Catena Aurea Gospel of Mark

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St. Thomas Aquinas

Catena Aurea (Golden Chain)

Volume II.

J.G.F. and J. Rivington

London, 1842

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PREFACE

The Remarks prefixed to the first volume of this Translation of the

Aurea Catena, apply in their substance to the following portion of it,

which contains the Commentary on S. Mark. Wherever the variations from

the original writers were such as to destroy the sense of the passage,

the true reading has been followed, and has been placed in the margin.

In other cases the text has been translated, as it is found in S.

Thomas.

Many of the passages ascribed to S. Chrysostom are not found in the

works of that Father. Most of these occur also in a Greek Catena on S.

Mark, published by Possinus, from a MS. in the Library of the

Archbishop of Tolouse, and still more of them in the Edition which has

been recently printed by the Oxford University Press, from a MS. in the

Bodleian. A Latin Version of this Catena or Commentary had previously

been published by Peltanus, and is found in the Bibliotheca Patrum; and

contains far the greater number of the same passages marked as S.

Chrysostom's in the Catena Aurea. It is commonly ascribed to Victor of

Antioch; though by some, with probability, to S. Cyril of Alexandria. A

Commentary on a portion of S. Mark published by Wastel, who gives the

authorship of it and of the Opus Imperfectum in Matthaeum to John of

Jerusalem, also contains a number of the same passages which S. Thomas

ascribes to S. Chrysostom. Some of the extracts marked "Cyril" are

found in a Commentary of S. Cyril of Alexandria on S. Luke, lately

published . by Mai.

The passages ascribed to S. Jerome, are taken from a Commentary found

among his works, but universally pronounced to be spurious. It has been

ascribed to Pelagius, but with more probability to Philippus Presbyter,

a friend and disciple of S. Jerome. It is entirely mystical, and is in

many places hopelessly obscure.

For the translation of the Volume now presented to the reader, the

Editors have to make their acknowledgments to JOHN DOBBEE DALGAIRNS, M.

A. of Exeter College.

J. H. N.

ERRATUM M.

P. 184. note 1. for A.D. 1417. read Paris 1517.

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Chapter 1

Ver. 1: The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

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Jerome, in Prolog: Mark the Evangelist, who served the priesthood in

Israel, according to the flesh a Levite, having been converted to the

Lord, wrote his Gospel in Italy, shewing in it how even his family

benefited Christ. For commencing his Gospel with the voice of the

prophetic cry, he shews the order of the election of Levi, declaring

that John the son of Zachariah was sent forth by the voice of an angel,

and saying, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of

God."

Pseudo-Jerome: The Greek word Evangelium' means good tidings, in Latin

it is explained, bona annunciatio,' or, the good news; these terms

properly belong to the kingdom of God and to the remission of sins; for

the Gospel is that by which comes the redemption of the faithful and

the beatitude of the saints.

But the four Gospels are one, and one Gospel in four. In Hebrew, His

name is Jesus, in Greek, Soter, in Latin, Salvator; but men say

Christus in Greek, Messias in Hebrew, Unctus in Latin, that is, King

and Priest.

Bede, in Marc., i, 1: The beginning of this Gospel should be compared

with that of Matthew, in which it is said, "The book of the generation

of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." But here He is

called "the Son of God."

Now from both we must understand one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, and

of man. And fitly the first Evangelist names Him "Son of man," the

second, "Son of God," that from less things our sense may by degrees

mount up to greater, and by faith and the sacraments of the human

nature assumed, rise to the acknowledgment of His divine eternity.

Fitly also did He, who was about to describe His human generation,

begin with a son of man, namely, David or Abraham. Fitly again, he who

was beginning his book with the first preaching of the Gospel, chose

rather to call Jesus Christ, "the Son of God;" for it belonged to the

human nature to take upon Him the reality of our flesh, of the race of

the patriarchs, and it was the work of Divine power to preach the

Gospel to the world.

Hilary, de Trin., iii, 11: He has testified, that Christ was the Son of

God, not in name only, but by His own proper nature. We are the sons of

God, but He is not a son as we are; for He is the very and proper Son,

by origin, not by adoption; in truth, not in name; by birth, not by

creation.

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2. As it is written in the Prophets, "Behold, I send my messenger

before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." [Mal 3:1]

3. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of

the Lord, make his paths straight." [Isa 40:3]

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Bede: Being about to write his Gospel, Mark rightly puts first the

testimonies of the Prophets, that he might notify to all, that what he

should write was to be received without scruple of doubt, in that he

shewed that these things were beforehand foretold by the Prophets. At

once, by one and the same beginning of his Gospel, he prepared the

Jews, who had received the Law and the Prophets, for receiving the

grace of the Gospel, and those sacraments, which their own prophecies

had foretold; and he also calls upon the Gentiles, who came to the Lord

by publishing of the Gospel, to receive and venerate the authority of

the Law and the Prophets; whence he says, "As it is written in the

prophet Isaiah, Behold, &c."

Jerome: Hierom. ad Pammach, Epist 57: But this is not written in

Isaiah, but in Malachi, the last of the twelve prophets.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But it may be said that it

is a mistake of the writer. Otherwise it may be said that he has

compressed into one, two prophecies delivered in different places by

two prophets; for in the prophet Isaiah it is written after the story

of Hezekiah, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness;" but in

Malachi, "Behold, I send mine angel."

The Evangelist therefore, taking parts of two prophecies, has put them

down as spoken by Isaiah, and refers them here to one passage, without

mentioning, however, by whom it is said, "Behold, I send mine angel."

Pseudo-Aug., Quaest. nov. et vet. Test. lvii: For knowing that all

things are to be referred to their author, he has brought these sayings

back to Isaiah, who was the first to intimate the sense.

Lastly, after the words of Malachi, he immediately subjoins, "The voice

of one crying in the wilderness," in order to connect the words of each

prophet, belonging as they do to one meaning, under the person of the

elder prophet.

Bede: Or otherwise, we must understand, that although these words are

not found in Isaiah, still the sense of them is found in many other

places, and most clearly in this which he has subjoined, "The voice of

one crying in the wilderness." For that which Malachi has called, the

angel to be sent before the face of the Lord, to prepare His way, is

the same thing as Isaiah has said is to be heard, "the voice of one

crying in the wilderness, saying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

But in each sentence alike, the way of the Lord to be prepared is

proclaimed. It may be, too, that Isaiah occurred to the mind of Mark,

in writing his Gospel, instead of Malachi, as often happens; which he

would, however, without doubt correct, at least when reminded by other

persons, who might read his work whilst he was yet in the flesh; unless

he though that, since his memory was then ruled by the Holy Spirit, it

was not without a purpose that the name of one prophet had occurred to

him instead of another. For thus whatsoever things the Holy Spirit

spoke by the prophets are implied each to have belonged to all, and all

to each.

Jerome: By Malachi, therefore, the voice of the Holy Spirit resounds to

the Father concerning the Son, who is the countenance of the Father by

which He has been known.

Bede: But John is called an angel not by community of nature, according

to the heresy of Origen [ed. note: Origen taught that all rational

beings, angels, devils, and men, were of one nature, differing only in

rank and condition, according to their deserts (in Joan, tom. ii, 17)

and capable of change: that men had once been angels: that angels took

human nature to serve man, and that St. John Baptist was an angel,

quoting this text. (in Joan, ii, 25.) v Huet, Orig. II, qu. 5, No. 14,

24, 25], but by the dignity of his office; for angel in Greek is in

Latin, nuntius (note: messenger), by which name that man is rightly

called, who was sent by God, that he might bear witness of the light,

and announce to the world the Lord, coming in the flesh; since it is

evident that all who are priests may be their office of preaching the

Gospel be called angels, as the prophet Malachi says, "The lips of the

priest keep knowledge, and they seek the law at his mouth, because he

is the Angel of the Lord of hosts." [Mal 2:7]

Theophylact: The Forerunner of Christ, therefore, is call an angel, on

account of his angelic life and lofty reverence. Again, where he says,

"Before thy face," it is as if he said, Thy messenger is near thee:

whence is shewn the intimate connection of the Forerunner with Christ;

for those walk next to kings who are their greatest friends.

There follows, "Who will prepare thy way before thee."

For by baptism he prepared the minds of the Jews to receive Christ.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or, "the way of the Lord," by which He comes into men,

in penitence, by which God comes down to us, and we mount up to Him.

And for this reason the beginning of John's preaching was, "Repent ye."

Bede: But as John might be called an angel, because he went before the

face of the Lord by his preaching, so he might also be rightly called a

voice, because, by his sound, he preceded the Word of the Lord.

Wherefore there follows, "The voice of one crying, &c."

For it is an acknowledged thing that the Only-Begotten Son is called

the Word of the Father, and even we, from having uttered words

ourselves, know that the voice sounds first, in order that the word may

afterwards by heard.

Pseudo-Jerome: But it is called "the voice of one crying," for we are

wont to use a cry to deaf persons, and to those afar off, or when we

are indignant, all which things we know applied to the Jews; for

"salvation is far from the wicked," and they "stopped their ears like

deaf adders," and deserved to hear "indignation, and wrath, and

tribulation" from Christ.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But the prophecy, by saying,

"In the wilderness," plainly shews that the divine teaching was not in

Jerusalem, but in the wilderness, which was fulfilled to the letter by

John the Baptist in the wilderness of Jordan, preaching the healthful

appearing of the Word of God.

The word of prophecy also shews, that besides the wilderness, which was

pointed out by Moses, where he made paths, there was another

wilderness, in which it proclaimed that the salvation of Christ was

present.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else the voice and the cry is in the desert, because

they were deserted by the Spirit of God, as a house empty, and swept

out; deserted also by prophet, priest, and king.

Bede: What he cried is revealed, in that which is subjoined, "Prepare

ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." For whosoever

preaches a right faith and good works, what else does he but prepare

the way for the Lord's coming to the hearts of His hearers, that the

power of grace might penetrate these hearts, and the light of truth

shine in them? And the paths he makes straight, when he forms pure

thoughts in the soul by the word of preaching.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," that is, act

out repentance and preach it; "make his paths straight," that walking

in the royal road, we may love our neighbours as ourselves, and

ourselves as our neighbours. For he who loves himself, and loves not

his neighbour, turns aside to the right; for many act well, and do not

correct their neighbour well, as Eli.

He, on the other hand, who, hating himself, loves his neighbour, turns

aside to the left; for many, for instance, rebuke well, but act not

well themselves, as did the Scribes and Pharisees.

"Paths" are mentioned after the "way" because moral commands are laid

open after penitence.

Theophylact: Or, the "way" is the New Testament, and the "paths" are

the Old, because it is a trodden path. For it was necessary to be

prepared for the way, that is, for the New Testament; but it was right

that the paths of the Old Testament should be straightened.

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4. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of

repentance for the remission of sins.

5. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of

Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan,

confessing their sins.

6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin

about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7. 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.

8. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with

the Holy Ghost."

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Pseudo-Jerome: According to the above-mentioned prophecy of Isaiah, the

way of the Lord is prepared by John, through faith, baptism, and

penitence; the paths are made straight by the rough marks of the

hair-cloth garment, the girdle of skin, the feeding on locusts and wild

honey, and the most lowly voice; whence it is said, "John was in the

wilderness."

For John and Jesus seek what is lost in the wilderness; where the devil

conquered, there he is conquered; where man fell, there he rises up.

But the name, John, means the grace of God, and the narrative begins

with grace. For it goes on to say, "baptizing." For by baptism grace is

given, seeing that by baptism sins are freely remitted.

But what is brought to perfection by the bridegroom is introduced by

the friend of the bridegroom. Thus catechumens, (which word means

persons instructed,) begin by the ministry of the priest, receive the

chrism from the bishop [ed. note: "Chrismantur." Chrism in the Roman

Church, was applied twice; at Baptism, and more solemnly to the

forehead by the Bishop at Confirmation. In the Eastern Church, it was

only given once, at Confirmation, and by the Bishop only. In the French

Church, it was given once, usually at Baptism, by the Priest, but if

for any reason omitted, by the Bishop at Confirmation, see Bingham,

Antiq. b., xii, e. 2, 2].

And to shew this, it is subjoined, "And preaching the baptism of

repentance, &c."

Bede: It is evident that John not only preached, but also gave to some

the baptism of repentance; but he could not give baptism for the

remission of sins [ed. note: vol 1, p. 97, note A]. For the remission

of sins is only given to us by the baptism of Christ. It is therefore

only said, "Preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of

sins;" for he "preached" a baptism which could remit sins, since he

could not give it.

Wherefore as he was the forerunner of the Incarnate Word of the Father,

by the word of his preaching, so by his baptism, which could not remit

sins, he preceded that baptism, of penitence, by which sins are

remitted.

Theophylact: The baptism of John had not remission of sins, but only

brought men to penitence. He preached therefore the baptism of

repentance, that is, he preached that to which the baptism of penitence

led, namely, remission of sins, that they who in penitence received

Christ, might receive Him to the remission of their sins.

Pseudo-Jerome: Now by John as by the bridegroom's friend, the bride is

brought to Christ, as by a servant Rebecca was brought to Isaac [Gen

24:61]; wherefore there follows, "And there went out to him all, &c.

For "confession and beauty are in his presence," [Ps 96:6] that is, the

presence of the bridegroom. And the bride leaping down from her camel

signifies the Church, who humbles herself on seeing her husband Isaac,

that is, Christ. But the interpretation of Jordan, where sins are

washed away, in an alien descent.' For we heretofore aliens to God by

pride, are by the sign of Baptism made lowly, and thus exalted on high

[ed. note: see St. Cyril of Jerus., Cat. xx, 4-7].

Bede: An example of confessing their sins and of promising to lead a

new life, is held out to those who desire to be baptized, by those

words which follow, "confessing their sins."

Chrys." Because indeed John preached repentance, he wore the marks of

repentance in his garment and in his food.

Wherefore there follow, "And John was clothed in camel's hair."

Bede: It says, clothed in a garment of hair, not in woollen clothes;

the former is the mark of an austere garb, the latter of effeminate

luxury. But the girdle of skins, with which he was girt, like Elias, is

a mark of mortification. And this meat, "locusts and wild honey," is

suited to a dweller in the wilderness, so that his object in eating was

not the deliciousness of meats, but the satisfying of the necessity of

human flesh.

Pseudo-Jerome: The dress of John, his food, and employment, signifies

the austere life of preachers, and that future nations are to be joined

to the grace of God, which is John, both in their minds and in

externals. For by camel's hair, is meant the rich among the nations;

and by the girdle of skin, the poor, dead to the world; and by the

wandering locusts, the wise men of this world; who, leaving the dry

stalks to the Jews, draw off with their legs the mystic grain, and in

the warmth of their faith leap up towards heaven; and the faithful,

being inspired by the wild honey, are full-fed from the untilled wood.

Theophylact: Or else; The garment of "camel's hair" was significative

of grief, for John pointed out, that he who repented should mourn. For

sackcloth signifies grief; but the girdle of skins shews the dead state

of the Jewish people. The food also of John not only denotes

abstinence, but also shews forth the intellectual food, which the

people then were eating, without understanding any thing lofty, but

continually raising themselves on high, and again sinking to the earth.

For such is the nature of locusts, leaping on high and again falling.

In the same way the people ate honey, which had come from bees, that

is, from the prophets; it was not however domestic, but wild, for the

Jews had the Scriptures, which are as honey, but did not rightly

understand them.

Gregory, Moral., xxxi, 25: Or, by the kind itself of his food he

pointed out the Lord, of whom he was the forerunner; for in that our

Lord took to Himself the sweetness of the barren Gentiles, he ate wild

honey. In that He in His own person partly converted the Jews, He

received locusts for His food, which suddenly leaping up, at once fall

to the ground. For the Jews leaped up when they promised to fulfil the

precepts of the Lord; but they fell to the ground when, by their evil

works, they affirmed that they had not heard them. They made therefore

a leap upwards in words, and fell down by their actions.

Bede: The dress and food of John may also express of what kind was his

inward walk. For he used a dress more austere than was usual, because

he did not encourage the life of sinners by flattery, but chid them by

the vigour of his rough rebuke; he had a girdle of skin round his

loins, for he was one, "who crucified his flesh with the affections and

lusts." [Gal 5:24] He used to eat locusts and wild honey, because his

preaching had some sweetness for the multitude, whilst the people

debated whether he was the Christ himself or not; but this soon came to

an end, when his hearers understood that he was not the Christ, but the

forerunner and prophet of Christ. For in honey there is sweetness, in

locusts swiftness of flight.

Whence there follows, "And he preached, saying, there cometh one

mightier than I after me."

Gloss.: He said this to do away with the opinion of the crowd, who

thought that he was the Christ; but he announces that Christ is

"mightier than he," he was to remit sins, which he himself could not

do.

Pseudo-Jerome: Who again is mightier than the grace, by which sins are

washed away, which John signifies? He who seven times and seventy times

seven remits sins [Matt 18:22]. Grace indeed comes first, but remits

sins once only by baptism, but mercy reaches to the wretched from Adam

up to Christ through seventy-seven generations, and up to one hundred

and forty-four thousand.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But lest he should be

thought to say this by way of comparing himself to Christ, he subjoins,

"Of whom I am not worthy, &c."

It is not however the same thing to loose the shoe-latchet, which Mark

here says, and to carry his shoes, which Matthew says. And indeed the

Evangelists following the order of the narrative, and not able to err

in any thing, say that John spoke each of these sayings in a different

sense. But commentators on this passage have expounded each in a

different way.

For he means by the latchet, the tie of the shoe. He says this

therefore to extol the excellence of the power of Christ, and the

greatness of His divinity; as if he said, Not even in the station of

his servant am I worthy to be reckoned.

For it is a great thing to contemplate, as it were stooping down, those

things which belong to the body of Christ, and to see from below the

image of things above, and to untie each of those mysteries, about the

Incarnation of Christ, which cannot be unravelled.

Pseudo-Jerome: The shoe is in the extremity of the body; for in the end

the Incarnate Saviour is coming for justice, whence it is said by the

prophet, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe." [Ps 60:9]

Gregory: Shoes also are made from the skins of dead animals. The Lord,

therefore, coming incarnate, appeared as it were with shoes on His

feet, for He assumed in His divinity the dead skins of our corruption.

Or else; it was a custom among the ancients, that if a man refused to

take as his wife the woman whom he ought to take, he who offered

himself as her husband by right of kindred took off that man's shoe.

Rightly then does he proclaim himself unworthy to loose his

shoe-latchet, as if he said openly, I cannot make bare the feet of the

Redeemer, for I usurp not the name of the Bridegroom, a thing which is

above my deserts.

Theophylact: Some persons also understand it thus; all who came to

John, and were baptized, through penitence were loosed from the bands

of their sins by believing in Christ. John then in this way loosed the

shoe-latchet of all the others, that is, the bands of sin. But Christ's

shoe-latchet he was not able to unloose, because he found no sin in

Him.

Bede: Thus then John proclaims the Lord not yet as God, or the Son of

God, but only as a man mightier than himself. For his ignorant hearers

were not yet capable of receiving the hidden things of so great a

Sacrament, that the eternal Son of God, having taken upon Him the

nature of man, had been lately born into the world of a virgin; but

gradually by the acknowledgment of His glorified lowliness, they were

to be introduced to the belief of His Divine Eternity. To these words,

however, he subjoins, as if covertly declaring that he was the true

God, "I baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy

Ghost." For who can doubt that none other but God can give the grace of

the Holy Ghost.

Jerome: For what is the difference between water and the Holy Ghost,

who was borne over the face of the waters? Water is the ministry of

man; but the Spirit is ministered by God.

Bede: Now we are baptized by the Lord in the Holy Ghost, not only when

in the day of our baptism, we are washed in the fount of life, to the

remission of our sins, but also daily by the grace of the same Spirit

we are inflamed, to do those things which please God.

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9. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of

Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens

opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11. And there came a voice from heaven, saying, "Thou art My beloved

Son, in whom I am well pleased."

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Pseudo-Jerome: Mark the Evangelist, like a hart, longing after the

fountains of water, leaps forward over places, smooth and steep; and,

as a bee laden with honey, he sips the tops of the flowers.

Wherefore he hath shewn us in his narrative Jesus coming from Nazareth,

saying, "And it came to pass in those days, &c."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Forasmuch as He was

ordaining a new baptism, He came to the baptism of John, which, in

respect of His own baptism, was incomplete, but different from the

Jewish baptism, as being between both. He did this that He might shew,

by the nature of His baptism, that He was not baptized for the

remission of sins, nor as wanting the reception of the Holy Ghost: for

the baptism of John was destitute of both these.

But He was baptized that He might be made known to all, that they might

believe on Him and "fulfil all righteousness," which is "keeping of the

commandments:" for it has been commanded to men that they should submit

to the Prophet's baptism.

Bede, in Marc., i, 4: He was baptized, that by being baptized Himself

He might shew His approval of John's baptism [ed. note: vol i, pl 109,

note h], and that, by sanctifying the waters of Jordan through the

descent of the dove, He might shew the coming of the Holy Ghost in the

laver of believers.

Whence there follows, "And straightway coming up out of the water, he

saw the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit like a dove descending, and

resting upon him."

But the heavens are opened, not by the unclosing of the elements, but

to the eyes of the spirit, to which Ezekiel in the beginning of his

book relates that they were opened; or that His seeing the heavens

opened after baptism was done for our sakes, to whom the door of the

kingdom of heaven is opened by the laver of regeneration.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else, that from heaven

sanctification might be given to men, and earthly things be joined to

heavenly. But the Holy Spirit is said to have descended upon Him, not

as if He then first came to Him, for He never had left Him; but that He

might shew forth the Christ, Who was preached by John, and point Him

out to all, as it were by the finger of faith.

Bede: This event also, in which the Holy Ghost was seen to come down

upon baptism, was a sign of spiritual grace to be given to us in

baptism.

Pseudo-Jerome: But this is the anointing of Christ according to the

flesh, namely, the Holy Ghost, of which anointing it is said, "God,

even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy

fellows." [Ps 45:7]

Bede: Well indeed in the shape of a dove did the Holy Ghost come down,

for it is an animal of great simplicity, and far removed from the

malice of gall, that in a figure He might shew us that He looks out for

simple hearts, and deigns not to dwell in the minds of the wicked.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, the Holy Ghost came down in the shape of a dove,

because in the Canticles it is sung of the Church: "My bride, my love,

my beloved, my dove."

"Bride" in the Patriarchs, "love" in the Prophets, "near of kin" in

Joseph and Mary, "beloved" in John the Baptist, "dove" in Christ and

His Apostles: to whom it is said, "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless

as doves." [Matt. 10:16]

Bede: Now the Dove sat on the head of Jesus, lest any one should think

that the voice of the Father was addressed to John and not to Christ.

And well did he add, "abiding on Him;" for this is peculiar to Christ,

that the Holy Ghost once filling Him should never leave Him.

For sometimes to His faithful disciples the grace of the Spirit is

conferred for signs of virtue, and for the working of miracles,

sometimes it is taken away; though for the working of piety and

righteousness, for the preservation of love to God and to one's

neighbour, the grace of the Spirit is never absent.

But the voice of the Father shewed that He Himself, who came to John to

be baptized with the other, was the very Son of God, willing to baptize

with the Holy Spirit, whence there follows, "And there came a voice

from heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." Not

that this informed the Son Himself of a thing of which He was ignorant,

but it shews to us what we ought to believe.

Augustine, de Con. Ev., ii, 14: Wherefore Matthew relates that the

voice said, "This is my beloved Son;" for he wished to shew that the

words, "This is My Son," were in fact said, that thus the persons who

heard it might know that He, and not another, was the Son of God.

But if you ask which of these two sounded forth in that voice, take

which you will, only remember, that the Evangelists, though not

relating the same form of speaking, relate the same meaning. And that

God delighted Himself in His Son, we are reminded in these words, "In

thee I am well pleased."

Bede: The same voice has taught us, that we also, by the water of

cleansing, and by the Spirit of sanctification, may be made the sons of

God. The mystery of the Trinity also is shewn forth in the baptism; the

Son is baptized, the Spirit comes down in the shape of a dove, the

voice of the Father bearing witness to the Son is heard.

Pseudo-Jerome: Morally also it may be interpreted; we also, drawn aside

from the fleeting world by the smell and purity of flowers, run with

the young maidens after the bridegroom, and are washed in the sacrament

of baptism, from the two fountains of the love of God, and of our

neighbour, by the grace of remission, and mounting up by hope gaze upon

heavenly mysteries with the eyes of a clean heart.

Then we receive in a contrite and lowly spirit, with simplicity of

heart, the Holy Spirit, who comes down to the meek, and abides in us,

by the never-failing charity. And the voice of the Lord from heaven is

directed to us the beloved of God; "Blessed are the peacemakers, for

they shall be called the sons of God;" [Matt. 5:9] and then the Father,

with the Son and the Holy Spirit, is well-pleased with us, when we are

made one spirit with God.

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12. And immediately the spirit driveth Him into the wilderness.

13. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan;

and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him.

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Chrys., Hom. in Matt., xiii: Because all that Christ did and suffered

was for our teaching, He began after His baptism to dwell in the

wilderness, and fought against the devil, that every baptized person

might patiently sustain greater temptations after His baptism, nor be

troubled, as if this which happened to Him was contrary to His

expectation, but might bear up against all things, and come off

conqueror.

For although God allows that we should be tempted for many other

reasons, yet for this cause also He allows it, that we may know, that

man when tempted is placed in a station of greater honour. For the

Devil approaches not save where he has beheld one set in a place of

greater honour; and therefore it is said, "And immediately the Spirit

drove Him into the wilderness."

And the reason why He does not simply say that He went into the

wilderness, but was driven, is that thou mayest understand that it was

done according to the word of Divine Providence. By which also He shews

that no man should thrust himself into temptation, but that those who

from some other state are as it were driven into temptation, remain

conquerors.

Bede, in Marc., 1, 5: And that no one might doubt, by what spirit he

said that Christ was driven into the wilderness, Luke has on purpose

premised, that "Jesus being full of the Spirit returned from Jordan, "

and then has added, "and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness;"

lest the evil spirit should be thought to have any power over Him, who,

being full of the Holy Spirit, departed whither He was willing to go,

and did what He was willing to do.

Chrys., in Matt., Hom., xiii: But the Spirit drove Him into the

wilderness, because He designed to provoke the devil to tempt Him, and

thus gave Him an opportunity not only by hunger, but also by the place.

For then most of all does the devil thrust himself in, when he sees men

remaining solitary.

Bede: But He retires into the desert that He may teach us that, leaving

the allurements of the world, and the company of the wicked, we should

in all things obey the Divine commands.

He is left alone and tempted by the devil, that He might teach us,

"that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer

persecution;" [2 Tim 3:12] whence it follows, "And He was in the

wilderness forty days and forty nights, and was tempted of Satan."

But He was tempted forty days and forty nights that He might shew us

that as long as we live here and serve God, whether prosperity smile

upon us, which is meant by the day, or adversity smite us, which agrees

with the figure of night, at all times our adversary is at hand, who

ceases not to trouble our way by temptations.

For "the forty days and forty nights" imply the whole time of this

world, for the globe in which we are serving God is divided into four

quarters.

Again, there are Ten Commandments, by observing which we fight against

our enemy, but four times ten are forty.

There follows, "and He was with the wild beasts."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But He says this to shew of

what nature was the wilderness, for it was impassable by man and full

of wild beasts.

It goes on; "and angels ministered unto Him." For after temptation, and

a victory against the devil, He worked the salvation of man. And thus

the Apostle says, "Angels are sent to minister for them who shall be

heirs of salvation." [Heb 1:14]

We must also observe, that to those who conquer in temptation angels

stand near and minister.

Bede: Consider also that Christ dwells among the wild beasts as man,

but, as God, uses the ministry of Angels. Thus, when in the solitude of

a holy life we bear with unpolluted mind the bestial manners of men, we

merit to have the ministry of Angels, by whom, when freed from the

body, we shall be transferred to everlasting happiness.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or then the beasts dwell with us in peace, as in the ark

clean animals with the unclean, when the flesh lusts not against the

spirit. After this, ministering Angels are sent to us, that they may

give answers and comforts to hearts that watch.

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14. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee,

preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God,

15. And saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at

hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel."

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Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The Evangelist Mark follows

Matthew in his order, and therefore after having said that Angels

minister, he subjoins, "But after that John was put into prison, Jesus

came, &c."

After the temptation and the ministry of Angels, He goes back into

Galilee, teaching us not to resist the violence of evil men.

Theophylact: And to shew us that in persecutions we ought to retire,

and not to await them; but when we fall into them, we must sustain

them.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He retired also that He

might keep Himself for teaching and for healing, before He suffered,

and after fulfilling all these things, might become obedient unto

death.

Bede: John being put in prison, fitly does the Lord begin to preach:

wherefore there follows, "Preaching the Gospel, &c." For when the Law

ceases, the Gospel arises in its steps.

Pseudo-Jerome: When the shadow ceases, the truth comes on; first, John

in prison, the Law in Judaea; then, Jesus in Galilee, Paul among the

Gentiles preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. For to an earthly kingdom

succeeds poverty, to the poverty of Christians is given an everlasting

kingdom; but earthly honour is like the foam of water, or smoke, or

sleep.

