate mode of explanation in a case like this,

where the narrative, as given by all the three evangelists, moves in

the same connection at once of subjects and of dates. Moreover, the

mere fact that the writers do not all observe the same order in the

reports which they give of the same sentiments expressed by the Lord,

certainly does not in any way affect either the understanding or the

communication of the subject itself, provided the matters which are

represented by them to have been spoken by Him are not inconsistent the

one with the other.

148. Again, what Matthew states in this form, "And this gospel of the

kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all

nations, and then shall the end come," [1190] is given also in the same

connection by Mark in the following manner: "And the gospel must first

be published among all nations." [1191] Mark has not added the words,

"and then shall the end come;" but he indicates what they express, when

he uses the phrase "first "in the sentence, "And the gospel must first

be published among all nations." For they had asked Him about the end.

And therefore, when He addresses them thus, "The gospel must first be

published among all nations," the term "first" clearly suggests the

idea of something to be done before the consummation should come.

149. In like manner, what Matthew states thus, "When ye therefore shall

see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,

stand in the holy place, whoso readeth let him understand," [1192] is

put in the following form by Mark: "But when ye shall see the

abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, let him that

readeth understand." [1193] But though the phrase is thus altered, the

sense conveyed is the same. For the point of the clause "where it ought

not," is that the abomination of desolation ought not to be in the holy

place. Luke's method of putting it, again, is neither, "And when ye

shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place," nor

"where it ought not," but, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed

with an army, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." [1194] At

that time, therefore, will the abomination of desolation be in the holy

place.

150. Again, what is given by Matthew in the following terms: "Then let

them which be in Jud�a flee into the mountains; and let him which is on

the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house; neither

let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes," [1195]

is reported also by Mark almost in so many words. On the other hand,

Luke's version proceeds thus: "Then let them which are in Jud�a flee to

the mountains." [1196] Thus far he agrees with the other two. But he

presents what is subsequent to that in a different form. For he goes on

to say, "And let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let

not them that are in the countries enter thereinto: for these be the

days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Now these statements seem to present differences enough between each

other. For the one, as it occurs in the first two evangelists, runs

thus: "Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything

out of his house;" whereas what is given by the third evangelist is to

this effect: "And let them which are in the midst of it depart out."

The import, however, may be, that in the great agitation which will

arise in the face of so mighty an impending peril, those shut up in the

state of siege (which is expressed by the phrase, "they which are in

the midst of it") will appear upon the housetop [or "wall"], amazed and

anxious to see what terror hangs over them, or what method of escape

may open. Still the question rises, How does this third evangelist say

here, "let them depart out," when he has already used these terms: "And

when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with an army"? For what is

brought in after this--namely, the sentence, "And let not them that are

in the countries enter thereinto"--appears to form part of one

consistent admonition; and we can perceive how those who are outside

the city are not to enter into it; but the difficulty is to see how

those who are in the midst of it are to depart out, when the city is

already compassed with an army. Well, may not this expression, "in the

midst of it," indicate a time when the danger will be so urgent as to

leave no opportunity open, so far as temporal means are concerned, for

the preservation of this present life in the body, and that the fact

that this will be a time when the soul ought to be ready and free, and

neither taken up with, nor burdened by, carnal desires, is imported by

the phrase employed by the first two writers--namely, "on the

house-top," or, "on the wall"? In this way the third evangelist's

phraseology, "let them depart out" (which really means, let them no

more be engrossed with the desire of this life, but let them be

prepared to pass into another life), is equivalent in sense to the

terms used by the other two," let him not come down to take anything

out of his house" (which really means, "let not his affections turn

towards the flesh, as if it could yield him anything to his advantage

then"). And in like manner the phrase adopted by the one, "And let not

them that are in the countries enter thereunto" (which is to say, "Let

not those who, with good purpose of heart, have already placed

themselves outside it, indulge again in any carnal lust or longing

after it"), denotes precisely what the other two evangelists embody in

the sentence, "Neither let him which is in the field return back to

take his clothes," which is much the same as to state that he should

not again involve himself in cares of which he had been unburdened.

151. Moreover, Matthew proceeds thus: "But pray ye that your flight be

not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day." Part of this is given

and part omitted by Mark, when he says, "And pray ye that your flight

be not in the winter." Luke, on the other hand, leaves this out

entirely, and instead of it introduces something which is peculiar to

himself, and by which he appears to me to have cast light upon this

very clause which has been set before us somewhat obscurely by these

others. For his version runs thus: "And take heed to yourselves, lest

at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and

drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you

unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the

face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye

may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to

pass." [1197] This is to be understood to be the same flight as is

mentioned by Matthew, which should not be taken in the winter or on the

Sabbath-day. That "winter," moreover, refers to these "cares of this

life" which Luke has specified directly; and the "Sabbath-day" refers

in like manner to the "surfeiting and drunkenness." For sad cares are

like a winter; and surfeiting and drunkenness drown and bury the heart

in carnal delights and luxury--an evil which is expressed under the

term "Sabbath-day," because of old, as is the case with them still, the

Jews had the very pernicious custom of revelling in pleasure on that

day, when they were ignorant of the spiritual Sabbath. Or, if something

else is intended by the words which thus appear in Matthew and Mark,

Luke's terms may also be taken to bear on something else, while no

question implying any antagonism between them need be raised for all

that. At present, however, we have not undertaken the task of

expounding the Gospels, but only that of defending them against

groundless charges of falsehood and deceit. Furthermore, other matters

which Matthew has inserted in this discourse, and which are common to

him and Mark, present no difficulty. On the other hand, with respect to

those sections which are common to him and Luke, [it is to be remarked

that] these are not introduced into the present discourse by Luke,

although in regard to the order of narration here they are at one. But

he records sentences of like tenor in other connections, either

reproducing them as they suggested themselves to his memory, and thus

bringing them in by anticipation so as to relate at an earlier point

words which, as spoken by the Lord, belong really to a later; or else,

giving us to understand that they were uttered twice over by the Lord,

once on the occasion referred to by Matthew, and on a second occasion,

with which Luke himself deals.

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[1189] Matt. xxiv. 3-xxv. 46; Mark xiii. 4-37; Luke xxi. 7-36.

[1190] Matt. xxiv. 14.

[1191] Mark xiii. 10.

[1192] Matt. xxiv. 15.

[1193] Mark xiii. 14. [The Greek text of Mark, according to the best

authorities, does not contain the phrase "spoken of by Daniel the

prophet." Augustin also omits the clause, but the Edinburgh edition

inserts it, following the Authorized Version. It has therefore been

stricken out in this edition.--R.]

[1194] Luke xxi. 20.

[1195] Matt. xxiv. 16-18.

[1196] Luke xxi. 21.

[1197] Luke xxi. 34-36.

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Chapter LXXVIII.--Of the Question Whether There is Any Contradiction

Between Matthew and Mark on the One Hand, and John on the Other, in So

Far as the Former State that After Two Days Was to Be the Feast of the

Passover, and Afterwards Tells Us that He Was in Bethany, While the

Latter Gives a Parallel Narrative of What Took Place at Bethany, But

Mentions that It Was Six Days Before the Passover.

152. Matthew continues thus: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had

finished all these sayings, He said unto His disciples, Ye know that

after two days will be the feast of the passover, and the Son of man

shall be betrayed to be crucified." [1198] This is attested in like

manner by the other two,--namely, Mark and Luke,--and that, too, with a

thorough harmony on the subject of the order of narration. [1199] They

do not, however, introduce the sentence as one spoken by the Lord

Himself. They make no statement to that effect. At the same time, Mark,

speaking in his own person, does tell us that "after two days was the

feast of the passover and of unleavened bread." And Luke likewise gives

this as his own affirmation: "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew

nigh, which is called the passover;" that is to say, it "drew nigh" in

this sense, that it was to take place after two days' space, as the

other two are more apparently at one in expressing it. John, on the

other hand, has mentioned in three several places the nearness of this

same feast-day. In the two earlier instances the intimation is made

when he is engaged in recording certain matters of another tenor. But

on the third occasion his narrative appears clearly to deal with those

very times, in connection with which the other three evangelists also

notice the subject,--that is to say, the times when the Lord's passion

was actually imminent. [1200]

153. But to those who look into the matter without sufficient care,

there may seem to be a contradiction involved in the fact that Matthew

and Mark, after stating that the passover was to be after two days,

have at once informed us how Jesus was in Bethany on that occasion, on

which the account of the precious ointment comes before us; whereas

John, when he is about to give us the same narrative concerning the

ointment, begins by telling us that Jesus came to Bethany six days

before the passover. [1201] Now, the question is, how the passover

could be spoken of by those two evangelists as about to be celebrated

two days after, seeing that we find them, immediately after they have

made this statement, in company with John, giving us an account of the

scene with the ointment in Bethany; while in that connection the

last-named writer informs us, that the feast of the passover was to

take place six days after. Nevertheless, those who are perplexed by

this difficulty simply fail to perceive that Matthew and Mark have

brought in their account of the scene which was enacted in Bethany

really in the form of a recapitulation, not as if the time of its

occurrence was actually subsequent to the [time indicated in the]

announcement made by them on the subject of the two days' space, but as

an event which had already taken place at a date when there was still a

period of six days preceding the passover. For neither of them has

appended his account of what took place at Bethany to his statement

regarding the celebration of the passover after two days' space in any

such terms as these: "After these things, when He was in Bethany." But

Matthew's phrase is this: "Now when Jesus was in Bethany." And Mark's

version is simply this: "And being in Bethany," etc.; which is a method

of expression that may certainly be taken to refer to a period

antecedent to the utterance of what was said two days before the

passover. The case, therefore, stands thus: As we gather from the

narrative of John, Jesus came to Bethany six days before the passover;

there the supper took place, in connection with which we get the

account of the precious ointment; leaving this place, He came next to

Jerusalem, sitting upon an ass; and thereafter happened those things

which they relate to have occurred after this arrival of His in

Jerusalem. Consequently, even although the evangelists do not mention

the fact, we understand that between the day on which He came to

Bethany, and which witnessed the scene with the ointment, and the day

to which all these deeds and words which are at present before us

belonged, there elapsed a period of four days, so that at this point

might come in the day which the two evangelists have defined by their

statement as to the celebration of the passover two days after.

Further, when Luke says, "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh,"

he does not indeed make any express mention of a two days' space; but

still, the nearness which he has instanced ought to be accepted as made

good by this very space of two days. Again, when John makes the

statement that "the Jews' passover was nigh at hand," [1202] he does

not intend a two days' space to be understood thereby, but means that

there was a period of six days before the passover. Thus it is that, on

recording certain matters immediately after this affirmation, with the

intention of specifying what measure of nearness he had in view when he

spoke of the passover as nigh at hand, he next proceeds in the

following strain: "Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to

Bethany, where Lazarus had died, whom Jesus raised from the dead;

[1203] and there they made Him a supper." [1204] This is the incident

which Matthew and Mark introduce in the form of a recapitulation, after

the statement that after two days would be the passover. In their

recapitulation they thus come back upon the day in Bethany, which was

yet a six days' space off from the passover, and give us the account

which John also gives of the supper and the ointment. Subsequently to

that scene, we are to suppose Him to come to Jerusalem, and then, after

the occurrence of the other things recorded, to reach this day, which

was still a two days' space from the passover, and from which these

evangelists have made this digression, with the object of giving a

recapitulatory notice of the incident with the ointment in Bethany. And

after the completion of that narrative, they return once more to the

point from which they made the digression; that is to say, they now

proceed to record the words spoken by the Lord two days before the

passover. For if we remove the notice of the incident at Bethany, which

they have introduced as a digression from the literal order, and have

given in the form of a recollection and recapitulation inserted at a

point subsequent to its actual historical position, and if we then set

the narrative in its regular connection, the recital will go on as

follows;--according to Matthew, the Lord's words coming in thus: "Ye

know that after two days shall be the feast of the passover, and the

Son of man shall be betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together

the chief priests and the elders of the people unto the palace of the

high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might

take Jesus by subtilty, and kill Him. But they said, Not on the

feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people. Then one of the

twelve, called Judas Scarioth, went unto the chief priests," [1205]

etc. For between the place where it is said, "lest there be an uproar

among the people," and the passage where we read, "then one of the

disciples, called Judas, went," etc., that notice of the scene at

Bethany intervenes, which they have introduced by way of

recapitulation. Consequently, by leaving it out, we have established

such a connection in the narrative as may make our conclusion

satisfactory, that there is no contradiction here in the matter of the

order of times. Again, if we deal with Mark's Gospel in like manner,

and omit the account of the same supper at Bethany, which he also has

brought in as a recapitulation, his narrative will proceed in the

following order: "Now after two days was the feast of the passover, and

of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how

they might take Him by craft, and put Him to death. For they said,

[1206] Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people. And

Judas Scariothes, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to

betray Him." [1207] Here, again, the incident at Bethany which these

evangelists have inserted, by way of recapitulation, is placed between

the clause, "lest there be an uproar of the people," and the verse

which we have attached immediately to that, namely, "And Judas

Scariothes, one of the twelve." Luke, on the other hand, has simply

omitted the said occurrence at Bethany. This is the explanation which

we give in reference to the six days before the passover, which is the

space mentioned by John when narrating what took place at Bethany, and

in reference to the two days before the passover, which is the period

specified by Matthew and Mark when presenting their account, in direct

sequence upon the statement thus made, of that same scene in Bethany

which has been recorded also by John. [1208]

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[1198] Matt. xxvi. 1, 2. [It cannot be determined with certainty how

much time is to be included in the phrase "after two days." Moreover,

the difficulty in regard to the time of the Last Supper affects this

question, to some extent at least.--R.]

[1199] Mark xiv. 1; Luke xxii. 1.

[1200] John xi. 55, xii. 1, xiii. 1.

[1201] John xii. 1.

[1202] John xi. 55.

[1203] Ubi fuerat Lazarus mortuus quem suscitavit Jesus.

[1204] John xii. 1, 2.

[1205] Matt. xxvi. 2-5, 14, etc.

[1206] Dicebant enim.

[1207] Mark xiv. 1, 2, 10.

[1208] [This view is rejected by Dr. Robinson in his Harmony, but

accepted by many commentators. See Robinson's Greek Harmony, rev. ed.

pp. 236-238.--R.]

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Chapter LXXIX.--Of the Concord Between Matthew, Mark, and John in Their

Notices of the Supper at Bethany, at Which the Woman Poured the

Precious Ointment on the Lord, and of the Method in Which These

Accounts are to Be Harmonized with that of Luke, When He Records an

Incident of a Similar Nature at a Different Period.