Bede: Let no one, however, suppose that the putting of John in prison

took place immediately after the forty days' temptation and the fast of

the Lord; for whosoever reads the Gospel of John will find, that the

Lord taught many things before the putting of John in prison, and also

did many miracles; for you have in his Gospel, "This beginning of

miracles did Jesus;" [John 2:11] and afterwards, "for John was not yet

cast into prison." [John 3:24]

Now it is said that when John read the books of Matthew, Mark, and

Luke, he approved indeed the text of the history, and affirmed that

they had spoken truth, but said that they had composed the history of

only one year after John was cast into prison, in which year also he

suffered. Passing over then the year of which the transactions had been

published by the three others, he related the events of the former

period, before John was cast into prison.

When therefore Mark had said that "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching

the Gospel of the kingdom," he subjoins, "saying, Since the time is

fulfilled, &c."

Pseudo-Chrys., vict. Ant. Cat. in Marc.: Since then the time was

fulfilled, "when the fulness of times was come, and God sent His son,"

it was fitting that the race of man should obtain the last dispensation

of God. And therefore he says, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Origen, in Matt., tom. x, 14: But the kingdom of God is essentially the

same as the kingdom of heaven, though they differ in idea. [ed. note:

see Origen, de Orat. 25, 26 in Matt. t 12.14 (?)]

For by the kingdom of God is to be understood that in which God reigns;

and this in truth is in the region of the living, where, seeing God

face to face, they will abide in the good things now promised to them;

whether by this region one chooses to understand Love, or some other

confirmation [ed. note: By confirmation,' seems to be meant the

perfecting of spiritual natures; see Thomas Aq., Summa Theologica, part

1, Q62, Art 1. It answers to (greek word) as used by St. Basil; de Sp.

S 16] of those who put on the likeness of things above, which are

signified by the heavens. [ed. note: "Coeli" is commonly interpreted of

the Angels, by the Fathers.]

For it is clear [ed. note: see Chrys., in Matt., Hom. 19 in c. 6,9]

enough that the kingdom of God is confined neither by place nor by

time.

Theophylact: Or else, the Lord means that the time of the Law is

complete; as if He said, Up to this time the Law was at work; from this

time the kingdom of God will work, that is, a conversation according to

the Gospel, which is with reason likened to the kingdom of heaven. For

when you see a man clothed in flesh living according to the Gospel, do

you not say that he has the kingdom of heaven, which "is not meat and

drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost?" [Rom

14:17]

The next word is, "Repent."

Pseudo-Jerome: For he must repent, who would keep close to eternal

good, that is, to the kingdom of God. For he who would have the kernel,

breaks the shell; the sweetness of the apple makes up for the

bitterness of its root; the hope of gain makes the dangers of the sea

pleasant; the hope of health takes away from the painfulness of

medicine.

They are able worthily to proclaim the preaching of Christ who have

deserved to attain to the reward of forgiveness; and therefore after He

has said, "Repent," He subjoins, "and believe the Gospel." For unless

ye have believed, ye shall not understand.

Bede: "Repent," therefore, "and believe;" that is, renounce dead works;

for of what use is believing without good works? The merit of good

works does not, however, bring to faith, but faith begins, that good

works may follow.

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16. Now as He walked by the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon, and Andrew

his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers.

17. And Jesus said unto them, "Come ye after Me, and I will make you to

become fishers of men."

18. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed Him.

19. And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw James, the son

of Zebedee, and John, his brother, who also were in the ship mending

their nets.

20. And straightway He called them: and they left their father Zebedee

in the ship with the hired servants, and went after Him.

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Gloss.: The Evangelist, having mentioned the preaching of Christ to the

multitude, goes on to the calling of the disciples, whom He made

ministers of His preaching, whence it follows, "And passing along the

sea of Galilee, &c."

Theophylact: As the Evangelist John relates, Peter and Andrew were

disciples of the Forerunner, but seeing that John had borne witness to

Jesus, they joined themselves to him; afterwards, grieving that John

had been cast into prison, they returned to their trade.

Wherefore there follows, "casting nets into the sea, for they were

fishers."

Look then upon them, living on their own labours, not on the fruits of

iniquity; for such men were worthy to become the first disciples of

Christ; whence it is subjoined, "And Jesus said unto them, Come ye

after Me."

Now He calls them for the second time; for this is the second calling

in respect of that, of which we read in John. But it is shewn to what

they were called, when it is added, "I will make you become fishers of

men."

Remig.: For by the net of holy preaching they drew fish, that is, men,

from the depths of the sea, that is, of infidelity, to the light of

faith. Wonderful indeed is this fishing! for fishes when they are

caught, soon after die; when men are caught by the word of preaching,

they rather are made alive.

Bede, in Marc., 1, 6: Now fishers and unlettered men are sent to

preach, that the faith of believers might be thought to lie in the

power of God, not in eloquence or in learning. It goes on to say, "and

immediately they left their nets, and followed Him."

Theophylact: For we must not allow any time to lapse, but at once

follow the Lord. After these again, He catches James and John, because

they also, though poor, supported the old age of their father.

Wherefore there follows, "And when He had gone a little farther thence,

He saw James, the son of Zebedee, &c."

But they left their father, because he would have hindered them in

following Christ. Do thou, also, when thou art hindered by thy parents,

leave them, and come to God. It is shewn by this that Zebedee was not a

believer; but the mother of the Apostles believed, for she followed

Christ, when Zebedee was dead.

Bede: It may be asked, how he could call two fishers from each of the

boats, (first, Peter and Andrew, then having gone a little further, the

two others, sons of Zebedee,) when Luke says that James and John were

called to help Peter and Andrew, and that it was to Peter only that

Christ said, "Fear not, from this time thou shalt catch men;" [Luke

5:!0] he also says, that "at the same time, when they had brought their

ships to land, they followed Him."

We must therefore understand that the transaction which Luke intimates

happened first, and afterwards that they, as their custom was, had

returned to their fishing. So that what Mark here relates happened

afterwards; for in this case they followed the Lord, without drawing

their boats ashore, (which they would have done had they meant to

return,) and followed Him, as one calling them, and ordering them to

follow.

Pseudo-Jerome: Further, we are mystically carried away to heaven, like

Elias, by this chariot, drawn by these fishers, as by four horses. On

these four corner-stones the first Church is built; in these, as in the

four Hebrew letters, we acknowledge the tetragrammation, the name of

the Lord, we who are commanded, after their example, to "hear" the

voice of the Lord, and "to forget" the "people" of wickedness, and "the

house of our fathers' " [Ps 45:10] conversation, which is folly before

God, and the spider's net, in the meshes of which we, like gnats, were

all but fallen, and were confined by things vain as the air, which

hangs on nothing; loathing also the ship of our former walk.

For Adam, our forefather according to the flesh, is clothed with the

skins of dead beasts; but now, having put off the old man, with his

deeds, following the new man we are clothed with those skins of

Solomon, with which the bride rejoices that she has been made beautiful

[Song of Songs, 1:4].

Again, Simon, means obedient; Andrew, manly; James, supplanter [ed.

note: Cf. vol i, 139, 140, 364]; John, grace; by which four names, we

are knit together into God's host [ed. note: Al. in imaginem'] ; by

obedience, that we may listen; by manliness, that we do battle; by

overthrowing, that we may persevere; by grace, that we may be

preserved. Which four virtues are called cardinal; for by prudence, we

obey; by justice, we bear ourselves manfully; by temperance, we tread

the serpent underfoot; by fortitude, we earn the grace of God.

Theophylact: We must know also, that action is first called, then

contemplation; for Peter is the type of the active life, for he was

more ardent than the others, just as the active life is the more

bustling; but John is the type of the contemplative life, for he speaks

more fully of divine things.

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21. And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day He

entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22. And they were astonished as His doctrine: for He taught them as one

that had authority, and not as the Scribes.

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Pseudo-Jerome: Mark, arranging the sayings of the Gospel as they were

in his own mind, not in themselves, quits the order of the history, and

follows the order of the mysteries.

Wherefore he relates the first miracle on the sabbath day, saying, "And

they go into Capernaum."

Theophylact: Quitting Nazareth. Now on the sabbath day, when the

Scribes were gathered together, He entered into a synagogue, and

taught.

Wherefore there follows, "And straightway on the sabbath day, having

entered into the synagogue, He taught them."

For this end the Law commanded them to give themselves up to rest on

the sabbath day, that they might meet together to attend to sacred

reading. Again, Christ taught them by rebuke, not by flattery as did

the Pharisees; wherefore it says, "And they were astonished at His

doctrine; for He taught them as one having power, and not as the

Scribes."

He taught them also in power, transforming men to good, and He

threatened punishment to those who did not believe on Him.

Bede: The Scribes themselves taught the people what was written in

Moses and the Prophets; but Jesus as the God and Lord of Moses,

himself, by the freedom of His own will, either added those things

which appeared wanting in the Law, or altered things as He preached to

the people; as we read in Matthew, "It was said to them of old time,

but I say unto you." [Matt. 5:27]

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23. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and

he cried out,

24. Saying, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of

Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the

Holy One of God."

25. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of

him."

26. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud

voice, he came out of him.

27. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among

themselves, saying, "What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for

with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey

him."

28. And immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region

round about Galilee.

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Bede, in Marc., 1, 7: Since by the envy of the devil death first

entered into the world, it was right that the medicine of healing

should first work against the author of death; and therefore it is

said, "And there was in their synagogue a man, &c."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The word, Spirit, is applied

to an Angel, the air, the soul, and even the Holy Ghost. Lest therefore

by the sameness of the name we should fall into error, he adds,

"unclean." And he is called unclean on account of his impiousness and

far removal from God, and because he employs himself in all unclean and

wicked works.

Augustine, City of God, 21: Moreover, how great is the power which the

lowliness of God, appearing in the form of a servant, has over the

pride of devils, the devils themselves know so well, that they express

it to the same Lord clothed in the weakness of flesh. For there

follows, "And he cried out, saying, What have we to do we Thee, Jesus

of Nazareth, &c."

For it is evident in these words that there was in them knowledge, but

there was not charity; and the reason was, that they feared their

punishment from Him, and loved not the righteousness in Him.

Bede: For the devils, seeing the Lord on the earth, thought that they

were immediately to be judged.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else the devil so speaks,

as if he said, by taking away uncleanness, and giving to the souls of

men divine knowledge, Thou allowest us no place in men.'

Theophylact: For to come out of man the devil considers as his own

perdition; for devils are ruthless, thinking that they suffer some

evil, so long as they are not troubling men.

There follows, "I know that Thou art the Holy One of God."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: As if he said, Methinks that

Thou art come; for he had not a firm and certain knowledge of the

coming of God. But he calls Him "holy" not as one of many, for every

prophet was also holy, but he proclaims that the was the One holy; by

the article in Greek he shews Him to be the One, but by his fear he

shews Him to be Lord of all.

Augustine: For He was known to them in that degree in which He wished

to be known; and He wished as much as was fitting. He was not known to

them as to the holy Angels, who enjoy Him by partaking of His eternity

according as He is the Word of God; but as He was to be made known in

terror, to those beings from whose tyrannical power He was about to

free the predestinate.

He was known therefore to the devils, not in that He is eternal Life,

[see 1 John 5:20, John 17:3] but by some temporal effects of His Power,

which might be more clear to the angelic senses of even bad spirits

than to the weakness of men.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Further, the Truth did not

wish to have the witness of unclean spirits.

Wherefore there follows, "And Jesus threatened him, saying, &c."

Whence a healthful precept is given to us; let us not believe devils,

howsoever they may proclaim the truth.

It goes on, "And the unclean spirit tearing him, &c."

For because the man spoke as one in his senses and uttered his words

with discretion, lest it should be thought that he put together his

words not from the devil but out of his own heart, He permitted the man

to be torn by the devil, that He might shew that it was the devil who

spoke.

Theophylact: That they might know, when they saw it, from how great an

evil the man was freed, and on account of the miracle might believe.

Bede: But it may appear to be a discrepancy, that he should have gone

out of him, tearing him, or, as some copies have it, vexing him, when,

according to Luke, he did not hurt him. But Luke himself says, "When He

had cast him into the midst, he came out of him, without hurting him."

[Luke 4:35] Wherefore it is inferred that Mark meant by vexing or

tearing him, what Luke expresses , in the words, "When He had cast him

into the midst;" so that what he goes on to say, "And did not hurt

him," may be understood to mean that the tossing of his limbs and

vexing did not weaken him, as devils are wont to come out even with the

cutting off and tearing away of limbs. But seeing the power of the

miracle, they wonder at the newness of our Lord's doctrine, and are

roused to search into what they had heard by what they had seen.

Wherefore there follows, "And they all wondered, &c."

For miracles were done that they might more firmly believe the Gospel

of the kingdom of God, which was being preached, since those who were

promising heavenly joys to men on earth, were shewing forth heavenly

things and divine works even on earth. For before (as the Evangelist

says) "He was teaching them as one who had power," and now, as the

crowd witnesses, "with power He commands the evil spirits, and they

obey Him."

It goes on, "And immediately His fame spread abroad, &c."

Gloss.: For those things which men wonder at they soon divulge, for

"out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." [Matt. 12:34]

Pseudo-Jerome: Moreover, Capernaum is mystically interpreted the town

of consolation, and the sabbath as rest. The man with an evil spirit is

healed by rest and consolation, that the place and time may agree with

his healing. This man with an unclean spirit is the human race, in

which uncleanness reigned from Adam to Moses; [Rom 5:14] for "they

sinned without law," and "perished without law." [Rom 2:12] and he,

knowing the Holy One of God, is ordered to hold his peace, for they

"knowing God did not glorify him as God," [Rom 1:21] but "rather served

the creature than the Creator." [Rom 1:25]

The spirit tearing the man came out of him. When salvation is near,

temptation is at hand also. Pharaoh, when about to let [ed. note: Al.

dismissus ab Israel'] Israel go, pursues Israel; the devil, when

despised, rises up to create scandals.

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29. And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they

entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell

him of her.

31. And He came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and

immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

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Bede, in Marc., 1, 7: First, it was right that the serpent's tongue

should be shut up, that it might not spread any more venom; then that

the woman, who was first seduced, should be healed from the fever of

carnal concupiscence.

Wherefore it is said, "And forthwith, when they were come out of the

synagogue, &c."

Theophylact: He retired then as the custom was on the sabbath-day about

evening to eat in His disciples' house. But she who ought to have

ministered was prevented by a fever.

Wherefore it goes on, "But Simon's wife's mother was lying sick of a

fever."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc., 1, 32: But the disciples,

knowing that they were to receive a benefit by that means, without

waiting for the evening prayed that Peter's mother should be healed.

Wherefore there follows, "who immediately tell Him of her."

Bede: But in the Gospel of Luke it is written that "they besought Him

for her." [Luke 4:38] For the Saviour sometimes after being asked,

sometimes of His own accord, heals the sick, shewing that He always

assents to the prayers of the faithful, when they pray also against bad

passions, and sometimes gives them to understand things which they do

not understand at all, or else, when they pray unto Him dutifully,

forgives their want of understanding; as the Psalmist begs of God,

"Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret faults." [Ps 19:12]

Wherefore He heals her at their request; for there follows, "And He

came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up."

Theophylact: By this it is signified, that God will heal a sick man, if

he ministers to the Saints, through love to Christ.

Bede, in Marc., 1, 6: But in that He gives most profusely His gifts of

healing and doctrine on the sabbath day, He teaches, that He is not

under the Law, but above the Law, and does not choose the Jewish

sabbath, but the true sabbath, and our rest is pleasing to the Lord,

if, in order to attend to the health of our souls, we abstain from

slavish work, that is, from all unlawful things.

It goes on, "And immediately the fever left her, &c."

Bede, in Marc., 1, 8: The health which is conferred at the command of

the Lord, returns at once entire, accompanied with such strength that

she is able to minister to those of whose help she had before stood in

need.

Again, if we suppose that the man delivered from the devil means, in

the moral way of interpretation, the soul purged from unclean thoughts,

fitly does the woman cured of a fever by the command of God mean the

flesh, restrained from the heat of it concupiscence by the precepts of

continence.

Pseudo-Jerome: For the fever means intemperance, from which, we the

sons of the synagogue [ed. note: See St. Augustine on Ps 72, no. 4, 5,

"Ecclesia Socrus Synagogue." The Church is called the daughter of the

Synagogue in the spurious Altercatio Eccles. et Synagog.' (Aug. Opp t.

viii, p. 19.) They word's ynagogue' is applied to the Church by Justin

M. Dial, see Tryph, p. 160 (Ben.) Clem. Alex. Str. vi, 633.], by the

hand of discipline, and by the lifting up of our desires, are healed,

and minister to the will of Him who heals us.

Theophylact: But he has a fever who is angry, and in the unruliness of

his anger stretches forth his hands to do hurt; but if reason restrains

his hands, he will arise, and so serve reason.

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32. And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that

were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33. And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34. 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.

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Theophylact: Because the multitude thought that it was not lawful to

heal on the sabbath day, they waited for the evening, to bring those

who were to be healed to Jesus.

Wherefore it is said, "And at even, when the sun had set."

There follows, "and He healed many that were vexed with divers

diseases."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Now in that he says "many",

all are to be understood according to the Scripture mode of expression.

Theophylact: Or he says, "many", because there were some faithless

persons, who could not at all be cured on account of their

unfaithfulness. Therefore He healed many of those who were brought,

that is, all who had faith.

It goes on, "and cast out many devils."

Pseudo-Augustine, Quaest. e Vet. et Nov. Test. 16: For the devils knew

that He was the Christ, who had been promised by the Law: for they saw

in Him all the signs which had been foretold by the Prophets; but they

were ignorant of His divinity, as also were "their princes, for if they

had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." [1 Cor

2:8]

Bede: For, Him whom the devil had known as a man, wearied by His forty

days' fast, without being able by tempting Him to prove whether He was

the Son of God, he now by the power of His miracles understood or

rather suspected to be the Son of God. The reason therefore why he

persuaded the Jews to crucify Him, was not because he did not think

that He was the Son of God, but because he did not foresee that he

himself was to be condemned by Christ's death.

Theophylact: Furthermore, the reason that He forbade the devils to

speak, was to teach us not to believe them, even if they say true. For

if once they find persons to believe them, they mingle truth with

falsehood.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: And Luke does not contradict

this, when he says, that "devils came out of many, crying out and

saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God:" [Luke 4:41] for he subjoins,

"And He rebuking them, suffered them not to speak;" for Mark, who

passes over many things for the sake of brevity, speaks about what

happened subsequently to the abovementioned words.

Bede: Again, in a mystical sense, the setting of the sun signifies the

passion of Him, who said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light

of the world." [John 9:5] And when the sun was going down, more

demoniacs and sick persons were healed than before: because He who

living in the flesh for a time taught a few Jews, has transmitted the

gifts of faith and health to all the Gentiles throughout the world.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the door of the kingdom, morally, is repentance and

faith, which works health for various diseases; for divers are the

vices with which the city of this world is sick.

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35. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went

out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36. And Simon and they that were with Him followed after Him.

37. And when they had found Him, they said unto Him, "All men seek for

Thee."

38. And He said unto them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may

preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

39. And He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and

cast out devils.

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Theophylact: After that the Lord had cured the sick, He retired apart.

Wherefore it is said, "And rising very early in the morning, He went

out and departed into a desert place." By which He taught us not to do

any thing for the sake of appearance, but if we do any good, not to

publish it openly.

It goes on, "and there prayed."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Not that He required prayer;

for it was He who Himself received the prayers of men; but He did this

by way of an economy, and became to us the model of good work.

Theophylact: For He shews to us that we ought to attribute to God

whatever we do well, and to say to Him, "Every good gift cometh down

from above," [James 1:17] from Thee.

It continues: "And Simon followed Him, and they that were with Him."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Luke however says that

crowds came to Christ, and spoke what Mark here relates that the

Apostles said, adding, "And when they came to Him, they said to Him,

All seek thee." [Luke 4:42] But they do not contradict each other; for

Christ received after the Apostles the multitude, breathlessly anxious

to embrace His feet. He received them willingly, but chose to dismiss

them, that the rest also might be partakers of His doctrine, as He was

not to remain long in the world.

And therefore there follows: "And He said, Let us go into the

neighbouring villages and towns, that there also I may preach."

Theophylact: For He passes on to them as being more in need, since it

was not right to shut up doctrine in one place, but to throw out his

rays every where.

It goes on: "For therefore am I come."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: In which word, He manifests

the mystery of His "emptying himself," [see Phil. 2:7-8] that is, of

His incarnation, and the sovereignty of His divine nature, in that He

here asserts, that He came willingly into the world.

Luke however says, "To this end was I sent," proclaiming the

Dispensation, and the good pleasure of God the Father concerning the

incarnation of the Son.

There follows: "And He continued preaching in their synagogues, in all

Galilee."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 19: But by this preaching, which, he

says, "He continued in all Galilee," is also meant the sermon of the

Lord delivered on the mount, which Matthew mentions, and Mark has

entirely passed over, without giving any thing like it, save that he

has repeated some sentences not in continuous order, but in scattered

places, spoken by the Lord at other times.

Theophylact: He also mingled action with teaching, for whilst employed

in preaching, He afterwards put to flight devils.

For there follows: "And casting out devils."

For unless Christ shewed forth miracles, He teaching would not be

believed; so do thou also, after teaching, work, that thy word be not

fruitless in thyself.

Bede: Again, mystically if by the setting of the sun, the death of the

Saviour is intended, why should not His resurrection be intended by the

returning dawn? For by its clear light, He went far into the wilderness

of the Gentiles, and there continued praying in the person of His

faithful disciples, for He aroused their hearts by the grace of the

Holy Spirit to the virtue of prayer.

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40. And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to

Him, and saying unto Him, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

41. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched

him, and saith unto him, "I will; be thou clean."

42. And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from

him, and he was cleansed.

43. And He straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44. And saith unto him, "See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy

way, shew thyself to the Priest, and offer for thy cleansing those

things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

45. But he went out and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad

the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the

city, but was without in desert places: and they came to Him from every

quarter.

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Bede, in Marc., i, 7: After that the serpent-tongue of the devils was

shut up, and the woman, who was first seduced, cured of a fever, in the

third place, the man, who listened to the evil counsels of the woman,

is cleansed from his leprosy, that the order of restoration in the Lord

might be the same as was the order of the fall in our first parents.

Whence it goes on: "And there came a leper to him, beseeching Him."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 19: Mark puts together circumstances,

from which one may infer that he is the same as that one whom Matthew

relates to have been cleansed, when the Lord came down from the mount,

after the sermon. [Matt 8:2]

Bede, in Marc., i, 9: And because the Lord said that He came "not to

destroy the Law but to fulfill," [Matt. 5:17] he who was excluded by

the Law, inferring that he was cleansed by the power of the Lord,

shewed that grace, which could wash away the stain of the leper, was

not from the Law, but over the Law. And truly, as in the Lord

authoritative power, so in him the constancy of faith is shewn.

For there follows: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

He falls on his face, which is at once a gesture of lowliness and of

shame, to shew that every man should blush for the stains of his life.

But his shame did not stifle confession; he shewed his wound, and

begged for medicine, and the confession is full of devotion and of

faith, for he refers the power to the will of the Lord.

Theophylact: For he said not, If thou wilt, pray unto God, but, "If

Thou wilt," as thinking Him very God.

Bede: Moreover, he doubted of the will of the Lord, not as disbelieving

His compassion, but, as conscious of his own filth, he did not presume.

It goes on; "But Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and

touched him, and saith unto him, I will, be thou clean."

It is not, as many of the Latins think, to be taken to mean and read, I

wish to cleanse thee, but that Christ should say separately, "I will,"

and then command , "be thou clean."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 25: Further, the reason why He touches the

leper, and did not confer health upon him by word alone, was, that it

is said by Moses in the Law, that he who touches a leper shall be

unclean till the evening; that is, that he might shew that this

uncleanness is a natural one, that the Law was not laid down for Him,

but on account of mere men. Furthermore, He shews that He Himself is

the Lord of the Law; and the reason why He touched the leper, though

the touch was not necessary to the working of the cure, was to shew

that He gives health, not as a servant, but as the Lord.

Bede: Another reason why He touched him, was to proved that He could

not be defiled, who free others from pollution. At the same time it is

remarkable, that He healed in the way in which He had been begged to

heal.

"If Thou wilt," says the leper, "Thou canst make me clean."

"I will," He answered, behold, thou hast My will, "be clean;" now thou

hast at once the effect of My compassion.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 25: Moreover, by this, not only did He not take

away the opinion of Him entertained by the leper, but He confirmed it;

for He puts to flight the disease by a word, and what the leper had

said in word, He filled up in deed.

Wherefore there follows, "And when He had spoken, immediately, &c."

Bede: For there is no interval between the work of God and the command,

because the work is in the command, for "He commanded, and they were

created." [Ps 148:5]

There follows: "And He straitly charged him, and forthwith, &c." See

thou tell no man."

Chrys., Hom 25: As if He said, It is not yet time that My works should

be preached, I require not thy preaching. By which He teaches us not to

seek worldly honour as a reward for our works.

It goes on: "But go thy way, shew thyself to the chief of the priests."

Our Saviour sent him to the priest for the trial of his cure, and that

he might not be cast out of the temple, but still be numbered with the

people in prayer. He sends him also, that he might fulfil all the parts

of the Law, in order to stop the evil-speaking tongue of the Jews. He

Himself indeed completed the work, leaving them to try it.

Bede: This He did in order that the priest might understand that the

leper was not healed by the Law, but by the grace of God above the Law.

There follows: "And offer for thy cleansing what Moses, &c."

Theophylact: He ordered him to offer the gift which they who were

healed were accustomed to offer, as if for a testimony, that He was not

against the Law, but rather confirmed the Law, inasmuch as He Himself

worked out the precepts of the Law.

Bede: If any one wonders, how the Lord seems to approve of the Jewish

sacrifice, which the Church rejects, let him remember that He had not

yet offered His own holocaust in His passion. And it was not right that

significative sacrifices should be taken away before that which they

signified was confirmed by the witness of the Apostles in their

preaching, and by the faith of the believing people.

Theophylact: But the leper, although the Lord forbade him disclosed the

benefit, wherefore it goes on: "But he having gone out, began to

publish and to blaze abroad the tale;" for the person benefitted ought

to be grateful, and to return thanks, even though his benefactor

requires it not.

Bede, see Greg., Moral., 19, 22: Now it may well be asked, why our Lord

ordered His action to be concealed, and yet it could not be kept hid

for an hour? But it is to be observed, that the reason why, in doing a

miracle, He ordered it to be kept secret, and yet for all that it was

noised abroad, was, that His elect, following the example of His

teaching, should wish indeed that in the great things which they do,

they should remain concealed, but should nevertheless unwillingly be

brought to light for the good of others. Not then that He wished any

thing to be done, which He was not able to bring about, but, by the

authority of His teaching, He gave an example of what His members ought

to wish for, and of what should happen to them even against their will.

Bede: Further, this perfect cure of one man brought large multitudes to

the Lord.

Wherefore it is added, "So that He could not any more openly enter into

the city, but could only be without in desert places."

Chrys.: For the leper every where proclaimed his wonderful cure, so

that all ran to see and to believe on the Healer; thus the Lord could

not preach the Gospel, but walked in desert places.

Wherefore there follows, "And they came together to Him from all

places."

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, our leprosy is the sin of the first man,

which began from the head, when he desired the kingdom of the world.

For covetousness is the root of all evil; wherefore Gehazi, engaged in

an avaritious pursuit, is covered with leprosy.

Bede: But when the hand of the Saviour, that is, the Incarnate Word of

God, is stretched out, and touches human nature, it is cleansed from

the various parts of the old error.

Pseudo-Jerome: This leprosy is cleansed on offering an oblation to the

true Priest after the order of Melchisedec; for He tells us, "Give alms

of such things as ye have, and, behold, all things are clean unto you."

[Luke 11:41]

But in that Jesus could not openly enter into the city, it is meant to

be conveyed that Jesus is not manifested to those who are enslaved to

the love of praise in the broad highway, and to their own wills, but to

those who with Peter go into the desert, which the Lord chose for

prayer, and for refreshing His people; that is, those who quit the

pleasures of the world, and all that they possess, that they may say,

"The Lord is my portion." But the glory of the Lord is manifested to

those, who meet together on all sides, that is, through smooth ways and

steep, whom nothing can "separate from the love of Christ." [Rom 8:35]

Bede, in Marc., i, 10: Even after working a miracle in that city, the

Lord retires into the desert, to shew that He loves best a quiet life,

and one far removed from the cares of the world, and that it is on

account of this desire, He applied Himself to the healing of the body.

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Chapter 2

1. And again He entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was

noised that He was in the house.

2. 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

preached the word unto them.

3. And they came unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, who was

carried by four.

4. 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.

5. When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy,

"Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

6. But there were certain of the Scribes sitting there, and reasoning

in their hearts,

7. Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but

God only?

8. And immediately when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they so

reasoned within themselves, He said unto them, "Why reason ye these

things in your hearts?

9. Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be

forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to

forgive sins, (He saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11. I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into

thine house."

12. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before

them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God,

saying, "We never saw it on this fashion."

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Bede, in Marc., 1, 10: Because the compassion of God deserts not even

carnal persons, He accords to them the grace of His presence, by which

even they may be made spiritual. After the desert, the Lord returns

into the city.

Wherefore it is said, "And again He entered into Capernaum, &c."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 25: But Matthew writes this miracle as if

it were done in the city of the Lord, whilst Mark places it in

Capernaum, which would be more difficult of solution, if Matthew had

also named Nazareth. But seeing that Galilee itself might be called the

city of the Lord, who can doubt but that the Lord did these things in

His own city, since He did them in Capernaum, a city of Galilee;

particularly as Capernaum was of such importance in Galilee as to be

called its metropolis?

Or else, Matthew passed by the things which were done after He came

into His own city, until He came to Capernaum, and so adds on the story

of the paralytic healed, subjoining, "And, behold, they presented to

Him a man sick of the palsy," after he had said that He came into His

own city.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else, Matthew called

Capernaum His city because He went there frequently, and there did many

miracles.

It goes on: "And it was noised that He was in the house, &c."

For the desire of hearing Him was stronger that the toil of approaching

Him. After this, they introduce the paralytic, of whom Matthew and Luke

speak; wherefore there follows: "And they came unto Him bearing one

sick of the palsy, who was carried by four."

Finding the door blocked up by the crowd, they could not by any means

enter that way. Those who carried him, however, hoping that he could

merit the grace of being healed, raising the bed with their burden, and

uncovering the roof, lay him with his bed before the face of the

Saviour.

And this is that which is added: "And when they could not lay him

before Him, &c."

There follows: "But when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the sick of

the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

He did not mean the faith of the sick man, but of his bearers; for it

sometimes happens that a man is healed by the faith of another.

Bede: It may indeed be seen how much each person's own faith weighs

with God, when that of another had such influence that the whole man at

once rose up, healed body and soul, and by one man's merit, another

should have his sins forgiven him.

Theophylact: He saw the faith of the sick man himself, since he would

not have allowed himself to be carried, unless he'd had faith to be

healed.

Bede: Moreover, the Lord being about to cure the man of the palsy,

first loosed the chains of his sins, in order to shew that he was

condemned to the loosening of his joints, because of the bonds of his

sins, and could not be healed to the recovery of his limbs, unless

these were first loosened.

But Christ's wonderful humility calls this man, despised, weak, with

all the joints of his limbs unstrung, a son, when the priests did not

deign to touch him. Or at least, He therefore calls him a son because

his sins are forgiven him.

It goes on: "But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and

reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man speak blasphemies?"

Cyril [ed. note: Nicolai observes on this passage, Nihil tale occurrit

in Cyrillo, tametsi blasphemiae ideo a Judaeis improperatae Christo

meminit in Johannem, Lib. ii, e.3.]: Now they accuse Him of blasphemy,

anticipating the sentence of His death: for there was a command in the

Law, that whosoever blasphemed should be put to death. And this charge

they laid upon Him, because He claimed for Himself the divine power of

remitting sins.

Wherefore it is added, "Who can forgive sin, save God only?" For the

Judge of all alone has power to forgive sin.

Bede: Who remits sin by those also to whom He has assigned the power of

remitting, and therefore Christ is proved to be very God, for He is

able to remit sins as God.

The Jews then are in error, who although they hold the Christ both to

be God, and to be able to remit sins, do not however believe that Jesus

is the Christ.

But the Arians err much more madly, who although overwhelmed with the

words of the Evangelist, so that they cannot deny that Jesus is the

Christ, and can remit sin, nevertheless fear not to deny that He is

God.

But He Himself, desiring to shame the traitors both by His knowledge of

things hidden and by the virtue of His works, manifests Himself to be

God.

For there follows: "And immediately when Jesus perceived in His spirit

that they so reasoned, He said unto them, Why reason ye these things in

your hearts?"

In which He shews Himself to be God, since He can know the hidden

things of the heart; and in a manner though silent He speaks thus, With

the same power and majesty, by which I look upon your thoughts, I can

forgive the sins of men.

Theophylact: But though their thoughts were laid bare, still they

remain insensible, refusing to believe that He who knew their hearts

could forgive sins, wherefore the Lord proves to them the cure of the

soul by that of the body, shewing the invisible by the visible, that

which is more difficult by that which is easier, although they did not

look upon it as such.

For the Pharisees thought it more difficult to heal the body, as being

more open to view; but the soul more easy to cure, because the cure is

invisible; so that they reasoned thus, Lo, He does not now cure the

body, but heals the unseen soul; if He'd had more power, He would at

once have cured the body, and not have fled for refuge to the unseen

world.

The Saviour, therefore, shewing that He can do both, says, "Which is

easier?" as if He said, I indeed by the healing of the body, which is

in reality more easy, but appears to you more difficult, will prove to

you the health of the soul, which is really more difficult.

Psuedo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: And because it is easier to

say than to do, there was still manifestly something to say in

opposition, for the work was not yet manifested.

Wherefore He subjoins, "But that ye may know, &c." as if He said, Since

ye doubt My word, I will bring on a work which will confirm what was

unseen.

But He says in a marked manner, "On earth to forgive sins," that He

might shew that He has joined the power of the divinity to the human

nature by an inseparable union, because although He was made man, yet

He remained the Word of God; and although by an economy He conversed on

the earth with men, nevertheless He was not prevented from working

miracles and from giving remission of sins.

For His human nature did not in any thing take away from these things

which essentially belonged to His Divinity, nor the Divinity hinder the

Word of God from becoming on earth, according to the flesh, the Son of

Man without change and in truth.

Theophylact: Again, He says, "Take up thy bed," to prove the greater

certainty of the miracle, shewing that it is not a mere illusion; and

at the same time to shew that He not only healed, but gave strength;

thus He not only turns away souls from sin, but gives them the power of

working out the commandments.

Bede: A carnal sign therefore is given, that the spiritual sign may be

proved, although it belongs to the same power to do away with the

distempers of both soul and body.

Whence it follows: "And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went

forth before them all."

Chrys.: Further, He first healed by the remission of sins that which He

had come to seek, that is, a soul, so that when they faithlessly

doubted, then He might bring forward a work before them, and in this

way His word might be confirmed by the work, and a hidden sign be

proved by an open one, that is, the health of the soul by the healing

of the body.

Bede: We are also informed, that many sicknesses of body arise from

sins, and therefore perhaps sins are first remitted, that the causes of

sickness being taken away, health may be restored. For men are

afflicted by fleshly troubles for five causes, in order to increase

their merits, as Job and the Martyrs; or to preserve their lowliness,

as Paul by the messenger of Satan; or that they may perceive and

correct their sins, as Miriam, the sister of Moses, and this paralytic;

or for the glory of God, as the man born blind and Lazarus; or as the

beginnings of the pains of damnation, as Herod and Antiochus.

But wonderful is the virtue of the Divine power, where without the

least interval of time, by the command of the Saviour, a speedy health

accompanies His words.

Wherefore there follows: "Insomuch that they were all amazed." Leaving

the greater thing, that is, the remission of sins, they only wonder at

that which is apparent, that is, the health of the body.

Theophylact: This is not however the paralytic, whose cure is related

by John, [John 5] for he had no man with him, this one had four; he is

cured in the pool of the sheep market, but this one in a house. It is

the same man, however, whose cure is related by Matthew [Matt. 9] and

Mark.

But mystically, Christ is still in Capernaum, in the house of

consolation.

Bede: Moreover, whilst the Lord is preaching in the house, there is not

room for them, not even at the door, because whilst Christ is preaching

in Judaea, the Gentiles are not yet able to enter to hear Him, to whom,

however, though placed without, he directed the words of His doctrine

by His preachers.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, the palsy is a type of the torpor, in which man

lies slothful in the softness of the flesh, though desiring health.

Theophlyact: If therefore I, having the powers of my mind unstrung,

remain, whenever I attempt any thing good without strength, as a

palsied man, and if I be raised on high by the four Evangelists, and be

brought to Christ, and there hear myself called son, then also are my

sins quitted by me; for a man is called the son of God because he works

the commandments.

Bede: Or else, because there are four virtues, by which a man is

through an assured heart exalted so that he merits safety; which

virtues some call prudence, fortitude, temperance and justice. Again,

they desire to bring the palsied man to Christ, but they are impeded on

every side by the crowd which is between them, because often the soul

desires to be renewed by the medicine of Divine grace, but through the

sluggishness of the grovelling body is held back by the hindrance of

old custom. Oftentimes amidst the very sweetness of secret prayer, and,

as it may be called, the pleasant converse with God, a crowd of

thoughts, cutting off the clear vision of the mind, shuts out Christ

from its sight.

Let us not then remain in the lowest ground, where the crowds are

bustling, but aim at the roof of the house, that is, the sublimity of

the Holy Scripture, and meditate on the law of the Lord.

Theophylact: But how should I be borne to Christ, if the roof be not

opened. For the roof is the intellect, which is set above all those

things which are within us; here it has much earth about it in the

tiles which are made of clay, I mean, earthly things: but if these be

taken away, the virtue of the intellect within us is freed from its

load. After this let it be let down, that is, humbled. For it does not

teach us to be puffed up, because our intellect has its load cleared

away, but to be humbled still more.

Bede: Or else, the sick man is let down after the roof is opened,

because, when the Scriptures are laid open to us we arrive at the

knowledge of Christ, that is, we descend to His lowliness, by the

dutifulness of faith. But by the sick man being let down with his bed,

it is meant that Christ should be known by man, whilst yet in the

flesh.

But by rising from the bed is meant the soul's rousing itself from

carnal desires, in which it was lying in sickness. To take up the bed

is to bridle the flesh itself by the bands of continence, and to

separate it from earthly pleasures, through the hope of heavenly

rewards.

But to take up the bed and to go home is to return to paradise. Or else

the man, now healed, who had been sick carries back home his bed, when

the soul, after receiving remission of sins, returns, even though

encompassed with the body, to its internal watch over itself.

Theophylact: It is necessary to take up also one's bed, that is the

body, to the working of good. For then shall we be able to arrive at

contemplation, so that our thoughts should say within us, never have we

seen in this way before, that is never understood as we have done since

we have been cured of the palsy; for he who is cleansed from sin, sees

more purely.

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13. And He went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude

resorted unto Him, and He taught them.

14. And as He passed by, He saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at

the receipt of custom, and said unto him, "Follow Me." And he arose and

followed Him.

15. And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many

Publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and His disciples;

for there were many, and they followed Him.

16. And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw Him eat with Publicans and

sinners, they said unto his disciples, "How is it that He eateth and

drinketh with Publicans and sinners?"

17. When Jesus heard it, He said unto them, "They that are whole have

no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call

the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

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Bede: After that the Lord taught at Capernaum, He went to the sea, that

He might not only set in order the life of men in towns, but also might

preach the Gospel of the kingdom to those who dwelt near the sea, and

might teach them to despise the restless motions of those things which

pass away like the waves of the sea, and to overcome them by the

firmness of faith.

Wherefore it is said, "And He went forth again to the sea, and all the

multitude, &c."

Theophylact: Or else, after the miracle, He goes to the sea, as if

wishing to be alone, but the crowd runs to Him again, that thou

mightest learn, that the more thou fliest from glory, the more she

herself pursues thee; but if thou followest her, she will fly from

thee. The Lord passing on from thence called Matthew.

Wherefore there follows, "And as He passed by, He saw Levi, the son of

Alphaeus, sitting, &c."

Chrys.: Now this is the same publican who is named by all the

Evangelists; Matthew by Matthew; simply Levi by Luke; and Levi, the son

of Alphaeus, by Mark; for he was the son of Alphaeus. And you may find

persons with two names in other parts of Scripture; as Moses' father in

law is sometimes called Jethro, sometimes Raguel.

Bede, in Marc., 11: So also the same person is called Levi and Matthew;

but Luke and Mark, on account of their reverence and the honour of the

Evangelist, are unwilling to put the common name, while Matthew is a

just accuser of himself, and calls himself Matthew and publican. He

wishes to shew to his hearers that no one who is converted should

despair of his salvation, since he himself was suddenly changed from a

publican into an Apostle.

but he says that he was sitting at the teloneum,' that is, the place

where the customs are looked after and administered. For telos' in

Greek is the same as vectigal,' customs, in Latin.

Theophylact: For he sat at the receipt of custom, either, as is often

done, exacting from some, or making up accounts, or doing some actions

of that sort, which publicans are wont to do in their abodes, yea this

man, who was raised on high from this state of life that he might leave

all things and follow Christ.

Wherefore it goes on, "And He saith to him, Follow Me, &c."

Bede: Now to follow is to imitate, and therefore in order to imitate

the poverty of Christ, in the feeling of his soul even more than in

outward condition, he who used to rob his neighbour's wealth, now

leaves his own. And not only did he quit the gain of the customs, but

he also despised the peril, which might come from the princes of this

world, because he left the accounts of the customs imperfect and

unsettled. For the Lord Himself, Who externally, by human language,

called Him to follow, inflamed him inwardly by divine inspiration to

follow Him the moment that He called him.

Pseudo-Jerome: Thus then Levi, which means Appointed, followed from the

custom-house of human affairs, the Word, Who says, "He who doth not

quit all that he has, cannot be My disciple."

Theophylact: But he who used to plot against others becomes so

benevolent, that he invites many persons to eat with him.

Wherefore it goes on: "And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat

in his house."

Bede, in Marc. i, 12: The persons here called publicans are those who

exact the public customs, or men who farm the customs of the exchequer

or of republics; moreover, those also, who follow after the gain of

this world by business, are called by the same name. They who had seen

that the publican, converted from his sins to better things, had found

a place of pardon, even for this reason themselves also do not despair

of salvation.

And they come to Jesus, not remaining in their former sins, as the

Pharisees and Scribes complain, but in penitence, as the following

words of the Evangelist shew, saying, "For there were many who followed

Him."

For the Lord went to the feasts of sinners, that He might have an

opportunity of teaching them, and might set before His entertainers

spiritual meats, which also is carried on in mystical figures. For he

who receives Christ into his inward habitation is fed with the highest

delights of overflowing pleasures.

Therefore the Lord enters willingly, and takes up His abode in the

affection of him who hath believed on Him; and this is the spiritual

banquet of good works, which the rich cannot have, and on which the

poor feast.

Theophylact: But the Pharisees blame this, making themselves pure.

Whence there follows: "And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw Him eat,

&c."

Bede: If by the election of Matthew and calling of the publicans, the

faith of the Gentiles is expressed, who formerly were intent on the

gains of this world; certainly the haughtiness of the Scribes and

Pharisees intimates the envy of the Jewish people, who are vexed at the

salvation of the Gentiles.

It goes on: "When Jesus heard it, He saith unto them, They that are

whole need not the physician, but they that are sick."

He aims at the Scribes and Pharisees, who, thinking themselves

righteous, refused to keep company with sinners. He calls Himself the

physician, Who, by a strange mode of healing, was wounded on account of

our iniquities, and by His wound we are healed. And He calls those

whole and righteous, who, wishing to establish their own righteousness,

are not subject to the righteousness of God. Moreover He calls those

rich and sinners, who, overcome by the consciousness of their own

frailty, and seeing that they cannot be justified by the Law, submit

their necks to the grace of Christ by repentance.

Wherefore it is added, "For I came not to call the righteous, but

sinners, &c."

Theophylact: Not indeed that they should continue sinners, but be

converted to that repentance.

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18. And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and

they come and say unto Him, "Why do the disciples of John and of the

Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?"

19. And Jesus said unto them, "Can the children of the bridechamber

fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the

bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away

from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21. No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the

new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is

made worse.

22. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine

doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will

be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles."

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Gloss.: As above, the Master was accused to the disciples for keeping

company with sinners in their feasts, so now, on the other hand, the

disciples are complained of to the Master for their omission of fasts,

that so matter for dissension might arise amongst them.

Wherefore it is said, "And the disciples of John and the Pharisees used

to fast."

Theophylact: For the disciples of John being in an imperfect state,

continued in Jewish customs.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 27: But it may be thought that He added

Pharisees, because they joined with the disciples of John in saying

this to the Lord, whilst Matthew relates that the disciples of John

alone said it: but the words which follow father shew that those who

said it spoke not of themselves, but of others.

For it goes on, "And they came and say unto Him, Why do the disciples,

&c."

For these words shew, that the guests who were there came to Jesus, and

had said this same thing to the disciples, so that in the words which

he uses, "they came," he speaks not of those same persons, of whom he

had said, "And the disciples of John and the Pharisees were fasting."

But as they were fasting, those persons who remembered it, come to Him.

Matthew then says this, "And there came to Him the disciples of John,

saying," because the Apostles also were there, and all eagerly, as each

could, objected these things.

Chrys.: The disciples of John, therefore, and of the Pharisees, being

jealous of Christ, ask Him, whether He alone of all men with His

disciples could, without abstinence and toil, conquer in the fight of

the passions.

Bede: But John did not drink wine and strong drink, because he who has

no power by nature, obtains more merit by abstinence. But why should

the Lord, to whom it naturally belonged to forgive sins, shun those

whom he could make more pure, than those who fast? But Christ also

fasted, lest He should break the precept, "He ate with sinners," that

thou mightest see His grace, and acknowledge His power.

It goes on; "And Jesus said unto them, Can the children, &c."

Augustine: Mark here calls them children of the nuptials, whom Matthew

calls children of the bridegroom; for we understand the children of the

nuptials to be not only those of the bridegroom, but also of the bride.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He then calls Himself a

bridegroom, as if about to be betrothed to the Church. For the

betrothal is giving an earnest, namely, that the grace of the Holy

Ghost, by which the world believed.

Theophylact: He also calls Himself a bridegroom, not only as betrothing

to Himself virgin minds, but because the time of His first coming is

not a time of sorrow, nor of sadness to believers, neither does it

bring with it toil, but rest.

For it is without any works of the law, giving rest by baptism, by

which we easily obtain salvation without toil. But the sons of the

nuptials or of the Bridegroom are the Apostles; because they, by the

grace of God, are made worthy of every heavenly blessing, by the grace

of God, and partakers of every joy.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But intercourse with Him, He

says, is far removed from all sorrow, when He adds, "As long as they

have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast." He is said, from whom

some good is far removed; but he who has it present with him rejoices,

and is not sad. But that He might destroy their elation of heart, and

shew that He intended not His own disciples to be licentious, He adds,

"But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken, &c." as if

He said, The time will come, when they will shew their firmness; for

when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, they will fast as longing

for His coming, and in order to unite to Him their spirits, cleansed by

bodily suffering.

He shews also that there is no necessity for His disciples to fast, as

having present with them the Bridegroom of human nature, Who every

where executes the words of God, and Who gives the seed of life.

The sons of the Bridegroom also cannot, because they are infants, be

entirely conformed to their Father, the Bridegroom, Who, considering

their infancy, deigns to allow them not to fast: but when the

Bridegroom is gone, they will fast, through desire of Him; when they

have been made perfect, they will be united to the Bridegroom in

marriage, and will always feast at the king's banquet.

Theophylact: We must also understand that every man whose works are

good is the son of the Bridegroom; he has the Bridegroom with him, even

Christ, and fasts not, that is, does no works of repentance, because he

does not sin: but when the Bridegroom is taken away by the man's

falling into sin, then he fasts and is penitent, that he may cure his

sin.

Bede: But in a mystical sense, it may thus be expressed; that the

disciples of John and the Pharisees fast, because every man who boasts

of the works of the law without faith, who follows the traditions of

men, and receives the preaching of Christ with his bodily ear, and not

by the faith of the heart, keeps aloof from spiritual goods, and wastes

away with a fasting soul. But he who is incorporated into the members

of Christ by a faithful love cannot fast, because he feasts upon His

Body and Blood.

It goes on, "No one seweth a piece of" rough, that is, "new, cloth on

an old garment: else the new piece that filleth it up taketh away from

the old, and the rent is made worse."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: As if He said, because these

are preachers of the New Testament, it is not possible that they should

serve old laws; but ye who follow old customs, fitly observe the fasts

of Moses. But for these, who are about to hand down to men new and

wonderful observances, it is not necessary to observe the old

traditions, but to be virtuous in mind; some time or other however they

will observe fasting with other virtues. But this fasting is different

from the fasting of the law, for that was one of restraint, this of

goodwill; on account of the fervour of the Spirit, Whom they cannot yet

receive.

Wherefore it goes on, "And no one putteth new wine into old bottles:

else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and

the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put in new bottles."

Bede: For He compares His disciples to old bottles, who would burst at

spiritual precepts, rather than be held in restraint by them. But they

will be new bottles, when after the ascension of the Lord, they are

renewed by desiring His consolation, and then new wine will come to the

new bottles, that is, the fervour of the Holy Ghost will fill the

hearts of spiritual men. A teacher must also take heed not to commit

the hidden things of the new mysteries to a soul, hardened in old

wickedness.

Theophylact: Or else the disciples are likened to old garments on

account of the infirmity of their minds, on which it was not fitting to

impose the heavy command of fasting.

Bede: Neither was it fitting to sew on a new piece; that is, a portion

of doctrine which teaches a general fast from all the joy of temporal

delights; for if this be done, the teaching is rent, and agrees not

with the old part. But by a new garment is intended good works, which

are done externally, and by the new wine, is expressed the fervour of

faith, hope, and charity, by which we are reformed in our minds.

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23. And it came to pass, that He went through the corn fields on the

sabbath day; and His disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears

of corn.

24. And the Pharisees said unto Him, "Behold, why do they on the

sabbath day that which is not lawful?"

25. And He said unto them, "Have ye never read what David did, when he

had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?

26. How he went into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the High

Priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for

the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?"

27. And He said unto them, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man

for the sabbath:

28. Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."

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Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The disciples of Christ,

freed from the figure, and united to the truth, do not keep the

figurative feast of the sabbath.

Wherefore it is said, "And it came to pass, that He went through the

corn fields on the sabbath day; and His disciples began, as they went,

to pluck the ears of corn."

Bede, in Marc., 1, 13: We read also in the following part, that they

who came and went away were many, and that they had not time enough to

take their food, wherefore, according to man's nature, they were

hungry.

Chrys., see Hom. in Matt., 39: But being hungry, they ate simple food,

not for pleasure, but on account of the necessity of nature. The

Pharisees however, serving the figure and the shadow, accused the

disciples of doing wrong.

Wherefore there follows, "But the Pharisees said unto Him, Behold, why

do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful."

Augustine, de Op. Monach., 23: For it was a precept in Israel,

delivered by a written law, that no one should detain a thief found in

his fields, unless he tried to take something away with him. For the

man who had touched nothing else but what he had eaten they were

commanded to allow to go away free and unpunished. Wherefore the Jews

accused our Lord's disciples, who were plucking the ears of corn, of

breaking the sabbath, rather than of theft.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But our Lord brings forward

David, to whom it once happened to eat though it was forbidden by the

law, when he touched the Priest's food, that by his example, He might

do away with their accusation of the disciples.

For there follows, "Have ye never read, &c."

Theophylact: For David, when flying from the face of Saul [1 Sam 21]

went to the Chief Priest, and ate the shew-bread, and took away the

sword of Goliath, which things had been offered to the Lord. But a

question has been raised how the Evangelist called Abiathar at this

time High Priest, when the Book of Kings calls him Abimelech.

Bede: There is, however, no discrepancy, for both were there, when

David came to ask for bread, and received it: that is to say,

Abimelech, the High Priest, and Abiathar his son; but Abimelech having

been slain by Saul, Abiathar fled to David, and became the companion of

all his exile afterwards. When he came to the throne, he himself also

received the rank of High Priest, and the son became of much greater

excellence than the father, and therefore was worthy to be mentioned as

the High Priest, even during his father's life-time.

It goes on: "And He said to them, The sabbath was made for man, and not

man for the sabbath."

For greater is the care to be taken of the health and life of a man,

than the keeping of the sabbath. Therefore the sabbath was ordered to

be observed in such a way, that, if there were a neccesity, he should

not be guilty, who broke the sabbath-day; therefore it was not

forbidden to circumcise on the sabbath, because that was a necessary

work. And the Maccabees, when necessity pressed on them, fought on the

sabbath-day.

Wherefore, His disciples being hungry, what was not allowed in the law

became lawful through their necessity of hunger; as now, if a sick man

break a fast, he is not held guilty in any way.

It goes on: "Therefore the Son of man is Lord, &c." As if He said,

David the king is to be excused for feeding on the food of the Priests,

how much more the Son of man, the true King and Priest, and Lord of the

sabbath, is free from fault, for pulling ears of corn on the

sabbath-day.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He calls himself properly,

Lord of the sabbath, and Son of man, since being the Son of God, He

deigned to be called Son of man, for the sake of men. Now the law has

no authority over the Lawgiver and Lord, for more is allowed the king,

than is appointed by the law. The law is given to the weak indeed, but

not to the perfect and to those who work above what the law enjoins.

Bede: But in a mystical sense the disciples pass through the corn

fields, when the holy doctors look with the care of a pious solicitude

upon those whom they have initiated in the faith, and who, it is

implied, are hungering for the best of all things, the salvation of

men.

But to pluck the ears of corn means to snatch men away from the eager

desire of earthly things. And to rub with the hands is by example of

virtue to put from the purity of their minds the concupiscence of the

flesh, as men do husks. To eat the grains is when a man, cleansed from

the filth of vice by the mouths of preachers, is incorporated amongst

the members of the Church.

Again, fitly are the disciples related to have done this, walking

before the face of the Lord, for it is necessary that the discourse of

the doctor should come first, although the grace of visitation from on

high, following it, must enlighten the heart of the hearer. As well, on

the sabbath-day, for the doctors themselves in preaching labour for the

hope of future rest, and teach their hearers to toil over their tasks

for the sake of eternal repose.

Theophylact: Or else, because when they have rest from their passions,

then are they made doctors to lead others to virtue, plucking away from

them earthly things.

Bede: Again, they walk through the corn fields with the Lord, who

rejoice in meditating upon His sacred words. They hunger, when they

desire to find in them the bread of life; and they hunger on sabbath

days, as soon as their minds are in a soothing rest, and they rejoice

in freedom from troubled thoughts; they pluck the ears of corn, and by

rubbing, cleanse them, till they come to what is fit to eat, when by

meditation they take to themselves the witness of the Scriptures, to

which they arrive by reading, and discuss them continually, until they

find in them the marrow of love; this refreshment of the mind is truly

unpleasing to fools, but is approved by the Lord.

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Chapter 3

1. And He entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there

which had a withered hand.

2. And they watched Him, whether He would heal him on the sabbath day;

that they might accuse Him.

3. And He saith unto the man which had the withered hand, "Stand

forth."

4. And He saith unto them, "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath

days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" But they held their

peace.

5. And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved

for the hardness of their hearts, He saith unto the man, "Stretch forth

thine hand." And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole

as the other.

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Theophylact: After confounding the Jews, who had blamed His disciples,

for pulling the ears of corn on the sabbath day, by the example of

David, the Lord now further bringing them to the truth, works a miracle

on the sabbath; shewing that, if it is a pious deed to work miracles on

the sabbath for the health of men, it is not wrong to do on the sabbath

thing necessary for the body.

He says therefore, "And He entered again into the synagogue; and there

was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched Him,

whether He would heal him on the sabbath-day; that they might accuse

Him."

Bede, in Marc., 1, 14: For, since He had defended the breaking of the

sabbath, which they objected to His disciples, by an approved example,

now they wish, by watching Him, to calumniate Himself, that they might

accuse Him of a transgression, if He cured on the sabbath, of cruelty

or of folly, if He refused.

It goes on: "And He saith unto the man which had the withered hand,

Stand in the midst."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc., see Chrys, Hom. in Matt.,

40: He placed him in the midst, that they might be frightened at the

sight, and on seeing Him compassionate him, and lay aside their malice.

Bede: And anticipating the calumny of the Jews, which they had prepared

for Him, He accused them of violating the precepts of the law, by a

wrong interpretation.

Wherefore there follows: "And He saith unto them, Is it lawful to do

good on the sabbath-day, or to do evil?"

And this He asks, because they thought that on the sabbath they were to

rest even from good works, whilst the law commands to abstain from bad,

saying, "Ye shall do no servile work therein;" [Lev 23:7] that is, sin:

for "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." [John 8:34]

What He first says, "to do good on the sabbath-day or to do evil," is

the same as what He afterwards adds, "to save a life or to lose it;"

that is, to cure a man or not. Not that God, Who is in the highest

degree good, can be the author of perdition to us, but that His not

saving is in the language of Scripture to destroy.

but if it be asked, wherefore the Lord, being about to cure the body,

asked about the saving of the soul, let him understand either that in

the common way of Scripture the soul is put for the man; as it is said,

"All the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob;" [Ex 1:5] or

because He did those miracles for the saving of a soul, or because the

healing itself of the hand signified the saving of the soul.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 35: But some one may wonder how Matthew

could have said, that they themselves asked the Lord, if it was lawful

to heal on the sabbath-day; when Mark rather relates that they were

asked by our Lord, "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-day, or to

do evil?"

Therefore we must understand that they first asked the Lord, if it was

lawful to heal on the sabbath-day, then that understanding their

thoughts, and that they were seeking an opportunity to accuse Him, He

placed in the middle him whom He was about to cure, and put those

questions, which Mark and Luke relate. We must then suppose, that when

they were silent, He propounded the parable of the sheep, and

concluded, that it was lawful to do good on the sabbath-day.

It goes on: "But they were silent." Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in

Marc.: For they knew that He would certainly cure him.

It goes on: "And looking round about upon them with anger."

His looking round upon them in anger, and being saddened at the

blindness of their hearts, is fitting for His humanity, which He

deigned to take upon Himself for us. He connects the working of the

miracle with a word, which proves that the man is cured by His voice

alone.

It follow therefore, "And he stretched it out, and his hand was

restored." Answering by all these things for His disciples, and at the

same time shewing that His life is above the law.

Bede: But mystically, the man with a withered hand shews the human

race, dried up as to its fruitfulness in good works, but now cured by

the mercy of the Lord; the hand of man, which in our first parent had

been dried up when he plucked the fruit of the forbidden tree, through

the grace of the Redeemer, Who stretched His guiltless hands on the

tree of the cross, has been restored to health by the juices of good

works.