154. Matthew, then, continuing his narrative from the point up to which

we had concluded its examination, proceeds in the following terms:

"Then assembled together the chief priests and the elders of the people

unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and

consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill Him: but they

said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there

came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of precious ointment, and

poured it on His head as He sat at meat;" and so on down to the words,

"there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial

of her." [1209] The scene with the woman and the costly ointment at

Bethany we have now to consider, as it is thus detailed. For although

Luke records an incident resembling this, and although the name which

he assigns to the person in whose house the Lord was supping might also

suggest an identity between the two narratives (for Luke likewise names

the host "Simon"), still, since there is nothing either in nature or in

the customs of men to make the case an incredible one, that as one man

may have two names, two men may with all the greater likelihood have

one and the same name, it is more reasonable to believe that the Simon

in whose house [it is thus supposed, according to Luke's version, that]

this scene at Bethany took place, was a different person from the Simon

[named by Matthew]. For Luke, again, does not specify Bethany as the

place where the incident which he records happened. And although it is

true that he in no way particularizes the town or village in which that

occurrence took place, still his narrative does not seem to deal with

the same locality. Consequently, my opinion is, that there is but one

interpretation to be put upon the matter. That is not, however, to

suppose that the woman who appears in Matthew was an entirely different

person from the woman who approached the feet of Jesus on that occasion

in the character of a sinner, and kissed them, and washed them with her

tears, and wiped them with her hair, and anointed them with ointment,

in reference to whose case Jesus also made use of the parable of the

two debtors, and said that her sins, which were many, were forgiven her

because she loved much. But my theory is, that it was the same Mary who

did this deed on two separate occasions, the one being that which Luke

has put on record, when she approached Him first of all in that

remarkable humility, and with those tears, and obtained the forgiveness

of her sins. [1210] For John, too, although he has not given the kind

of recital which Luke has left us of the circumstances connected with

that incident, has at least mentioned the fact, in commending the same

Mary to our notice, when he has just begun to tell the story of the

raising of Lazarus, and before his narrative brings the Lord to Bethany

itself. The history which he offers us of that transaction proceeds

thus: "Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town

of Mary, and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the

Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother

Lazarus was sick." [1211] By this statement John attests what Luke has

told us when he records a scene of this nature in the house of a

certain Pharisee, whose name was Simon. Here, then, we see that Mary

had acted in this way before that time. And what she did a second time

in Bethany is a different matter, which does not belong to Luke's

narrative, but is related by three of the evangelists in concert,

namely, John, Matthew, and Mark. [1212]

155. Let us therefore notice how harmony is maintained here between

these three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and John, regarding whom there

is no doubt that they record the self-same occurrence at Bethany, on

occasion of which the disciples also, as all three mention, murmured

against the woman, ostensibly on the ground of the waste of the very

precious ointment. Now the further fact that Matthew and Mark tell us

that it was the Lord's head on which the ointment was poured, while

John says it was His feet, can be shown to involve no contradiction, if

we apply the principle which we have already expounded in dealing with

the scene of the feeding of the multitudes with the five loaves. For as

there was one writer who, in giving his account of that incident, did

not fail to specify that the people sat down at once by fifties and by

hundreds, although another spoke only of the fifties, no contradiction

could be supposed to emerge. There might indeed have seemed to be some

difficulty, if the one evangelist had referred only to the hundreds,

and the other only to the fifties; and yet, even in that case, the

correct finding should have been to the effect that they were seated

both by fifties and by hundreds. And this example ought to have made it

plain to us, as I pressed it upon my readers in discussing that

section, that even where the several evangelists introduce only the one

fact each, we should take the case to have been really, that both

things were elements in the actual occurrence. [1213] In the same way,

our conclusion with regard to the passage now before us should be, that

the woman poured the ointment not only upon the Lord's head, but also

on His feet. It is true that some person may possibly be found absurd

and artful enough to argue, that because Mark states that the ointment

was poured out only after the alabaster vase was broken there could not

have remained in the shattered vessel anything with which she could

anoint His feet. But while a person of that character, in his

endeavours to disprove the veracity of the Gospel, may contend that the

vase was broken, in a manner making it impossible that any portion of

the contents could have been left in it, how much better and more

accordant with piety must the position of a very different individual

appear, whose aim will be to uphold the truthfulness of the Gospel, and

who may therefore contend that the vessel was not broken in a manner

involving the total outpouring of the ointment! Moreover, if that

calumniator is so persistently blinded as to attempt to shatter the

harmony of the evangelists on this subject of the shattering of the

vase, [1214] he should rather accept the alternative, that the [Lord's]

feet were anointed before the vessel itself was broken, and that it

thus remained whole, and filled with ointment sufficient for the

anointing also of the head, when, by the breakage referred to, the

entire contents were discharged. For we allow that there is a due

regard to the several parts of our nature when the act commences with

the head, but [we may also say that] an equally natural order is

preserved when we ascend from the feet to the head.

156. The other matters belonging to this incident do not seem to me to

raise any question really involving a difficulty. There is the

circumstance that the other evangelists mention how the disciples

murmured about the [wasteful] outpouring of the precious ointment,

whereas John states that Judas was the person who thus expressed

himself, and tells us, in explanation of the fact, that "he was a

thief." But I think it is evident that this same Judas was the person

referred to under the [general] name of the disciples, the plural

number being used here instead of the singular, in accordance with that

mode of speech of which we have already introduced an explanation in

the case of Philip and the miracle of the five loaves. [1215] It may

also be understood in this way, that the other disciples either felt as

Judas felt, or spoke as he did, or were brought over to that view of

the matter by what Judas said, and that Matthew and Mark consequently

have expressed in word what was really the mind of the whole company;

but that Judas spoke as he did just because he was a thief, whereas

what prompted the rest was their care for the poor; and further, that

John has chosen to record the utterance of such sentiments only in the

instance of that one [among the disciples] whose habit of acting the

thief he believed it right to bring out in connection with this

occasion.

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[1209] Matt. xxvi. 3-13.

[1210] Luke vii. 36-50. [This identification of Mary of Bethany with

the woman spoken of by Luke is part of the process by which the latter

is assumed to be Mary Magdalene. The occasions were different, and it

is far more likely that there were two women, neither of them Mary

Magdalene.--R.]

[1211] John xi. 1, 2. [John's language is more properly referred to

what was well known among Christians when he wrote, than to what had

occurred before the sickness of Lazarus.--R.]

[1212] John xii. 1-8; Matt. xxvi. 3-13; Mark xiv. 3-9.

[1213] See above, chap. xlvi. � 98.

[1214] De alabastro fracto frangere conetur.

[1215] See above, � 96.

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Chapter LXXX.--Of the Harmony Characterizing the Accounts Which are

Given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, of the Occasion on Which He Sent His

Disciples to Make Preparations for His Eating the Passover.

157. Matthew proceeds thus: "Then one of the twelve, who is called

Judas [of] Scarioth, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them,

What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they

covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver;" and so on down to the

words, "And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them, and they

made ready the passover." [1216] Nothing in this section can be

supposed to stand in any contradiction with the versions of Mark and

Luke, who record this same passage in a similar manner. [1217] For as

regards the statement given by Matthew in these terms, "Go into the

city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at

hand: I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples," [1218]

it just indicates the person whom Mark and Luke name the "goodman of

the house," [1219] or the "master of the house," [1220] in which the

dining-room was shown them where they were to make ready the passover.

And Matthew has expressed this by simply bringing in the phrase, "to

such a man," as a brief explanation introduced by himself with the view

of succinctly giving us to understand who the person referred to was.

For if he had said that the Lord addressed them in words like these:

"Go into the city, and say unto him [or "it"], [1221] The Master saith,

My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house," it might

have been supposed that the terms were intended to be directed to the

city itself. For this reason, therefore, Matthew has inserted the

statement, that the Lord bade them go "to such a man," not, however, as

a statement made by the Lord, whose instructions he was recording, but

simply as one volunteered by himself, with the view of avoiding the

necessity of narrating the whole at length, when it seemed to him that

this was all that required to be mentioned in order to bring out with

sufficient accuracy what was really meant by the person who gave the

order. For who can fail to see that no one naturally speaks to others

in such an indefinite fashion as this, "Go ye to such a man"? If,

again, the words had been, "Go ye to any one whatsoever," or "to any

one you please," [1222] the mode of expression might have been correct

enough, but the person to whom the disciples were sent would have been

left uncertain: whereas Mark and Luke present him as a certain

definitely indicated individual, although they pass over his name in

silence. The Lord Himself, we may be sure, knew to what person it was

that He despatched them. And in order that those also whom He was thus

sending might be able to discover the individual meant, He gave them,

before they set out, a particular sign which they were to

follow,--namely, the appearance of a man bearing a pitcher or a vessel

of water,--and told them, that if they went after him, they would reach

the house which He intended. Hence, seeing that it was not competent

here to employ the phraseology, "Go to any one you please," which is

indeed legitimate enough, so far as the demands of linguistic propriety

are concerned, but which an accurate statement of the matter dealt with

here renders inadmissible in this passage, with how much less warrant

could an expression like this have been used here (by the speaker

Himself), "Go to such a man," which the usage of correct language can

never admit at all? But it is manifest that the disciples were sent by

the Lord, plainly, not to any man they pleased, but to "such a man,"

that is to say, to a certain definite individual. And that is a thing

which the evangelist, speaking in his own person, could quite rightly

have related to us, by putting it in this way: "He sent them to such a

man, [1223] in order to say to him, I will keep the passover at thy

house." He might also have expressed it thus: "He sent them to such a

man, saying, Go, say to him, I will keep the passover at thy house."

And thus it is that, after giving us the words actually spoken by the

Lord Himself, namely, "Go into the city," he has introduced this

addition of his own, "to such a man," which he does, however, not as if

the Lord had thus expressed Himself, but simply with the view of giving

us to understand, although the name is left unrecorded, that there was

a particular person in the city to whom the Lord's disciples were sent,

in order to make ready the passover. Thus, too, after the two [or

three] words brought in that manner as an explanation of his own, he

takes up again the order of the words as they were uttered by the Lord

Himself, namely, "And say unto him, The Master saith." And if you ask

now "to whom" they were to say this, the correct reply is given [at

once] in these terms, To that particular man to whom the evangelist has

given us to understand that the Lord sent them, when, speaking in His

own person, he introduced the clause, "to such a man." The clause thus

inserted may indeed contain a rather unusual mode of expression, but

still it is a perfectly legitimate phraseology when it is thus

understood. Or it may be, that in the Hebrew language, in which Matthew

is reported to have written, there is some peculiar usage which might

make it entirely accordant with the laws of correct expression, even

were the whole taken to have been spoken by the Lord Himself. Whether

that is the case, those who understand that tongue may decide. Even in

the Latin language itself, indeed, this kind of expression might also

be used, in terms like these: "Go into the city to such a man as may be

indicated by a person who shall meet you carrying a pitcher of water."

If the instructions were conveyed in such words as these, they could be

acted upon without any ambiguity. Or again, if the terms were anything

like these, "Go into the city to such a man, who resides in this or the

other place, in such and such a house," then the note thus given of the

place and the designation of the house would make it quite possible to

understand the commission delivered, and to execute it. But when these

instructions, and all others of a similar order, are left entirely

untold, the person who in such circumstances uses this kind of address,

"Go to such a man, and say unto him," cannot possibly be listened to

intelligently for this obvious reason, that when he employs the terms,

"to such a man," he intends a certain particular individual to be

understood by them, and yet offers us no hint by which he may be

identified. But if we are to suppose that the clause referred to is one

introduced as an explanation by the evangelist himself, [we may find

that] the requirements of brevity will render the expression somewhat

obscure, without, however, making it incorrect. Moreover, as to the

fact, that where Mark speaks of a pitcher [1224] of water, Luke

mentions a vessel, [1225] the simple explanation is, that the one has

used a word indicative of the kind of vessel, and the other a term

indicative of its capacity, while both evangelists have nevertheless

preserved the real meaning actually intended.

158. Matthew proceeds thus: "Now when the even was come, He sat down

with the twelve disciples; and as they did eat, He said, Verily I say

unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding

sorrowful, and began every one of them to say, Lord, is it I?" and so

on, down to where we read, "Then Judas, which betrayed Him, answered

and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said." [1226] In

what we have now presented for consideration here, the other three

evangelists, [1227] who also record such matters, offer nothing

calculated to raise any question of serious difficulty. [1228]

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[1216] Matt. xxvi. 14-19.

[1217] Mark xiv. 10-16; Luke xxii. 3-13.

[1218] Matt. xxvi. 18.

[1219] Patrem familias.

[1220] Dominum domus.

[1221] Ite in civitatem et dicite ei. Turning on the identity of form

retained by the Latin pronoun in all the genders of the dative case,

this, of course, cannot be precisely represented in English.

[1222] Ad quemcunque aut ad quemlibet.

[1223] Ad quendam.

[1224] Lagenam, bottle.

[1225] Amphoram, large measure.

[1226] Matt. xxvi. 20-25.

[1227] Mark xiv. 17-21; Luke xxii. 14-23; John xiii. 21-27.

[1228] [No notice is taken by Augustin, in this treatise, of the most

serious difficulty connected with the narratives of the Lord's Supper;

namely, that of the day of the month on which it was instituted. The

Synoptists distinctly declare that our Lord ate the passover supper

with His disciples at the regular time (Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12;

Luke xxii. 7), but some passages in John (xiii. 1, 27-30; xviii. 28;

xix. 31) seem to indicate that the proper time of its observance had

not yet come. Hence many commentators think that the Lord's Supper was

instituted on the evening of the 13th of Nisan, one day before the

regular time of the paschal supper.--R.]

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Book III.

This book contains a demonstration of the harmony of the evangelists

from the accounts of the Supper on to the end of the Gospel, the

narratives given by the several writers being collated, and the whole

arranged in one orderly connection.

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Prologue.

1. Inasmuch as we have now reached that point in the history at which

all the four evangelists necessarily hold their course in company on to

the conclusion, without presenting any serious divergence the one from

the other, if it happens anywhere that one of them makes mention of

something which another leaves unnoticed, it appears to me that we may

demonstrate the consistency maintained by the various evangelists with

greater expedition, if from this point onwards we now bring all the

statements given by all the writers together into one connection, and

arrange the whole in a single narration, and under one view. [1229] I

consider that in this way the task which we have undertaken may be

discharged with greater convenience and facility than otherwise might

be the case. What we have now before us, therefore, is to attempt the

construction of a single narrative, in which we shall include all the

particulars, and for which we shall possess the attestation of those

evangelists who, (each selecting for recital out of the whole number of

facts those which he had either the ability or the desire to relate,)

have prepared these records for us: [1230] this being done in such a

manner, moreover, that all these statements, in regard to which we have

to prove an entire freedom from contradictions, are taken as made by

all the evangelists together.

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[1229] The text gives: et in unam narrationem faciemque digeramus. For

faciem the reading seriem, series, also occurs.

[1230] The text gives: ut aggrediamur narrationem omnia commemorantes,

cum eorum evangelistarum attestatione qui ex his omnibus, etc. Some

editions have cum eorundem evangelistarum attestatione quid ex his,

etc. = the attestation of the same evangelists as to what, etc.

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Chapter I.--Of the Method in Which the Four Evangelists are Shown to Be

at One in the Accounts Given of the Lord's Supper and the Indication of

His Betrayer.

2. Let us commence here, accordingly, with the notice presented by

Matthew, [which runs thus]: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread,

and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said,

Take, eat; this is my body." [1231] Both Mark and Luke also gave this

section. [1232] It is true that Luke has made mention of the cup twice

over: first before He gave the bread; and, secondly, after the bread

has been given. But the fact is, that what is stated in that earlier

connection has been introduced, according to this writer's habit, by

anticipation, while the words which he has inserted here in their

proper order are left unrecorded in those previous verses, and the two

passages when put together make up exactly what stands expressed by

those other evangelists. [1233] John, on the other hand, has said

nothing about the body and blood of the Lord in this context; but he

plainly certifies that the Lord spake to that effect on another

occasion, [1234] with much greater fulness than here. At present,

however, after recording how the Lord rose from supper and washed the

disciples' feet, and after telling us also the reason why the Lord

dealt thus with them, in expressing which He had intimated, although

still obscurely, and by the use of a testimony of Scripture, the fact

that He was being betrayed by the man who was to eat of His bread, at

this point John comes to the section in question, which the other three

evangelists also unite in introducing. He presents it thus: "When Jesus

had thus said, He was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me. Then

the disciples looked (as the same John subjoins) one on another,

doubting of whom He spake." [1235] "And (as Matthew and Mark tell us)

they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto

Him, Is it I? And He answered and said (as Matthew proceeds to state),

He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray

me." Matthew also goes on to make the following addition to the

preceding: "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him; but

woe unto that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed! it had been

good for that man if he had not been born." [1236] Mark, too, is at one

with him here as regards both the words themselves and the order of

narration. [1237] Then Matthew continues thus: "Then Judas, which

betrayed Him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him,

Thou hast said." Even these words did not say explicitly whether he was

himself the man. For the sentence still admits of being understood as

if its point was this, "I am not the person who has said so." [1238]

All this, too, may quite easily have been uttered by Judas and answered

by the Lord without its being noticed by all the others.

3. After this, Matthew proceeds to insert the mystery of His body and

blood, as it was committed then by the Lord to the disciples. Here Mark

and Luke act correspondingly. But after He had handed the cup to them,

[we find that] He spoke again concerning His betrayer, in terms which

Luke recounts, when he says, "But, behold, the hand of him that

betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth as

it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom He shall be betrayed."

[1239] At this point we must now suppose that to come in which is

narrated by John while these others omit it, just as John has also

passed by certain matters which they have detailed. In accordance with

this, after the giving of the cup, and after the Lord's subsequent

saying which has been brought in by Luke,--namely, "But, behold, the

hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table," etc.,--the

statement made by John is [to be taken as immediately] subjoined. It is

to the following effect: "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of

His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him,

and said unto him, [1240] Who is he of whom He speaketh? He then, when

he had laid himself on Jesus' breast, saith unto Him, Lord, who is it?

Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped

it. And when He had dipped the sop, He gave it to Judas, the son of

Simon [of] Scarioth. And after the sop Satan then entered into him."

[1241]

4. Here we must take care not to let John underlie the appearance not

only of standing in antagonism to Luke, who had stated before this,

that Satan entered into the heart of Judas at the time when he made his

bargain with the Jews to betray Him on receipt of a sum of money, but

also of contradicting himself. For, at an earlier point, and previous

to [his notice of] the receiving of this sop, he had made use of these

terms: "And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart

of Judas to betray Him." [1242] And how does he enter into the heart,

but by putting unrighteous persuasions into the thoughts of unrighteous

men? The explanation, however, is this. We ought to suppose Judas to

have been more fully taken possession of by the devil now, just as on

the other hand, in the instance of the good, those who had already

received the Holy Spirit on that occasion, subsequently to His

resurrection, when He breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the Holy

Ghost," [1243] also obtained a fuller gift of that Spirit at a later

time, namely, when He was sent down from above on the day of Pentecost.

In like manner, Satan then entered into this man after the sop. And (as

John himself mentions in the immediate context) "Jesus saith unto him,

What thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what

intent He spake this unto him; for some of them thought, because Judas

had the bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy those things that we have

need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the

poor. He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it

was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son

of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him: and if God be glorified

in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway

glorify Him." [1244]

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[1231] Matt. xxvi. 26.