Well too was it in the synagogue that the hand was withered; for where

the gift of knowledge is greater, there also the danger of inexcusable

guilt is greater.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else it means the avaricious, who, being able to give

had rather receive, and love robbery rather than making gifts. And they

are commanded to stretch forth their hands, that is, "let him that

stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hand

the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

[Eph 4:28]

Theophylact: Or, he had his right hand withered, who does not the works

which belong to the right side; for from the time that our hand is

employed in forbidden deeds, from that time it is withered to the

working of good. But it will be restored whenever it stands firm in

virtue; wherefore Christ saith, "Arise," that is, from sin, "and stand

in the midst;" that thus it may stretch itself forth neither too little

nor too much.

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6. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the

Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

7. But Jesus withdrew Himself with His disciples to the sea: and a

great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judaea,

8. And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and

they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what

great things He did, came unto Him.

9. And He spake to His disciples, that a small ship should wait on Him,

because of the multitude, lest they should throng Him.

10. For He had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon Him for to

touch Him, as many as had plagues.

11. And unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and

cried, saying, "Thou art the Son of God."

12. And He straitly charged them that they should not make Him known.

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Bede, in Marc., 1, 15: The Pharisees, thinking it a crime that at the

word of the Lord the hand which was diseased was restored to a sound

state, agreed to make a pretext of the words spoken by our Saviour.

Wherefore it is said, "And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway

took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy

Him."

As if every one amongst them did not greater things on the sabbath day,

carrying food, reaching forth a cup, and whatever else is necessary for

meals. Neither could He, Who said and it was done, be convicted of

toiling on the sabbath day.

Theophylact: But the soldiers of Herod the king are called Herodians,

because a certain new heresy had sprung up, which asserted that Herod

was the Christ. For the prophecy of Jacob intimated that when the

princes of Judah failed then Christ should come; because therefore in

the time of Herod none of the Jewish princes remained, and he, an

alien, was the sole ruler, some thought that he was the Christ, and set

on foot this heresy. These, therefore, were with the Pharisees trying

to kill Christ.

Bede: Or else he calls Herodians the servants of Herod the Tetrarch,

who on account of the hatred which their lord had for John, pursued

with treachery and hate the Saviour also, Whom John preached.

It goes on, "But Jesus withdrew Himself with His disciples to the sea;"

He fled from their treachery, because the hour of His passion had not

yet come, and no place away from Jerusalem was proper for His Passion.

By which also He gave an example to His disciples, when they suffer

persecution in one city, to flee to another.

Theophylact: At the same time again, He goes away, that by quitting the

ungrateful He might do good to more, "for many followed Him, and He

healed them."

For there follows, "And a great multitude from Galilee, &c." Syrians

and Sidonians, being foreigners, receive benefit from Christ; but His

kindred the Jews persecute Him: thus there is no profit in

relationship, if there be not a similarity in goodness.

Bede: For the strangers followed Him, because they saw the works of His

powers, and in order to hear the words of His teaching. But the Jews,

induced solely by their opinion of His powers, in a vast multitude come

to hear Him, and to beg for His aiding health.

Wherefore there follows, "And He spake to His disciples, that they

should wait, &c."

Theophylact: Consider then how He hid His glory, for He begs for a

little ship, lest the crowd should hurt Him, so that entering into it,

He might remain unharmed.

It follows, "As many as had scourges, &c."

But he means by scourges, diseases, for God scourges us, as a father

does His children.

Bede: Both therefore fell down before the Lord, those who had the

plagues of bodily diseases, and those who were vexed by unclean

spirits. The sick did this simply with the intention of obtaining

health, but the demoniacs, or rather the devils within them, because

under the mastery of a fear of God they were compelled not only to fall

down before Him but also to praise His majesty.

Wherefore it goes on, "And they cried out, saying, Thou art the Son of

God."

And here we must wonder at the blindness of the Arians, who, after the

glory of His resurrection, deny the Son of God, Whom the devils confess

to be the Son of God, though still clothed with human flesh.

There follows, "And He straitly charged them, that they should not make

Him known."

For God said to the sinner, "Why does thou preach my laws?" [Ps 50:16]

A sinner is forbidden to preach the Lord, lest any one listening to his

preaching should follow him in his error, for the devil is an evil

master, who always mingles false things with true, that the semblance

of truth may cover the witness of fraud.

But not only devils, but persons healed by Christ, and even Apostles,

are ordered to be silent concerning Him before the Passion, lest by the

preaching of the majesty of His Divinity, the economy of His Passion

should be retarded. But allegorically, in the Lord's coming out of the

synagogue, and then retiring to the sea, He prefigured the salvation of

the Gentiles, to whom He deigned to come through their faith, having

quitted the Jews on account of their perfidy.

For the nations, driven about in divers by-paths of error, are fitly

compared to the unstable sea. [ed. note: see Cyprian, Ep. 63, also

Augustine, City of God, Book 20, 16]

Again, a great crowd from various provinces followed Him, because He

has received with kindness many nations, who came to Him through the

preaching of the Apostles. But the ship waiting upon the Lord in the

sea is the Church, collected from amongst the nations; and He goes into

it lest the crowd should throng Him, because flying from the troubled

minds of carnal persons, He delights to come to those who despise the

glory of this world, and to dwell within them.

Further, there is a difference between thronging the Lord, and touching

Him; for they throng Him, when by carnal thoughts and deeds they

trouble peace, in which truth dwells; but he touches Him, who by faith

and love has received Him into his heart; wherefore those who touched

Him are said to have been saved.

Theophylact: Morally again, the Herodians, that is, persons who love

the lusts of the flesh, wish to slay Christ. For the meaning of Herod

is, of skin' [ed. note: pelliceus, see Hier. de Nom. Hebr.]. But those

who quit their country, that is, a carnal mode of living, follow

Christ, and their plagues are healed, that is, the sins which wound

their conscience. But Jesus in us is our reason, which commands that

our vessel, that is, our body, should serve Him, lest the troubles of

worldly affairs should press upon our reason.

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13. And He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He

would: and they came unto Him.

14. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He

might send them forth to preach,

15. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16. And Simon He surnamed Peter;

17. And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and He

surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

18. And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas,

and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19. And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed Him.

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Bede, in Marc., 1, 16: After having forbidden the evil spirits to

preach Him, He chose holy men, to cast out the unclean spirits, and to

preach the Gospel.

Wherefore it is said, "And He went up into a mountain, &c."

Theophylact: Luke, however, says that He went up to pray, for after the

shewing forth of miracles He prays, teaching us that we should give

thanks, when we obtain any thing good, and refer it to Divine grace.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He also instructs the

Prelates of the Church to pass the night in prayer before they ordain,

that their office be not impeded. When therefore, according to Luke, it

was day, He called whom He would; for there were many who followed Him.

Bede: For it was not a matter of their choice and zeal, but of Divine

condescension and grace, that they should be called to the Apostleship.

The mount also in which the Lord chose His Apostles, shews the lofty

righteousness in which they were to be instructed, and which they were

about to preach to men.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or spiritually, Christ is the mount, from which living

waters flow, and milk is procured for the health of infants; whence the

spiritual feast of fat things is made known, and whatsoever is believed

to be most highly good is established by the grace of that Mountain.

Those therefore who are highly exalted in merits and in words are

called up into a mountain, that the place may correspond to the

loftiness of their merits.

It goes on: "And they came unto Him, &c."

For the Lord loved the beauty of Jacob, [Ps 46] that they might "sit

upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," [Matt 19:28]

who also in bands of threes and fours watch around the tabernacle of

the Lord, and carry the holy words of the Lord, bearing them forward on

their actions, as men do burdens on their shoulders.

Bede: For as a sacrament of this the children of Israel once used to

encamp about the Tabernacle, so that on each of the four sides of the

square three tribes were stationed. Now three times four are twelve,

and in three bands of four the Apostles were sent to preach, that

through the four quarters of the whole world they might baptize the

nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

It goes on: "And He gave them power, &c."

that is, in order that the greatness of their deeds might bear witness

to the greatness of their heavenly promises, and that they, who

preached unheard-of things, might do unheard-of actions.

Theophylact: Further, He gives the names of the Apostles, that the true

Apostles might be known, so that men might avoid the false.

And therefore it continues: "And Simon He surnamed Cephas."

Augustine, de Con. Evan. ii, 17: But let no one suppose that Simon now

received his name and was called Peter, for thus he would make Mark

contrary to John, who relates that it had been long before said unto

him, "Thou shalt be called Cephas." [John 1:42]

But Mark gives this account by way of recapitulation; for as he wished

to give the names of the twelve Apostles, and was obliged to call him,

Peter, his object was to intimate briefly, that he was not called this

originally, but that the Lord gave him that name.

Bede: And the reason that the Lord willed that he should at first be

called otherwise, was that from the change itself of the name, a

mystery might be conveyed to us. Peter then in Latin or in Greek means

the same thing as Cephas in Hebrew, and in each language the name is

drawn from, a stone.

Nor can it be doubted that is the rock of which Paul spoke, "And this

rock was Christ." [1 Cor 10:4] For as Christ was the true light, and

allowed also that the Apostles should be called the light of the world,

[Matt 5:14] so also to Simon, who believed on the rock Christ, He gave

the name of Rock.

Pseudo-Jerome: Thus from obedience, which Simon signifies, the ascent

is made to knowledge, which is meant by Peter.

It goes on: "And James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother."

Bede: We must connect this with what went before, "He goeth up into a

mountain, and calleth."

Pseudo-Jerome, Gen. 27:36 see Catena Aurea, Matt. 10:2: Namely, James

who has supplanted all the desires of the flesh, and John, who received

by grace what others held by labour.

There follows: "And He surnamed them, Boanerges."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He calls the sons of Zebedee

by this name, because they were to spread over the world the mighty and

illustrious decrees of the Godhead.

Pseudo-Jerome; Or by this the lofty merit of the three mentioned above

is shewn, who merited to hear in the mountain the thunders of the

Father, when he proclaimed in thunder through a could concerning the

Son, "This is My beloved Son;" that they also through the cloud of the

flesh and fire of the word, might as it were scatter the thunderbolts

in rain on the earth, since the Lord turned the thunderbolts into rain,

so that mercy extinguishes what judgment sets on fire.

It goes on: "And Andrew," who manfully does violence to perdition, so

that he had ever ready within him his own death, to give as an answer,

[1 Pet 3:15] and his soul was ever in his hands. [Ps 119:109]

Bede: For Andrew is a Greek name, which means manly,' from (greek

word), that is, man, for he manfully adhered to the Lord.

There follows, "And Philip."

Pseudo-Jerome: Or, the mouth of a lamp,' that is, one who can throw

light by his mouth upon what he has conceived in his heart, to whom the

Lord gave the opening of a mouth, which diffused light. We know that

this mode of speaking belongs to holy Scripture; for Hebrew names are

put down in order to intimate a mystery.

There follows: "And Bartholomew," which means, the son of him who

suspends the waters; of him, that is, who said, "I will also command

the clouds that they rain no rain upon it." [Isa 5:6]

But the name of son of God is obtained by peace and loving one's enemy;

for, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they are the sons of God. [Matt

5:9] And, Love your enemies, that ye may be the sons of God. [see Matt

5:44-45]

There follows: "And Matthew," that is, given,' to whom it is given by

the Lord, not only to obtain remission of sins, but to be enrolled in

the number of the Apostles.

"And Thomas," which means, abyss,' for men who have knowledge by the

power of God, put forward many deep things.

It goes on: "And James the son of Alphaeus," that is, of the learned,'

or the thousandth,' beside whom a thousand will fall. [Ps 91:7] This

other James is he, whose wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but

against spiritual wickedness. [Eph 6:12]

There follows, "And Thaddaeus," that is, corculum,' which means, he who

guards the heart' [ed. note: cordis cultor'] , one who keeps his heart

in all watchfulness.

Bede: But Thaddaeus is the same person, as Luke calls in the Gospel and

in the Acts, Jude of James, for he was the brother of James, the

brother of the Lord, as he himself has written in his Epistle.

There follows, "And Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who

betrayed Him."

He has added this by way of distinction from Simon Peter, and Jude the

brother of James. Simon is called the Canaanite from Cana, a village in

Galilee, and Judas, Scariotes, from the village from which he had his

origin, or he is so called from the tribe of Issachar.

Theophylact: Whom he reckons amongst the Apostles, that we may learn

that God does not repel any man for wickedness, which is future, but

counts him worthy on account of his present virtue.

Pseudo-Jerome: But Simon in interpreted, laying aside sorrow;' for

"blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." [Matt 5:4]

And he is called Canaanite, that is, Zealot, because the zeal of the

Lord ate him up. But Judas Iscariot is one who does not do away his

sins by repentance. For Judas means, boaster,' or vain-glorious. And

Iscariot, the memory of death.' But many are the proud and

vain-glorious confessors in the Church, as Simon Magus, and Arius, and

other heretics, whose deathlike memory is celebrated in the Church,

that it may be avoided.

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19. ------ And they went into an house.

20. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so

much as eat bread.

21. And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him:

for they said, "He is beside himself."

22. And the Scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, "He hath

Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils."

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Bede: the Lord leads the Apostles, when they were elected, into a

house, as if admonishing them, that after having received the

Apostleship, they should retire to look on their own consciences.

Wherefore it is said, "And they came into a house, and the multitude

came together again, so that they could not eat bread."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Ungrateful indeed were the

multitudes of princes, whom their pride hinders from knowledge, but the

grateful multitude of the people came to Jesus.

Bede: And blessed indeed the concourse of the crowd, flocking together,

whose anxiety to obtain salvation was so great, that they left not the

Author of salvation even an hour free to take food. But Him, whom a

crowd of strangers loves to follow, His relations hold in little

esteem.

For it goes on, "And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay

hold upon Him."

For since they could not take in the depth of wisdom, which they heard,

they thought that He was speaking in a senseless way.

Wherefore it continues, "for they said, He is beside Himself."

Theophylact: That is, He has a devil and is mad, and therefore they

wished to lay hold upon Him, that they might shut Him up as one who had

a devil. And even His friends wished to do this, that is, His

relations, perchance His countrymen, or His brethren. But it was a

silly insanity in them, to conceive that the Worker of such great

miracles of Divine Wisdom had become mad.

Bede: Now there is a great difference between those who do not

understand the word of God from slowness of intellect, such as those

who are here spoken of, and those who purposely blaspheme, of whom it

is added, "And the Scribes which came down from Jerusalem, &c." For

what they could not deny they endeavour to pervert by a malicious

interpretation, as if they were not the works of God, but of a most

unclean spirit, that is, of Beelzebub, who was the God of Ekrom.

For Beel' means Baal himself, and zebub' a fly; the meaning of

Beelzebub therefore is, the man of flies, on account of the filth of

the blood which was offered, from which most unclean rite, they call

him prince of the devils, adding, "and by the prince of the devils

casteth He out devils."

Pseudo-Jerome: But mystically, the house to which they came, is the

early Church. The crowds which prevent their eating bread are sins and

vices; for he who eateth unworthily, "eateth and drinketh damnation to

himself." [1 Cor 11:29]

Bede: The Scribes also coming down from Jerusalem blaspheme. But the

multitude from Jerusalem, and from other regions of Judaea, or of the

Gentiles, followed the Lord, because so it was to be at the time of His

Passion, that a crowd of the people of the Jews should lead Him to

Jerusalem with palms and praises, and the Gentiles should desire to see

Him; but the Scribes and Pharisees should plot together for His death.

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23. And He called them unto Him, and said unto them in parables, "How

can Satan cast out Satan?

24. And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot

stand.

25. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot

stand, but hath an end.

27. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods,

except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his

house.

28. Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of

men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29. But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never

forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:"

30. Because they said, "He hath an unclean spirit."

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Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The blasphemy of the Scribes

having been detailed, our Lord shews that what they said was

impossible, confirming His proof by an example.

Wherefore it says, "And having called them together unto Him, He said

unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?" As if He had

said, A kingdom divided against itself by civil war must be desolated,

which is exemplified both in a house and in a city. Wherefore also if

Satan's kingdom by divided against itself, so that Satan expels Satan

from men, the desolation of the kingdom of the devils is at hand.

But their kingdom consists in keeping men under their dominion. If

therefore they are driven away from men, it amounts to nothing less

than the dissolution of their kingdom. But if they still hold their

power over men, it is manifest that the kingdom of evil is still

standing, and Satan is not divided against himself.

Gloss.: And because He has already shewn by an example that a devil

cannot cast out a devil, He shews how he can be expelled, saying, "No

man can enter into a strong man's house, &c."

Theophylact: The meaning of the example is this: The devil is the

strong man; his goods are the men into whom he is received; unless

therefore a man first conquers the devil, how can he deprive him of his

goods, that is, of the men whom he has possessed?

So also I who spoil his goods, that is, free men from suffering by his

possession, first spoil the devils and vanquish them, and am their

enemy. How then can ye say that I have Beelzebub and that being the

friend of the devils, I cast them out?

Bede, in Marc., 1, 17: The Lord has also bound the strong man, that is,

the devil: which means, He has restrained him from seducing the elect,

and entering into his house, the world; He has spoiled his house, and

his goods, that is men, because He has snatched them from the snares of

the devil, and has united them to His Church.

Or, He has spoiled his house, because the four parts of the world, over

which the old enemy had sway, He has distributed to the Apostles and

their successors, that they may convert the people to the way of life.

But the Lord shews that they committed a great sin in crying out that

which they knew to be of God, was of the devil, when He subjoins,

"Verily, I say unto you, All sins are forgiven, &c." All sins and

blasphemies are not indeed remitted to all men, but to those who have

gone through a repentance in this life sufficient for their sins; thus

neither is Novatus right [ed. note: Novatus was a Carthaginian

presbyter, who, after having abetted Felicissimus in his schism against

St. Cyprian, came to Rome and joined Novatian against Pope Cornelius,

A.D. 251. His error, which is here opposed to Origen's , consisted in

denying that Christ had left with His Church the power of absolving

from certain sins, especially from apostasy.], who denied that any

pardon should be granted to penitents, who had lapsed in time of

martyrdom; nor Origen, who asserts that after the general judgment,

after the revolution of ages, all sinners will receive pardon for their

sins, which error the following words of the Lord condemn, when He

adds, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, &c."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He says indeed, that

blasphemy concerning Himself was pardonable, because He then seemed to

be a man despised and of the most lowly birth, but, that contumely

against God has no remission. Now blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is

against God, for the operation of the Holy Ghost is the kingdom of God;

and for this reason, He says, that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost

cannot be remitted. Instead, however, of what is here added, "But will

be in danger of eternal damnation," another Evangelist says, "Neither

in this world, nor in the world to come." By which is understood, the

judgment which is according to the law, and that which is to come.

For the law orders one who blasphemes God to be slain, and in the

judgment of the second law he has no remission. However, he who is

baptized is taken out of this world; but the Jews were ignorant of the

remission which takes place in baptism. [ed. note: A few words are left

out in the Catena, which occur in Victor, and which do away with the

obscurity of the passage. The missing of the whole is, that though

there is no remission either in this world or in the next, yet that

baptism is, as it were, a space between the two worlds, where remission

can be obtained. The reason, therefore, why this blasphemy could not be

remitted, was, because the Jews would not come to Christ's baptism.]

He therefore who refers to the devil miracles, and the casting out of

devils which belong to the Holy Ghost alone, has no room left him for

remission of his blasphemy. Neither does it appear that such a

blasphemy as this is remitted, since it is against the Holy Ghost.

Wherefore he adds, explaining it, "Because they said, He hath an

unclean spirit."

Theophylact: We must however understand, that they will not obtain

pardon unless they repent. But since it was at the flesh of Christ that

they were offended, even though they did not repent, some excuse was

allowed them, and they obtained some remission.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or this is meant; that he will not deserve to work out

repentance, so as to be accepted, who, understanding who Christ was,

declared that He was the prince of the devils.

Bede: Neither however are those, who do not believe the Holy Spirit to

be God, guilty of an unpardonable blasphemy, because they were

persuaded to do this by human ignorance, not by devilish malice.

Augustine, Serm., 71, 12, 22: Or else impenitence itself is the

blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which hath no remission. For either in

his thought or by his tongue, he speaks a word against the Holy Ghost,

the forgiver of sins, who treasures up for himself an impenitent heart.

But he subjoins, "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit," that

he might shew that His reason for saying it, was their declaring that

He cast out a devil by Beelzebub, not because there is a blasphemy,

which cannot be remitted, since even this might be remitted through a

right repentance; but the cause why this sentence was put forth by the

Lord, after mentioning the unclean spirit, (who as our Lord shews was

divided against himself,) was, that the Holy Ghost even makes those

whom He brings together undivided, by His remitting those sins, which

divided them from Himself, which gift of remission is resisted by no

one, but him who has the hardness of an impenitent heart.

For in another place, the Jews said of the Lord, that He had a devil

[John 7:20], without however His saying any thing there about the

blasphemy against the Spirit; and the reason is, that they did not

there cast in His teeth the unclean spirit, in such a way, that spirit

could by their own words be shewn to be divided against Himself, as

Beelzebub was here shewn to be, by their saying, that it might be he

who cast out devils. [ed. note: St. Augustine explains his meaning by

going on to say, that as the Devil was proved by the words of the Jews

to be the author of division, so the Holy Ghost was the author of

unity, so that one form of blasphemy of the Holy Ghost was rending the

unity of the Church, without which there is no remission. St. Ambrose,

something in the same way, applies the text to the Arians, as dividing

the Holy Trinity, de Fide, i, 1.]

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31. There came then His brethren, and His mother, and, standing

without, sent unto Him, calling Him.

32. And the multitude sat about Him, and they said unto Him, "Behold,

thy mother and thy brethren without seek for Thee."

33. And He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brethren?"

34. And He looked round about on them which sat about Him, and said,

"Behold My mother and My brethren!"

35. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and

My sister, and mother.

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Theophylact: Because the relations of the Lord had come to seize upon

Him, as if beside Himself, His mother, urged by the sympathy of her

love, came to Him.

Wherefore it is said, "And there came unto Him His mother, and,

standing without, sent unto Him, calling Him."

Chrys.: From this it is manifest that His brethren and His mother were

not always with Him; but because He was beloved by them, they come from

reverence and affection, waiting without.

Wherefore it goes on, "And the multitude sat about Him, &c."

Bede: The brother of the Lord must not be thought to be the sons of the

ever-virgin Mary, as Helvidius says [ed. note: The perpetual virginity

of the Mother of God is reckoned by White, Bramhall, Patrick and

Pearson, amongst the traditions which have ever been held in the

Catholic Church. For an account of the heretics who denied it, see Bp.

Pearson on the Creed, Art, 3, p. 272, note x., also Catena Aurea in

Matt., p 58, note c], nor the sons of Joseph by a former marriage, as

some think, but rather they must be understood to be His relations.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But another Evangelist says,

that His brethren did not believe on Him. [John 7:5] With which this

agrees, which says, that they sought Him, waiting without, and with

this meaning the Lord does not mention them as relations.

Wherefore it follows, "And He answered them, saying, Who is My mother

or My brethren?"

But He does not here mention His mother and His brethren altogether

with reproof, but to shew that a man must honour his own soul above all

earthly kindred; wherefore this is fitly said to those who called Him

to speak with His mother and relations, as if it were a more useful

task than the teaching of salvation.

Bede; see Ambr. in Luc. 6, 36: Being asked therefore by a message to go

out, He declines, not as though He refused the dutiful service of His

mother, but to shew that He owes more to His Father's mysteries than to

His mother's feelings. Nor does He rudely despise His brothers, but,

preferring His spiritual work to fleshly relationship, He teaches us

that religion is the bond of the heart rather than that of the body.

Wherefore it goes on, "And looking round about on them which sat about

Him, He said, Behold My mother and My brethren."

Chrys.: By this, the Lord shews that we should honour those who are

relations by faith rather than those who are relations by blood. A man

indeed is made the mother of Jesus by preaching Him [ed. note: Nearly

the same idea occurs in St. Ambrose, in Luc. 2, 8]; for He, as it were,

brings forth the Lord, when he pours Him into the heart of his hearers.

Pseudo-Jerome: But let us be assured that we are His brethren and His

sisters, if we do the will of the Father; that we may be joint-heirs

with Him, for He discerns us not by sex but by our deeds.

Wherefore it goes on: "Whosoever shall do the will of God, &c."

Theophylact: He does not therefore say this, as denying His mother, but

as shewing that He is worthy of honour, not only because she bore

Christ, but on account of her possessing every other virtue.

Bede: By mystically, the mother and brother of Jesus means the

synagogue, (from which according to the flesh He sprung,) and the

Jewish people who, while the Saviour is teaching within, come to Him,

and are not able to enter, because they cannot understand spiritual

things.

But the crowd eagerly enter, because when the Jews delayed, the

Gentiles flocked to Christ; but His kindred, who stand without wishing

to see the Lord, are the Jews who obstinately remained without,

guarding the letter, and would rather compel the Lord to go forth to

them to teach carnal things, than consent to enter in to learn

spiritual things of Him.

If therefore not even His parents when standing without are

acknowledged, how shall we be acknowledged, if we stand without? [ed.

note: see Ambr. in Luc., 6, 37] For the word is within and the light

within.

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Chapter 4

1. And Jesus began to teach again by the sea-side: and there was

gathered unto Him a great multitude, so that He entered into a ship,

and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2. And He taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in

His doctrine:

3: "Hearken: Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the

fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and

immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6. But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no

root, it withered away.

7. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it,

and it yielded no fruit.

8. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up

and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some

an hundred."

9. And He said unto them, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

10. And when He was alone, they that were about Him with the twelve

asked of Him the parable.

11. And He said unto them, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of

the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things

are done in parables:

12. That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may

hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted,

and their sins should be forgiven them."

13. And He said unto them, "Know ye not this parable? and how then will

ye know all parables?

14. The sower soweth the word.

15. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but

when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the

word that was sown in their hearts.

16. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who,

when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17. And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time:

afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake,

immediately they are offended.

18. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the

word,

19. And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and

the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh

unfruitful.

20. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the

word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some

sixty, and some an hundred."

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Theophylact: Although the Lord appears in the transactions mentioned

above to neglect His mother, nevertheless He honours her; since on her

account He goes forth about the borders of the sea.

Wherefore it is said, "And Jesus began to teach again by the sea-side,

&c.

Bede, in Marc., 1, 18: For if we look into the Gospel of Matthew, it

appears that this same teaching of the Lord at the sea, was delivered

on the same day as the former. For after the conclusion of the first

sermon, Matthew immediately subjoins, saying, "The same day went Jesus

out of the house, and sat by the sea-side."

Pseudo-Jerome: But He began to teach at the sea, that the place of His

teaching might point out the bitter feelings and instability of His

hearers.

Bede: After leaving the house also, He began to teach at the sea,

because, quitting the synagogue, He came to gather together the

multitude of the Gentile people by the Apostles.

Wherefore it continues: "And there was gathered unto Him a great

multitude, so that He entered into a ship, and sat in the sea."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 44: Which we must understand was not done

without a purpose, but that He might not leave any one behind Him, but

have all His hearers before His face.

Bede: Now this ship shewed in a figure the Church, to be built in the

midst of the nations, in which the Lord consecrates for Himself a

beloved dwelling-place.

It goes on: "And He taught them many things by parables."

Pseudo-Jerome: A parable is a comparison made between things discordant

by nature, under some similitude. For parable is the Greek for a

similitude, when we point out by some comparisons what we would have

understood. In this way we say an iron man, when we desire that he

should be understood to be hardy and strong; when to be swift, we

compare him to winds and birds. But He speaks to the multitudes in

parables, with His usual providence, that those who could not take in

heavenly things, might conceive what they heard by an earthly

similitude.

Chrys.: For He rouses the minds of His hearers by a parable, pointing

out objects to the sight, to make His discourse more manifest.

Theophylact: And in order to rouse the attention of those who heard,

the first parable that He proposes is concerning the seed, which is the

word of God.

Wherefore it goes on, "And He said to them in His doctrine."

Not in that of Moses, nor of the Prophets, because He preaches His own

Gospel.

"Hearken: behold, there went out a sower to sow."

Now the Sower is Christ.

Chrys.: Not that He went out in space, Who is present in all space, and

fills all, but in the form and economy by which He is made more near to

us through the clothing of flesh. For since we were not able to go to

Him, because sins impeded our path, He went out to us. But He went out,

preaching in order to sow the word of piety, which He spake abundantly.

Now He does not needlessly repeat the same word, when He says, "A sower

went out to sow," for sometimes a sower goes out that he may break up

land for tillage, or to pull up weeds, or for some other work. But this

one went out to sow.

Bede, in Marc., 1, 19: Or else, He went out to sow, when after calling

to His faith the elect portion of the synagogue, He poured out the

gifts of His grace in order to call the Gentiles also.

Chrys.: Further, as a sower does not make a distinction in the ground

which is beneath him, but simply and without distinction puts in the

seed, so also He Himself addresses all. And to signify this, He says,

"And as he sowed, some fell by the way-side."

Theophylact: Take notice, that He says not that He threw it in the way,

but that it fell, for a sower, as far as he can, throws it into good

ground, but if the ground be bad, it corrupts the seed. Now the way is

Christ; but infidels are by the way-side, that is, out of Christ.

Bede: Or else, the way is a mind which is a path for bad thoughts,

preventing the seed of the word from growing in it. And therefore

whatsoever good seed comes in contact with such a way, perishes, and is

carried off by devils.

Wherefore there follows, "And the fowls of the air came and devoured it

up."

And well are the devils called fowls of the air, either because they

are of a heavenly and spiritual origin, or because they dwell in the

air.