[1232] Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 49.

[1233] [Luke's first reference to the cup belongs to the passover

celebration, in distinction from the Lord's Supper.--R.]

[1234] John vi. 32-64.

[1235] John xiii. 21, 22.

[1236] Matt. xxvi. 22-25.

[1237] Mark xiv. 19-21.

[1238] [This explanation seems altogether inadmissible, and is equally

unnecessary.--R.]

[1239] Luke xxii. 21, 22.

[1240] Innuit ergo huic Simon Petrus et dixit ei.

[1241] John xiii. 23-27. [Whether this preceded or followed the giving

of the cup is still in dispute.--R.]

[1242] John xiii. 2.

[1243] John xx. 22.

[1244] John xiii. 28-32.

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Chapter II.--Of the Proof of Their Freedom from Any Discrepancies in

the Notices Given of the Predictions of Peter's Denials.

5. "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek

me: and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now

I say unto you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one

another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this

shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to

another. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus

answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou

shalt follow me afterwards. Peter saith unto Him, Lord, why cannot I

follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake. Jesus answered

him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say

unto thee, The cock shall not crow, until thou deniest me thrice."

[1245] John, from whose Gospel I have taken the passage introduced

above, is not the only evangelist who details this incident of the

prophetic announcement of his own denial to Peter. The other three also

record the same thing. [1246] They do not, however, take one and the

same particular point in the discourses [of Christ] as their occasion

for proceeding to this narration. For Matthew and Mark both introduce

it in a completely parallel order, and at the same stage of their

narrative, namely, after the Lord left the house in which they had

eaten the passover; while Luke and John, on the other hand, bring it in

before He left that scene. Still we might easily suppose, either that

it has been inserted in the way of a recapitulation by the one couple

of evangelists, or that it has been inserted in the way of an

anticipation by the other; only such a supposition may be made more

doubtful by the circumstance that there is so remarkable a diversity,

not only in the Lord's words, but even in those sentiments of His by

which the incident in question is introduced, and by which Peter was

moved to venture his presumptuous asseveration that he would die with

the Lord or for the Lord. These considerations may constrain us rather

to understand the narratives really to import that the man uttered his

presumptuous declaration thrice over, as it was called forth by

different occasions in the series of Christ's discourses, and that also

three several times the answer was returned him by the Lord, which

intimated that before the cock crew he would deny Him thrice.

6. And surely there is nothing incredible in supposing that Peter was

moved to such an act of presumption on several occasions, separated

from each other by certain intervals of time, as he was actually

instigated to deny Him repeatedly. Neither should it seem unreasonable

to fancy that the Lord gave him a reply in similar terms at three

successive periods, especially when [we see that] in immediate

connection with each other, and without the interposition of anything

else either in fact or word, Christ addressed the question to him three

several times whether he loved Him, and that, when Peter returned the

same answer thrice over, He also gave him thrice over the self-same

charge to feed His sheep. [1247] That it is the more reasonable thing

to suppose that Peter displayed his presumption on three different

occasions, and that thrice over he received from the Lord a warning

with respect to his triple denial, is further proved, as we may see, by

the very terms employed by the evangelists, which record sayings

uttered by the Lord in diverse form and of diverse import. Let us here

call attention again to that passage which I introduced a little ago

from the Gospel of John. There we certainly find that He had expressed

Himself in this way: "Little children, yet a little while I am with

you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye

cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you,

That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye love one

another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye

have love one to another. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither

goest Thou?" [1248] Now, surely it is evident here that what moved

Peter to utter this question, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" was the words

which the Lord Himself had spoken. For he had heard Him say, "Whither I

go, ye cannot come." Then Jesus made this reply to the said Peter:

"Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shall follow me

afterwards." Thereupon Peter expressed himself thus: "Lord, why cannot

I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake." [1249] And to

this presumptuous declaration the Lord responded by predicting his

denial. Luke, again, first mentions how the Lord said, "Simon, behold

Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I

have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and, when thou art

converted, strengthen thy brethren:" next he proceeds immediately to

tell us how Peter replied to this effect: "Lord, I am ready to go with

Thee, both unto prison and to death;" and then he continues thus: "And

He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before

that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." [1250] Now, who can

fail to perceive that this is an occasion by itself, and that the

incident in connection with which Peter was incited to make the

presumptuous declaration already referred to is an entirely different

one? But, once more, Matthew presents us with the following passage:

"And when they had sung an hymn," he says, "they went out into the

Mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended

because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd,

and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am

risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." [1251] The same

passage is given in precisely the same form by Mark. [1252] What

similarity is there, however, in these words, or in the ideas expressed

by them, either to the terms in which John represents Peter to have

made his presumptuous declaration, or to those in which Luke exhibits

him as uttering such an asseveration? And so we find that in Matthew's

narrative the connection proceeds immediately thus: "Peter answered and

said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet

will I never be offended. Jesus saith unto him, Verily, I say unto

thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Peter saith unto him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not

deny Thee. Likewise also said all His disciples." [1253]

7. All this is recorded almost in the same language also by Mark, only

that he has not put in so general a form what the Lord said with regard

to the manner in which the event [of Peter's failure] was to be brought

about, but has given it a more particular turn. For his version is

this: "Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night,

before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." [1254] Thus it

appears that all of them tell us how the Lord foretold that Peter would

deny Him before the cock crew, but that they do not all mention how

often the cock was to crow, and that Mark is the only one who has

presented a more explicit notice of this incident in the narrative.

Hence some are of opinion that Mark's statement is not in harmony with

those of the others. But this is simply because they do not give

sufficient attention to the facts of the case, and, above all, because

they approach the question under the cloud of a prejudiced mind, in

consequence of their being possessed by a hostile disposition towards

the gospel. The fact is, that Peter's denial, when taken as a whole, is

a threefold denial. For he remained in the same state of mental

agitation, and harboured the same mendacious intention, until what had

been foretold regarding him was brought to his mind, and healing came

to him by bitter weeping and sorrow of heart. It is evident, however,

that if this complete denial--that is to say, the threefold denial--is

taken to have commenced only after the first crowing of the cock, three

of the evangelists will appear to have given an incorrect account of

the matter. For Matthew's version is this: "Verily I say unto thee,

That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice;" and

Luke puts it thus: "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this

day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me;" and John

presents it in this form: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock

shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." And thus, in different

terms and with words introduced in diverse successions, these three

evangelists have expressed one and the same sense as conveyed by the

words which the Lord spake--namely, the fact that, before the cock

should crow, Peter was to deny Him thrice. On the other hand, if [we

suppose that] he went through the whole triple denial before the cock

began to crow at all, then Mark will be made to underlie the charge of

having given a superfluous statement when he puts these words into the

Lord's mouth: "Verily I say unto thee, That this day, before the cock

crow twice, thou shall deny me thrice." For to what purpose would it be

to say, "before the cock crow twice," when, on the supposition that

this entire threefold denial was gone through previous to the first

crowing of the cock, it is self-evident that a negation, which would

thus be proved to have been completed before the first cockcrow, must

also, as matter of course, be understood to have been fully uttered

before the second cockcrow and before the third, and, in short, before

all the cockcrowings which took place on that same night? But, inasmuch

as this threefold denial was begun previous to the first crowing of the

cock, those three evangelists concerned themselves with noticing, not

the time at which Peter was to complete it, but the extent [1255] to

which it was to be carried, and the period at which it was to commence;

that is to say, their object was to bring out the facts that it was to

be thrice repeated, and that it was to begin previous to the

cockcrowing. At the same time, so far as the man's own mind is

concerned, we might also quite well understand it to have been engaged

in, as a whole, previous to the first cockcrow. For although it is true

that, so far as regards the actual utterance of the individual who was

guilty of the denial, that threefold negation was only entered upon

previous to the first cockcrow, and really finished before the second

cockcrow, still it is equally true that, in so far as the disposition

of mind and the apprehensions indulged by Peter were concerned, it was

conceived, [1256] as a whole, before the first cockcrow. Neither is it

a matter of any consequence of what duration those intervals of delay

were which elapsed between the several utterances of that

thrice-recurring voice, if it is the case that the denial completely

possessed his heart even previous to the first cockcrow,--in

consequence, indeed, of his having imbibed a spirit of terror so abject

as to make him capable of denying the Lord when he was questioned

regarding Him, not only once, but a second time, and even a third time.

Thus, a more correct and careful consideration of the matter might show

us [1257] that, precisely as it is declared that the man who looketh on

a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in

his heart, [1258] so, in the present instance, inasmuch as in the words

which he spoke, Peter merely expressed the apprehension which he had

already conceived with such intensity in his mind as to make it capable

of enduring even on to a third repetition of his denial of the Lord,

this threefold negation is to be assigned as a whole to that particular

period at which the fear that sufficed thus to carry him on to a

threefold denial took possession of him. In this way, too, it may be

made apparent that, even if the words in which the denial was couched

began to break forth from him only after the first cockcrow, when his

heart was smitten by the inquiries addressed to him, it would involve

neither any absurdity nor any untruthfulness, although it were said

that before the cock crew he denied Him thrice, seeing that, in any

case, previous to the crowing of the cock, his mind had been assailed

by an apprehension violent enough to be able to draw him [1259] on even

to a third denial. All the less, therefore, ought we to feel any

difficulty in the matter, if it appears that the threefold denial, as

expressed also in the thrice-recurring utterances of the person who

made the denial, was entered upon previous to the crowing of the cock,

although it was not completed before the first cockcrow. We may take a

parallel case, and suppose an intimation to be made to the following

effect to a person: "This night, before the cock crow, you will write a

letter to me, in which you will revile me thrice." Well, surely in this

instance, if the man began to write the letter before the cock had

crowed at all, and finished it after the cock had crowed for the first

time, that would be no reason for alleging that the intimation

previously made was false. The fact, therefore, is that, in putting

these words into the Lord's lips, "Before the cock crow twice, thou

shalt deny me thrice," Mark has given us a plainer indication of the

intervals of time which separated the utterances themselves. And when

we come to the said section of the evangelical narrative, we shall see

that the circumstances are presented in a manner which exhibits, in

that connection also, the harmony subsisting among the evangelists.

8. If, however, the demand is to get at the very words, literally and

completely, which the Lord addressed to Peter, we answer that it is

impossible to discover these; and further, that it is simply

superfluous to ask them, inasmuch as the speaker's meaning--to intimate

which was the object He had in view in uttering the words--admits of

being understood with the utmost plainness, even under the diverse

terms employed by the evangelists. And whether, then, it be the case

that Peter, instigated at different occasions in the course of the

Lord's sayings, made his presumptuous declaration three several times,

and had his denial foretold him thrice over by the Lord, as is the more

probable result to which our investigation points us; or whether it may

appear that the accounts given by all the evangelists are capable of

being reduced to a single statement, when a certain order of narration

is adopted, so that it could be proved that it was only on one occasion

that the Lord predicted to Peter, on the exhibition of his presumptuous

spirit, the fact that he would deny Him;--in either case, any

contradiction between the evangelists will fail to be detected, as

nothing of that nature really exists.

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[1245] John xiii. 33-38.

[1246] Matt. xxvi. 30-35; Mark xiv. 26-31; Luke xxii. 31-34.

[1247] John xxi. 15-17.

[1248] John xiii. 33-36.

[1249] John xiii. 37.

[1250] Luke xxii. 31-33.

[1251] Matt. xxvi. 30-32.

[1252] Mark xiv. 26-28.

[1253] Matt. xxvi. 33-35. [It is very probable that the prediction of

Peter's denial was repeated, being first spoken in the upper room

(Luke, John), and afterwards on the way to Gethsemane (Matthew,

Mark)--R.]

[1254] Mark xiv. 30. [The Latin reproduces the emphatic form of the

Greek text: "That thou to-day, even this night, before the cock crow

twice, shalt deny me thrice" (Revised Version). It seem probable that

this is the most accurate report, derived from Peter himself.--R.]

[1255] Reading quanta futura esset. Quando also occurs for quanta, in

which case the sense would be = the period at which it was to take

place.

[1256] Adopting concepta est. There is another reading, coepta est = it

was commenced.

[1257] The text gives simply: ut rectius diligentiusque attendentibus.

Migne states that in six mss. videtur is added = it seems to those who

consider the matter more correctly, etc.

[1258] Matt. v. 28.

[1259] The text gives eum. Another common reading is eam = it, i.e. his

mind.

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Chapter III.--Of the Manner in Which It Can Be Shown that No

Discrepancies Exist Between Them in the Accounts Which They Give of the

Words Which Were Spoken by the Lord, on to the Time of His Leaving the

House in Which They Had Supped.

9. At this point, therefore, we may now follow, as far as we can, the

order of the narrative, as gathered from all the evangelists together.

Thus, then, after the prediction in question had been made to Peter,

according to John's version, the same John proceeds with his statement,

and introduces in this connection the Lord's discourse, which was to

the following effect: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in

God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions;"

[1260] and so forth. He narrates at length the sayings, so memorable

and so pre-eminently sublime, of which He delivered Himself in the

course of that address, until, in due connection, he comes to the

passage where the Lord speaks as follows: "O righteous Father, the

world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known

that Thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and

will declare it; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in

them, and I in them." [1261] Again we find, according to the narrative

given by Luke, that there arose "a strife among them which of them

should be accounted the greatest. And He said unto them, The kings of

the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise

authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but

he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; [1262] and he

that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that

sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat?

but I am among you as he that serveth. And ye are they which have

continued with me in my temptations: and I appoint unto you a kingdom,

as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my

table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of

Israel." [1263] The said Luke also immediately subjoins to these words

the following passage: "And the Lord said to Simon: Simon, behold,

Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I

have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art

converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto Him: Lord, I am

ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death. And He said, I

tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou

shall thrice deny that thou knowest me. And He said unto them, When I

sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And

they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now, he that hath a

purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no

sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, this

that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And He was reckoned

among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And

they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And He said unto them, It

is enough." [1264] Next comes the passage, given both by Matthew and by

Mark: "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of

Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of

me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the

sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen

again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto

Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never

be offended. Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this

night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter saith

unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.

Likewise also said all the disciples." [1265] We have introduced the

preceding section as it is presented by Matthew. But Mark also records

it almost in so many and the same words, with the exception of the

apparent discrepancy, which we have already cleared up above, on the

subject of the crowing of the cock.

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[1260] John xiv. 1, 2.

[1261] John xvii. 25, 26.

[1262] Another reading is minor = as the less.

[1263] Luke xxii. 24-30. [This incident may with more propriety be

placed before the washing of the disciples' feet.--R.]

[1264] Luke xxii. 31-38. [The conversation in regard to the swords

(vers. 35-38) probably preceded the discourse reported by John

(xiv.-xvii.).--R.]

[1265] Matt. xxvi. 30-35.

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Chapter IV.--Of What Took Place in the Piece of Ground or Garden to

Which They Came on Leaving the House After the Supper; And of the

Method in Which, in John's Silence on the Subject, a Real Harmony Can

Be Demonstrated Between the Other Three Evangelists--Namely, Matthew,

Mark, and Luke.

10. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the same connection as

follows: "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane."

[1266] This is mentioned also by Mark. [1267] Luke, too, refers to it,

although he does not notice the piece of ground by name. For he says:

"And He came out, and went, as was His wont, to the Mount of Olives;

and His disciples also followed Him. And when He was at the place, He

said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation." [1268] That is

the place which the other two have instanced under the name of

Gethsemane. There, we understand, was the garden which John brings into

notice when he gives the following narration: "When Jesus had spoken

these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron,

where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples."

[1269] Then taking Matthew's record, we get this statement next in

order: "He said unto His disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray

yonder. [1270] And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,

and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith He unto them, My

soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch

with me. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and

prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from

me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And He cometh unto

the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What!

could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not

into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if

this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done.

And He came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And

He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying

the same words. Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them,

Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the

Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be

going: behold, he is at hand that shall betray me." [1271]

11. Mark also records these passages, introducing them quite in the

same method and succession. Some of the sentences, however, are given

with greater brevity by him, and others are somewhat more fully

explained. These sayings of our Lord, indeed, may seem in one portion

to stand in some manner of contradiction to each other as they are

presented in Matthew's version. I refer to the fact that [it is stated

there that] He came to His disciples after His third prayer, and said

to them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at

hand, and the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that shall betray me." For

what are we to make of the direction thus given above, "Sleep on now,

and take your rest," when there is immediately subjoined this other

declaration, "Behold, the hour is at hand," and thereafter also the

instruction, "Arise, let us be going"? Those readers who perceive

something like a contradiction here, seek to pronounce these words,

"Sleep on now, and take your rest," in a way betokening that they were

spoken in reproach, and not in permission. And this is an expedient

which might quite fairly be adopted were there any necessity for it.

Mark, however, has reproduced these sayings in a manner which implies

that after He had expressed himself in the terms, "Sleep on now, and

take your rest," He added the words, "It is enough," and then appended

to these the further statement, "The hour is come; behold, the Son of

man shall be betrayed." [1272] Hence we may conclude that the case

really stood thus: namely, that after addressing these words to them,

"Sleep on now, and take your rest," the Lord was silent for a space, so

that what He had thus given them permission to do might be [seen to be]

really acted upon; and that thereafter He made the other declaration,

"Behold the hour is come." Thus it is that in Mark's Gospel we find

those words [regarding the sleeping] followed immediately by the

phrase, "It is enough;" that is to say, "the rest which you have had is

enough now." But as no distinct notice is introduced of this silence on

the Lord's part which intervened then, the passage comes to be

understood in a forced manner, and it is supposed that a peculiar

pronunciation must be given to these words.

12. Luke, on the other hand, has omitted to mention the number of times

that He prayed. He has told us, however, a fact which is not recorded

by the others--namely, that when He prayed He was strengthened by an

angel, and that, as He prayed more earnestly, He had a bloody sweat,

with drops falling down to the ground. Thus it appears that when he

makes the statement, "And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to

His disciples," he does not indicate how often He had prayed by that

time. But still, in so doing, he does not stand in any kind of

antagonism to the other two. Moreover, John does indeed mention how He

entered into the garden along with His disciples. But he does not

relate how He was occupied there up to the period when His betrayer

came in along with the Jews to apprehend Him.

13. These three evangelists, therefore, have in this manner narrated

the same incident, just as, on the other hand, one man might give three

several accounts of a single occurrence, with a certain measure of

diversity in his statements, and yet without any real contradiction.

Luke, for example, has specified the distance to which He went forward

from the disciples--that is to say, when He withdrew from them in order

to pray--more definitely than the others. For he tells us that it was

"about a stone's cast." Mark, again, states first of all in his own

words how the Lord prayed that, "If it were possible, the hour might

pass from Him," referring to the hour of His Passion, which he also

expresses presently by the term "cup." He then reproduces the Lord's

own words, in the following manner: "Abba, Father, all things are

possible to Thee: take away this cup from me." And if we connect with

these terms the clause which is given by the other two evangelists, and

for which Mark himself has also already introduced a clear parallel,

presented as a statement made in his own person instead of the Lord's,

the whole sentence will be exhibited in this form: "Father, if it be

possible, (for) all things are possible unto Thee, take away this cup

from me." And it will be so put just to prevent any one from supposing

that He made the Father's power less than it is when He said, "If it be

possible." For thus His words were not, "If Thou canst do it;" but "If

it be possible." And anything is possible which He wills. Therefore,

the expression, "If it be possible," has here just the same force as,

"If Thou wilt." For Mark has made the sense in which the phrase, "If it

be possible," is to be taken quite plain, when he says, "All things are

possible unto Thee." And further, the fact that these writers have

recorded how He said, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou

wilt" (an expression which means precisely the same as this other form,

"Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done"), shows us clearly enough

that it was with reference not to any absolute impossibility on the

Father's side, but only to His will, that these words, "If it be

possible," were spoken. This is made the more apparent by the plainer

statement which Luke has presented to the same effect. For his version

is not, "If it be possible," but, "If Thou be willing." And to this

clearer declaration of what was really meant we may add, with the

effect of still greater clearness, the clause which Mark has inserted,

so that the whole will proceed thus: "If Thou be willing, (for) all

things are possible unto Thee, take away this cup from me."

14. Again, as to Mark's mentioning that the Lord said not only

"Father," but "Abba, Father," the explanation simply is, that "Abba" is

in Hebrew exactly what "Pater" is in Latin. And perhaps the Lord may

have used both words with some kind of symbolical significance,

intending to indicate thereby, that in sustaining this sorrow He bore

the part of His body, which is the Church, of which He has been made

the corner-stone, and which comes to Him [in the person of disciples

gathered] partly out of the Hebrews, to whom He refers when He says

"Abba," and partly out of the Gentiles, to whom He refers when He says

"Pater" [Father]. [1273] The Apostle Paul also makes use of the same

significant expression. For he says, "In whom we cry, Abba, Father;"

[1274] and, in another passage, "God sent His Spirit into your hearts,

crying, Abba, Father." [1275] For it was meet that the good Master and

true Saviour, by sharing in the sufferings of the more infirm, [1276]

should in His own person illustrate the truth that His witnesses ought

not to despair, although it might perchance happen that, through human

frailty, sorrow might steal in upon their hearts at the time of

suffering; seeing that they would overcome it if, mindful that God

knows what is best for those whose well-being He regards, they gave His

will the preference over their own. On this subject, however, as a

whole, the present is not the time for entering on any more detailed

discussion. For we have to deal simply with the question concerning the

harmony of the evangelists, from whose varied modes of narration we

gather the wholesome lesson that, in order to get at the truth, the one

essential thing to aim at in dealing with the terms is simply the

intention which the speaker had in view in using them. For the word

"Father" means just the same as the phrase "Abba, Father." But with a

view to bring out the mystic significance, the expression, "Abba,

Father," is the clearer form; while, for indicating the unity, the word

"Father" is sufficient. And that the Lord did indeed employ this method

of address, "Abba, Father," must be accepted as matter of fact. But

still His intention would not appear very obvious were there not the

means (since others use simply the term "Father") to show that under

such a form of expression those two Churches, which are constituted,

the one out of the Jews, and the other out of the Gentiles, are

presented as also really one. In this way, then, [we may suppose that]

the phrase, "Abba, Father," was adopted in order to convey the same

idea as was indicated by the Lord on another occasion, when He said,

"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." [1277] In these words

He certainly referred to the Gentiles, since He had sheep also among

the people of Israel. But in that passage He goes on immediately to add

the declaration, "Them also I must bring, that there may be one fold

and one Shepherd." And so we may say that, just as the phrase, "Abba,

Father," contains the idea of [the two races,] the Israelites and the

Gentiles, the word "Father," used alone, points to the one flock which

these two constitute.

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[1266] Matt. xxvi. 36-46.

[1267] Mark xiv. 32-42.

[1268] Luke xxii. 39-46.

[1269] John xviii. 1.

[1270] ["Go yonder and pray;" so the Latin, as well as the Greek text.

Comp. Revised Version, which in some other instances, in the passage

here cited, agrees more closely with Augustin's text than does the

Authorized Version.--R.]

[1271] Matt. xxvi. 36-46.

[1272] Mark xiv. 41. [On the various explanations of this difficult

passage, see commentaries.--R.]

[1273] See Eph. ii. 11-22.

[1274] Rom. viii. 15.

[1275] Gal. iv. 6.

[1276] Or = having compassion on the more infirm; infirmioribus

compatiens.

[1277] John x. 16.

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Chapter V.--Of the Accounts Which are Given by All the Four Evangelists

in Regard to What Was Done and Said on the Occasion of His

Apprehension; And of the Proof that These Different Narratives Exhibit

No Real Discrepancies.

15. When we follow the versions presented by Matthew and Mark, we find

that the history now proceeds thus: "And while He yet spake, lo, Judas,

one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords

and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he

that betrayed Him, gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss,

that same is He; hold Him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and

said, Hail, Master; and kissed Him." [1278] First of all, however, as

we gather from Luke's statement, He said to the traitor, "Judas,

betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" [1279] Next, as we learn

from Matthew, He spoke thus: "Friend, wherefore art thou come?"

Thereafter He added certain words which are found in John's narrative,

which runs in the following strain: "Whom seek ye? They answered Him,

Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also,

which betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon then as He had said unto

them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked

He them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus

answered, I have told you that I am He: if therefore ye seek me, let

these go their way; that the saying might be fulfilled which He spake,

Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none." [1280]

16. Next comes in a passage, which is given by Luke as follows: "When

they which were about Him saw what would follow, they said unto Him,

Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant

of the high priest," as is noticed by all the four historians, "and cut

off his ear," which, as we are informed by Luke and John, was his

"right ear." Moreover, we gather also from John that the person who

smote the servant was Peter, and that the name of the man whom he thus

struck was Malchus. Next we take what Luke mentions, namely, "Jesus

answered and said, Suffer ye thus far;" [1281] with which we must

connect the words appended by Matthew, namely, "Put up thy sword into

his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the

sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall

presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then

shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" [1282] Along

with these words we may also place the question to which John tells us

He gave utterance on the same occasion, namely, "The cup which my

Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" [1283] And then, as is

recorded by Luke, He touched the ear of the person who had been struck,

and healed him.

17. Neither should we let the idea disturb us, that some contradiction

may be found in the circumstance that Luke tells us how, when the

disciples asked Him whether they should smite with the sword, the Lord

replied in these words, "Suffer ye thus far," in a manner which might

seem to imply that He thus expressed Himself, after the blow had been

struck, in terms bearing that He was satisfied with what had been done

so far, but desired nothing further to be done; whereas the language

which is employed by Matthew might give us rather to understand that

this whole incident of the use which Peter made of the sword was

displeasing to the Lord. For it is more correct to suppose that when

they put the question to Him, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" He

replied then, "Suffer ye thus far;" His meaning being this: "Let not

what is about to take place agitate you. These men are to be suffered

to go thus far; that is to say, so far as to apprehend me, and thus to

effect the fulfilment of those things which are written of me." We have

further to suppose, however, that during the time which passed in the

interchange of the question addressed by them to the Lord, and the

reply returned by Him to them, Peter was borne on by his intense desire

to appear as defender, and by his stronger excitement in the Lord's

behalf, to deal the blow. But while these two things might easily have

happened at the same time, two different statements could not have been

uttered by the same person in one breath. [1284] For the writer would

not have used the expression, "And Jesus answered and said," unless the

words were a reply to the question which had been addressed by those

who were about Him, and not a statement directed to Peter's act. For

Matthew is the only one who has recorded the judgment passed by Jesus

on Peter's act. And in that passage the phrase which Matthew has

employed is also not in the form, "Jesus answered Peter thus, Put up

thy sword;" but it runs in these terms: "Then said Jesus unto him, Put

up thy sword;" from which it appears that it was after the deed that

Jesus thus declared Himself. What is contained, again, in the

phraseology used by Luke, namely, "And Jesus answered and said, Suffer

ye thus far," must be taken to have been the reply which was returned

to the parties who had put the question to Him. But inasmuch as,

according to our previous explanation, the single blow with which the

servant was struck was delivered just during the time when the terms of

the said question and answer were passing between these persons and the

Lord, the writer has considered it right to record that act in the same

particular order, so that it stands inserted between the words of the

interrogation and those in which the response was couched.

Consequently, there is nothing here in antagonism to the statement

introduced by Matthew, namely, "For all they that take the sword shall

perish with the sword,"--that is to say, those who may have used the

sword. But there might appear to be some inconsistency here if the

Lord's answer were taken in a sense which would show Him to have

expressed approval on this occasion of the voluntary use of the sword,

even although it was only to the effect of a single wound, and that,

too, not a fatal one. The words, however, which were addressed to Peter

may be understood, as a whole, in an application quite in harmony with

the rest; so that, bringing in also what Luke and Matthew have

reported, as I have stated above, we obtain the following connection:

"Suffer ye thus far. Put up thy sword into its place; for all they that

take the sword shall perish with the sword," etc. In what way,

moreover, this sentence, "Suffer ye thus far," is to be understood, I

have explained already. And if there is any better method of

interpreting it, be it so. Only let the veracity of the evangelists be

maintained in any case.

18. After this, Matthew continues the narrative, and mentions that in

that hour He addressed the multitude as follows: "Are ye come out as

against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with

you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me." [1285] Then He

added also certain words, which Luke introduces thus: "But this is your

hour, and the power of darkness." [1286] Next comes the sentence given

by Matthew: "But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets

might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled." This

last fact is recorded also by Mark. The same evangelist makes also the

following addition: "And there followed Him a certain young man, having

a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and when they laid hold on

him, he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked." [1287]

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[1278] Matt. xxvi. 47-56; Mark xiv. 43-50.

[1279] Luke xii. 48.

[1280] John xviii. 4-9. [This passage is more naturally placed before

the kissing by Judas.--R.]

[1281] Luke xxii. 51.

[1282] Matt. xxvi. 52-55.

[1283] John xviii. 11.

[1284] That is to say, while Christ's answer to the disciples and

Peter's act might easily have been synchronous, the Lord could not have

addressed Himself in different senses to two distinct parties at the

same time, namely, to the persons who put the question, and to Peter.

[1285] Matt. xxvi. 53.

[1286] Luke xxii. 53.

[1287] Mark xiv. 52.

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Chapter VI.--Of the Harmony Characterizing the Accounts Which These

Evangelists Give of What Happened When the Lord Was Led Away to the

House of the High Priest, as Also of the Occurrences Which Took Place

Within the Said House After He Was Conducted There in the Nighttime,

and in Particular of the Incident of Peter's Denial.

19. In the line of Matthew's narrative we come next upon this

statement: "And they that laid hold on Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas

the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled."

[1288] We learn, however, from John that He was conducted first to

Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. [1289] On the other hand, Mark

and Luke omit all mention of the name of the high priest. [1290]

Moreover [we find that] He was led away bound. For, as John informs us,

there were at hand there, in the multitude, a tribune and a cohort, and

the servants of the Jews. [1291] Then in Matthew we have these words:

"But Peter followed Him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and

went in and sat with the servants to see the end." [1292] To this

passage in the narrative Mark makes this addition: "And he warmed

himself at the fire." [1293] Luke also makes a statement which amounts

to the same, thus: "Peter followed afar off: and when they had kindled

a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sat down together, Peter sat

down among them." [1294] And John proceeds in these terms: "And Simon

Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. That disciple

(namely, that other) was known unto the high priest, and went in (as

John also tells us) with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But

Peter (as the same John adds) stood at the door without. Then went out

that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake

unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter." [1295] For the last

fact we are thus indebted to John's narrative. And in this way we see

how it came about that Peter also got inside, and was within the hall,

as the other evangelists mention. [1296]

20. Then Matthew's report goes on thus: "Now the chief priests and

elders and all the council sought false witness against Jesus, to put

Him to death, but found none: yea, though many false witnesses came,

yet found they none." [1297] Mark comes in here with the explanation,

that "their witness agreed not together." [1298] But, as Matthew

continues, "At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow

said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three

days." [1299] Mark states that there were also others who said, "We

have heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands,

and within three days I will build another made without hands. And

therefore (as Mark also observes in the same passage) their witness did

not agree together." [1300] Then Matthew gives us the following

relation: "And the high priest arose and said unto Him, Answerest thou

nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held

His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure

thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ,

the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said." [1301] Mark

reports the same passage in different terms, only he omits to mention

the fact that the high priest adjured Him. He makes it plain, however,

that the two expressions ascribed to Jesus as the reply to the high

priest,--namely, "Thou hast said," and, "I am," [1302] --really amount

to the same. For, as the said Mark puts it, the narrative goes on thus:

"And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the

right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." [1303] This

is just as Matthew also presents the passage, with the solitary

exception that he does not say that Jesus replied in the phrase "I am."

Again, Matthew goes on further in this strain: "Then the high priest

rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need

have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What

think ye? And they answered and said, He is guilty of death." [1304]

Mark's version of this is entirely to the same effect. So Matthew

continues, "Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him, and

others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto

us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?" [1305] Mark reports these

things in like manner. He also mentions a further fact, namely, that

they covered His face. [1306] On these incidents we have likewise the

testimony of Luke.

21. These things the Lord is understood to have passed through on to

the early morning in the high priest's house, to which He was first

conducted, and in which Peter was also tempted. With respect, however,

to this temptation of Peter, which took place during the time that the

Lord was enduring these injuries, the several evangelists do not

present the same order in the recital of the circumstances. For Matthew

and Mark first narrate the injuries offered to the Lord, and then this

temptation of Peter. Luke, again, first describes Peter's temptation,

and only after that the reproaches borne by the Lord; while John, on

the other hand, first recounts part of Peter's temptation, then

introduces some verses recording what the Lord had to bear, next

appends a statement to the effect that the Lord was sent away thence

(i.e. from Annas) to Caiaphas the high priest, and then at this point

resumes and sums up the relation which he had commenced of Peter's

temptation in the house to which he was first conducted, giving a full

account of that incident, thereafter reverting to the succession of

things befalling the Lord, and telling us how He was brought to

Caiaphas. [1307]

22. Accordingly, Matthew proceeds as follows: "Now Peter sat without in

the palace; and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with

Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not

what thou sayest. And as he went out into the porch, another maid saw

him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with

Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the

man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to

Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

Then began he to curse and to swear, saying that he knew not the man.

And immediately the cock crew." [1308] Such is Matthew's version. But

we are also given to understand that after he had gone outside, and

when he had now denied the Lord once, the first cock crew,--a fact

which Matthew does not specify, but which is intimated by Mark.