Or else, those who are about the way are negligent and slothful men.

It goes on: "And some fell on stony ground."

He calls stone, the hardness of a wanton mind; He calls ground, the

inconstancy of a soul in its obedience; and sun, the heat of a raging

persecution.

Therefore the depth of earth, which ought to have received the seed of

God, is the honesty of a mind trained in heavenly discipline, and

regularly brought up in obedience to the Divine words. But the stony

places, which have no strength for fixing the root firmly, are those

breasts which are delighted only with the sweetness of the word which

they hear, and for a time with the heavenly promises, but in a season

of temptation fall away, for there is too little of healthful desire in

them to conceive the seed of life.

Theophylact: Or, the stony persons are those who adhering a little to

the rock, that is, to Christ, up to a short time, receive the word, and

afterwards, falling back, cast it away.

It goes on: "And some fell among thorns;" by which are marked souls

which care for many things. For thorns are cares.

Chrys.: But further He mentions good ground, saying, "And other fell on

good ground." For the difference of the fruits follows the quality of

the ground. But great is the love of the Sower for men, for the first

He commends, and rejects not the second, and gives a place to the

third.

Theophylact: See also how the bad are the greatest number, and the few

are those who are saved, for the fourth part of the ground is found to

be saved.

Chrys.: This, however, the greater portion of the seed is not lost

through the fault of the owner, but of the earth, which received it,

that is, of the soul, which hears. And indeed the real husbandman, if

he sowed in this way, would be rightly blamed; for he is not ignorant

that rock, or the road, or thorny ground, cannot become fertile. But in

spiritual things it is not so; for there it is possible that stony

ground may become fertile; and that the road should not be trodden

down, and that the thorns may be destroyed, for if this could not take

place, he would not have sown there. By this, therefore, He gives to us

hope of repentance.

It goes on, "And He said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him

hear."

Bede: As often as this is inserted in the Gospel or in the Apocalypse

of John, that which is spoken is mystical, and is pointed out as

healthful to be heard and learnt. For the ears by which they are heard

belong to the heart, and the ears by which men obey and do what is

commanded are those of an interior sense.

There follows, "And when He was alone, the twelve that were with Him

asked of Him the parable; and He said unto them, Unto you it is given

to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to them that are without

all things are done in parables."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: As if He said unto them, You

that are worthy to be taught all things which are fitted for teaching,

shall learn the manifestation of parables; but I use parables with them

who are unworthy to learn, because of their wickedness. For it was

right that they who did not hold fast their obedience to that law which

they had received, should not have any share in a new teaching, but

should be estranged from both; for He shewed by the obedience of His

disciples, that, on the other hand, the others were become unworthy of

mystical doctrine. But afterwards, by bringing in a voice from

prophecy, He confounds their wickedness, as having been long before

reproved.

Wherefore it goes on, "that seeing they might see, and not perceive,

&c." [see Isa 6:9] as if He said that they prophecy might be fulfilled

which foretells these things.

Theophylact: For it was God Who made them to see, that is, to

understand what is good. But they themselves see not, of their own will

making themselves not to see, lest they should be converted and correct

themselves, as if they were displeased at their own salvation.

It goes on, "Lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins

be forgiven them."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Thus, therefore, they see

and they do not see, they hear and do not understand, for their seeing

and hearing comes to them from God's grace, but their seeing and not

understanding comes to them from their unwillingness to receive grace,

and closing their eyes, and pretending that they could not see; neither

do they acquiesce in what was said, and so are not changed as to their

sins by hearing and seeing, but rather are made worse.

Theophylact: Or we may understand in a different way His speaking to

the rest in parables, that seeing they might not perceive, and hearing,

not understand. For God gives sight and understanding to men who seek

for them, but the rest He blinds, lest it become a greater accusation

against them, that though they understood, they did not choose to do

what they ought.

Wherefore it goes on, "Lest at any times they should be, &c."

Augustine, Quaest, 14, in Matt.: Or else they deserved this, their not

understanding, and yet this in itself was done in mercy to them, that

they might know their sins, and, being converted, merit pardon.

Bede: To those then who are without, all things are done in parables,

that is, both the actions and the words of the Saviour, because neither

in those miracles which He was working, nor in those mysteries which He

preached, were they able to acknowledge Him as God. Therefore they are

not able to attain to the remission of their sins.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But His speaking to them

only in parables, and yet not leaving off speaking to them entirely,

shews that to those who are placed near to what is good, though they

may have no good in themselves, still good is shewn disguised.

But when a man approaches it with reverence and a right heart, he wins

for himself an abundant revelation of mysteries; when on the contrary

his thoughts are not sound, he will be neither made worthy of those

things which are easy to many men, nor even of hearing them.

There follows, "And He said unto them, Know ye not this parable, how

then shall ye know all parables?"

Pseudo-Jerome: For it was necessary that they to whom He spoke in

parables should ask for what they did not understand, and learn by the

Apostle whom they despised, the mystery of the kingdom which they

themselves had not.

Gloss.: And for this reason, the Lord in saying these things, shews

that they ought to understand both this first, and all following

miracles.

Wherefore explaining it, He goes on, "The sower soweth the word."

Chrys., in Matt., Hom. 44: And indeed the prophet has compared the

teaching of the people to the planting of a vine; [Isa 5] in this place

however it is compared to sowing, to shew that obedience is now shorter

and more easy, and will sooner yield fruit.

Bede: But in this exposition of the Lord there is embraced the whole

range of those who might hear the words of truth, but are unable to

attain to salvation. For there are some to whom no faith, no intellect,

nay no opportunity of trying its usefulness, can give a perception of

the word which they hear; of whom He says, "And these are by the

wayside." For unclean spirits take away at once the word committed to

their hearts, as birds carry away the seed of the trodden way. There

are some who both experience its usefulness and feel a desire for it,

but some of them the calamities of this world frighten, and others its

prosperity allures, so that they do not attain to that which they

approve. Of the first of whom He says, "And these are they who fell on

stony ground;" of the latter, "And these are they which are sown among

thorns." But riches are called thorns, because they tear the soul with

the piercing of its own thoughts, and after bringing it to sin, they,

as one may say, make it bleed by inflicting a wound.

Again He says, "And the toil of this world, and the deceitfulness of

riches;" for the man who is deceived by an empty desire of riches must

soon be afflicted by the toils of continual cares.

He adds, "And the lusts of other things;" because, whosoever despises

the commandments of God, and wanders away lustfully seeking other

things, is unable to attain to the joy of beatitude. And concupiscences

of this sort choke the word, because they do not allow a good desire to

enter into the heart, and, as it were, stifle the entrance of vital

breath.

There are, however, excepted from these different classes of men, the

Gentiles who do not even have grace to hear the words of life.

Theophylact: Further, of those who receive the seed as they ought there

are three degrees.

Wherefore it goes on, "And these are they who are sown on good ground."

Those who bear fruit an hundred-fold are those who lead a perfect and

an obedient life, as virgins and hermits. Those who bear fruit

sixty-fold are those who are in the mean as continent persons [ed.

note: The word translated continentes . . . means ascetics, who mix in

the affairs of the world; whereas hermits lived quite out of them, and

gave themselves up to contemplation; caenobites came between the two,

living together in convents, and combined both the practical and

contemplative life, see Greg. Naz. Or. 43, 62] and those who are living

in convents.

Those who bear thirty-fold are those who though weak indeed, bear fruit

according to their own virtue, as laymen and married persons.

Bede: Or he bears thirty-fold, who instills into the minds of the elect

faith in the Holy Trinity; sixty-fold, who teaches the perfection of

good works; a hundred-fold, who shews the rewards of the heavenly

kingdom.

For in counting a hundred, we pass on to the right hand [ed. note: "He

alludes to the mode of counting among the ancients. All numbers were

signified by fingers of the left hand, either straight or variously

bent, up to a hundred; and then they changed to the right. Consult

Caelius Rhodiginus, Lectionum Antiq. lib. 23, cap. 11, 12." Benedictine

note on Greg. Hom. in Ezec. lib. 2, Hom., 5]; therefore that number is

fitly made to signify everlasting happiness.

But the good ground is the conscience of the elect, which does the

contrary to all the former three, which both receives with willingness

the seed of the word committed to it, and keeps it when received up to

the season of fruit.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else the fruits of the earth are contained in thirty,

sixty, or a hundred-fold, that is, in the Law, the Prophets, and the

Gospel.

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21. And He said unto them, "Is a candle brought to be put under a

bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22. For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither

was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."

24. And He saith unto them, "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure

ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more

be given.

25. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from

him shall be taken even that which he hath."

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Chrys.: After the question of the disciples concerning the parable, and

its explanation, He well subjoins, "And He said unto them, Is a candle

brought, &c." As if He said, A parable is given, not that it should

remain obscure, and hidden as if under a bed or a bushel, but that it

should be manifested to those who are worthy. The candle within us is

that of our intellectual nature, and it shines either clearly or

obscurely according to the proportion of our illumination. For if

meditations which feed the light, and the recollection with which such

a light is kindled, are neglected, it is presently extinguished.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else the candle is the discourse concerning the three

sorts of seed. The bushel or the bed is the hearing of the disobedient.

The Apostles are the candlestick, whom the word of the Lord hath

enlightened.

Wherefore it goes on, "For there is nothing hidden, &c."

The hidden and secret thing is the parable of the seed, which comes

forth to light, when it is spoken of by the Lord.

Theophylact: Or else the Lord warns His disciples to be as light, in

their life and conversation; as if He said, As a candle is put so as to

give light, so all will look to your life. Therefore be diligent to

lead a good life; sit not in corners, but be ye a candle. For a candle

gives light, not when placed under a bed, but on a candlestick; this

light indeed must be placed on a candlestick, that is, on the eminence

of a godly life, that it may be able to give light to others. Not under

a bushel, that is, in things pertaining to the palate, nor under a bed,

that is, in idleness. For no one who seeks after the delights of his

palate and loves rest can be a light shining over all.

Bede, in Marc., 1, 20: Or, because the time of our life is contained

under a certain measurement of Divine Providence, it is rightly

compared to a bushel. But the bed of the soul is the body, in which it

dwells and reposes for a time. He therefore who hides the word of God

under the love of this transitory life, and of carnal allurements,

covers his candle with a bushel or a bed.

But he puts his light on a candlestick who employs his body in the

ministry of the word of God; therefore under these words He typically

teaches them a figure of preaching.

Wherefore it goes on, "For there is nothing hidden, which shall not be

revealed, nor is there any thing made secret, which shall not come

abroad."

As if He said, Be not ashamed of the Gospel, but amidst the darkness of

persecution raise the light of the word of God upon the candlestick of

your body, keeping fixedly in your mind that day, when the Lord will

throw light upon the hidden places of darkness, for then everlasting

praise awaits you, and everlasting punishment your adversaries.

Chrys., in Matt., Hom. 15: Or else, "There is nothing hid;" as if He

said, If ye conduct your life with care, accusation will not be able to

obscure your light.

Theophylact: For each of us, whether he have done good or evil, is

brought to light in this life, much more in that which is to come. For

what can be more hidden than God, nevertheless He Himself is manifested

in the flesh.

It continues, "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."

Bede: That is, if any man have a sense for understanding the word of

God, let him not withdraw himself, let him not turn his ear to fables,

but let him lend his ear to search those things which truth hath

spoken, his hands for fulfilling them, his tongue for preaching them.

There follows, "And He said unto them, Take heed what ye hear."

Theophylact: That is, that none of those things which are said to you

by me should escape you.

"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you," that is,

whatsoever degree of application ye bring, in that degree ye will

receive profit.

Bede: Or else, If ye diligently endeavor to do all the good which ye

can, and to teach it to your neighbours, the mercy of God will come in,

to give you both in the present life a sense to take in higher things,

and a will to do better things, and will add for the future an

everlasting reward. And therefore it is subjoined, "And to you shall

more be given."

Pseudo-Jerome: According to the measure of his faith the understanding

of mysteries is divided to every man, and the virtues of knowledge will

also be added to them.

It goes on: "For he that hath, to him shall be given;" that is, he who

hath faith shall have virtue, and he who hath obedience to the word,

shall also have the understanding of the mystery. Again, he who, on the

other hand, has not faith, fails in virtue; and he who has not

obedience to the word, shall not have the understanding of it; and if

he does not understand, he might as well not have heard.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else, He who has the

desire and wish to hear and to seek, to him shall be given. But he who

has not the desire of hearing divine things, even what he happens to

have of the written law is taken from him.

Bede: For sometimes a clever reader by neglecting his mind, deprives

himself of wisdom, of which he tastes the sweetness, who, though slow

in intellect, works more diligently.

Chrys.: Again it may be said, that he "hath not," who has not truth.

But our Lord says that "he hath," because he has a lie, for every one

whose understanding believes a lie, thinks that he has something.

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26. And He said, "So is the kingdom of god, as if a man should cast

seed into the ground;

27. And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should

spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade,

then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the

sickle, because the harvest is come."

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Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: A parable occurred, a little

above, about the three seeds which perished in various ways, and the

one which was saved; in which last He also shews three differences,

according to the proportion of faith and practice.

Here, however, He puts forth a parable concerning those only who are

saved.

Wherefore it is said, "And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a

man should cast seed into the ground, &c."

Pseudo-Jerome: The kingdom of God is the Church, which is ruled by God,

and herself rules over men, and treads down the powers which are

contrary to her, and all wickedness.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else He calls by the name

of kingdom of God, faith in Him, and in the economy of His Incarnation;

which kingdom indeed is as if a man should throw seed. For He Himself

being God and the Son of God, having without change been made man, has

cast seed upon the earth, that is, He has enlightened the whole world

by the word of divine knowledge.

Pseudo-Jerome: For the seed is the word of life, the ground is the

human heart, and the sleep of the man means the death of the Saviour.

The seed springs up night and day, because after the sleep of Christ,

the number of Christians, through calamity and prosperity, continued to

flourish more and more in faith, and to wax greater in deed.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or Christ Himself is the man

who rises, for He sat waiting with patience, that they who received

seed should bear fruit. He rises, that is, by the word of His love, He

makes us grow to the bringing forth fruit, by the armour of

righteousness on the right hand, [2 Cor 6:7] by which is meant the day,

and on the left, by which is meant the night of persecution; for by

these the seed springs up, and does not wither.

Theophylact: Or else Christ sleeps, that is, ascends into heaven,

where, though He seem to sleep, yet He rises by night, when through

temptations He raises us up to the knowledge of Himself; and in the day

time, when on account of our prayers, He sets in order our salvation.

Pseudo-Jerome: But when He says, "He knoweth not how," He is speaking

in a figure; that is, He does not make known to us, who amongst us will

produce fruit unto the end.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else He says, "He knoweth

not," that He may shew the free-will of those who receive the word, for

He commits a work to our will, and does not work the whole Himself

alone, lest the good should seem involuntary. For the earth brings

forth fruits of its own accord, that is, she is brought to bear fruit

without being compelled by a necessity contrary to her will. "First the

blade."

Pseudo-Jerome: That is, fear. For "the fear of God is the beginning of

wisdom. Then the full corn in the ear;" [Ps 111:10] that is, charity,

for charity is the fulfilling of the Law. [see Rom 13:8]

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Cat. e Cat. in Marc.: Or, first it produces the

blade, in the law of nature, by degrees growing up to advancement;

afterwards it brings forth the ears, which are to be collected into a

bundle, and to be offered on an altar to the Lord, that is, in the law

of Moses; afterwards the full-fruit, in the Gospel.

Or because we must not only put forth leaves by obedience, but also

learn prudence, and, like the stalk of corn, remain upright without

minding the winds which blow us about. We must also take heed to our

soul by a diligent recollection, that, like the ears, we may bear

fruit, that is, shew forth the perfect operation of virtue.

Theophylact: for we put forth the blade when we shew a principle of

good; then the ear, when we can resist temptations; then comes the

fruit, when a man works something perfect.

It goes on: "and when it has brought forth the fruit, immediately he

sendeth the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Pseudo-Jerome: The sickle is death or the judgment, which cuts down all

things; the harvest is the end of the world.

Gregory, in Ezech, 2, Hom. 3: Or else, Man casts seed into the ground,

when he places a good intention in his heart; and he sleeps, when he

already rests in the hope which attends on a good work. But he rises

night and day, because he advances amidst prosperity and adversity,

though he knows it not, for he is as yet unable to measure his

increase, and yet virtue, once conceived, goes on increasing.

When therefore we conceive good desires, we put seed into the ground;

when we begin to work rightly, we are the blade. When we increase to

the perfection of good works, we arrive at the ear; when we are firmly

fixed in the perfection of the same working, we already put forth the

full corn in the ear.

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30. And He said, "Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with

what comparison shall we compare it?

31. It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the

earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32. But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all

herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air

may lodge under the shadow of it."

33. And with many such parable spake He the word unto them, as they

were able to hear it.

34. But without a parable spake He not unto them: and when they were

alone, He expounded all things to His disciples.

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Gloss.: After having narrated the parable concerning the coming forth

of the fruit from the seed of the Gospel, he here subjoins another

parable, to shew the excellence of the doctrine of the Gospel before

all other doctrines.

Wherefore it is said, "And He said, Whereunto shall we liken the

kingdom of God?"

Theophylact: Most brief indeed is the word of faith; Believe in God,

and thou shalt be saved. But the preaching of it has been spread far

and wide over the earth, and increased so, that the birds of heaven,

that is, contemplative men, sublime in understanding and knowledge,

dwell under it. For how many wise men among the Gentiles, quitting

their wisdom, have found rest in the preaching of the Gospel! Its

preaching then is greater than all.

Chrys.: And also because the wisdom spoken amongst the perfect expands,

to an extent greater than all other sayings, that which was told to men

in short discourses, for there is nothing greater than this truth.

Theophylact: Again, it put forth great boughs, for the Apostles were

divided off as the boughs of a tree, some to Rome, some to India, some

to other parts of the world.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, that seed is very small in fear, but great when

it has grown into charity, which is greater than all herbs: for "God is

love," [1 John 4:16] whilst "all flesh is grass." [Isa 40:6] But the

boughs which it puts forth are those of mercy and compassion, since

under its shade the poor of Christ, who are meant by the living

creatures of the heavens, delight to dwell.

Bede: Again, the man who sows is by many taken to mean the Saviour

Himself, by others, man himself sowing in his own heart.

Chrys.: Then after this, Mark, who delights in brevity, to shew the

nature of the parables, subjoins, "And with many such parables spake He

the word unto them as they could hear Him."

Theophylact: For since the multitude was unlearned, He instructs them

from objects of food and familiar names, and for this reason he adds,

"But without a parable spake He not unto them," that is, in order that

they might be induced to approach and to ask Him.

It goes on, "And when they were alone, He expounded all things to His

disciples," that is, all things about which they were ignorant and

asked Him, not simply all, whether obscure or not.

Pseudo-Jerome: For they were worthy to hear mysteries apart, in the

most secret haunt of wisdom, for they were men, who, removed from the

crowds of evil thoughts, remained in the solitude of virtue; and wisdom

is received in a time of quiet.

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35. And the same day, when the even was come, He saith unto them, "Let

us pass over unto the other side."

36. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took Him even as He

was in the ship. And there were also with Him other little ships.

37. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the

ship, so that it was now full.

38. And He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and

they awake Him, and say unto Him, "Master, carest thou not that we

perish?"

39. And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace,

be still." And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40. And He said unto them, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye

have no faith?"

41. And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, "What manner

of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

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Pseudo-Jerome: After His teaching, they come from that place to the

sea, and are tossed by the waves.

Wherefore it is said, "And the same day, when the even was come, &c."

Remig.: For the Lord is said to have had three places of refuge,

namely, the ship, the mountain, and the desert. As often as He was

pressed upon by the multitude, He used to fly to one of these. When

therefore the Lord saw many crowds about Him, as man, He wished to

avoid their importunity, and ordered His disciples to go over to the

other side.

There follows: "And sending away the multitudes, they took Him, &c."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt. 28: The Lord took the disciples indeed, that they

might be spectators of the miracle which was coming, but He took them

alone, that no others might see that they were of such little faith.

Wherefore, to shew that others went across separately, it is said, "And

there were also with Him other ships."

Lest again the disciples might be proud of being alone taken, He

permits them to be in danger; and besides this, in order that they

might learn to bear temptations manfully.

Wherefore it goes on, "And there arose a great storm of wind;" and that

He might impress upon them a greater sense of the miracle which was to

be done, He gives time for their fear, by sleeping.

Wherefore there follows, "And He was Himself in the hinder part of the

ship, &c."

For if He had been awake, they would either not have feared, not have

asked Him to save them when the storm arose, or they would not have

thought that He could do any such things.

Theophylact: Therefore He allowed them to fall into the fear of danger,

that they might experience His power in themselves, who saw others

benefitted by Him. But He was sleeping upon the pillow of the ship,

that is, on a wooden one.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt. 28: Shewing His humility, and thus teaching us

many lessons of wisdom. But not yet did the disciples who remained

about Him know His glory; they thought indeed that if He arose He could

command the winds, but could by no means do so reposing or asleep.

And therefore there follows, "And they awake Him, and say unto Him,

"Master, carest thou not that we perish?"

Theophylact: But He arising, rebukes first the wind, which was raising

the tempest of the sea, and causing the waves to swell, and this is

expressed in what follows, "And He arose, and rebuked the wind;" then

He commands the sea.

Wherefore it goes on, "And He said to the sea, Peace, be still."

Gloss.: For from the troubling of the sea there arises a certain sound,

which appears to be its voice threatening danger, and therefore, by a

sort of metaphor, He fitly commands tranquility by a word signifying

silence: just as in the restraining of the winds, which trouble the sea

with their violence, He uses a rebuke.

For men who are in power are accustomed to curb those, who rudely

disturb the peace of mankind, by threatening to punish them; by this,

therefore, we are given to understand, that, as a king can repress

violent men by threats, and by his edicts sooth the murmurs of his

people, so Christ, the King of all creatures, by His threats restrained

the violence of the winds, and compelled the sea to be silent.

And immediately the effect followed, for it continues, "And the wind

ceased," when He had threatened, "and there arose a great calm," that

is, in the sea, to which He had commanded silence.

Theophylact: He rebuked His disciples for not having faith; for it goes

on, "And He said unto them, Why are ye so fearful?" How is it that ye

have not faith? For if they had faith, they would have believed that

even when sleeping, He could preserve them safe.

There follows, "And they feared with a great fear, and said one to

another, &c."

For they were in doubt about Him, for since He stilled the sea, not

with a rod like Moses, nor with prayers as Elisha at the Jordan, nor

with the ark as Joshua, the son of Nun, on this account they thought

Him truly God, but since He was asleep, they thought Him a man.

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, however, the hinder part of the ship is the

beginning of the Church, in which the Lord sleeps in the body only, for

He never sleepeth who keepeth Israel; for the ship with its skins of

dead animals keeps in the living, and keeps out the waves, and is bound

together by wood, that is, by the cross and the death of the Lord the

Church is saved.

The pillow is the body of the Lord, on which His Divinity, which is as

His head, has come down.

But the wind and the sea are devils and persecutors, to whom He says

Peace, when He restrains the edicts of impious kings, as He will.

The great calm is the peace of the Church after oppression, or a

contemplative after an active life.

Bede: Or else the ship into which He embarked, is taken to mean the

tree of His passion, by which the faithful attain to the security of

the safe shore. The other ships which are said to have been with the

Lord signify those who are imbued with faith in the cross of Christ,

and are not beaten about by the whirlwind of tribulation; or who, after

the storms of temptation, are enjoying the serenity of peace.

And whilst His disciples are sailing on, Christ is asleep, because the

time of our Lord's Passion came on His faithful ones when they were

meditating on the rest of His future reign.

Wherefore it is related, that it took place late, that not only the

sleep of our Lord, but the hour itself of departing light might signify

the setting of the true Sun.

Again, when He ascended the cross, of which the stern of the ship was a

type, His blaspheming persecutors rose like the waves against Him,

driven on by the storms of the devils, by which, however, His own

patience is not disturbed, but His foolish disciples are stuck with

amazement. The disciples awake the Lord, because they sought, with most

earnest wishes, the resurrection of Him whom they had seen die. Rising

up, He threatened the wind, because when He had triumphed in His

resurrection, He prostrated the pride of the devil.

He ordered the sea to be still, that is, in rising again, He cast down

the rage of the Jews. The disciples are blamed, because after His

resurrection, He chided them for their unbelief. And we also when being

marked with the sign of the Lord's cross, we determine to quit the

world, embark in the ship with Christ; we attempt to cross the sea;

but, He goes to sleep, as we are sailing amidst the roaring of the

waters, when amidst the strivings of our virtues, or amidst the attacks

of evil spirits, of wicked men, or of our own thoughts, the flame of

our love grows cold.

Amongst storms of this sort, let us diligently strive to awake Him; He

will soon restrain the tempest, pour down peace upon us, give us the

harbour of salvation.

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Chapter 5

1. And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country

of the Gadarenes.

2. And when He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out

of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3. Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no,

not with chains:

4. Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and

the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in

pieces: neither could any man tame him.

5. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the

tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped Him.

7. And cried with a loud voice, and said, "What have I to do with thee,

Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that Thou

torment me not."

8. For He said unto him, "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit."

9. And He asked him, "What is thy name?" And he answered, saying, "My

name is Legion: for we are many."

10. And he besought Him much that He would not send them away out of

the country.

11. Now there was nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine

feeding.

12. And all the devils besought Him, saying, "Send us into the swine,

that we may enter into them."

13. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went

out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a

steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were

choked in the sea.

14. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in

the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the

devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind:

and they were afraid.

16. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was

possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine.

17. And they began to pray Him to depart out of their coasts.

18. And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with

the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him.

19. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, "Go home to thy

friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee,

and hath had compassion on thee."

20. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things

Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

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Theophylact: Those who were in the ship enquired among themselves,

"What manner of man is this?" and now it is made known Who He is by the

testimony of His enemies. For the demoniac came up confessing that He

was the Son of God. Proceeding to which circumstance the Evangelist

says, "And they came over unto the other side, &c."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 21: Geraza is a noted town of Arabia, across the

Jordan, near mount Galaad, which the tribe of Manasseh held, not far

from the lake of Tiberias, into which the swine were precipitated.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Nevertheless the exact

reading contains neither Gadarenes, nor Gerasines, but Gergesenes. For

Gadara is a city of Judaea, which has no sea at all about it; and

Geraza is a city of Arabia, having neither lake nor sea near it. And

that the Evangelists may not be thought to have spoken so manifest a

falsehood, well acquainted as they were with the parts around Judaea,

Gergese, from which come the Gergesenes, was an ancient city, now

called Tiberias, around which is situated a considerable lake. [ed.

note: Reland seems to feel the same difficulty about Gadara as the

author of this comment; but he reconciles it by saying that the whole

region might have been so called from the town of Gadara in Peroea,

though the town itself was not on the lake. Reland, Palace., v2, p774,

also Lightfoot, Horae Hebr. in locum.]

It continues, "And when He was come out of the ship, immediately there

met Him, &c."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 24: Though Matthew says that there were

two, Mark and Luke mention one, that you may understand that one of

them was a more illustrious person, concerning whose state that country

was much afflicted.

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc., see Chrys., Hom. in Matthew, 28: Or

else, Mark and Luke relate what was most worthy of compassion, and for

this reason they put down more at length what had happened to this man;

for there follows, "no man could bind him, no, not with chains."

They therefore simply said, a "man possessed of a devil," without

taking heed to the number; or else, that he might shew the greater

virtue in the Worker; for He who had cured one such, might cure many

others. Nor is there any discrepancy shewn here, for they did not say

that there was one alone, for then they would have contradicted

Matthew.

Now devils dwelt in tombs, wishing to convey a false opinion to many,

that the souls of the dead were changed to devils.

Greg. Nyss.: Now the assembly of the devils had prepared itself to

resist the Divine power. But when He was approaching Who had power over

all things, they proclaim aloud His eminent virtue.

Wherefore there follows, "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and

worshipped him, saying, &c."

Cyril: See how the devil is divided between to passions, fear and

audacity; he hangs back and prays, as if meditating a question; he

wishes to know what he had to do with Jesus, as though he would say,

"Do you cast me out from men, who are mine?"

Bede: And how great is the impiety of the Jews, to say that He cast out

devils by the prince of the devils, when the very devils confess that

they have nothing in common with Him.

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc., and Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 28: Then

praying to Him, he subjoins, "I adjure thee by God, that Thou torment

me not." For he considered being cast out to be a torment, or else he

was also invisibly tortured. For however bad the devils are, they know

that there awaits them at last a punishment for their sins; but that

the time of their last punishment was not yet come, they full well

knew, especially as they were permitted to mix among men. But because

Christ had come upon them as they were doing such dreadful deeds, they

thought that such was the heinousness of their crimes, He would not

wait for the last times, to punish them; for this reason they beg that

they may not be tormented.

Bede: For it is a great torment for a devil to cease to hurt a man, and

the more severely he possesses him, the more reluctantly he lets him

go.

For it goes on, "For He said unto Him, Come out of the man, thou

unclean spirit."

Cyril: Consider the unconquerable power of Christ; He makes Satan

shake, for to him the words of Christ are fire and flame: as the

Psalmist says, "The mountains melted at the presence of the Lord, [Ps

97:5] that is, great and proud powers.

There follows, "And He asked him, What is thy name?"

Theophylact: The Lord indeed asks, not that He Himself required to

know, but that the rest might know that there was a multitude of devils

dwelling in him.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Lest he should not be

believed, if He affirmed there were many, He wishes that they

themselves should confess it; wherefore there follows, "And he saith

unto Him, Legion, for we are many." He gives not a fixed number, but a

multitude, for such accuracy in the number would not help us to

understand it.