23. But it was not when he was outside at the gate that he denied the

Lord the second time. That took place after he had come back to the

fire-place. There was no need, however, to mention the precise time at

which he did thus return. Consequently Mark goes on with his narrative

of the incident in these terms: "And he went out into the porch, and

the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that

stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again." [1309] This is

not the same maid, however, as the former one, but another, as Matthew

tells us. Nay, we gather further that on the occasion of the second

denial he was addressed by two parties, namely, by the maid who is

mentioned by Matthew and Mark, and also by another person who is

noticed by Luke. For Luke's account runs in this style: "And Peter

followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the

hall, and were sat down together, Peter sat down among them. But a

certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked

upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied Him,

saying, Woman, I know Him not. And after a little while, another saw

him, and said, "Thou art also of them." [1310] Now the clause, "And

after a little while," which Luke introduces, covers the period during

which [we may suppose that] Peter went out and the first cock crew. By

this time, however, he had come in again; and thus we can understand

the consistency of John's narrative, which informs us that he denied

the Lord the second time as he stood by the fire. For in his version of

Peter's first denial, John not only says nothing about the first

crowing of the cock (which holds good of the other evangelists, too,

with the exception of Mark), but also leaves unnoticed the fact that it

was as he sat by the fire that the maid recognised him. For all that

John says there is this, "Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto

Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am

not." [1311] Then he brings in the statement which he deemed it right

to make on the subject of what took place with Jesus in that same

house. His record of this is to the following effect: "And the servants

and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was

cold. And they warmed themselves; and Peter stood with them, and warmed

himself." [1312] Here, therefore, we may suppose Peter to have gone

out, and by this time to have come in again. For at first he was

sitting by the fire; and after a space, as we gather, he had returned,

and commenced to stand [by the hearth].

24. It may be, however, that some one will say to us: Peter had not

actually gone out as yet, but had only risen with the purpose of going

out. This may be the allegation of one who is of opinion that the

second interrogation and denial took place when Peter was outside at

the door. Let us therefore look at what follows in John's narrative. It

is to this effect: "The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples,

and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I

ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews

always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me?

ask them which heard me what I have said unto them: behold, they know

what I said. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which

stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou

the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear

witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me? And Annas sent

Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest." [1313] This certainly shows us

that Annas was high priest. For Jesus had not been sent to Caiaphas as

yet, when the question was thus put to Him, "Answerest thou the high

priest so?" Mention is also made of Annas and Caiaphas as high priests

by Luke at the beginning of his Gospel. [1314] After these statements,

John reverts to the account which he had previously begun of Peter's

denial. Thus he brings us back to the house in which the incidents took

place which he has recorded, and from which Jesus was sent away to

Caiaphas, to whom He was being conducted at the commencement of this

scene, as Matthew has informed us. [1315] Moreover, it is in the way of

a recapitulation that John records the matters regarding Peter which he

has introduced at this point. Falling back upon his narration of that

incident with the view of making up a complete account of the threefold

denial, he proceeds thus: "And Simon stood and warmed himself. They

said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He

denied it, and said, I am not." [1316] Here, therefore, we find that

Peter's second denial occurred, not when he was at the door, but as he

was standing by the fire. This, however, could not have been the case,

had he not returned by this time after having gone outside. For it is

not that by this second occasion he had actually gone out, and that the

other maid who is referred to saw him there outside; but the matter is

put as if it was on his going out that she saw him; or, in other words,

it was when he rose to go out that she observed him, and said to those

who were there,--that is, to those who were gathered by the fire

inside, within the court,--"This fellow was also with Jesus of

Nazareth." Then we are to suppose that the man who had thus gone

outside, on hearing this assertion, came in again, and swore to those

who were now inimically disposed, "I do not know the man." [1317] In

like manner, Mark also says of this same maid, that "she began to say

to them that stood by, This is one of them." [1318] For this damsel was

speaking not to Peter, but to those who had remained there when he went

out. At the same time, she spoke in such a manner that he heard her

words; whereupon he came back and stood again by the fire, and met

their words with a negative. Then we have the statement made by John in

these terms: "They said, Art not thou also one of his disciples?" We

understand this question to have been addressed to him on his return as

he stood there; and we also recognise the harmony in which this stands

with the position that on this occasion Peter had to do not only with

that other maid who is mentioned by Matthew and Mark in connection with

this second denial, but also with that other person who is introduced

by Luke. This is the reason why John uses the plural, "They said." The

explanation then may be, that when the maid said to those who were with

her in the court as he went out, "This is one of them," he heard her

words and returned with the purpose of clearing himself, as it were, by

a denial. Or, in accordance with the more probable theory, we may

suppose that he did not catch what was said about him as he went out,

and that on his return the maid and the other person who is introduced

by Luke addressed him thus, "Art not thou also one of his disciples?"

that he met them with a denial, "and said, I am not;" and further, that

when this other person of whom Luke speaks insisted more

pertinaciously, and said, "Surely thou art one of them," Peter answered

thus, "Man, I am not." Still, when we compare together all the

statements made by the several evangelists on this subject, we come

clearly to the conclusion, that Peter's second denial took place, not

when he was at the door, but when he was within, by the fire in the

court. It becomes evident, therefore, that Matthew and Mark, who have

told us how he went without, have left the fact of his return unnoticed

simply with a view to brevity.

25. Accordingly, let us next examine into the consistency of the

evangelists so far as the third denial is concerned, which we have

previously instanced in the statement given by Matthew only. Mark then

goes on with his version in these terms: "And a little after, they that

stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them; for thou art

a Galil�an. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this

man of whom ye speak. And immediately the second time the cock crew."

[1319] Luke, again, continues his narrative, relating the same incident

in this fashion: "And about the space of one hour after, another

confidently affirmed, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he

is a Galil�an. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And

immediately while he yet spake the cock crew." [1320] John follows with

his account of Peter's third denial, which is thus given: "One of the

servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off,

saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied

again; and immediately the cock crew." [1321] Now what precise period

of time is meant under the phrase, "a little after," which is employed

by Matthew and Mark, is made clear by Luke, when he says, "And about

the space of one hour after." John, however, conveys no intimation of

this space of time. Again, with respect to the circumstance that

Matthew and Mark use the plural number instead of the singular, and

speak of the persons who were engaged with Peter, while Luke mentions

only a single individual, and John, too, specifies but one,

particularizing him further as kinsman to him whose ear Peter cut off;

we may easily explain it either by understanding Matthew and Mark to

have adopted a familiar method of speech here in employing the plural

number simply instead of the singular, or by supposing that one of the

persons present--one who knew Peter and had seen him--took the lead in

making the declaration, and that the rest, imitating his confidence,

joined him in pressing the assertion upon Peter. If this is the case,

then two of the evangelists have given the general statement, using

simply the plural number; while the other two have preferred to

particularize only the one special individual who played the chief part

in the transaction. But, once more, Matthew affirms that the words,

"Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee," were

spoken to Peter himself. In like manner, John tells us that the

question, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" was addressed

directly to Peter. But Mark, on the other hand, gives us to understand

that the sentence, "Surely he is one of them, for he is also a

Galil�an," was what those who stood by said to each other about Peter.

And, in the same way, Luke indicates that the declaration uttered by

the other person, who said, "Of a truth, this fellow also was with him,

for he is a Galil�an," was not addressed to Peter, but was made

regarding Peter. These variations, however, may be explained either by

understanding the evangelists, who speak of Peter as the person

directly addressed, to have fairly reproduced the general sense,

inasmuch as what was spoken about the man in his own presence was much

the same as if it had been spoken immediately to him; or by supposing

that both these methods of address were actually practised, and that

the one has been noticed by the former evangelists, and the other by

the latter. Moreover, we take the second cockcrowing to have occurred

after the third denial, as Mark has expressly informed us.

26. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in these terms: "And Peter

remembered the word of Jesus which He had said unto him, Before the

cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept

bitterly." [1322] Mark, again, gives it thus: "And Peter called to mind

the word that Jesus had said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou

shall deny me thrice. And he began to weep." [1323] Luke's version is

as follows: "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter

remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the

cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept

bitterly." [1324] John says nothing about Peter's recollection and

weeping. Now, the statement made here by Luke, to the effect that "the

Lord turned and looked upon Peter," is one which requires more careful

consideration, with a view to its correct acceptance. For although

there are also inner halls (or courts), so named, it was in the outer

court (or hall) that Peter appeared on this occasion among the

servants, who were warming themselves along with him at the fire. And

it is not a credible supposition that Jesus was heard by the Jews in

this place, so that we might also understand the look referred to to

have been a look with the bodily eye. For Matthew presents us first

with this narrative: "Then did they spit in His face and buffeted Him;

and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy

unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?" [1325] And then he

follows this up immediately with the paragraph about Peter: "Now Peter

sat without in the palace." [1326] He would not, however, have used

this latter expression, had it not been the case that the things

previously alluded to were done to the Lord inside the house. And,

indeed, as we gather from Mark's version, these things took place not

simply in the interior, but also in the upper parts of the house. For,

after recording the said circumstances, Mark goes on thus: "And as

Peter was beneath in the palace." [1327] Thus, as Matthew's words, "Now

Peter sat without in the palace," show us that the things previously

mentioned took place inside the house, so Mark's words, "And as Peter

was beneath in the palace," indicate that they were done not only in

the interior, but in the upper parts of the house. But if this is the

case, how could the Lord have looked on Peter with the actual glance of

the bodily eye? These considerations bring me to the conclusion, that

the look in question was one cast upon Peter from Heaven, the effect of

which was to bring up before his mind the number of times he had now

denied [his Master], and the declaration which the Lord had made to him

prophetically, and in this way (the Lord thus looking mercifully upon

him [1328] ), to lead him to repent, and to weep salutary tears. The

expression, therefore, will be a parallel to other modes of speech

which we employ daily, as when we thus pray, "Lord, look upon me;" or

as when, in reference to one who has been delivered by the divine mercy

from some danger or trouble, we say that the "Lord looked upon him." In

the Scriptures, also, we find such words as these: "Look upon me and

hear me;" [1329] and "Return, [1330] O Lord, and deliver my soul."

[1331] And, according to my judgment, a similar view is to be taken of

the expression adopted here, when it is said that "the Lord turned and

looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord." Finally,

we have to notice how, while it is the more usual practice with the

evangelists to employ the name "Jesus" in preference to the word "Lord"

in their narratives, Luke has used the latter term exclusively in the

said sentence, saying expressly, "The Lord' turned and looked upon

Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord:'" whereas Matthew and

Mark have passed over this "look" in silence, and consequently have

said that Peter remembered not the word of the "Lord," but the word of

"Jesus." From this, therefore, we may gather that the "look" thus

proceeding from Jesus was not one with the eyes of the human body, but

a look cast from Heaven. [1332]

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[1288] Matt. xxvi. 57.

[1289] John xviii. 13.

[1290] Mark xiv. 53; Luke xxii. 54.

[1291] John xviii. 12.

[1292] Matt. xxvi. 58.

[1293] Mark xiv. 54.

[1294] Luke xxii. 54, 55.

[1295] John xviii. 15-18.

[1296] [It is implied here that the denials of Peter took place in the

house of Annas, and also that Matthew and Mark, in their account of the

night examination, refer to the same event described by John (xviii.

19-23). The objection to this is found in the explicit statement of

Matthew (xxvi. 57) in regard to Caiaphas.--R.]

[1297] Matt. xxvi. 59, 60.

[1298] Mark xiv. 56.

[1299] Matt. xxvi. 61.

[1300] Mark xiv. 57-59.

[1301] Matt. xxvi. 62-64.

[1302] Mark xiv. 62.

[1303] Mark xiv. 62.

[1304] Matt. xxvi. 65, 66.

[1305] Matt. xxvi. 67, 68.

[1306] Mark xiv. 65.

[1307] [The evangelists indicate three distinct episodes of recognition

and denial, but do not refer to the same facts in detail. This Augustin

seems to apprehend.--R.]

[1308] Matt. xxvi. 69-74.

[1309] Mark xiv. 68-70.

[1310] Luke xxii. 54-58.

[1311] John xviii. 17.

[1312] John xviii. 18.

[1313] John xviii. 19-24.

[1314] Luke iii. 2.

[1315] Matt. xxviii. 57. [See note on � 19. Augustin's Latin text in

John xviii. 24, et misit eum, etc., agrees in tense with the Greek. The

Authorized Version incorrectly renders, "Now Annas had sent," etc. The

Revised Version has, "Annas therefore sent," The theory of two distinct

night examinations (before Annas first, and then before Caiphas) agrees

best with the literal sense. Both may have occupied parts of the same

house.--R.]

[1316] John xviii. 25.

[1317] Matt. xxviii. 71.

[1318] Mark xiv. 69.

[1319] Mark xiv. 70-72.

[1320] Luke xxii. 59, 60.

[1321] John xviii. 26, 27.

[1322] Matt. xxvi. 75.

[1323] Mark xiv. 72: the words, "when he thought thereon," being

omitted. [There is nothing omitted. The difficult Greek term (epibalon)

is explained by "when he thought thereon" in the Authorized Version.

Augustin's view is given in Revised Version margin, "And he began to

weep."--R.]

[1324] Luke xxii. 61, 62.

[1325] Matt. xxvi. 67, 68.

[1326] Atrio, court. [The Revised Version properly renders the terms

referring to the "court," etc. "Palace" (Authorized Version) is

misleading.--R.]

[1327] Mark xiv. 66.

[1328] Or, regarding him, respiciente.

[1329] Ps. xiii. 3.

[1330] Converte.

[1331] Ps. vi. 4.

[1332] [This fanciful interpretation is unnecessary. The inner court of

the large Jewish house, with rooms looking upon it, would allow place

for all the incidents, without any departure from the simple historical

sense.--R.]

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Chapter VII.--Of the Thorough Harmony of the Evangelists in the

Different Accounts of What Took Place in the Early Morning, Previous to

the Delivery of Jesus to Pilate; And of the Question Touching the

Passage Which is Quoted on the Subject of the Price Set Upon the Lord,

and Which is Ascribed to Jeremiah by Matthew, Although No Such

Paragraph is Found in the Writings of that Prophet.

27. Matthew next proceeds as follows: "When the morning was come, all

the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus,

to put Him to death; and when they had bound Him, they led Him away,

and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor." [1333] Mark's

version is to the like effect: "And straightway in the morning, the

chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the

whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried Him away, and delivered Him

to Pilate." [1334] Luke, again, after completing his account of Peter's

denial, recapitulates what Jesus had to endure when it was now about

daybreak, as it appears, and continues his narrative in the following

connection: "And the men that held Jesus mocked Him, and smote Him; and

when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face, and asked

Him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things

blasphemously spake they against Him. And as soon as it was day, the

elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes came

together, and led Him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ?

tell us. And He said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe; and

if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter

shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then

said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye

say that I am. And they said, What need we further witness? For we

ourselves have heard of His own mouth. And the whole multitude of them

arose, and led Him unto Pilate." [1335] Luke has thus recorded all

these things. His statement contains certain facts which are also

related by Matthew and Mark; namely, that the Lord was asked whether He

was the Son of God, and that He made this reply, "I say unto you,

hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of

power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." And we gather that these

things took place when the day was now breaking, because Luke's

expression is, "And as soon as it was day." Thus Luke's narrative is

similar to those of the others, although he also introduces something

which these others have left unnoticed. We gather further, that when it

was yet night, the Lord faced the ordeal of the false witnesses,--a

fact which is recorded briefly by Matthew and Mark, and which is passed

over in silence by Luke, who, however, has told the story of what was

done when the dawn was coming in. The former two--namely, Matthew and

Mark--have given connected narratives of all that the Lord passed

through until early morning. After that, however, they have reverted to

the story of Peter's denial; on the conclusion of which they have come

back upon the events of the early morning, and have introduced the

other circumstances which remained for recital with a view to the

completion of their account of what befell the Lord. [1336] But up to

this point they have given no account of the occurrences belonging

specifically to the morning. [1337] In like manner John, after

recording what was done with the Lord as fully as he deemed requisite,

and after telling also the whole story of Peter's denial, continues his

narrative in these terms: "Then lead they Jesus to Caiaphas, [1338]

unto the hall of judgment. And it was early." [1339] Here we might

suppose either that there had been something imperatively requiring

Caiaphas' presence in the hall of judgment, and that he was absent on

the occasion when the other chief priests held an inquiry on the Lord;

or else that the hall of judgment was in his house; and that yet from

the beginning of this scene they had thus only been leading Jesus away

to the personage in whose presence He was at last actually conducted.

But as they brought the accused person in the character of one already

convicted, and as it had previously approved itself to Caiaphas'

judgment that Jesus should die, there was no further delay in

delivering Him over to Pilate, with a view to His being put to death.

[1340] And thus it is that Matthew here relates what took place between

Pilate and the Lord.

28. First, however, he makes a digression with the purpose of telling

the story of Judas' end, which is related only by him. His account is

in these terms: "Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that

He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces

of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, in

that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to

us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the

temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief

priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put

them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took

counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was

valued, whom the children of Israel [1341] did value, and gave them for

the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." [1342]

29. Now, if any one finds a difficulty in the circumstance that this

passage is not found in the writings of the prophet Jeremiah, and

thinks that damage is thus done to the veracity of the evangelist, let

him first take notice of the fact that this ascription of the passage

to Jeremiah is not contained in all the codices of the Gospels, and

that some of them state simply that it was spoken "by the prophet." It

is possible, therefore, to affirm that those codices deserve rather to

be followed which do not contain the name of Jeremiah. For these words

were certainly spoken by a prophet, only that prophet was Zechariah. In

this way the supposition is, that those codices are faulty which

contain the name of Jeremiah, because they ought either to have given

the name of Zechariah or to have mentioned no name at all, as is the

case with a certain copy, merely stating that it was spoken "by the

prophet, saying," which prophet would assuredly be understood to be

Zechariah. However, let others adopt this method of defence, if they

are so minded. For my part, I am not satisfied with it; and the reason

is, that a majority of codices contain the name of Jeremiah, and that

those critics who have studied the Gospel with more than usual care in

the Greek copies, report that they have found it stand so in the more

ancient Greek exemplars. I look also to this further consideration,

namely, that there was no reason why this name should have been added

[subsequently to the true text], and a corruption thus created; whereas

there was certainly an intelligible reason for erasing the name from so

many of the codices. For venturesome inexperience might readily have

done that, when perplexed with the problem presented by the fact that

this passage could not be found in Jeremiah. [1343]

30. How, then, is the matter to be explained, but by supposing that

this has been done in accordance with the more secret counsel of that

providence of God by which the minds of the evangelists were governed?

For it may have been the case, that when Matthew was engaged in

composing his Gospel, the word Jeremiah occurred to his mind, in

accordance with a familiar experience, instead of Zechariah. Such an

inaccuracy, however, he would most undoubtedly have corrected (having

his attention called to it, as surely would have been the case, by some

who might have read it while he was still alive in the flesh), had he

not reflected that [perhaps] it was not without a purpose that the name

of the one prophet had been suggested instead of the other in the

process of recalling the circumstances (which process of recollection

was also directed by the Holy Spirit), and that this might not have

occurred to him had it not been the Lord's purpose to have it so

written. If it is asked, however, why the Lord should have so

determined it, there is this first and most serviceable reason, which

deserves our most immediate consideration, namely, that some idea was

thus conveyed of the marvellous manner in which all the holy prophets,

speaking in one spirit, continued in perfect unison with each other in

their utterances,--a circumstance certainly much more calculated to

impress the mind than would have been the case had all the words of all

these prophets been spoken by the mouth of a single individual. The

same consideration might also fitly suggest the duty of accepting

unhesitatingly whatever the Holy Spirit has given expression to through

the agency of these prophets, and of looking upon their individual

communications as also those of the whole body, and on their collective

communications as also those of each separately. If, then, it is the

case that words spoken by Jeremiah are really as much Zechariah's as

Jeremiah's, and, on the other hand, that words spoken by Zechariah are

really as much Jeremiah's as they are Zechariah's, what necessity was

there for Matthew to correct his text when he read over what he had

written, and found that the one name had occurred to him instead of the

other? Was it not rather the proper course for him to bow to the

authority of the Holy Spirit, under whose guidance he certainly felt

his mind to be placed in a more decided sense than is the case with us,

and consequently to leave untouched what he had thus written, in

accordance with the Lord's counsel and appointment, with the intent to

give us to understand that the prophets maintain so complete a harmony

with each other in the matter of their utterances that it becomes

nothing absurd, but, in fact, a most consistent thing for us to credit

Jeremiah with a sentence originally spoken by Zechariah? [1344] For if,

in these days of ours, a person, desiring to bring under our notice the

words of a certain individual, happens to mention the name of another

by whom the words were not actually uttered, [1345] but who at the same

time is the most intimate friend and associate of the man by whom they

were really spoken; and if forthwith recollecting that he has given the

one name instead of the other, he recovers himself and corrects the

mistake, but does it nevertheless in some such way as this, "After all,

what I said was not amiss;" what would we take to be meant by this, but

just that there subsists so perfect a unison of sentiment between the

two parties--that is to say, the man whose words the individual in

question intended to repeat, and the second person whose name occurred

to him at the time instead of that of the other--that it comes much to

the same thing to represent the words to have been spoken by the former

as to say that they were uttered by the latter? How much more, then, is

this a usage which might well be understood and most particularly

commended to our attention in the case of the holy prophets, so that we

might accept the books composed by the whole series of them, as if they

formed but a single book written by one author, in which no discrepancy

with regard to the subjects dealt with should be supposed to exist, as

none would be found, and in which there would be a more remarkable

example of consistency and veracity than would have been the case had a

single individual, even the most learned, been the enunciator of all

these sayings? Therefore, while there are those, whether unbelievers or

merely ignorant men, who endeavour to find an argument here to help

them in demonstrating a want of harmony between the holy evangelists,

men of faith and learning, on the other hand, ought rather to bring

this into the service of proving the unity which characterizes the holy

prophets. [1346]

31. I have also another reason (the fuller discussion of which must be

reserved, I think, for another opportunity, in order to prevent the

present discourse from extending to larger limits than may be allowed

by the necessity which rests upon us to bring this work to a

conclusion) to offer in explanation of the fact that the name of

Jeremiah has been permitted, or rather directed, by the authority of

the Holy Spirit, to stand in this passage instead of that of Zechariah.

It is stated in Jeremiah that he bought a field from the son of his

brother, and paid him money for it. That sum of money is not given,

indeed, under the name of the particular price which is found in

Zechariah, namely, thirty pieces of silver; but, on the other hand,

there is no mention of the buying of the field in Zechariah. Now, it is

evident that the evangelist has interpreted the prophecy which speaks

of the thirty pieces of silver as something which has received its

fulfilment only in the Lord's case, so that it is made to stand for the

price set upon Him. But again, that the words which were uttered by

Jeremiah on the subject of the purchase of the field have also a

bearing upon the same matter, may have been mystically signified by the

selection thus made in introducing [into the evangelical narrative] the

name of Jeremiah, who spoke of the purchase of the field, instead of

that of Zechariah, to whom we are indebted for the notice of the thirty

pieces of silver. In this way, on perusing first the Gospel, and

finding the name of Jeremiah there, and then, again, on perusing

Jeremiah, and failing there to discover the passage about the thirty

pieces of silver, but seeing at the same time the section about the

purchase of the field, the reader would be taught to compare the two

paragraphs together, and get at the real meaning of the prophecy, and

learn how it also stands in relation to this fulfilment of prophecy

which was exhibited in the instance of our Lord. For [it is also to be

remarked that] Matthew makes the following addition to the passage

cited, namely, "Whom the children of Israel did value; and gave them

the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Now, these words are not

to be found either in Zechariah or in Jeremiah. Hence we must rather

take them to have been inserted with a nice and mystical meaning by the

evangelist, on his own responsibility,--the Lord having given him to

understand, by revelation, that a prophecy of the said tenor had a real

reference to this occurrence, which took place in connection with the

price set upon Christ. Moreover, in Jeremiah, the evidence of the

purchase of the field is ordered to be cast into an earthen vessel. In

like manner, we find in the Gospel that the money paid for the Lord was

used for the purchase of a potter's field, which field also was to be

employed as a burying-place for strangers. And it may be that all this

was significant of the permanence of the repose of those who sojourn

like strangers in this present world, and are buried with Christ by

baptism. For the Lord also declared to Jeremiah, that the said purchase

of the field was expressive of the fact that in that land [of Jud�a]

there would be a remnant of the people delivered from their captivity.

[1347] I judged it proper to give some sort of sketch [1348] of these

things, as I was calling attention to the kind of significance which a

really careful and painstaking study should look for in these

testimonies of the prophets, when they are reduced to a unity and

compared with the evangelical narrative. These, then, are the

statements which Matthew has introduced with reference to the traitor

Judas.

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[1333] Matt. xxvii. 1, 2.

[1334] Mark xv. 1, 2.

[1335] Luke xxii. 63-xxiii. 1. [That Luke's account gives in detail the

formal meeting of the Sanhedrin at daybreak in altogether probable,

since Matthew and Mark distinguish this assembly from the night

examination.--R.]

[1336] The text gives: ut inde c�tera contexerent quousque perducerent,

etc. Seven mss. read perduxerant, = as far as they had drawn out their

account, etc.

[1337] Matt. xxvi. 59-xxvii. 1, 2; Mark xiv. 55-xv. 1, 2.

[1338] Adducunt ergo Jesum ad Caiapham.

[1339] John xviii. 28.

[1340] In his 114 Tractate on John, Augustin again attempts to grapple

with the difficulty created here by the reading which was before him,

namely, to Caiaphas, instead of from Caiaphas. [The Greek text is "from

Caiaphas." The other reading is probably harmonistic error, of early

origin.--R.]

[1341] The text gives filii Israel, instead of a filiis Israel = they

of the children of Israel.

[1342] Matt. xxvii. 3-10.

[1343] [It is refreshing to find this exhibition of critical judgment

and candour. The critical canon respecting the lectio difficilier is

virtually accepted. The easier reading was suggested by Origen.--R.]

[1344] [The simplest explanation is that the name "Jeremiah" was

applied to the collection of prophetical books, in which it was placed

first by the Jews.--R.]

[1345] Reading a quo non dicta sint. Most of the mss. omit the non.

[1346] [This explanation is at variance with many of the healthy

expressions regarding inspiration which abound in Augustin's expository

writings.--R.]

[1347] See Jer. xxxii.

[1348] Reading delineanda. Four mss. give delibanda = proper to touch

upon.

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Chapter VIII.--Of the Absence of Any Discrepancies in the Accounts

Which the Evangelists Give of What Took Place in Pilate's Presence.

32. He next proceeds as follows: "And Jesus stood before the governor:

and the governor asked Him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews?

Jesus saith unto him, Thou sayest. And when He was accused of the chief

priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then saith Pilate unto Him,

Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And He

answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled

greatly. Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the

people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable

prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together,

Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas,

or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had

delivered Him. But when he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife

sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for

I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the

chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask

Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. But the governor answered and said unto

them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? And they

said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus

which is called Christ? They all say, Let him be crucified. The

governor said to them, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out

the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could

prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and

washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the

blood of this just person; see ye to it. Then answered all the people,

and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he

Barabbas unto them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to

them to be crucified." [1349] These are the things which Matthew has

reported to have been done to the Lord by Pilate.

33. Mark also presents an almost entire identity with the above, both

in language and in subject. The words, however, in which Pilate replied

to the people when they asked him to release one prisoner according to

the custom of the feast, are reported by this evangelist as follows:

"But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the

King of the Jews?" [1350] On the other hand, Matthew gives them thus:

"Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them,

Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is

called Christ?" There need be no difficulty in the circumstance that

Matthew says nothing about the people having requested that one should

be released unto them. But it may fairly be asked, what were the words

which Pilate actually uttered, whether these reported by Matthew, or

those recited by Mark. For there seems to be some difference between

these two forms of expression, namely, "Whom will ye that I release

unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?" and, "Will ye

that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" Nevertheless, as they

were in the habit of calling their kings "anointed ones," [1351] and

one might use the one term or the other, [1352] it is evident that what

Pilate asked them was whether they would have the King of the Jews,

that is, the Christ, released unto them. And it matters nothing to the

real identity in meaning that Mark, desiring simply to relate what

concerned the Lord Himself, has not mentioned Barabbas here. For, in

the report which he gives of their reply, he indicates with sufficient

clearness who the person was whom they asked to have released unto

them. His version is this: "But the chief priests moved the people,

that he should rather release Barabbas unto them." Then he proceeds to

add the sentence, "And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What

will ye then that I should do unto him whom ye call the King of the

Jews?" This makes it plain enough now, that in speaking of the King of

the Jews, Mark meant to express the very sense which Matthew intended

to convey by using the term "Christ." For kings were not called

"anointed ones" [1353] except among the Jews; and the form which

Matthew gives to the words in question is this, "Pilate saith unto

them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" So Mark

continues, "And they cried out again, Crucify him:" which appears thus

in Matthew, "They all say unto him, Let him be crucified." Again Mark

goes on, "Then Pilate said unto them Why, what evil hath he done? And

they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him." Matthew has not

recorded this passage; but he has introduced the statement, "When

Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was

made," and has also informed us how he washed his hands before the

people with the view of declaring himself innocent of the blood of that

just person (a circumstance not reported by Mark and the others). And

thus he has also shown us with all due plainness how the governor dealt

with the people with the intention of securing His release. This has

been briefly referred to by Mark, when he tells us that Pilate said,

"Why, what evil hath he done?" And thereupon Mark also concludes his

account of what took place between Pilate and the Lord in these terms:

"And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto

them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified."

The above is Mark's recital of what occurred in presence of the

governor. [1354]

34. Luke gives the following version of what took place in presence of

Pilate: "And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow

perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to C�sar, and

saying that he himself is Christ a king." [1355] The previous two

evangelists have not recorded these words, although they do mention the

fact that these parties accused Him. Luke is thus the one who has

specified the terms of the false accusations which were brought against

Him. On the other hand, he does not state that Pilate said to Him,

"Answerest thou nothing? behold, how many things they witness against

thee." Instead of introducing these sentences, Luke goes on to relate

other matters which are also reported by these two. Thus he continues:

"And Pilate asked Him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And He

answered him and said, Thou sayest." Matthew and Mark have likewise

inserted this fact, previous to the statement that Jesus was taken to

task for not answering His accusers. The truth, however, is not at all

affected by the order in which Luke has narrated these things; and as

little is it affected by the mere circumstance that one writer passes

over some incident without notice, which another expressly specifies.

We have an instance in what follows; namely, "Then said Pilate to the

chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. And they

were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching

throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. But when

Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean. And

as soon as he knew that He belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent

Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when

Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad; for he was desirous to see Him

of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him, and he hoped

to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned with Him in many

words; but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes

stood and vehemently accused Him. And Herod with his men of war set Him

at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent

Him again to Pilate. And the same day Herod and Pilate were made

friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves."

[1356] All these things are related by Luke alone, namely, the fact

that the Lord was sent by Pilate to Herod, and the account of what took

place on that occasion. At the same time, among the statements which he

makes in this passage, there are some bearing a resemblance to matters

which may be found reported by the other evangelists in connection with

different portions of their narrations. But the immediate object of

these others, however, was to recount simply the various things which

were done in Pilate's presence on to the time when the Lord was

delivered over to be crucified. In accordance with his own plan,

however, Luke makes the above digression with the view of telling what

occurred with Herod; and after that he reverts to the history of what

took place in the governor's presence. Thus he now continues as

follows: "And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and

the rulers and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man

unto me as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I having

examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those

things whereof ye accuse him." [1357] Here we notice that he has

omitted to mention how Pilate asked the Lord what answer He had to make

to His accusers. Thereafter he proceeds in these terms: "No, nor yet

Herod: for I sent you to him: and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done

unto him. I will therefore chastise him and release him. For of

necessity he must release one unto them at the feast. And they cried

out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us

Barabbas; who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder,

was cast into prison. Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus,

spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I

have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him and

let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He

might be crucified; and the voices of them [1358] prevailed." [1359]

The repeated effort which Pilate, in his desire to accomplish the

release of Jesus, thus made to gain the people's consent, is

satisfactorily attested by Matthew, although in a very few words, when

he says, "But when Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that

rather a tumult was made." For he would not have made such a statement

at all, had not Pilate exerted himself earnestly in that direction,

although at the same time he has not told us how often he made such

attempts to rescue Jesus from their fury. Accordingly, Luke concludes

his report of what took place in the governor's presence in this

fashion: "And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast

into prison, whom they desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will."

[1360]

35. Let us next take the account of these same incidents--that is to

say, those in which Pilate was engaged--as it is presented by John. He

proceeds thus: "And they themselves went not into the judgment-hall,

lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye

against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a

malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." [1361] We

must look into this passage in order to show that it contains nothing

inconsistent with Luke's version, which states that certain charges

were brought against Him, and also specifies their terms. For Luke's

words are these: "And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this

fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to C�sar,

saying that he himself is Christ a king." On the other hand, according

to the paragraph which I have now cited from John, the Jews seem to

have been unwilling to state any specific accusations, when Pilate

asked them, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" For their

reply was, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered

him up unto thee;" the purport of which was, that he should accept

their authority, cease to inquire what fault was alleged against Him,

and believe Him guilty for the simple reason that He had been

[reckoned] worthy of being delivered up by them to him. This being the

case, then, we ought to suppose that both these versions report words

which were actually said, both the one before us at present, and the

one given by Luke. For among the multitude of sayings and replies which

passed between the parties, these writers have made their own

selections as far as their judgment allowed them to go, and each of

them has introduced into his narrative just what he considered

sufficient. It is also true that John himself mentions certain charges

which were alleged against Him, and which we shall find in their proper

connections. Here, then, he proceeds thus: "Then said Pilate unto them,

Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews, therefore,

said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death; that

the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what

death He should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again,

and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And

Jesus answered, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell

it thee of me?" [1362] This again may seem not to harmonize with what

is recorded by the others,--namely, "Jesus answered, Thou

sayest,"--unless it is made clear in what follows that the one thing

was said as well as the other. Hence he gives us to understand that the

matters which he records next are [not to be regarded as] things never

actually uttered by the Lord, but are rather to be considered things

which have been passed over in silence by the other evangelists. Mark,

therefore, what remains of his narrative. It proceeds thus: "Pilate

answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have

delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom

is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my

servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is

my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a

king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king." [1363]

Behold, here is the point at which he comes to that which the other

evangelists have reported. And then he goes on, the Lord being still

the speaker, to recite other matters which the rest have not recorded.