Bede: But by the public declaration of the scourge which the madman

suffered the virtue of the Healer appears more gracious. And even the

priests of our time, who know how to cast out devils by the grace of

exorcism, are wont to say that the sufferers cannot be cured at all,

unless they in confession openly declare, as far as they are able to

know, what they have suffered from the unclean spirits in sight, in

hearing, in taste, in touch, or any other sense of body or soul,

whether awake or asleep.

It goes on, "And he besought Him much that He would not send them away

out of the country."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Luke, however, says, "into

the abyss." [Luke 8:3] For the abyss is the separation of this world,

for devils deserve to be sent into outer darkness, prepared for the

devil and his angels. This Christ might have done, but He allowed them

to remain in this world, lest the absence of a tempter should deprive

men of the crown of victory.

Theophylact: Also that by fighting with us, they may make us more

expert.

It goes on, "Now there was there about the mountain a great herd of

swine feeding."

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 24: What Mark here says, that the herd was

about the mountain, and what Luke calls on the mountain, are by no

means inconsistent. For the herd of swine was so large, that some part

were on the mountain, the rest around it.

It goes on: "And the devils besought Him, saying, Send us into the

swine, that we may enter into them."

Remig., see Aurea Catena in Matt., p.327: The devils entered not into

the swine of their own will, but their asking for this concession was

that is might be shewn that they cannot hurt men without Divine

permission. They did not ask to be sent into men, because they saw that

He, by whose power they were tortured, bore a human form. Nor did they

desire to be sent into the flocks, for they are clean animals offered

up in the temple of God. But they desired to be sent into the swine,

because no animal is more unclean than a hog, and devils always delight

in filthiness.

It goes on: "And forthwith Jesus gave them leave."

Bede: And He gave them leave, that by the killing of the swine, the

salvation of men might be furthered.

Pseudo-Chyrs., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He wished to shew publicly

the fury which devils entertain against men, and that they would

inflict much worse things upon men, if they were not hindered by Divine

power; because, again, His compassion would not allow this to be shewn

on men, He permitted them to enter into the swine, that on them the

fury and power of the devils might be made known.

There follows: "And the unclean spirits went out."

Titus: But the herdsmen also took to flight, lest they should perish

with the swine, and spread the same fear amongst the inhabitants of the

town.

Wherefore there follows: "And they that fed them, &c."

The necessity of their loss, however, brought these men to the Saviour;

for frequently when God makes men suffer loss in their possessions, He

confers a benefit on their souls.

Wherefore it goes on: "And they came to Jesus, and see him that was

tormented by the devil, &c." that is, at the feet of Him from whom he

had obtained health; a man, whom before, not even chains could bind,

clothed and in his right mind, though he used to be continually naked;

and they were amazed.

Wherefore it says, "And they were afraid."

This miracle then they find out partly by sight, partly by words.

Wherefore there follows: "And they that saw it told them."

Theophylact: But amazed at the miracle, which they had heard, they were

afraid, and for this reason they beseech Him to depart out of their

borders; which is expressed in what follows: "And they began to pray

Him to depart out of their coasts;" for they feared lest some time or

other they should suffer a like thing: for, saddened at the loss of

their swine, they reject the presence of the Saviour.

Bede: Or else, conscious of their own frailty, they judged themselves

unworthy of the presence of the Lord.

It goes on: "And when He was going to the ship, he that had been

tormented, &c."

Theophylact: For he feared lest some time or other the devils should

find him, and enter into him a second time. But the Lord sends him back

to his house, intimating to him, that though He Himself was not

present, yet His power would keep him; at the same time also that he

might be of use in the healing of others.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He did not suffer him, and saith unto him,

Go home to thy friends, &c."

See the humility of the Saviour. He said not, Proclaim all things which

I have done to you,' but, all that the Lord hath done; do thou also,

when thou hast done any good thing, take it not to thyself, but refer

it to God.

Chrys.: But although He bade others, whom He healed, to tell it to no

one, He nevertheless fitly bids this one proclaim it, since all that

region, being possessed by devils, remained without God.

Theophylact: He therefore began to proclaim it, and all wonder, which,

is that which follows: "And he began to publish."

Bede: Mystically, however, Gerasa or Gergese, as some read it, is

interpreted casting out a dweller or a stranger approaching, because

the people of the Gentiles both expelled the enemy from the heart, and

he who was afar off is made near.

Pseudo-Jerome: Here again the demoniac is the people of the Gentiles,

in a most hopeless case, bound neither by the law of nature, nor of

God, nor by human fear.

Bede: Who dwelt in the tombs, because they delighted in dead works,

that is, in sins; who were ever raging night and day, because whether

in prosperity or in adversity, they were never free from the service of

malignant spirits: again, by the foulness of their works, they lay as

it were in the tombs, in their lofty pride, they wandered over the

mountains, by words of most hardened infidelity, they as it were cut

themselves with stones.

But he said, "My name is Legion," because the Gentile people were

enslaved to divers idolatrous forms of worship. Again, that the unclean

spirits going out from man enter into swine, which they cast headlong

into the sea, implies that now that the people of the Gentiles are

freed from the empire of demons, they who have not chosen to believe in

Christ, work sacrilegious rites in hidden places.

Theophylact: Or by this it is signified that devils enter into those

men who live like swine, rolling themselves in the slough of pleasure;

they drive them headlong into the sea down the precipice of perdition,

into the sea of an evil life where they are choked.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or they are choked in hell without any touch of mercy by

the rushing on of an early death; which evils many persons thus avoid,

for by the scourging of the fool, the wise is made more prudent.

Bede: But that the Lord did not admit him, though he wished to be with

Him, signifies, that every one after the remission of his sins should

remember that he must work to obtain a good conscience, and serve the

Gospel for the salvation of others, that at last he may rest in Christ.

Greg., Mor., 37: For when we have perceived ever so little of the

Divine knowledge, we are at once unwilling to return to human affairs,

and seek for the quiet of contemplation; but the Lord commands that the

mind should first toil hard at its work, and afterwards should refresh

itself with contemplation.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the man who is healed preached in Decapolis, where

the Jews, who hang on the letter of the Decalogue, are being turned

away from the Roman rule.

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21. 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.

22. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue,

Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, he fell at His feet,

23. And besought Him greatly, saying, "My little daughter lieth at the

point of death: I pray thee, come and lay Thy hands on her, that she

may be healed; and she shall live."

24. And Jesus went with him; and much people followed Him, and thronged

Him.

25. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26. And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all

that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27. When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched

His garment.

28. For she said, "If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole."

29. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she

felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

30. And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtue had gone out

of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, "Who touched My

clothes?"

31. And His disciples said unto Him, "Thou seest the multitude

thronging Thee, and saying Thou, Who touched Me?' "

32. And He looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her,

came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth.

34. And He said unto her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go

in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

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Theophylact: After the miracle of the demoniac, the Lord works another

miracle, namely, in raising up the daughter of the ruler of the

synagogue; the Evangelist, before narrating this miracle, says, "And

when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much

people gathered unto Him."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 28: But we must understand, that what is

added of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, took place when

Jesus had again crossed the sea in a ship, though how long after does

not appear; for if there were not an interval, there could be no time

for the taking place of that which Matthew relates, concerning the

feast at his own house; after which event, nothing follows immediately,

except this concerning the daughter of the chief of the synagogue. For

he has so put it together, that the transition itself shews that the

narrative follows the order of time.

It goes on, "There cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, &c."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He has recorded the name on

account of the Jews of that time, that it might mark the miracle.

It goes on, "And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet, and besought Him

greatly, &c."

Matthew indeed relates that the chief of the synagogue reported that

his daughter was dead, but Mark says that she was very sick, and that

afterwards it was told to the ruler of the synagogue, when our Lord was

about to go with him, that she was dead. The fact then, which Matthew

implies, is the same, namely, that He raised her from the dead; and it

is for the sake of brevity, that he says that she was dead, which was

evident from her being raised.

Augustine: For he attaches himself not to the words of the father, but

to what is of most importance, his wishes; for he was in such despair,

that his wish was that she should return to life, not thinking that she

could be found alive, whom he had left dying.

Theophylact: Now this man was faithful in part, inasmuch as he fell at

the feet of Jesus, but in that he begged of Him to come, he did not

shew as much faith as he ought. For he ought to have said, Speak the

word only, and my daughter shall be healed.'

There follows, "And He went away with him, and much people followed

Him, and thronged Him; and a woman, which had an issue of blood twelve

years, &c."

Chrys., see Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 31: This woman, who was celebrated

and known to all, did not dare to approach the Saviour openly, nor to

come to Him, because, according to the law, she was unclean; for this

reason she touched Him behind, and not in front, for that she durst not

do, but only ventured to touch the hem of His garment. It was not

however the hem of the garment, but her frame of mind that made her

whole.

There follows, "For she said, "If I may but touch His clothes, I shall

be whole."

Theophylact: Most faithful indeed is this woman, who hoped for healing

from His garments. For which reason she obtains health.

Wherefore it goes on, "And straightway the fountain of her blood was

dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Now the virtues of Christ

are by His own will imparted to those men, who touch Him by faith.

Wherefore there follows, "And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself

that virtue had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and

said, Who touched My clothes?" The virtues indeed of the Saviour do not

go out of Him locally or corporally, nor in any respect pass away from

Him. For being incorporeal, they go forth to others and are given to

others; they are not however separated from Him, from whom they are

said to go forth, in the same way as sciences are given by the teacher

to his pupils.

Therefore it says, "Jesus, knowing in Himself the virtue which had gone

out of Him," to shew that with His knowledge, and not without His being

aware of it, the woman was healed. But He asked, "Who touched me?"

although He knew her who touched Him, that He might bring to light the

woman, by her coming forward, and proclaim her faith, and lest the

virtue of His miraculous work should be consigned to oblivion.

It goes on, "And His disciples said unto Him, Thou seest the multitude

thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched Me?"

But the Lord asked, "Who touched Me," that is in thought and faith, for

the crowds who throng Me cannot be said to touch Me, for they do not

come near to Me in thought and in faith.

There follows, "And He looked round about to see her that had done this

thing."

Theophylact: For the Lord wished to declare the woman, first to give

His approbation to her faith, secondly to urge the chief of the

synagogue to a confident hope that He could thus cure his child, and

also to free the woman from fear. For the woman feared because she had

stolen health.

Wherefore there follows, "But the woman fearing and trembling, &c."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 22: Observe that the object of His question was that

the woman should confess the truth of her long want of faith, of her

sudden belief and healing, and so herself be confirmed in faith, and

afford an example to others.

"But He said to her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in

peace, and be whole of thy plague."

He said not, Thy faith is about to make thee whole, but has made thee

whole, that is, in that thou hast believed, thou hast already been made

whole.

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc., see Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 31: He

calls her "daughter" because she was saved by her faith; for faith in

Christ makes us His children.

Theophylact: But He saith to her, "Go in peace," that is, in rest,

which means, go and have rest, for up to this time thou hast been in

pains and torture.

Pseudo-Chrys.: Or else He says, "Go in peace," sending her away into

that which is the final good, for God dwells in peace, that thou mayest

know, that she was not only healed in body, but also from the causes of

bodily pain, that is, from her sins.

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, however, Jairus comes after the healing of

the woman, because when the fulness of the Gentiles has come in, then

shall Israel be saved. [Romans 11] Jairus means either illuminating, or

illuminated, that is, the Jewish people, having cast off the shadow of

the letter, enlightened by the Spirit, and enlightening others, falling

at the feet of the Word, that is, humbling itself before the

Incarnation of Christ, prays for her daughter, for when a man lives

himself, he makes others live also. Thus Abraham, and Moses, and

Samuel, intercede for the people who are dead, and Jesus comes upon

their prayers.

Bede: Again, the Lord going to the child, who is to be healed, is

thronged by the crowd, because though He gave healthful advice to the

Jewish nation, He is oppressed by the wicked habits of that carnal

people; but the woman with an issue of blood, cured by the Lord, is the

Church gathered together from the nations, for the issue of blood may

be either understood of the pollution of idolatry, or of those deeds,

which are accompanied by pleasure to flesh and blood. But whilst the

word of the Lord decreed salvation to Judaea, the people of the

Gentiles by an assured hope seized upon the health, promised and

prepared for others.

Theophylact: Or else, by the woman, who had a bloody flux, understand

human nature; for sin rushed in upon it, which since it killed the

soul, might be said to spill its blood. It could not be cured by many

physicians, that is, by the wise men of this world, and of the Law and

the Prophets; but the moment that it touched the hem of Christ's

garment, that is, His flesh, it was healed, for whosoever believes the

Son of man to be Incarnate is he who touches the hem of His garment.

Bede: Wherefore one believing woman touches the Lord, whilst the crowd

throngs Him, because He, who is grieved by divers heresies, or by

wicked habits, is worshipped faithfully with the heart of the Catholic

Church alone. But the Church of the Gentiles came behind Him; because

though it did not see the Lord present in the flesh, for the mysteries

of His Incarnation had been gone through, yet it attained to the grace

of His faith, and so when by partaking of His sacraments, it merited

salvation from its sins, as it were the fountain of its blood was dried

up by the touch of His garments. And the Lord looked round about to see

her who had done this, because He judges that all who deserve to be

saved are worthy of His look and of His pity.

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35. While He yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's

house certain which said, "Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the

Master any further?"

36. As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He saith unto the

ruler of the synagogue, "Be not afraid, only believe."

37. And He suffered no man to follow Him, save Peter, and James, and

John the brother of James.

38. And He cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth

the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39. And when He was come in, He saith unto them, "Why make ye this ado,

and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."

40. And they laughed Him to scorn. But when He had put them all out, He

taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with

Him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41. And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, "Talitha

cumi;" which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

42. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the

age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great

astonishment.

43. And He charged them straitly that no man should know it; and

commanded that something should be given her to eat.

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Theophylact: Those who were about the ruler of the synagogue, thought

that Christ was one of the prophets, and for this reason they thought

that they should beg of Him to come and pray over the damsel. But

because she had already expired, they thought that He ought not to be

asked to do so.

Therefore it is said, "While He yet spake, there came messengers to the

ruler of the synagogue, which said, Thy daughter is dead; why troublest

thou the Master any further?"

But the Lord Himself persuades the father to have confidence.

For it goes on, "As soon as Jesus heard the word which was spoken, He

saith to the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid; only believe."

Augustine: It is not said that he assented to his friends who brought

the tidings and wished to prevent the Master from coming, so that our

Lord's saying, "Fear not, only believe," is not a rebuke for his want

of faith, but was intended to strengthen the belief which he had

already. But if the Evangelist had related, that the ruler of the

synagogue joined the friends who came from his house, in saying that

Jesus should not be troubled, the words which Matthew relates him to

have said, namely, that the damsel was dead, would then have been

contrary to what was in his mind.

It goes on, "And He suffered no man to follow Him, save Peter, and

James, and John the brother of James."

Theophylact: For Christ in His lowliness would not do any thing for

display.

It goes on, "And He cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue,

and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But He Himself commands them

not to wail, as if the damsel was not dead, but sleeping.

Wherefore it says, "And when He was come in, He saith unto them, Why

make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."

Pseudo-Jerome: It was told the ruler of the synagogue, Thy daughter is

dead. But Jesus said to him, She is not dead, but sleepeth. Bother are

true, for the meaning is, She is dead to you, but to Me she is asleep.

Bede: For to men she was dead, who were unable to raise her up; but to

God she was asleep, in whose purpose both the soul was living, and the

flesh was resting, to rise again. Whence it became a custom amongst

Christians, that the dead, who, they doubt not, will rise again, should

be said to sleep.

It goes on, "And they laughed Him to scorn."

Theophylact: But they laugh at Him, as if unable to do any thing

farther; and in this He convicts them of bearing witness involuntarily,

that she was really dead whom He raised up, and therefore, that it

would be a miracle if He raised her.

Bede: Because they chose rather to laugh at than to believe in this

saying concerning her resurrection, they are deservedly excluded from

the place, as unworthy to witness His power in raising her, and the

mystery of her rising.

Wherefore it goes on, "But when He had put them all out, He taketh the

father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with Him, and

entereth in where the damsel was lying."

Chrys.: Or else, to take away all display, He suffered not all to be

with Him; that, however, He might leave behind Him witnesses of His

divine power, He chose His three chief disciples and the father and

mother of the damsel, as being necessary above all. And He restores

life to the damsel both by His hand, and by word of mouth.

Wherefore it says, "And He took the damsel by the hand, and said unto

her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto

thee, Arise."

For the hand of Jesus, having a quickening power, quickens the dead

body, and His voice raises her as she is lying.

Wherefore it follows, "And straightway the damsel arose and walked."

Jerome, Hier. ad Pam., Ep. 57: Some one may accuse the Evangelist of a

falsehood in his explanation, in that he had added, "I say unto thee,"

when in Hebrew, "Talitha cumi" only means, "Damsel, arise;" but He

adds, "I say unto thee, Arise," to express that His meaning was to call

and command her.

It goes on, "For she was of the age of twelve years."

Gloss.: The Evangelist added this, to shew that she was of an age to

walk. By her walking, she is shewn to have been not only raised up, but

also perfectly cured.

It continues, "And they were astonished with a great astonishment."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 81: To shew that He had raised her really, and

not only to the eye of fancy.

Bede: Mystically; the woman was cured of a bloody flux, and immediately

after the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue is reported to be

dead, because as soon as the Church of the Gentiles is washed from the

stain of vice, and called daughter by the merits of her faith, at once

the synagogue is broken up on account of its zealous treachery and

envy; treachery, because it did not choose to believe in Christ; envy,

because it was vexed at the faith of the Church.

What the messengers told the ruler of the synagogue, "Why troublest

thou the Master any more," is said by those in this day who, seeing the

state of the synagogue, deserted by God, believe that it cannot be

restored, and therefore think that we are not to pray that it should be

restored. But if the ruler of the synagogue, that is, the assembly of

the teachers of the Law, determine to believe, the synagogue also,

which is subjected to them, will be saved.

Further, because the synagogue lost the joy of having Christ to dwell

in it, as its faithlessness deserved, it lies dead as it were, amongst

persons weeping and wailing. Again, our Lord raised the damsel by

taking hold of her hand, because the hands of the Jews, which are full

of blood, must first be cleansed, else the synagogue, which is dead,

cannot rise again. But in the woman with the bloody flux, and the

raising of the damsel, is shewn the salvation of the human race, which

was so ordered by the Lord, that first some from Judaea, then the

fulness of the Gentiles, might come in, and so all Israel might be

saved. Again, the damsel was twelve years old, and the woman had

suffered for twelve years, because the sinning of unbelievers was

contemporary with the beginning of the faith of believers.

Wherefore it is said, "Abraham believed on God, and it was counted to

him for righteousness." [Gen 15:6]

[ed. note: Bede's own words are rather more clear than those in the

Catena: "That is, the woman began to be afflicted at the same time as

the damsel was born; for nearly at the same period of the world the

synagogue began to arise amongst the patriarchs, and the race of

Gentiles throughout the world to be polluted with idolatry."]

Greg., Mor. 4, 27: Morally again, our Redeemer raised the damsel in the

house, the young man without the gate, Lazarus in the tomb; he still

lies dead in the house, whose sin is concealed; he is carried without

the gate, whose sin has broken forth into the madness of an open deed;

he lies crushed under the mound of the tomb, who in the commission of

sin, lies powerless beneath the weight of habit.

Bede: And we may remark, that lighter and daily errors may be cured by

the remedy of a lighter penance. Wherefore the Lord raises the damsel,

lying in the inner chamber with a very easy cry, saying, "Damsel,

arise;" but that he who had been four days dead might quit the prison

of the tomb, He groaned in spirit, He was troubled, He shed tears. In

proportion, then, as the death of the soul presses the more heavily, so

much the more ardently must the fervour of the penitent press forward.

But this too must be observed, that a public crime requires a public

reparation; wherefore Lazarus, when called from the sepulchre, was

placed before the eyes of the people: but slight sins require to be

washed out by a secret penance, wherefore the damsel lying in the house

is raised up before few witnesses, and those are desired to tell no

man.

The crowd also is cast out before the damsel is raised; for if a crowd

of worldly thoughts be not first cast out from the hidden parts of the

heart, the soul, which lies dead within, cannot rise.

Well too did she arise and walk, for the soul, raised from sin, ought

not only to rise from the filth of its crimes, but also to make

advances in good works, and soon it is necessary that it should be

filled with heavenly bread, that is, made partaker of the Divine Word,

and of the Altar.

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Chapter 6

1. And He went out from thence, and came into His own country; and His

disciples follow Him.

2. And when the sabbath day was come, He began to teach in the

synagogue: and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "From whence

hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto

him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James,

and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with

us?" And they were offended at Him.

4. But Jesus said unto them, "A prophet is not without honour but in

his own country, and among his own kind, and in his own house."

5. And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands

upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6. And He marvelled because of their unbelief.

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Theophylact: After the miracles which have been related, the Lord

returns into His own country, not that He was ignorant that they would

despise Him, but that they might have no reason to say, If Thou hadst

come, we had believed Thee.

Wherefore it is said, "And He went out from thence, and came into His

own country."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 23: He means by His country, Nazareth, in which He

was brought up. But how great the blindness of the Nazarenes! they

despise Him, Who by His words and deeds they might know to be the

Christ, solely on account of His kindred.

It goes on: "And when the sabbath day was come, He began to teach in

the synagogue; and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, From

whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is

given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?"

By wisdom is meant His doctrine, by powers, the cures and miracles

which He did.

It goes on: Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?"

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 42: Matthew indeed says that He was

called the son of a carpenter; nor are we to wonder, since both might

have been said, for they believed Him to be a carpenter, because He was

the son of a carpenter.

Pseudo-Jerome: Jesus is called the son of a workman, of that one,

however, whose work was the morning and the sun, that is, the first and

second Church, as a figure of which the woman and the damsel are

healed.

Bede: For although human things are not to be compared with divine,

still the type is complete, because the Father of Christ works by fire

and spirit.

It goes on: "The brother of James, and Joses, of Jude, and of Simon.

And are not his sisters here with us?"

They bear witness that His brothers and sisters were with Him, who

nevertheless are not to be taken for the sons of Joseph or of Mary, as

heretics say, but rather, as is usual in Scripture, we must understand

them to be His relations, as Abraham and Lot are called brothers,

though Lot was brother's son to Abraham.

"And they were offended at Him." The stumbling and the error of the

Jews is our salvation, and the condemnation of heretics. For so much

did they despise the Lord Jesus Christ, as to call Him a carpenter, and

son of a carpenter.

It goes on: "And Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour,

but in his own country."

Even Moses bears witness that the Lord is called a Prophet in the

Scripture, for predicting His future Incarnation to the sons of Israel,

he says, "A Prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you of your brethren."

[Acts 7:37] But not only He Himself, Who is Lord of prophets, but also

Elias, Jeremiah, and the remaining lesser prophets, were worse received

in their own country than in strange cities, for it is almost natural

for men to envy their fellow-townsmen; for they do not consider the

present works of the man, but they remember the weakness of Him

infancy.

Pseudo-Jerome: Oftentimes also the origin of a man brings him contempt,

as it is written, "Who is the son of Jesse?" [1 Sam 25:10] for the Lord

"hath respect unto the lowly; as to the proud, He beholdeth them afar

off."

Theophylact: Or again, if the prophet has noble relations, his

countrymen hate them, and on that account do not honour the prophet.

There follows, "And He could there do no mighty work, &c." What,

however, is here expressed by He could not, we must take to mean, He

did not choose, because it was not that He was weak, but that they were

faithless; He does not therefore work any miracles there, for He spared

them, lest they should be worthy of greater blame, if they believed

not, even with miracles before their eyes.

Or else, for the working of miracles, not only the power of the Worker

is necessary, but the faith of the recipient, which was wanting in this

case: therefore Jesus did not choose to work any signs there.

There follows: "And He marvelled at their unbelief."

Bede: Not as if He Who knows all things before they are done, wonders

at what He did not expect or look forward to, but knowing the hidden

things of the heart, and wishing to intimate to men that it was

wonderful, He openly shews that He wonders. And indeed the blindness of

the Jews is wonderful, for they neither believed what their prophets

said of Christ, nor would in their own persons believe on Christ, Who

was born amongst them. Mystically again; Christ is despised in His own

house and country, that is, amongst the people of the Jews, and

therefore He worked few miracles there, lest they should become

altogether inexcusable. But He performs greater miracles every day

amongst the Gentiles, not so much in the healing of their bodies, as in

the salvation of their souls.

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6. ---- And He went round about the villages, teaching.

7. And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by

two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8. And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey,

save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:

9. But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10. And He said unto them, "In what place soever ye enter into an

house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart

thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against

them. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and

Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city."

12. And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were

sick, and healed them.

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Theophylact: The Lord not only preached in the cities, but also in

villages, that we may learn not to despise little things, nor always to

seek for great cities, but to sow the word of the Lord in abandoned and

lowly villages.

Wherefore it is said, "And He went round about the villages, teaching."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 24: Now our kind and merciful Lord and Master did

not grudge His servants and their disciples His own virtues, and as He

Himself had healed every sickness and every infirmity, so also He gave

the same power to His disciples.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to

send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean

spirits."

Great is the difference between giving and receiving. Whatsoever He

does, is done in His own power, as Lord; if they do any thing, they

confess their own weakness and the power of the Lord, saying in the

name of Jesus, "Arise, and walk."

Theophylact: Again He sends the Apostles two and two that they might

become more active; for, as says the Preacher, "Two are better than

one." [Eccles 4:9] But if He had sent more than two, there would not

have been a sufficient number to allow of their being sent to many

villages.

Greg., Hom. in Evan., 17: Further, the Lord sent the disciples to

preach, two and two, because there are two precepts of charity, namely,

the love of God, and of our neighbour; and charity cannot be between

less than two; by this therefore He implies to us, that he who has not

charity towards his neighbour, ought in no way to take upon himself the

office of preaching.

There follows: "And He commanded them, that they should take nothing

for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in

their purse: but be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats."

Bede: For such should be the preacher's trust in God, that, though he

takes no thought for supplying his own wants in this present world, yet

he should feel most certain that these will not be left unsatisfied,

lest whilst his mind is taken up with temporal things, he should

provide less of eternal things to others.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The Lord also gives them

this command, that they might shew by their mode of life, how far

removed they were from the desire of riches.

Theophylact: Instructing them also by this means not to be fond of

receiving gifts, in order too that those, who saw them proclaim

poverty, might be reconciled to it, when they saw that the Apostles

themselves possessed nothing.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 30: Or else; according to Matthew, the

Lord immediately subjoined, "The workman is worthy of his meat," [Matt

10:19] which sufficiently proves why He forbade their carrying or

possessing such things; not because they were not necessary, but

because He sent them in such a way as to shew, that they were due to

them from the faithful, to whom they preached the Gospel.

From this it is evident that the Lord did not mean by this precept that

the Evangelists ought to live only on the gifts of those to whom they

preach the Gospel, else the Apostle transgressed this precept when he

procured his livelihood by the labour of his own hands, but He meant

that He had given them a power, in virtue of which, they might be

assured these things were due to them.

It is also often asked, how it comes that Matthew and Luke have related

that the Lord commanded His disciples not to carry even a staff, whilst

Mark says, "And He commanded them that they should take nothing for

their journey, save a staff only." Which question is solved, by

supposing that the word's taff' has a meaning in Mark, who says that it

ought to be carried, different from that which it bears in Matthew and

Luke, who affirm the contrary. For in a concise way one might say, Take

none of the necessaries of life with you, nay, not a staff, save a

staff only; so that the saying, nay not a staff, may mean, nay not the

smallest thing; but that which is added, "save a staff only," may mean

that, through the power received by them from the Lord, of which a rod

is the ensign, nothing, even of those things which they do not carry,

will be wanting to them.

The Lord, therefore, said both, but because one Evangelist has not

given both, men suppose, that he who has said that the staff, in one

sense, should be taken, is contrary to him who again has declared,

that, in another sense, it should be left behind: now however that a

reason has been given, let no one think so.

So also when Matthew declares that shoes are not to be worn on the

journey, he forbids anxiety about them, for the reason why men are

anxious about carrying them, is that they may not be without them. This

is also to be understood of the two coats, that no man should be

troubled about having only that with which he is clad from anxiety lest

he should need another, when he could always obtain one from the power

given by the Lord.

In like manner Mark, by saying that they are to be shod with sandals or

soles, warns us that this mode of protecting the feet has a mystical

signification, that the foot should neither be covered above nor be

naked on the ground, that is, that the Gospel should neither be hid,

nor rest upon earthly comforts; and in that He forbids their possessing

or taking with them, or more expressly their wearing, two coats, He

bids them walk simply, not with duplicity. But whosoever thinks that

the Lord could not in the same discourse say some things figuratively,

others in a literal sense, let him look into His other discourses, and

he shall see, how rash and ignorant is his judgment.

Bede: Again, by the two tunics He seems to me to mean two sets of

clothes; not that in places like Scythia, covered with the ice and

snow, a man should be content with only one garment, but by coat, I

think a suit of clothing is implied, that being clad with one, we

should not keep another through anxiety as to what may happen.

Pseudo-Chrys.: Or else, Matthew and Luke neither allow shoes nor staff,

which is meant to point out the highest perfection. But Mark bids them

take a staff and be shod with sandals, which is spoken by permission.