His terms are these: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I

into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one

that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is

truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and

saith unto them, I find no fault in him. But ye have a custom, that I

should release unto you one at the passover: will ye, therefore, that I

release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all again, Not

this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate,

therefore, took Jesus, and scourged Him. And the soldiers platted a

crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple

robe; and they came to Him and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they

smote Him with their hands. Pilate went forth again, and saith unto

them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no

fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and

the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the

chief priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying,

Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and

crucify him; for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have

a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son

of God." [1364] This may fit in with what Luke reports to have been

stated in the accusation brought by the Jews,--namely, "We found this

fellow perverting our nation,"--so that we might append here the reason

given for it, "Because he made himself the Son of God." John then goes

on in the following strain: "When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying,

he was the more afraid, and went again into the judgment-hall, and

saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then

saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that

I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus

answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were

given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath

the greater sin. From thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the

Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not C�sar's

friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against C�sar."

[1365] This may very well agree with what Luke records in connection

with the said accusation brought by the Jews. For after the words, "We

found this fellow perverting our nation," he has added the clause, "And

forbidding to give tribute to C�sar, and saying that he himself is

Christ a king." This will also offer a solution for the difficulty

previously referred to, namely, the occasion which might seem to be

given for supposing John to have indicated that no specific charge was

laid by the Jews against the Lord, when they answered and said unto

him, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up

unto thee." John then continues in the following strain: "When Pilate

therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in

the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the

Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about

the sixth hour; and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King? But they

cried out, Away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I

crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but

C�sar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified."

[1366] The above is John's version of what was done by Pilate. [1367]

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[1349] Matt. xxvii. 11-26.

[1350] Mark xv. 9.

[1351] Or, Christs, Christos.

[1352] The text gives: et qui dixit illum an illum.

[1353] Or, Christs, Christos.

[1354] Mark xv. 2-15.

[1355] Luke xxiii. 2, 3.

[1356] Luke xxii. 4-12.

[1357] Luke xxiii. 13, 14.

[1358] The words, and of the chief priests, are omitted in the text.

[So the Greek text, according to the best authorities. Comp. Revised

Version.--R.]

[1359] Luke xxiii. 15-23.

[1360] Luke xxiii. 24, 25.

[1361] John xviii. 28-30.

[1362] John xviii. 31-34.

[1363] John xviii. 35-37.

[1364] John xviii. 37-xix. 7.

[1365] John xix. 8-12.

[1366] John xix. 13-16.

[1367] [Many harmonists, in view of the fact that Jesus had been

scourged before the events narrated in John xix. 2-16, place these

occurrences after the delivery of Jesus to be crucified. In � 36

Augustin defends the view that Matthew and Mark have varied from the

order. See also chap. xiii.--R.]

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Chapter IX.--Of the Mockery Which He Sustained at the Hands of Pilate's

Cohort, and of the Harmony Subsisting Among the Three Evangelists Who

Report that Scene, Namely, Matthew, Mark, and John.

36. We have now reached the point at which we may study the Lord's

passion, strictly so called, as it is presented in the narrative of

these four evangelists. Matthew commences his account as follows: "Then

the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and

gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him,

and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of

thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and

they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of

the Jews!" [1368] At the same stage in the narrative, Mark delivers

himself thus: "And the soldiers led Him away into the hall called

Pr�torium; and they called together the whole band. And they clothed

Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head,

and began to salute Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote

Him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon Him, and, bowing their

knees, worshipped Him." [1369] Here, therefore, we perceive that while

Matthew tells us how they "put on Him a scarlet robe," Mark speaks of

purple, with which He was clothed. The explanation may be that the said

scarlet robe was employed instead of the royal purple by these

scoffers. There is also a certain red-coloured purple which resembles

scarlet very closely. And it may also be the case that Mark has noticed

the purple which the robe contained, although it was properly scarlet.

Luke has left this without mention. On the other hand, previous to

stating how Pilate delivered Him up to be crucified, John has

introduced the following passage: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus,

and scourged Him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put

it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King

of the Jews! And they smote Him with their hands." [1370] This makes it

evident that Matthew and Mark have reported this incident in the way of

a recapitulation, and that it did not actually take place after Pilate

had delivered Him up to be crucified. For John informs us distinctly

enough that these things took place when He yet was with Pilate. Hence

we conclude that the other evangelists have introduced the occurrence

at that particular point, just because, having previously passed it by,

they recollected it there. This is also borne out by what Matthew

proceeds next to relate. He continues thus: "And they spit upon Him,

and took the reed, and smote Him on the head. And after that they had

mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on

Him, and led Him away to crucify Him." [1371] Here we are given to

understand that the taking the robe off Him and the clothing Him with

His own raiment were done at the close, when He was being led away.

This is given by Mark, as follows: "And when they had mocked Him, they

took off the purple from Him, and put His own clothes on Him." [1372]

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[1368] Matt. xxvii. 27-31.

[1369] Mark xv. 16-20.

[1370] John xix. 1-3.

[1371] Matt. xxvii. 30, 31.

[1372] Mark xv. 20.

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Chapter X.--Of the Method in Which We Can Reconcile the Statement Which

is Made by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, to the Effect that Another Person

Was Pressed into the Service of Carrying the Cross of Jesus, with that

Given by John, Who Says that Jesus Bore It Himself.

37. Matthew, accordingly, goes on with his narrative in these terms:

"And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him

they compelled to bear His cross." [1373] In like manner, Mark says:

"And they led Him out to be crucified. And they compelled one Simon, a

Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of

Alexander and Rufus, to bear His cross." [1374] Luke's version is also

to this effect: "And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one

Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country; and on him they laid the

cross, that he might bear it after Jesus." [1375] On the other hand,

John records the matter as follows: "And they took Jesus, and led Him

away. And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place

of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they

crucified Him." [1376] From all this we understand that Jesus was

carrying the cross Himself as He went forth into the place mentioned.

But on the way the said Simon, who is named by the other three

evangelists, was pressed into the service, and got the cross to carry

for the rest of the course until the spot was reached. Thus we find

that both circumstances really took place; namely, first the one

noticed by John, and thereafter the one instanced by the other three.

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[1373] Matt. xxvii. 32.

[1374] Mark xv. 20, 21.

[1375] Luke xxiii. 26. [This probably implies that the afterpart of the

cross was laid upon Simon, not the whole of it. This obviates the

necessity for the explanation given by Augustin.--R.]

[1376] John xix. 16-18.

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Chapter XI.--Of the Consistency of Matthew's Version with that of Mark

in the Account of the Potion Offered Him to Drink, Which is Introduced

Before the Narrative of His Crucifixion.

38. Matthew then proceeds in these terms: "And they came unto a place

called Golgotha; that is to say, a place of a skull." [1377] So far as

the place is concerned, they are most unmistakeably at one. The same

Matthew next adds, "and they gave Him wine [1378] to drink, mingled

with gall; and when He had tasted thereof, He would not drink." [1379]

This is given by Mark as follows: "And they gave Him to drink wine

mingled with myrrh; and He received it not." [1380] Here we may

understand Matthew to have conveyed the same sense as Mark, when he

speaks of the wine being "mingled with gall." For the gall is mentioned

with a view to express the bitterness of the potion. And wine mingled

with myrrh is remarkable for its bitterness. The fact may also be that

gall and myrrh together made the wine exceedingly bitter. Again, when

Mark says that "He received it not," we understand the phrase to denote

that He did not receive it so as actually to drink it. He did taste it,

however, as Matthew certifies. Thus Mark's words, "He received it not,"

convey the same meaning as Matthew's version, "He would not drink." The

former, however, has said nothing about His tasting the potion.

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[1377] Matt. xxvii. 33.

[1378] Vinum. [So the correct Greek text. Comp. Revised Version.--R.]

[1379] Matt. xxvii. 34.

[1380] Mark xv. 23.

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Chapter XII.--Of the Concord Preserved Among All the Four Evangelists

on the Subject of the Parting of His Raiment.

39. Matthew goes on thus: "And after they crucified Him, they parted

His garments, casting lots: and sitting down, they watched Him." [1381]

Mark reports the same incident, as follows: "And crucifying Him, they

parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should

take." [1382] In like manner Luke says: "And they parted His raiment,

and cast lots. And the people stood beholding." [1383] The occurrence

is thus recorded briefly by the first three. But John gives us a more

detailed narrative of the method in which the act was gone about. His

version runs thus: "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus,

took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and

also His coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top

throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it,

but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be

fulfilled, which saith, They parted my garments, and for my vesture

they did cast lots." [1384]

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[1381] Matt. xxvii. 35, 36. The words, "that it might be fulfilled

which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them,

and upon my vesture did they cast lots," are omitted. [So the Greek

text, according to the best authorities. Comp. Revised Version.--R.]

[1382] Mark xv. 24.

[1383] Luke xxiii. 34, 35.

[1384] John xix. 23, 24.

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Chapter XIII.--Of the Hour of the Lord's Passion, and of the Question

Concerning the Absence of Any Discrepancy Between Mark and John in the

Article of the "Third" Hour and the "Sixth."

40. Matthew continues thus: "And they set up over His head His

accusation written, This is Jesus the King of the Jews.'" [1385] Mark,

on the other hand, before making any such statement, inserts these

words: "And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him." [1386] For

he subjoins these terms immediately after he has told us about the

parting of the garments. This, then, is a matter which we must consider

with special care, lest any serious error emerge. For there are some

who entertain the idea that the Lord was certainly crucified at the

third hour; and that thereafter, from the sixth hour on to the ninth,

the darkness covered the land. According to this theory, we should have

to understand three hours to have passed between the time when He was

crucified and the time when the darkness occurred. And this view might

certainly be held with all due warrant, were it not that John has

stated that it was about the sixth hour when Pilate sat down on the

judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in Hebrew,

Gabbatha. For his version goes on in this manner: "And as it was the

preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith

unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him,

away with him! crucify him! Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your

king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but C�sar. Then

delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified." [1387] If Jesus,

therefore, was delivered up to the Jews to be crucified when it was

about the sixth hour, and when Pilate was then sitting upon the

judgment-seat, how could He have been crucified at the third hour, as

some have been led to suppose, in consequence of a misinterpretation of

the words of Mark?

41. First, then, let us consider what the hour really is at which He

can have been crucified; and then we shall see how it happens that Mark

has reported Him to have been crucified at the third hour. Now it was

about the sixth hour when Pilate, who was sitting, as has been stated,

at the time upon the judgment-seat, delivered Him up to be crucified.

The expression is not that it was the sixth hour fully, but only that

it was about the sixth hour; that is to say, the fifth hour was

entirely gone, and so much of the sixth hour had also been entered

upon. These writers, however, could not naturally use such

phraseologies as the fifth hour and a quarter, or the fifth hour and a

third, or the fifth hour and a half or anything of that kind. For the

Scriptures have the well-known habit of dealing simply with the round

numbers, without mention of fractions, especially in matters of time.

We have an example of this in the case of the "eight days," after

which, as they tell us, He went up into a mountain, [1388] --a space

which is given by Matthew and Mark as "six days after," [1389] because

they look simply at the days between the one from which the reckoning

commences and the one with which it closes. This is particularly to be

kept in view when we notice how measured the terms are which John

employs here. For he says not "the sixth hour," but "about the sixth

hour." And yet, even had he not expressed himself in that way, but had

stated merely that it was the sixth hour, it would still be competent

for us to interpret the phrase in accordance with the method of speech

with which we are, as I said, familiar in Scripture, namely, the use of

the round numbers. And thus we could still take the sense quite fairly

to be that, on the completion of the fifth hour and the commencement of

the sixth, those matters were going on which are recorded in connection

with the Lord's crucifixion, until, on the close of the sixth hour, and

when He was hanging on the cross, the darkness occurred which is

attested by three of the evangelists, namely, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

[1390]

42. In due order, let us now inquire how it is that Mark, after telling

us that they parted His garments when they were crucifying Him, casting

lots upon them what every man should take, has appended this statement,

"And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him." [1391] Now here he

had already made the declaration, "And crucifying Him, they parted His

garments;" and the other evangelists also certify that, when He was

crucified, they parted His garments. If, therefore, it was Mark's

design to specify the time at which the incident took place, it would

have been enough for him to say simply, "And it was the third hour."

What reason, then, can be assigned for his having added these words,

"And they crucified Him," but that, under the summary statement thus

inserted, he intended significantly to suggest something which might be

found a subject for consideration, when the Scripture in question was

read in times in which the whole Church knew perfectly well what hour

it was at which the Lord was hanged upon the tree, and the means were

possessed for either correcting the writer's error or confuting his

want of truth? But, inasmuch as he was quite aware of the fact that the

Lord was suspended [on the cross] by the soldiers, and not by the Jews,

as John most plainly affirms, [1392] his hidden object [in bringing in

the said clause] was to convey the idea that those parties who cried

out that He should be crucified were the Lord's real crucifiers, rather

than the men who simply discharged their service to their chief in

accordance with their duty. We understand, accordingly, that it was the

third hour when the Jews cried out that the Lord should be crucified.

And thus it is intimated most truly that these persons did really

crucify Christ at the time when they cried out. All the more, too, did

this merit notice, because they were unwilling to have the appearance

of having done the deed themselves, and with that view delivered Him up

unto Pilate, as their words indicate clearly enough in the report given

by John. For, after stating how Pilate said to them, "What accusation

bring ye against this man?" his version proceeds thus: "They answered

and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have

delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him,

and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him,

It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." [1393] Consequently,

what they were especially unwilling to have the appearance of doing,

that Mark here shows that they actually did do at the third hour. For

he judged most truly that the Lord's murderer was rather the tongue of

the Jews than the hand of the soldiers.

43. Moreover, if any one alleges that it was not the third hour when

the Jews cried out for the first time in the terms referred to, he

simply displays himself most insanely to be an enemy to the Gospel;

unless perchance he can prove himself able to produce some new solution

of the problem. For he cannot possibly establish the position that it

was not the third hour at the period alluded to. And, consequently, we

surely ought rather to credit a veracious evangelist than the

contentious suspicions of men. But you may ask, How can you prove that

it was the third hour? I answer, Because I believe the evangelists; and

if you also believe them, show me how the Lord can have been crucified

both at the sixth hour and at the third. For, to make a frank

acknowledgment, we cannot get over the statement of the sixth hour in

John's narrative; and Mark records the third hour: and, therefore, if

both of us accept the testimony of these writers, show me any other way

in which both these notes of time can be taken as literally correct. If

you can do so, I shall most cheerfully acquiesce. For what I prize is

not my own opinion, but the truth of the Gospel. And I could wish,

indeed, that more methods of clearing up this problem might be

discovered by others. Until that be done, however, join me, if it

please you, in taking advantage of the solution which I have

propounded. For if no explanation can be found, this one will suffice

of itself. But if another can be devised, when it is unfolded, we shall

make our choice. Only don't consider it an inevitable conclusion that

any one of all the four evangelists has stated what is false, or has

fallen into error in a position of authority at once so elevated and so

holy.

44. Again, if any one affirms his ability to prove it not to have been

the third hour when the Jews cried out in the terms in question,

because, after Mark's statement to this effect, "And Pilate answered,

and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him

whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify

him," we find no further details introduced into the narrative of the

same evangelist, but are led on at once to the statement, that the Lord

was delivered up by Pilate to be crucified--an act which John mentions

to have taken place about the sixth hour;--I repeat, if any one adduces

such an argument, let him understand that many things have been passed

by without record here, which occurred in the interval when Pilate was

engaged in looking out for some means by which he could rescue Jesus

from the Jews, and was exerting himself most strenuously by every means

in his power to withstand their maddened desires. For Matthew says,

"Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do, then, with Jesus, which is

called Christ? They all say, Let him be crucified." Then we affirm it

to have been the third hour. And when the same Matthew goes on to add

the sentence, "But when Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but

that rather a tumult was made," we understand that a period of two

hours had passed, during the attempts made by Pilate to effect the

release of Jesus, and the tumults raised by the Jews in their efforts

to defeat him, and that the sixth hour had then commenced, previous to

the close of which those things took place which are related as

happening between the time when Pilate delivered up the Lord and the

oncoming of the darkness. Once more, as regards what Matthew records

above,--namely, "And when he was set down on the judgment-seat, his

wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man;

for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him,"

[1394] --we remark, that Pilate really took his seat upon the tribunal

at a later point, but that, among the earlier incidents which Matthew

was recounting, the account given of Pilate's wife came into his mind,

and he decided on inserting it in this particular connection, with the

view of preparing us for understanding how Pilate had an especially

urgent reason for wishing, even on to the last, not to deliver Him up

to the Jews.

45. Luke, again, after mentioning how Pilate said, "I will therefore

chastise him and let him go," tells us that the whole multitude then

cried out, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." [1395]

But perhaps they had not yet exclaimed, "Crucify him!" For Luke next

proceeds thus: "Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again

to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him!" [1396] This

is understood to have been at the third hour. Luke then continues in

these terms: "And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath

he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore

chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices

requiring that He might be crucified. And the voices of them

prevailed." [1397] Here, then, this evangelist also makes it quite

evident that there was a great tumult. With sufficient accuracy for the

purposes of my inquiry into the truth, we can further gather how long

the interval was after which he spoke to them in these terms, "Why,

what evil hath he done?" And when he adds thereafter, "They were

instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified, and the

voices of them prevailed," who can fail to perceive that this clamour

was made just because they saw that Pilate was unwilling to deliver the

Lord up to them? And, inasmuch as he was exceedingly reluctant to give

Him up, he did not certainly yield at present in a moment, but in

reality two hours and something more were passed by him in that state

of hesitancy.

46. Interrogate John in like manner, and see how strong this hesitancy

was on Pilate's part, and how he shrank from so shameful a service. For

this evangelist records these incidents much more fully, although even

he certainly does not mention all the occurrences which took up these

two hours and part of the sixth hour. After telling us how Pilate

scourged Jesus, and allowed the robe to be put on Him in derision by

the soldiers, and suffered Him to be subjected to ill-treatment and

many acts of mockery (all of which was permitted by Pilate, as I

believe, really with the view of mitigating their fury and keeping them

from persevering in their maddened desire for His death), John

continues his account in the following manner: "Pilate went forth

again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye

may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing

the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them,

Behold the man!" [1398] The object of this was, that they might gaze

upon that spectacle of ignominy and be appeased. But the evangelist

proceeds again: "When the chief priests therefore and officers saw Him,

they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him!" [1399] It was then

the third hour, as we maintain. Mark also what follows: "Pilate saith

unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him.

The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die,

because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard

that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the

judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave

him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me?

knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to

release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all

against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that

delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. From thenceforth Pilate

sought to release Him." [1400] Now, when it is said here that "Pilate

sought to release Him," how long a space of time may we suppose to have

been spent in that effort, and how many things may have been omitted

here among the sayings which were uttered by Pilate, or the

contradictions which were raised by the Jews, until these Jews gave

expression to the words which moved him, and made him yield? For the

writer goes on thus: "But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this

man go, thou art not C�sar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king

speaketh against C�sar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he

brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that

is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the

preparation of the passover, about the sixth hour." [1401] Thus, then,

between that exclamation of the Jews when they first cried out,

"Crucify him," at which period it was the third hour, and this moment

when he sat down on the judgment-seat, two hours had passed, which had

been taken up with Pilate's attempts to delay matters and the tumults

raised by the Jews; and by this time the fifth hour was quite spent,

and so much of the sixth hour had been entered. Then the narrative goes

on thus: "He saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out,

Away with him, away with him! crucify him!" [1402] But not even now was

Pilate so overcome by the apprehension of their bringing a charge

against himself as to be very ready to yield. For his wife had sent to

him when he was sitting at this time upon the judgment-seat,--an

incident which Matthew, who is the only one that records it, has given

by anticipation, introducing it before he comes to its proper place

(according to the order of time) in his narrative, and bringing it in

at another point which he judged opportune. In this way, Pilate, still

continuing his efforts to prevent further advances, said then to them,

"Shall I crucify your king?" Thereupon "the chief priests answered, We

have no king but C�sar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be

crucified." [1403] And in the time that passed when He was on the way,

and when He was crucified along with the two robbers, and when His

garments were parted and the possession of His coat was decided by lot,

and the various deeds of contumely were done to Him (for, while these

different things were going on, gibes were also cast at Him), the sixth

hour was fully spent, and the darkness came on, which is mentioned by

Matthew, Mark, and Luke. [1404]

47. Let such impious pertinacity therefore perish, and let it be

believed that the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified at once at the third

hour by the voice of the Jews, and at the sixth by the hands of the

soldiers. For during these tumults on the part of the Jews, and these

agitations on the side of Pilate, upwards of two hours elapsed from the

time when they burst out with the cry, "Crucify Him." But again, even

Mark, who studies brevity above all the other evangelists, has been

pleased to give a concise indication of Pilate's desire and of his

efforts to save the Lord's life. For, after giving us this statement,

"And they cried again, Crucify him" (in which he gives us to understand

that they had cried out before this, when they asked that Barabbas

might be released to them), he has appended these words: "Then Pilate

continued to say unto them, Why, what evil hath he done?" [1405] Thus

by one short sentence he has given us an idea of matters which took a

long time for their transaction. At the same time, however, keeping in

view the correct apprehension of his meaning, he does not say, "Then

Pilate said unto them," but expresses himself thus: "Then Pilate

continued to say unto them, Why, what evil hath he done?" For, if his

phrase had been "said," [1406] we might have understood him to mean

that such words were uttered only once. But, by adopting the terms,

"continued to say," [1407] he has made it clear enough to the

intelligent that Pilate spoke repeatedly, and in a number of ways. Let

us therefore consider how briefly Mark has expressed this as compared

with Matthew, how briefly Matthew as compared with Luke, how briefly

Luke as compared with John, while at the same time each of these

writers has introduced now one thing and now another peculiar to

himself. In fine, let us also consider how brief is even the narrative

given by John himself, as compared with the number of things which took

place, and the space of time occupied by their occurrence. And let us

give up the madness of opposition, and believe that two hours, and

something more, may quite well have passed in the interval referred to.

48. If any one, however, asserts that if this was the real state of the

case, Mark might have mentioned the third hour explicitly at the point

at which it really was the third hour, namely, when the voices of the

Jews were lifted up demanding that the Lord should be crucified; and,

further, that he might have told us plainly there that those

vociferators did really crucify Him at that time,--such a reasoner is

simply imposing laws upon the historians of truth in his own

overweening pride. For he might as well maintain that if he were

himself to be a narrator of these occurrences, they ought all to be

recorded just in the same way and the same order by all other writers

as they have been recorded by himself. Let him therefore be content to

reckon his own notion inferior to that of Mark the evangelist, who has

judged it right to insert the statement just at the point at which it

was suggested to him by divine inspiration. For the recollections of

those historians have been ruled by the hand of Him who rules the

waters, as it is written, according to His own good pleasure. For the

human memory moves [1408] through a variety of thoughts, and it is not

in any man's power to regulate either the subject which comes into his

mind or the time of its suggestion. Seeing, then, that those holy and

truthful men, in this matter of the order of their narrations,

committed the casualties of their recollections (if such a phrase may

be used) to the direction of the hidden power of God, to whom nothing

is casual, it does not become any mere man, in his low estate, removed

far from the vision of God, and sojourning distantly from Him, to say,

"This ought to have been introduced here;" for he is utterly ignorant

of the reason which led God to will its being inserted in the place it

occupies. The word of an apostle is to this effect: "But if our gospel

be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." [1409] And again he says: "To

the one indeed we are the savour of life unto life; to the other, the

savour of death unto death;" and adds immediately, "And who is

sufficient for these things?" [1410] --that is to say, who is

sufficient to comprehend how righteously that is done? The Lord Himself

expresses the same when He says, "I am come that they which see not

might see, and that they which see might be made blind." [1411] For it

is in the depth of the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God that

it comes to pass that of the same lump one vessel is made unto honour,

and another unto dishonour. [1412] And to flesh and blood it is said,

"O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" [1413] Who, then,

knows the mind of the Lord in the matter now under consideration? or

who hath been His counsellor, [1414] where He has in such wise ruled

the hearts of these evangelists in their recollections, and has raised

them to so commanding a position of authority in the sublime edifice of

His Church, that those very things which are capable of presenting the

appearance of contradictions in them become the means by which many are

made blind, deservedly given over to the lusts of their own heart, and

to a reprobate mind; [1415] and by which also many are exercised in the

thorough cultivation of a pious understanding, in accordance with the

hidden righteousness of the Almighty? For the language of a prophet in

speaking to the Lord is this: "Thy thoughts are exceeding deep. An

inconsiderate man will not know, and a foolish man will not understand

these things." [1416]

49. Moreover, I request and admonish those who read the statement

which, with the help of the Lord, has thus been elaborated by us, to

bear in mind this discourse, which I have thought it needful to

introduce in the present connection, in every similar difficulty which

may be raised in such inquiries, so that there may be no necessity for

repeating the same thing over and over again. Besides, any one who is

willing to clear himself of the hardness of impiety, and to give his

attention to the subject, will easily perceive how opportune the place

is in which Mark has inserted this notice of the third hour, so that

every one may there be led to bethink himself of an hour at which the

Jews really crucified the Lord, although they sought to transfer the

burden of the crime to the Romans, whether to the leaders among them or

to the soldiers, [as we see] when we come here upon the record of what

was done by the soldiers in the discharge of their duty. For this

writer says here, "And crucifying Him, they parted His garments,

casting lots upon them, what every man should take." [1417] And to whom

can this refer but to the soldiers, as is made manifest in John's

narrative? Thus, lest any one should leave the Jews out of account, and

make the conception of so great a crime lie against those soldiers,

Mark gives us here the statement, "And it was the third hour, and they

crucified Him,"--his object being to have those Jews rather discovered

to be the real crucifiers, who will be found by the careful

investigator in a position making it quite possible for them to have

cried out for the Lord's crucifixion at the third hour, while he

observes that what was done by the soldiers took place at the sixth

hour. [1418]

50. At the same time, however, there are not wanting persons who would

have the time of the preparation--which is referred to by John, when he

says, "And it was the preparation of the passover, about the sixth

hour"--understood under this third hour of the day, which was also the

period at which Pilate sat down upon the judgment-seat. In this way the

completion of the said third hour would appear to be the time when He

was crucified, and when He was now hanging on the tree. Other three

hours must then be supposed to have passed, at the end of which He gave

up the ghost. According to this idea, too, the darkness would have

commenced with the hour at which He died--that is to say, the sixth

hour of the day--and have lasted until the ninth. For these persons

affirm that the preparation of the passover of the Jews was indeed on

the day which was followed by the day of the Sabbath, because the days

of unleavened bread began with the said Sabbath; but that,

nevertheless, the true passover, which was being realized in the Lord's

passion, the passover not of the Jews, but of the Christians, began to

be prepared--that is, to have its parasceue--from the ninth hour of the

night onwards, inasmuch as the Lord was then being prepared for being

put to death by the Jews. For the term parasceue means by

interpretation "preparation." Between the said ninth hour of the night,

therefore, and His crucifixion, the period occurs which is called by

John the sixth hour of the parasceue, and by Mark the third hour of the

day; so that, according to this view, Mark has not introduced by way of

recapitulation into his record the hour at which the Jews cried out,

"Crucify him, crucify him," but has expressly mentioned the third hour

as the hour at which the Lord was nailed to the tree. What believer

would not receive this solution of the problem with favour, were it

only possible to find some point [in the narrative of incidents] in

connection with the said ninth hour, at which we could suppose, in due

consistency with other circumstances, the parasceue of our

passover--that is to say, the preparation of the death of Christ--to

have commenced. For, if we say that it began at the time when the Lord

was apprehended by the Jews, it was still but the first parts of the

night. If we hold that it was at the time when He was conducted to the

house of Caiaphas' father-in-law, where He was also heard by the chief

priests, the cock had not crowed at all as yet, as we gather from

Peter's denial, which took place only when the cock was heard. Again,

if we suppose it was at the time when He was delivered up to Pilate, we

have in the plainest terms the statement of Scripture, to the effect

that by this time it was morning. Consequently, it only remains for us

to understand that this parasceue of the passover--that is to say, the

preparation for the death of the Lord--commenced at the period when all

the chief priests, in whose presence He was first heard, answered and

said, "He is guilty of death," an utterance which we find reported both

by Matthew and by Mark; [1419] so that they are taken to have

introduced, in the form of a recapitulation, at a later stage, facts

relating to the denial of Peter, which in point of historical order had

taken place at an earlier point. And it is nothing unreasonable to

conjecture, that the time at which, as I have said, they pronounced Him

guilty of death, may very well have been the ninth hour of the night,

between which time and the hour at which Pilate sat down on the

judgment-seat there came in this sixth hour, as it is called--not,

however, the sixth hour of the day, but that of the parasceue--that is

to say, the preparation for the sacrifice of the Lord, which is the

true passover. And, on this theory, the Lord was suspended on the tree

when the sixth hour of the same parasceue was completed, which occurred

at the completion of the third hour of the day. [1420] We may make our

choice, therefore, between this view and the other, which supposes Mark

to have introduced the third hour by way of reminiscence, and to have

had it especially in view, in mentioning the hour there, to suggest the

fact of the condemnation brought upon the Jews in the matter of the

Lord's crucifixion, in so far as they are understood to have been in a

position to raise the clamour for His crucifixion to such an effect

that we may hold them to have been the persons who actually crucified

Him, rather than the men by whose hands He was suspended on the tree;

just as the centurion, already referred to, approached the Lord in a

more genuine sense than could be said of those friends whom He sent [on

the matter-of-fact mission]. [1421] But whichever of these two views we

adopt, unquestionably a solution is found for this problem on the

subject of the hour of the Lord's passion, which is most remarkably apt

at once to excite the impudence of the contentious and to agitate the

inexperience of the weak.

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[1385] Matt. xxvii. 37. [No notice is taken of the different forms the

"title" on the cross, recorded by the evangelists.--R.]

[1386] Mark xv. 25.

[1387] John xix. 13-16.

[1388] Luke ix. 28.

[1389] Matt. xvii. 1; Mark ix. 1.

[1390] Matt. xxvii. 45; Mark xv. 33; Luke xxiii. 44.

[1391] Mark xv. 25.

[1392] John xix. 23.

[1393] John xviii. 29-31.

[1394] Matt. xxvii. 19.

[1395] Luke xxiii. 16, 18.

[1396] Luke xxiii. 20, 21.

[1397] Luke xxiii. 22, 23.

[1398] John xix. 4, 5.

[1399] John xix. 6.

[1400] John xix. 6-12.

[1401] John xix. 12-14.

[1402] John xix. 15.

[1403] John xix. 15, 16.

[1404] [The arrangement of the various details is open to discussion;

but the probability is, that the virtual surrender of Pilate to the

demand of the Jews took place about the third hour (9 A.M.), and that

it was nearly two hours before the crucifixion took place.--R.]

[1405] Mark xv. 13, 14.

[1406] Dixit.

[1407] Dicebat. (The Greek also has the imperfect, elegen. But in the

use of this verb in the New Testament the continuous force of the

imperfect cannot be insisted upon, as many examples will show. The

conclusion of Augustin is correct, despite the insufficiency of this

argument.--R.]

[1408] Fluitat = floats.

[1409] 2 Cor. iv. 3.

[1410] 2 Cor. ii. 16.

[1411] John ix. 39.

[1412] Rom. ix. 21.

[1413] Rom. ix. 20.

[1414] Rom. xi. 34.

[1415] Rom. i. 24-28.

[1416] Ps. xcii. 5, 6.

[1417] Mark xv. 24.

[1418] [There is so much force in the positions of Augustin in regard

to the time of day, that one may overlook the irrelevant arguments he

introduces. He at least candidly accepts the readings before him. The

supposition of an early confusion of the numbers has no support, and

such an alteration is altogether unlikely.--R.]

[1419] Matt. xxvi. 66; Mark xiv. 64.

[1420] [This view is extremely fanciful. "Preparation" was a Jewish

term, with a distinct meaning. In early Christian times it meant

Friday. To modify the sense is impossible.--R.]

[1421] See above, Book ii. ch. 20.

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Chapter XIV.--Of the Harmony Preserved Among All the Evangelists on the

Subject of the Two Robbers Who Were Crucified Along with Him.

51. Matthew continues his narrative in the following terms: "Then were

there two robbers crucified with Him, one on the right hand, and

another on the left." [1422] Mark and Luke give it also in a similar

form. [1423] Neither does John raise any question of difficulty,

although he has made no mention of those robbers. For he says, "And two

other with Him, on either side one,and Jesus in the midst." [1424] But

there would have been a contradiction if John had spoken of these

others as innocent, while the former evangelists called them robbers.

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[1422] Matt. xxvii. 38.

[1423] Mark xv. 27; Luke xxiii. 33.

[1424] John xix. 18.

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