[see 1 Cor 7:6]

Bede: Again, allegorically; under the figure of a scrip is pointed out

the burdens of this world, by bread is meant temporal delights, by

money in the purse, the hiding of wisdom; because he who receives the

office of a doctor, should neither be weighed down by the burden of

worldly affairs, nor be made soft by carnal desires, nor hide the

talent of the word committed to him under the case of an inactive body.

It goes on, "And He said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into

an house, there abide till ye depart from that place."

Where He gives a general precept of constancy, that they should look to

what is due to the tie of hospitality, adding, that it is inconsistent

with the preaching of the kingdom of heaven to run about from house to

house.

Theophylact: That is, lest they should be accused of gluttony in

passing from one to another. It goes on, "And whoever shall not receive

you, &c." This the Lord commanded them, that they might shew that they

had walked a long way for their sakes, and to no purpose. Or, because

they received nothing from them, not even dust, which they shake off,

that it might be a testimony against them, that is, by way of

convicting them.

Pseudo-Chrys.: Or else, that it might be a witness of the toil of the

way, which they sustained for them; or as if the dust of the sins of

the preachers was turned against themselves.

It goes on: "And they went and preached that men should repent. And

they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick,

and healed them."

Mark alone mentions their anointing with oil. James however, in his

canonical Epistle, says a thing similar. For oil both refreshes our

labours, and gives us light and joy; but again, oil signifies the mercy

of the unction of God, the healing of infirmity, and the enlightening

of the heart, the whole of which is worked by prayer.

Theophylact: It also means, the grace of the Holy Ghost, by which we

are eased from our labours, and receive light and spiritual joy.

Bede: Where it is evident from the Apostles themselves, that it is an

ancient custom of the holy Church that persons possessed or afflicted

with any disease whatever, should be anointed with oil consecrated by

priestly blessing.

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14. And king Herod heard of Him; (for His name was spread abroad:) and

he said, "That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore

mighty works do shew forth themselves in him."

15. Others said, "That it is Elias." And others said, "That it is a

prophet, or as one of the prophets."

16. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, "It is John, whom I

beheaded: he is risen from the dead."

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Gloss.: After the preaching of the disciples of Christ, and the working

of miracles, the Evangelist fitly subjoins an account of the report,

which arose amongst the people.

Wherefore he says, "And king Herod heard of Him."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Aut. e Cat. in Marc.: This Herod is the son of the

first Herod, under whom Joseph had led Jesus into Egypt. But Matthew

calls him Tetrarch, and Luke mentions him as ruling over one fourth of

his father's kingdom; for the Romans after the death of his father

divided his kingdom into four parts. But Mark calls him a king, either

after the title of his father, or because it was consonant to his own

wish.

Pseudo-Jerome: It goes on, "For His name was spread abroad."

For it is not right that a candle should be placed under a bushel. "And

they said," that is, some of the multitude, "that John the Baptist was

risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew themselves

forth in him."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 25: Here we are taught how great was the envy of the

Jews. For, lo, they believe that John, of whom it was said that he did

no miracle, could rise from the dead, and that, without the witness of

any one. But Jesus, approved of God by miracles and signs, whose

resurrection, Angles and Apostles, men and women, preached, they chose

to believe was carried away by stealth, rather than suppose that He had

risen again.

And these men, in saying that John was risen from the dead, and that

therefore mighty works were wrought in him, had just thoughts of the

power of the resurrection, for men, when they shall have risen from the

dead, shall have much greater power than they possessed when still

weighed down by the weakness of the flesh.

There follows: "But others said, that it is Elias."

Theophylact: For John confuted many men, when he said, "Ye generation

of vipers."

It goes on: "But others said, that it is a prophet, or as one of the

prophets."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Is seems to me that this

prophet means that one of whom Moses said, "God will raise up a prophet

unto thee of thy brethren." [Deut 18:15] They were right indeed, but

because they feared to say openly, This is the Christ, they used the

voice of Moses, veiling their own surmise through fear of their rules.

There follows: "But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom

I beheaded: he is risen from the dead." Herod expressly says this in

irony.

Theophylact: Or else, Herod, knowing that he without a cause had slain

John, who was a just man, thought that he had risen from the dead, and

had received through his resurrection the power of working miracles.

Augustine, de Con. Even., ii, 43: But in these words Luke bears witness

to Mark, to this point at least, that others and not Herod said that

John had risen; but Luke had represented Herod as hesitating and has

put down his words as if he said, "John have I beheaded, but who is

this of whom I hear such things?" [Luke 9:7]

We must, however, suppose that after this hesitation he had confirmed

in his own mind what others had said, for he says to his children, as

Matthew relates, "This is John the Baptist, he has risen from the

dead." [Matt 14:2] Or else these words are to be spoken, so as to

indicate that he is still hesitating, particularly as Mark who had said

above that others had declared that John had risen from the dead,

afterwards however is not silent as to Herod's plainly saying, "It is

John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead." Which words also may

be spoken in two ways, either they may be understood as those of a man

affirming or doubting.

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17. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound

him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had

married her.

18. For John had said unto Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have

thy brother's wife."

19. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed

him; but she could not;

20. For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy,

and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard

him gladly.

21. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made

a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;

22. And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and

pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the

damsel, "Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee."

23. And he sware unto her, "Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will

give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom."

24. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, "What shall I ask?"

And she said, "The head of John the Baptist."

25. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked,

saying, "I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of

John the Baptist."

26. And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for

their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his

head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

28. And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and

the damsel gave it to her mother.

29. And when the disciples heard of it, they came and took up his

corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

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Theophylact: The Evangelist Mark, taking occasion from what went

before, here relates the death of the Forerunner, saying, "For Herod

himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison

for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her."

Bede: Ancient history relates, that Philip, the son of Herod the great,

under whom the Lord fled into Egypt, the brother of this Herod, under

whom Christ suffered, married Herodias, the daughter of king Aretas;

but afterwards, that his father-in-law, after certain disagreements had

arisen with his son-in-law, had taken his daughter away, and, to the

grief of her former husband, had given her in marriage to his enemy;

therefore John the Baptist rebukes Herod and Herodias for contracting

an unlawful union, and because it was not allowed for a man to marry

his brother's wife during his lifetime.

Theophylact: The law also commanded a brother to marry his brother's

wife, if he died without children; but in this case there was a

daughter, which made the marriage criminal.

There follows: "Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would

have killed him; but she could not."

Bede: For Herodias was afraid, lest Herod should repent at some time,

or be reconciled to his brother Philip, and so the unlawful marriage be

divorced.

It goes on: "For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and

a holy."

Gloss.: He feared him, I say, because he revered him, for he knew him

to be just in his dealings with men, and holy towards God, and he took

care that Herodias should not slay him. "And when he heard him, he did

many things," for he thought that he spake by the Spirit of God, "and

heard him gladly," because he considered that what he said was

profitable.

Theophylact: But see how great is the fury of lust, for though Herod

had such an awe and fear of John, he forgets it all, that he may

minister to his fornication.

Remig.: For his lustful will drove him to lay hands on a man whom he

knew to be just and holy. And by this, we may see how a less fault

became the cause to him of a greater; as it is said, "He which is

filthy, let him be filthy still." [Rev 22:11]

It goes on: "And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his

birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates

of Galilee."

Bede: The only men whom we read of, as celebrating their birthdays with

festive joys are Herod and Pharaoh, but each, with an evil presage,

stained his birthday with blood; Herod, however, with so much the

greater wickedness, as he slew the holy and guiltless teacher of truth,

and that by the wish, and at the instance of a female dancer.

For there follows: "And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in,

and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said

unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it

thee."

Theophylact: For during the banquet, Satan danced in the person of the

damsel, and the wicked oath is completed.

For it goes on: "And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of

me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom."

Bede: His oath does not excuse his murder, for perchance his reason for

swearing was, that he might find an opportunity for slaying, and if she

had demanded the death of his father and mother, he surely would not

have granted it.

It goes on: "And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I

ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist."

Worthy is blood to be asked as the reward of such a deed as dancing.

It goes on: "And she came in straightway with haste, &c."

Theophylact: The malignant woman begs that the head of John be given to

her immediately, that is, at once, in that very hour, for she feared

lest Herod should repent.

There follows: "And the king was exceeding sorry."

Bede: It is usual with Scripture, that the historian should relate

events as they were then believed by all, thus Joseph is called the

father of Jesus by Mary herself. So now also Herod is said to be

"exceeding sorry," for so the guests thought, since the hypocrite bore

sadness on his face, when he had joy in his heart; and he excuses the

wickedness by his oath, that he might be impious under pretence of

piety.

Wherefore there follows: "For his oath's sake, and for their sakes who

sat with him, he would not reject her."

Theophylact: Herod not being his own master, but full of lust,

fulfilled his oath, and slew the just man; it would have been better

however to break his oath, than to commit so great a sin.

Bede: In that again which is added, "And for their sakes who sat with

him," he wishes to make all partakers in his guilt, that a bloody feast

might be set before luxurious and impure guests.

Wherefore it goes on: "But sending an executioner, he commanded his

head to be brought in a charger."

Theophylact: Spiculator' is the name for the public servant

commissioned to put men to death.

Bede: Now Herod was not ashamed to bring before his guests the head of

a murdered man; but we do not read of such an act of madness in

Pharaoh. From both examples, however, it is proved to be more useful,

often to call to mind the coming day of our death, by fear and by

living chastely, than to celebrate the day of our birth with luxury.

For man is born in the world to toil, but the elect pass by death out

of the world to repose.

It goes on: "And he beheaded him in prison, &c."

Greg., Mor., 3, 7: I cannot, without the greatest wonder, reflect that

he, who was filled even in his mother's womb with the spirit of

prophecy, and who was the greatest that had arisen amongst those born

of women, is sent into prison by wicked men, is beheaded for the

dancing of a girl, and though a man of so great austerity, meets death

through such a foul instrument. Are we to suppose that there was

something evil in his life, to be wiped away by so ignominious a death?

When, however, could he commit a sin even in his eating, whose food was

only locusts, and wild honey? How could he offend in his conversation,

who never quitted the wilderness? How is it that Almighty God so

despises in this life those whom He has so sublimely chosen before all

ages, if it be not for the reason, which is plain to the piety of the

faithful, that He thus sinks them into the lowest place, because He

sees how He is rewarding them in the highest, and outwardly He throws

them down amongst things despised, because inwardly He draws them up

even to incomprehensible things. Let each then infer from this what

they shall suffer, whom He rejects, if He so grieves those whom He

loves.

There follows: "And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took

up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb."

Bede: Josephus relates, that John was brought bound into the castle of

Macheron, and there slain; and ecclesiastical history says [Theodoret,

Hist., Eccles., 3, 3] that he was buried in Sebaste, a city of

Palestine, once called Samaria. But the beheading of John the Baptist

signifies the lessening of that fame, by which he was thought to be

Christ by the people, as the raising of our Saviour on the cross

typifies the advance of the faith, in that He Himself, who was first

looked upon as a prophet by the multitude, was recognized as the Son of

God by all the faithful; wherefore John, who was destined to decrease,

was born when the daylight begins to wax short; but the Lord at that

season of the year in which the day begins to lengthen.

Theophylact: In a mystical way, however, Herod, whose name means, of

skin,' is the people of the Jews, and the wife to whom he was wedded

means vain glory, whose daughter even now encircles the Jews with her

dance, namely, a false understanding of the Scriptures; they indeed

beheaded John, that is, the word of prophecy, and hold to him without

Christ, his head.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, the head of the law, which is Christ, is cut

off from His own body, that is, the Jewish people, and is given to a

Gentile damsel, that is, the Roman Church, and the damsel gives it to

her adulterous mother, that is, to the synagogue, who in the end will

believe. The body of John is buried, his head is put in a dish; thus

the human Letter is covered over, the Spirit is honoured, and received

on the altar.

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30. And the Apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told

Him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31. And He said unto them, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert

place, and rest a while:" for there were many coming and going, and

they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33. And the people saw them departing, and many knew Him, and ran afoot

thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto

Him.

34. And Jesus, when He came out, saw many people, and was moved with

compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a

shepherd: and He began to teach them many things.

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Gloss.: The Evangelist, after relating the death of John, gives an

account of those things which Christ did with His disciples after the

death of John, saying, "And the Apostles gathered themselves together

unto Jesus, and told Him all things, both what they had done, and what

they had taught."

Pseudo-Jerome: For they return to the fountain-head whence the streams

flow; those who are sent by God, always offer up thanks for those

things which they have received.

Theophylact: Let us also learn, when we are sent on any mission, not to

go far away, and not to overstep the bounds of the office committed,

but to go often to him, who sends us, and report all that we have done

and taught; for we must not only teach but act.

Bede: Not only do the Apostles tell the Lord what they themselves had

done and taught, but also His own and John's disciples together tell

Him what John had suffered, during the time that they were occupied in

teaching, as Matthew relates.

It goes on: "And He said to them, Come ye yourselves apart, &c."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 45: This is said to have taken place,

after the passion of John, therefore what is first related took place

last, for it was by these events that Herod was moved to say, "This is

John the Baptist, whom I beheaded."

Theophylact: Again, He goes into a desert place from His humility. But

Christ makes His disciples rest, that men who are set over others may

learn, that they who labour in any work or in the word deserve rest,

and ought not to labour continually.

Bede: How arose the necessity for giving rest to His disciples, He

shews, when He adds, "For there were many coming and going, and they

had no leisure so much as to eat;" we may then see how great was the

happiness of that time, both from the toil of the teachers, and from

the diligence of the learners.

It goes on: "And embarking in a ship, they departed into a desert place

privately."

The disciples did not enter into the ship alone, but taking up the Lord

with them, they went to a desert place, as Matthew shews. [Matt 14]

Here He tries the faith of the multitude, and by seeking a desert place

He would see whether they care to follow Him. And they follow Him, and

not on horseback, nor in carriages, but laboriously coming on foot,

they shew how great is their anxiety for their salvation.

There follows: "And the people saw them departing, and many knew Him,

and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them."

In saying that they outwent them on foot, it is proved that the

disciples with the Lord did not reach the other bank of the sea, or of

the Jordan, but they went to the nearest places of the same country,

where the people of those parts could come to them on foot.

Theophylact: So do thou not wait for Christ till He Himself call you,

but outrun Him, and come before Him.

There follows: "And Jesus when He came out saw many people, and was

moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep having

no shepherd."

The Pharisees being ravening wolves did not feed the sheep, but

devoured them; for which reason they gather themselves to Christ, the

true Shepherd, who gave them spiritual food, that is, the word of God.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He began to teach them many things."

For seeing that those who followed Him on account of His miracles were

tired from the length of the way, He pitied them, and wished to satisfy

their wish by teaching them.

Bede, in Marc., 2, 26: Matthew says that He healed their sick, for the

real way of pitying the poor is to open to them the way of truth by

teaching them, and to take away their bodily pains.

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, however, the Lord took apart those whom He

chose, that though living amongst evil men, they might not apply their

minds to evil things, as Lot in Sodom, Job in the land of Uz, and

Obadiah in the house of Ahab.

Bede, in Marc., 2, 25: Leaving also Judaea, the holy preachers, in the

desert of the Church, overwhelmed by the burden of their tribulations

amongst the Jews, obtained rest by the imparting of the grace of faith

to the Gentiles.

Pseudo-Jerome: Little indeed is the rest of the saints here on earth,

long is their labour, but afterwards, they are bidden to rest from

their labours. But as in the ark of Noah, the animals that were within

were sent forth, and they that were without rushed in, so is it in the

Church, Judas went, the thief came to Christ. But as long as men go

back from the faith, the Church can have no refuge from grief; for

Rachel weeping for her children would not be comforted. Moreover, this

world is not the banquet, in which the new wine is drank, when the new

song will be sung by men made anew, when this mortal shall have put on

immortality.

Bede, in Marc., 2, 26: But when Christ goes to the deserts of the

Gentiles, many bands of the faithful leaving the walls of their cities,

that is their old manner of living, follow Him.

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35. And when the day was now far spent, His disciples came unto Him,

and said, "This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

36. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and

into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to

eat."

37. He answered and said unto them, "Give ye them to eat." And they

said unto Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread,

and give them to eat?"

38. He saith unto them, "How many loaves have ye? go and see." And when

they knew, they say, "Five, and two fishes."

39. And He commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the

green grass.

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked

up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to His

disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided He among them

all.

42. And they did all eat, and were filled.

43. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the

fishes.

44. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

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Theophylact: The Lord, placing before them, first, what is most

profitable, that is, the food of the word of God, afterwards also gave

the multitude food for their bodies; in beginning to relate which, the

Evangelist say, "And when the day was now far spent, His disciples came

unto Him, and said, This is a desert place.

Bede: The time being far spent, points out that it was evening.

Wherefore Luke says, "But the day had begun to decline."

Theophylact: See now, how those who are disciples of Christ grow in

love to man, for they pity the multitudes, and come to Christ to

intercede for them. But the Lord tried them, to see whether they would

know that His power was great enough to feed them.

Wherefore it goes on: "He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to

eat."

Bede: By these words He calls on His Apostles, to break bread for the

people, that they might be able to testify that they had no bread, and

thus the greatness of the miracle might become more known.

Theophylact: But the disciples thought that He did not know what was

necessary for the feeding of so large a multitude, for their answer

shews that they were troubled.

For it goes on, "And they said unto Him, Let us go and buy two hundred

pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 46: This in the Gospel of John is the

answer to Philip, but Mark gives it as the answer of the disciples,

wishing it to be understood that Philip made this answer as a

mouthpiece of the others; although he might put the plural number for

the singular, as is usual.

It goes on: "And He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and

see."

The other Evangelists pass over this being done by the Lord.

It goes on: "And when they knew, they say, "Five, and two fishes."

This, which was suggested by Andrew, as we learn from John, the other

Evangelists, using the plural for the singular, have put into the mouth

of the disciples.

It goes on, "And He commanded them to make all sit down by companies

upon the green grass, and they sat down in ranks by hundreds and by

fifties."

But we need not be perplexed, though Luke says that they were ordered

to sit down by fifties, and Mark by hundreds and fifties, for one has

mentioned a part, the other the whole. Mark, who mentions the hundreds,

fills up what the other has left out.

Theophylact: We are given to understand that they lay down in parties,

separate from one another, for what is translated by companies, is

repeated twice over in the Greek, as though it were by companies and

companies.

It goes on, "And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes,

He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave

them to His disciples to set before them: and the two fishes divided He

among them all."

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc., see Hom. in Matt., 49: Now it was

with fitness that He looked up to heaven, for the Jews, when receiving

manna in the desert, presumed to say of God, "Can he give bread?" [Ps

78:20] To prevent this, therefore, before He performed the miracle, He

referred to His Father when He was about to do.

Theophylact: He also looks up to heaven, that He may teach us to seek

our food from God, and not from the devil, as they do who unjustly feed

on other men's labours. By this also He intimated to the crowd, that He

could not be opposed to God, since He called upon God. And He gives the

bread to His disciples to set before the multitude, that by handling

the bread, they might see that it was an undoubted miracle.

It goes on: "And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up

twelve baskets full of the fragments."

Twelve baskets of fragments remained over and above, that each of the

Apostles, carrying a basket on his shoulder, might recognise the

unspeakable wonder of the miracle. For it was a proof of overflowing

power not only to feed so many men, but also to leave such a

superabundance of fragments. Even though Moses gave manna, yet what was

given to each was measured by his necessity, and what was over and

above was overrun with worms. Elias also fed the woman, but gave her

just what was enough for her; but Jesus, being the Lord, makes His

gifts with superabundant profusion.

Bede: Again, in a mystical sense, the Saviour refreshes the hungry

crowds at the day's decline, because, either now that the end of the

world approaches, or now that the Son of justice has set in death for

us, we are saved from wasting away in spiritual hunger. He calls the

Apostles to Him at the breaking of bread, intimating that daily by them

our hungry souls are fed, that is, by their letters and examples. By

the five loaves are figured the Five Books of Moses, by the two fishes,

the Psalms and Prophets.

Theophylact: Or the two fishes are the discourses of fishermen, that

is, their Epistles and Gospel.

Bede: [ed. note: The same application to the five senses is found in

Origen in Matt. 14, 17, and St. Ambrose in Luc., 6, 80. The latter,

probably, was the source from which Bede borrowed it, as in both it

forms a portion of a comparison between this miracle and that of the

four thousand being fed with seven loaves, in which the latter are said

to be a type of the Christian, who has given up external things.

Origen, Hom. 3 in Leviticus lays it down as a principle, that the

number five is almost always taken for the five sense in Scripture.]

There are five senses in the outward man which shews that by the five

thousand men are meant those who, living in the world, know how to make

a good use of external things.

Greg., Mor. 16, 55: The different ranks in which those who ate lie

down, mark out the divers churches which make up the one Catholic. [ed.

note: The number fifty is connected with rest from sin, or remission,

with an allusion to the Jubilee and to Pentecost by Origen in Matt.

Tom. xi. 3, and by St. Ambrose Ap. David 8. On number a hundred, as the

recognized symbol of perfection, see Benedictine Note] But the Jubilee

rest is contained in the mystery of the number fifty, and fifty must be

doubled before it reaches up to a hundred. As then the first step is to

rest from doing evil, that afterwards the soul may rest more fully from

evil thoughts, some lie down in parties of fifty, others of a hundred.

Bede: Again, those men lie down on grass and are fed by the food of the

Lord, who have trodden under foot their concupiscences by continence,

and apply themselves diligently to hear and fulfil the words of God.

[ed. note: see Aurea Catena in Matthew, p. 537] The Saviour, however,

does not create a new sort of food; for when He came in the flesh He

preached no other things than were predicted, but shewed how pregnant

with mysteries of grace were the writings of the Law and the Prophets.

He looks up to heaven, that He may teach us that there we must look for

grace. He breaks and distributes to the disciples that they may place

the bread before the multitudes, because He has opened the mysteries of

prophecy to holy doctors, who are to preach them to the whole world.

What is left by the crowd is taken up by the disciples, because the

more sacred mysteries, which cannot be received by the foolish, are not

to be passed by with negligence, but to be inquired into by the

perfect. For by the twelve baskets, the Apostles and the following

Doctors are typified, externally indeed despised by men, but inwardly

full of healthful food. For all know that carrying baskets is a part of

the work of slaves.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or, in the gathering of the twelve baskets full of

fragments, is signified the time, when they shall sit on thrones,

judging all who are left of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the twelve

tribes of Israel, when the remnant of Israel shall be saved.

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45. And straightway He constrained His disciples to get into the ship,

and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while He sent away

the people.

46. And when He had sent them away, He departed into a mountain to

pray.

47. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and

He alone on the land.

48. And He saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto

them: and about the fourth watch of the night He cometh unto them,

walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

49. But when they saw Him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had

been a spirit, and cried out:

50. For they all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He talked

with them, and saith unto them, "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not

afraid."

51. And He went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and

they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart

was hardened.

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Gloss.: The Lord indeed by the miracle of the loaves shewed that He is

the Creator of the world: but now by walking on the waves He proved

that He had a body free from the weight of all sin, and by appeasing

the winds and by calming the rage of the waves, He declared Himself to

be the Master of the elements.

Wherefore it is said, "And straightway He constrained His disciples to

get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida,

while He sent away the people."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He dismisses indeed the

people with His blessing and with some cures. But He constrained His

disciples, because they could not without pain separate themselves from

Him, and that, not only on account of the very great affection which

they had for Him, but also because they were at a loss how He would

join them.

Bede, in Marc., 2, 27: But it is with reason that we wonder how Mark

says, that after the miracle of the loaves the disciples crossed the

sea of Bethsaida, when Luke relates that the miracle was done in the

parts of Bethsaida [Luke 9:10], unless we understand that Luke means by

the desert which is Bethsaida not the country immediately around the

town, but the desert places belonging to it. But when Mark says that

they should "go before unto Bethsaida," the town itself is meant.

It goes on: "And when He had sent them away, He departed into a

mountain to pray."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: This we must understand of

Christ, in that He is man; He does it also to teach us to be constant

in prayer.

Theophylact: But when He had dismissed the crowd, He goes up to pray,

for prayer requires rest and silence.

Bede, in Marc., 2, 28: Not every man, however, who prays goes up into a

mountain, but he alone prays well, who seeks God in prayer. But he who

prays for riches or worldly labour, or for the death of his enemy,

sends up from the lowest depths his vile prayers to God.

John says, "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and

take Him by force and make Him a king, He departed against into a

mountain Himself, alone." [John 6:15]

It goes on: "And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the

sea, and He alone on the land."

Theophylact: Now the Lord permitted His disciples to be in danger, that

they might learn patience; wherefore He did not immediately come to

their aid, but allowed them to remain in danger all night, that He

might teach them to wait patiently, and not to hope at once for help in

tribulations.

For there follows: "And He saw them toiling in rowing, for the wind was

contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night, He cometh

unto them walking upon the sea."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Holy Scripture reckons four

watches in the night, making each division three hours; wherefore by

the fourth watch it means that which is after the ninth hour, that is,

in the tenth or some following hour.

There follows: "And would have passed them."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 47: But how could they understand this,

except from His going a different way, wishing to pass them as

strangers; for they were so far from recognizing Him, as to take Him

for a spirit.

For it goes on: "But when they saw Him walking upon the sea, they

supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out."

Theophylact: See again how Christ, though He was about to put and end

to their dangers, puts them in greater fear. But He immediately

reassured them by His voice, for it continues, "And immediately He

talked with them, and said unto them, It is I, be not afraid."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 50: As soon then as they knew Him by His voice,

their fear left them.

Augustine: How then could He wish to pass them, whose fears He so

reassures, if it were not that His wish to pass them would wring from

them that cry, which called for His help?

Bede: [ed. note: This opinion with which Theodorus is charged was one

held by the Phantasiasts, a sect of the Monophysites. The denial of the

human body to our Lord, was a natural consequence of denying Him a

human soul, for how could a human body inclose, so to speak, His

Divinity? Theodoras was Bishop of Pharan, in Arabia, and was condemned

as the author of the Monothelite heresy in the Lateran Council under

Pope Martin I, AD 649. The passage from Dionysius is quoted in Actio 3

of the Council, and occurs de Div. Nom, c. 1] But Theodorus, who was

Bishop of Phanara, wrote that the Lord had no bodily weight in His

flesh, and walked on the sea without weight; but the Catholic faith

declares that He had weight according to the flesh. For Dionysius says,

We know not how without plunging in His feet, which had bodily weight

and the gravity of matter, He could walk on the wet and unstable

substance.

Theophylact: Then by entering into the ship, the Lord restrained the

tempest. For it continues, "And He went up unto them into the ship, and

the wind ceased." Great indeed is the miracle of our Lord's walking on

the sea, but the tempest and the contrary wind were there as well, to

make the miracle greater. For the Apostles, not understanding from the

miracle of the five loaves the power of Christ, now more fully knew it

from the miracle of the sea.

Wherefore it goes on, "And they were sore amazed in themselves." For

they understood not concerning the loaves.

Bede: The disciples indeed, who were still carnal, were amazed at the

greatness of His virtue, they could not yet however recognise in Him

the truth of the Divine Majesty. Wherefore it goes on, "For their

hearts were hardened."

But mystically, the toil of the disciples in rowing, and the contrary

wind, mark out the labours of the Holy Church, who amidst the beating

waves of the world, and the blasts of unclean spirits, strives to reach

the repose of her celestial country. And well is it said that the ship

was in the midst of the sea, and He alone on land, for sometimes the

Church is afflicted by a pressure from the Gentiles so overwhelming,

that her Redeemer seems to have entirely deserted her. But the Lord

sees His own, toiling on the sea, for, lest they faint in tribulations,

He strengthens them by the look of His love, and sometimes frees them

by a visible assistance. Further, in the fourth watch He came to them

as daylight approached, for when man lifts up his mind to the light of

guidance from on high, the Lord will be with him, and the dangers of

temptations will be laid asleep.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else, the first watch

means the time up to the deluge; the second, up to Moses; the third, up

to the coming of the Lord; in the fourth the Lord came and spoke to His

disciples.

Bede: Often then does the love of heaven seem to have deserted the

faithful in tribulation, so that it may be thought that Jesus wishes to

pass by His disciples, as it were, toiling in the sea. And still do

heretics suppose that the Lord was a phantom, and did not take upon Him

real flesh from the Virgin.

Pseudo-Jerome: And He says to them, "Be of good cheer, it is I,"

because we shall see Him as He is. But the wind and the storm ceased

when Jesus sat down, that is, reigned in the ship, which is the

Catholic Church.

Bede: In whatsoever heart, also, He is present by the grace of His

love, there soon all the strivings of vices, and of the adverse world,

or of evil spirits, are kept under and put to rest.

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53. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of

Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him,

55. And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry

about in beds those that were sick, where they heard He was.

56. And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country,

they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might

touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched

Him were made whole.

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Gloss.: The Evangelist, having shewn the danger which the disciples had

sustained in their passage, and their deliverance from it, now shews

the place to which they sailed, saying, "And when they had passed over,

they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore."

Theophylact: The Lord remained at the above-mentioned place for some

time. Therefore the Evangelist subjoins, "And when they had come out of

the ship, straightway they knew Him," That is, the inhabitants of the

country.

Bede: But they knew Him by report, not by His features; or through the

greatness of His miracles, even His person was known to some. See too

how great was the faith of the men of the land of Gennesaret, so that

they were not content with the healing of those who were present, but

sent to other towns round about, that all might hasten to the

Physician; wherefore there follows, "And ran through the whole region

round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick,

where they heard He was."

Theophylact: For they did not call Him to their houses that He might

heal them, but rather the sick themselves were brought to Him.

Wherefore it also follows: "And whithersoever He entered into villages,

or cities, or country, &c."

For the miracle which had been wrought on the woman with an issue of

blood, had reached the ears of many, and caused in them that great

faith, by which they were healed.

It goes on: "And as many as touched Him were made whole."

Again, in a mystical sense, do thou understand by the hem of His

garment the slightest of His commandments, for whosoever shall

transgress it "shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,"

[Matt. 5:19] or else His assumption of our flesh, by which we have come

to the Word of God, and afterwards, shall have the enjoyment of His

majesty.

Pseudo-Jerome: Furthermore that which is said, "And as many as touched

Him were made whole," shall be fulfilled, when grief and mourning shall

fly away.

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Chapter 7

1. Then came together unto Him the Pharisees, and certain of the

Scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2. And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that

is to say, the unwashen, hands, they found fault.

3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands

oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not.

And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as

the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

5. Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked Him, "Why walk not thy

disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with

unwashen hands?"

6. He answered and said unto them, "Well hath Esaias [Isaiah]

prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written: This people honoureth

me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the

commandments of men.'

8. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of

men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things

ye do.

9. And He said unto them, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God,

that ye may keep your own tradition.

10. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother;' and, Whoso

curseth father or mother, let him die the death:'

11. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother - It is

Corban - that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be

profited by me; he shall be free.'

12. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which

ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."

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Bede, in Marc., 2, 29: The people of the land of Gennesareth, who

seemed to be unlearned men, not only come themselves, but also bring

their sick to the Lord, that they may but succeed in touching the hem

of His garment. But the Pharisees and Scribes, who ought to have been

the teachers of the people, run together to the Lord, not to seek for

healing, but to move captious questions.

Wherefore it is said, "Then there came together unto Him the Pharisees

and certain of the Scribes, coming from Jerusalem; and when they saw

some of His disciples eat bread with common, that is, with unwashen

hands, they found fault."

Theophylact: For the disciples of the Lord, who were taught only the

practice of virtue, used to eat in a simple way, without washing their

hands; but the Pharisees, wishing to find an occasion of blame against

them, took it up; they did not indeed blame them as transgressors of

the law, but for transgressing the traditions of the elders.

Wherefore it goes on: "For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they

wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders."

Bede: For taking the spiritual words of the Prophets in a carnal sense,

they observed, by washing the body alone, commandments which concerned

the chastening of the heart and deeds, saying, "Wash you, make you

clean;" [Isa 1:16] and again, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the

Lord." [Isa 52.11]

It is therefore a superstitious human tradition, that men who are clean

already, should wash oftener because they eat bread, and that they

should not eat on leaving the market, without washing. But it is

necessary for those who desire to partake of the bread which comes down

from heaven, often to cleanse their evil deeds by alms, by tears, and

the other fruits of righteousness. It is also necessary for a man to

wash thoroughly away the pollutions which he has contracted from the

cares of temporal business, by being afterwards intent on good thoughts

and works.

In vain, however, do the Jews wash their hands, and cleanse themselves

after the market, so long as they refuse to be washed in the font of

the Saviour; in vain do they observe the washing of their vessels, who

neglect to wash away the filthy sins of their bodies and of their

hearts.

It goes on: "Then the Scribes and Pharisees asked Him, Why walk not thy

disciples after the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with common

hands?"

Jerome, Hier. in Matt., 15: Wonderful is the folly of the Pharisees and

Scribes; they accuse the Son of God, because He keeps not the

traditions and precepts of men. But "common" is here put for unclean;

for the people of the Jews, boasting that they were the portion of God,

called those meats common, which all made use of.

Pseudo-Jerome: He beats back the vain words of the Pharisees with His

arguments, as men drive back dogs with weapons, by interpreting Moses

and Isaiah, that we too by the word of Scripture may conquer the

heretics, who oppose us.

Wherefore it goes on: "Well hath Esaia prophesied of you hypocrites; as

it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their

heart is far from me." [Isa 29:13]

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: For since they unjustly

accused the disciples not of trangressing the law, but the commands of

the elders, He sharply confounds them, calling them hypocrites, as

looking with reverence upon what was not worthy of it. He adds,

however, the words of Isaiah the prophet, as spoken to them; as though

He would say, As those men, of whom it is said, "that they honour God

with their lips, whilst their heart is far from Him," in vain pretend

to observe the dictates of piety, whilst they honour the doctrines of

men, so ye also neglect your soul, of which you should take care, and

blame those who live justly.

Pseudo-Jerome: But Pharisaical tradition, as to tables and vessels, is

to be cut off, and cast away. For they often make the commands of God

yield to the traditions of men.

Wherefore it continues, "For laying aside the commandments of God, ye

hold to the traditions of men, as the washing of pots and cups."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Moreover, to convict them of

neglecting the reverence due to God, for the sake of the tradition of

the elders, which was opposed to the Holy Scriptures, He subjoins, "For

Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father

or mother, let him die the death."

Bede: The sense of the word honour in Scripture is not so much the

saluting and paying court to men, as alms-giving, and bestowing gifts;

"honour," says the Apostle, "widows who are widows indeed." [1 Tim 5:3]

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Notwithstanding the

existence of such a divine law, and the threats against such as break

it, ye lightly transgress the commandment of God, observing the

traditions of the Elders.

Wherefore there follows: "But ye say, If a man shall say to his father

or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou

mightest be profited by me;" understand, he will be freed from the

observation of the foregoing command.

Wherefore it continues, "And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his

father or his mother."

Theophylact: For the Pharisees, wishing to devour the offerings,

instructed sons, when their parents asked for some of their property,

to answer them, what thou hast asked of me is corban, that is, a gift,

I have already offered it up to the Lord; thus the parents would not

require it, as being offered up to the Lord, (and in that way

profitable for their own salvation). [ed. note: the words in the

parenthesis are not in Theophylact]

Thus they deceived the sons into neglecting their parents, whilst they

themselves devoured the offerings; with this therefore the Lord

reproaches them, as transgressing the law of God for the sake of gain.

Wherefore it goes on, "Making the word of God of none effect through

your traditions, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do

ye;" transgressing, that is, the commands of God, that ye may observe

the traditions of men.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else it may be said, that

the Pharisees taught young persons, that if a man offered a gift in

expiation of the injury done to his father or mother, he was free from

sin, as having given to God the gifts which are owed to a parent; and

in saying this, they did not allow parents to be honoured.

Bede: The passage may in a few words have this sense, Every gift which

I have to make, will go to do you good; for ye compel children, it is

meant, to say to their parents, that gift which I was going to offer to

God, I expend on feeding you, and does you good, oh father and mother,

speaking this ironically. Thus they would be afraid to accept what had

been given into the hands of God, and might prefer a life of poverty to

living on consecrated property.

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, again, the disciples eating with unwashed

hands signifies the future fellowship of the Gentiles with the

Apostles. The cleaning and washing of the Pharisees is barren; but the

fellowship of the Apostles, though without washing, has stretched out

its branches as far as the sea.

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14. And when he had called all the people unto Him, He said unto them,

"Hearken unto Me every one of you, and understand:

15. There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can

defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are they that

defile the man.

16. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."

17. And when He was entered into the house from the people, His

disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

18. And He saith unto them, "Are ye so without understanding also? Do

ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the

man, it cannot defile him;

19. Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and

goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?"

20. And He said, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the

man.

21. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts,

adulteries, fornications, murders,

22. Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil

eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

23. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

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Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The Jews regard and murmur

about only the bodily purification of the law; our Lord wishes to bring

in the contrary.

Wherefore it is said, "And when He had called all the people unto Him,

He said unto them, Hearken unto Me every one, and understand: there is

nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him, but

the things which come out of a man, those are they which defile a man;"

that is, which make him unclean.

The things of Christ have relation to the inner man, but those which

are of the law are visible and external, to which, as being bodily, the

cross of Christ was shortly to put an end.

Theophylact: But the intention of the Lord in saying this was to teach

men, that the observing of meats, which the law commands, should not be

taken in a carnal sense, and from this He began to unfold to them the

intent of the law.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Again He subjoins, "If any

man have ears to hear, let him hear." For He had not clearly shewn

them, what those things are which proceed out of a man, and defile a

man; and on account of this saying, the Apostles thought that the

foregoing discourse of the Lord implied some other deep thing.

Wherefore there follows: "And when He was entered into the house from

the people, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable;" they

called it parable, because it was not clear.

Theophylact: The Lord begins by chiding them, wherefore there follows,

"Are ye so without understanding also?"

Bede: For that man is a faulty hearer who considers what is obscure to

be a clear speech, or what is clear to be obscurely spoken.

Theophylact: Then the Lord shews them what was hidden, saying, "Do ye

not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man,

it cannot make him common?"

Bede: For the Jews, boasting themselves to be the portion of God, call

common those meals which all men use, as shellfish, hares, and animals

of that sort. Not even however what is offered to idols is unclean, in

as far as it is food and God's creature; it is the invocation of devils

which makes it unclean; and He adds the cause of it, saying, "Because

it entereth not into his heart."

The principal seat of the soul according to Plato is the brain, but

according to Christ, it is in the heart.

Gloss [ed. note: It is probable that most, if not all the Glosses which

cannot be found, are from St. Thomas himself, and this one is

especially like his language, as may be seen by referring to Summa, 2,

2, Q148, Art 1, and 1, Q119, Art 1, in both of which places also he

quotes the passages in St. Matthew parallel to this part of St. Mark.]

It says therefore into his heart, that is, into his mind, which is the

principal part of his soul, on which his whole life depends; wherefore

it is necessary, that according to the state of his heart a man should

be called clean or unclean, and thus whatsoever does not reach the

soul, cannot bring pollution to the man.

Meats therefore, since they do not reach the soul, cannot in their own

nature defile a man; but an inordinate use of meats, which proceeds

from a want of order in the mind, makes men unclean.

But that meats cannot reach the mind, He shews by that which He adds,

saying, "But into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging

all meats." This however He says, without referring to what remains

from the food in the body, for that which is necessary for the

nourishment and growth of the body remains. But that which is

superfluous goes out, and thus as it were purges the nourishment, which

remains.

Augustine: For some things are joined to others in such a way as both

to change and be changed, just as food, losing its former appearance,

is both itself turned into our body, and we too are changed, and our

strength is refreshed by it.

[ed. note: The last words of this comment are not in St. Augustine, but

in Bede, who took them originally from St. Jerome's Commentary on

Matthew, from whence most of Bede's remarks on this passage are taken

word for word. As the sentence marked Bede is not found in him, it

probably belongs to the Gloss, and his name has been transferred from

the former sentence.] Further, a most subtle liquid, after the food has

been prepared and digested in our veins, and other arteries, by some

hidden channels, called from a Greek word, pores, passes through us,

and goes into the draught.

Bede: Thus then it is not meat that makes men unclean, but wickedness,

which works in us the passions which come from within.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He said, That which cometh out of a man,

that defileth a man."

Gloss.: The meaning of which He points out, when He subjoins, "for from

within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts."

And thus it appears that evil thoughts belong to the mind, which is

here called the heart, and according to which a man is called good or

bad, clean or unclean.

Bede: From this passage are condemned those men who suppose that

thoughts are put into them by the devil, and do not arise from their

own evil will. The devil may excite and help on evil thoughts, he

cannot be their author.

Gloss.: From evil thoughts, however, evil actions proceed to greater

lengths, concerning which it is added, adulteries, that is, acts which

consist in the violation of another man's bed; fornications, which are

unlawful connexions between persons, not bound by marriage; murders, by

which hurt is inflicted on the person of one's neighbour; thefts, by

which his goods are taken from him; covetousness, by which things are

unjustly kept; wickedness, which consists in calumniating others;

deceit, in overreaching them; lasciviousness, to which belongs any

corruption of mind or body.

Theophylact: An evil eye, that is, hatred and flattery, for he who

hates turns an evil and envious eye on him whom he hates, and a

flatterer, looking askance at his neighbour's goods, leads him into

evil; blasphemies, that is, faults committed against God; pride, that

is, contempt of God, when a man ascribes the good, which he does, not

to God, but to his own virtue; foolishness, that is, an injury against

one's neighbour.

Gloss. [ed. note: see Summa 2, 2, Q46, 1, and 1, 2, Q1, 1]: Or,

foolishness consists in wrong thoughts concerning God; for it is

opposed to wisdom, which is the knowledge of divine things. It goes on:

"All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." For

whatsoever is in the power of a man, is imputed to him as a fault,

because all such things proceed from the interior will, by which man is

master of his own actions.

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24. And from thence He arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and

Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it; but He

could not be hid.

25. For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit,

heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet:

26. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought

Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27. But Jesus said unto her, "Let the children first be filled: for it

is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the

dogs."

28. And she answered and said unto Him, "Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under

the table eat of the children's crumbs."

29. And He said unto her, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is

gone out of thy daughter."

30. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out,

and her daughter laid upon the bed.

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Theophylact: After that the Lord had finished His teaching concerning

food, seeing that the Jews were incredulous, He enters into the country

of the Gentiles, for the Jews being unfaithful, salvation turns itself

to the Gentiles.

Wherefore it is said, "And from thence He arose, and went into the

borders of Tyre and Sidon."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Tyre and Sidon were places

of the Canaanites, therefore the Lord comes to them, not as to His own,

but as to men, who had nothing in common with the fathers to whom the

promise was made. And therefore He comes in such a way, that His coming

should not be known to the Tyrians and Sidonians.

Wherefore it continues: "and entered into a house, and would have no

man know it." For the time had not come for His dwelling with the

Gentiles and bringing them to the faith, for this was not to be, till

after His cross and resurrection.

Theophylact: Or else, His reason for coming in secret was that the Jews

should not find occasion of blame against Him, as if He had passed over

to the unclean Gentiles.

It goes on: "But He could not be hid."

Pseudo-Augustine, Quaest e Vet. et N. Test. 77: But if He wished to do

so and could not, it appears as if His will was impotent; it is not

possible however that our Saviour's will should not be fulfilled, nor

can He will a thing, which He knows ought not be.

Therefore when a thing has taken place, it may be asserted that He has

willed it. But we should observe that this happened amongst the

Gentiles, to whom it was not time to preach; nevertheless not to

receive them, when they came to the faith of their own accord, would

have been to grudge them the faith.

So then it came to pass that the Lord was not made known by His

disciples; others, however, who had seen Him entering the house,

recognized Him, and it began to be known that He was there. His will

therefore was that He should not be proclaimed by His own disciples,

but that others should come to seek Him, and so it took place.

Bede, in Marc., 2, 30: Having entered also into the house, He commanded

His disciples not to betray who He was to anyone in this unknown

region, that they, on whom He had bestowed the grace of healing, might

learn by His example, as far as they could, to shrink from the glory of

human praise in the shewing forth of their miracles; yet they were not

to cease from the pious work of virtue, when either the faith of the

good justly deserved that miracles should be done, or the

unfaithfulness of the wicked might necessarily compel them. For He

Himself made known His entry into that place to the Gentile woman, and

to whomsoever He would.

Pseudo-Aug.: Lastly, the Canaanitish woman came in to Him, on hearing

of Him; if she had not first submitted herself to the God of the Jews,

she would not have obtained their benefit. Concerning her it continues:

"For a woman, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, as soon as she had

heard of Him, came in and fell at His feet."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Now by this the Lord wished

to shew His disciples that He opened the door of faith even to the

Gentiles, wherefore also the nation of the woman is described when it

is added, "The woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by nation," that

is, from Syria and Phaenice.

It goes on: "and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil

out of her daughter."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 49: It appears however that some question

about a discrepancy may be raised, because it is said that the Lord was

in the house when the woman came, asking about her daughter. When,

however, Matthew says that His disciples had suggested to Him, "Send

her away, for she crieth after us," [Matt 15:23] He appears to imply

nothing less than that the woman uttered supplicating cries after the

Lord, as He walked. How then do we infer that she was in the house,

except by gathering it from Mark, who says that she came in to Jesus,

after having before said that He was in the house? But Matthew in that

he says, "He answered her not a word," gave us to understand that He

went out, during that silence, from the house; thus too the other

events are connected together, so that they now in no way disagree.

It continues: "But He said unto her, Let the children be first filled."

Bede: The time will come when even you who are Gentiles will obtain

salvation; but it is right that first the Jews who deservedly are wont

to be called by the name of children of God's ancient election, should

be refreshed with heavenly bread, and that so at length, the food of

life should be ministered to the Gentiles.

There follows: "For it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to

cast it to the dogs."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: These words He uttered not

that there is in Him a deficiency of virtue, to prevent His ministering

to all, but because His benefit, if ministered to both Jews and

Gentiles who had no communication with each other, might be a cause of

jealousy.

Theophylact: He calls the Gentiles dogs, as being thought wicked by the

Jews; and He means by bread, the benefit which the Lord promised to the

children, that is, to the Jews. The sense therefore is, that it is not

right for the Gentiles first to be partakers of the benefit, promised

principally to the Jews. The reason, therefore, why the Lord does not

immediately hear, but delays His grace, is, that He may also shew that

the faith of the woman was firm, and that we may learn not at once to

grow weary in prayer, but to continue earnest till we obtain.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: In like manner also to shew

the Jews that He did not confer healing on foreigners in the same

degree as to them, and that by the discovery of the woman's faith, the

unfaithfulness of the Jews might be the more laid bare. For the woman

did not take it ill, but with much reverence assented to what the Lord

had said.

Wherefore it goes on, "And she answered and said unto Him, Truth, Lord,

but the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

Theophylact: As if she had said, The Jews have the whole of that bread

which comes down from heaven, and Thy benefits also; I ask for the

crumbs, that is, a small portion of the benefit.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Her placing herself

therefore in the rank of dogs is a mark of her reverence; as if she

said, I hold it as a favour to be even in the position of a dog, and to

eat not from another table, but from that of the Master himself.

Theophylact: Because therefore the woman answered with much wisdom, she

obtained what she wanted; wherefore there follows, "And He said unto

her, &c." He said not, My virtue hath made thee whole, but for this

saying, that is, for thy faith, which is shewn by this saying, "go thy

way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter."

It goes on: "And when she was come into her house, she found her

daughter laid upon the bed, and the devil gone out."

Bede: On account then of the humble and faithful saying of her mother,

the devil left the daughter; here is given a precedent for catechising

and baptizing infants, seeing that by the faith and the confession of

the parents, infants are freed in baptism from the devil, though they

can neither have knowledge in themselves, or do either good or evil.

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically however the Gentile woman, who prays for her

daughter, is our mother the Church of Rome. Her daughter afflicted with

a devil, is the barbarian western race, which by faith hath been turned

from a dog into a sheep. She desires to take the crumbs of spiritual

understanding, not the unbroken bread of the letter.

Theophylact: The soul of each of us also, when he falls into sin,

becomes a woman; and this soul has a daughter who is sick, that is,

evil actions; this daughter again has a devil, for evil actions arise

from devils. Again, sinners are called dogs, being filled with

uncleanness. For which reason we are not worthy to receive the bread of

God, or to be made partakers of the immaculate mysteries of God; if

however in humility, knowing ourselves to be dogs, we confess our sins,

then the daughter, that is, our evil life, shall be healed.

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31. And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He came

unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32. And they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in

his speech; and they beseech him to put His hand upon him.

33. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into

his ears, and He spit, and touched His tongue;

34. And looking up to heaven, He sighed, and saith unto him,

"Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

35. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue

was loosed, and he spake plain.

36. And He charged them that they should tell no man: but the more He

charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

37. And were beyond measure astonished, saying, "He hath done all

things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

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Theophylact: The Lord did not wish to stay in the parts of the

Gentiles, lest He should give the Jews occasion to say, that they

esteemed Him a transgressor of the law, because He held communion with

the Gentiles, and therefore He immediately returns.

Wherefore it is said, "And again departing from the coasts of Tyre, He

came through Sidon, to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the

borders of Decapolis."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 31: Decapolis is a region of ten cities, across the

Jordan, to the east, over against Galilee [ed. note: It appears,

however, from Reland, Pales. v.1, p198, that a portion of Decapolis,

including its metropolis, Scythopolis, was on this side Jordan, and

therefore this text of St. Mark may be taken literally.] When therefore

it is said that the Lord came to the sea of Galilee, through the midst

of the borders of Decapolis, it does not mean that He entered the

confines of Decapolis themselves; for He is not said to have crossed

the sea, but rather to have come to the borders of the sea, and to have

reached quite up to the place, which was opposite to the midst of the

coasts of Decapolis, which were situated at a distance across the sea.

It goes on, "And they bring Him one that was deaf and dumb, and they

besought Him to lay hands upon him."

Theophylact: Which is rightly placed after the deliverance of one

possessed with a devil, for such an instance of suffering came from the

devil.

There follows, "And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His

fingers into his ears."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He takes the deaf and dumb

man who was brought to Him apart from the crowd, that He might not do

His divine miracles openly; teaching us to cast away vain glory and

swelling of heart, for no one can work miracles as he can, who loves

humility and is lowly in his conduct. But He puts His fingers into his

ears, when He might have cured him with a word, to shew that His body,

being united to Deity, was consecrated by Divine virtue, with all that

He did. For since on account of the transgression of Adam, human nature

had incurred much suffering and hurt in its members and senses, Christ

coming into the world shewed the perfection of human nature in Himself,

and on this account opened ears, with His fingers, and gave the power

of speech by His spittle.

Wherefore it goes on, "And spit, and touched his tongue."

Theophylact: That He might shew that all the members of His sacred body

are divine and holy, even the spittle which loosed the string of the

tongue. For the spittle is only the superflous moisture of the body,

but in the Lord, all things are divine.

It goes on, "And looking up to heaven, He groaned, and saith unto him,

Ephphatha, that is, Be opened."

Bede: He looked up to heaven, that He might teach us that thence is to

be procured speech for the dumb, hearing for the deaf, health for all

who are sick. And He sighed, not that it was necessary for Him to be

any thing from His Father with groaning, for He, together with the

Father, gives all things to them who ask, but that He might give us an

example of sighing, when for our own errors and those of our

neighbours, we invoke the guardianship of the Divine mercy.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He at the same time also

groaned, as taking our cause upon Himself and pitying human nature,

seeing the misery into which it had fallen.

Bede: But that which He says, "Ephphatha, that is, Be opened," belong

properly to the ears, for the ears are to be opened for hearing, but

the tongue to be loosed from the bonds of its impediment, that is may

be able to speak.

Wherefore it goes on, "And straightway his ears were opened, and the

string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain."

Where each nature of one and the same Christ is manifestly distinct,

looking up indeed into Heaven as man, praying unto God, He groaned, but

presently with one word, as being strong in the Divine Majesty, He

healed.

It goes on, "And He charged them that they should tell no man."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: By which He has taught us

not to boast in our powers, but in the cross and humiliation. He also

bade them conceal the miracle, lest He should excite the Jews by envy

to kill Him before the time.

Pseudo-Jerome: A city, however, placed on a hill cannot be hid, and

lowliness always comes before glory.

Wherefore it goes on, "but the more He charged them, so much the more a

great deal they published it."

Theophylact: By this we are taught, when we confer benefits on any, by

no means to seek for applause and praise; but when we have received

benefits, to proclaim and praise our benefactors, even though they be

unwilling.

Augustine: If however He, as one Who knew the present and the future

wills of men, knew that they would proclaim Him the more in proportion

as He forbade them, why did He give them this command? If it were not

that He wished to prove to men who are idle, how much more joyfully,

with how much greater obedience, they whom He commands to proclaim Him

should preach, when they who were forbidden could not hold their peace.

Gloss.: From the preaching however of those who were healed by Christ,

the wonder of the multitude, and their praise of the benefits of

Christ, increased.

Wherefore it goes on, "And they were beyond measure astonished, saying,

He hath done all things well; he maketh the deaf to hear, and the dumb

to speak."

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, Tyre is interpreted, narrowness, and

signifies Judaea, to which the Lord said, "For the bed is grown too

narrow," [Isa 28:20] and from which He turns Himself to the Gentiles.

Sidon means, hunting, for our race is like an untamed beast, and "sea",

which means a wavering inconstancy. Again, the Saviour comes to save

the Gentiles in the midst of the coasts of Decapolis, which may be

interpreted, as the commands of the Decalogue.

Further, the human race throughout its many members is reckoned as one

man, eaten up by varying pestilence, in the first created man; it is

blinded, that is, its eye is evil; it becomes deaf, when it listens to,

and dumb when it speaks, evil. And they prayed Him to lay His hand upon

him, because many just men, and patriarchs, wished and longed for the

time when the Lord should come in the flesh.

Bede: Or he is deaf and dumb, who neither has ears to hear the words of

God, nor opens his mouth to speak them, and such must be presented to

the Lord for healing, by men who have already learned to hear and speak

the divine oracles.

Pseudo-Jerome: Further, he who obtains healing is always drawn aside

from turbulent thoughts, disorderly actions, and incoherent speeches.

And the fingers which are put into the ears are the words and the gifts

of the Holy Ghost, of whom it is said, "This is the finger of God." [Ex

8:19; Luke 11:20]

The spittle is heavenly wisdom, which loosens the sealed lips of the

human race, so that it can say, I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

and the rest of the Creed. "And looking up to heaven, he groaned," that

is, He taught us to groan, and to raise up the treasures of our hearts

to the heavens; because by the groaning of hearty compunction, the

silly joy of the flesh is purged away. But the ears are opened to

hymns, and songs, and psalms; and He looses the tongue, that it may

pour forth the good word, which neither threats nor stripes can

restrain.

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Chapter 8

1. In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to

eat, Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and saith unto them,

2. "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with

Me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint

by the way: for divers of them came from far."

4. And His disciples answered Him, "From whence can a man satisfy these

men with bread here in the wilderness."

5. And He asked them, "How many loaves have ye?" And they said,

"Seven."

6. And He commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and He took

the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to His disciples

to set before them; and they did set them before the people.

7. And they had a few small fishes: and He blessed, and commanded to

set them also before them.

8. So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken

meat that was left seven baskets.

9. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and He sent them

away.

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Theophylact: After the Lord had performed the former miracle concerning

the multiplication of the loaves, now again, a fitting occasion

presents itself, and He takes the opportunity of working a similar

miracle.

Wherefore it is said, "In those days, the multitude being very great,

and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and

saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have

now been with Me three days, and have nothing to eat."

For He did not always work miracles concerning the feeding of the

multitude, lest they should follow Him for the sake of food; now

therefore He would not have performed this miracle, if He had not seen

that the multitude was in danger.

Wherefore it goes on: "And if I send them away fasting to their own

houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 32: Why they who came from afar hold out for three

days, Matthew says more fully: "And He went up into a mountain, and sat

down there, and great multitudes came unto Him, having with them many

sick persons, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them."

[Matt. 15:29-30]

Theophylact: The disciples did not yet understand, nor did they believe

in His virtue, notwithstanding former miracles; wherefore it continues,

"And His disciples said unto Him, From whence can a man satisfy these

men with bread here in the wilderness?"

But the Lord Himself does not blame them, teaching us that we should

not be grievously angry with ignorant men and those who do not

understand, but bear with their ignorance.

After this it continues, "And He asked them, How many loaves have ye?

and they answered, Seven.

Remig.: Ignorance was not His reason for asking them, but that from

their answering, "seven," the miracle might be noised abroad, and

become more known in proportion to the smallness of the number.

It goes on: "And He commanded the people to sit down on the ground."

In the former feeding they lay down on grass, in this one on the

ground.

It continues, "And He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and

brake."

In giving thanks, He has left us an example, that for all gifts

conferred on us from heaven we should return thanks to Him. And it is

to be remarked, that our Lord did not give the bread to the people, but

to His disciples, and the disciples to the people.

For it goes on, "and gave to His disciples to set before them; and they

did set them before the people."

And not only the bread, but the fish also He blessed, and ordered to be

set before them.

For there comes after, "And they had a few small fishes: and He

blessed, and commanded to set them also before them."

Bede: In this passage then we should notice, in one and the same, our

Redeemer, a distinct operation of Divinity and of Manhood; thus the

error of Eutyches [ed. note: i.e. the Monothelites], who presumes to

lay down the doctrine of one only operation in Christ, is to be cast

out far from the Christian pale. For who does not here see that the

pity of our Lord for the multitude is the feeling and sympathy of

humanity; and that at the same time His satisfying four thousand men

with seven loaves and a few fishes, is a work of Divine virtue?

It goes on, "And they took up of the broken meat that was left seven

baskets."

Theophylact: The multitudes who ate and were filled did not take with

them the remains of the loaves, but the disciples took them up, and

they did before the baskets. In which we learn according to the

narration, that we should be content with what is sufficient, and not

look for any thing beyond. The number of those who ate is put down,

when it is said, "And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and

He sent them away;" where we may see that Christ sends no one away

fasting, for He wishes all to be nourished by His grace.

Bede: The typical difference between this feeding and the other of the

five loaves and two fishes, is, that there the letter of the Old

Testament, full of spiritual grace, is signified, but here the truth

and grace of the New Testament, which is to be ministered to all the

faithful, is pointed out.

Now the multitude remains three days, waiting for the Lord to heal

their sick, as Matthew relates, when the elect, in the faith of the

Holy Trinity, supplicate for sins, with persevering earnestness; or

because they turn themselves to the Lord in deed, in word, and in

thought.

Theophylact: Or by those who wait for three days, He means the

baptized; for baptism is called illumination, and is performed by true

immersion.

Greg., Mor. 1, 19: He does not however wish to dismiss them fasting,

lest they should faint by the way; for it is necessary that men should

find in what is preached the word of consolation, lest hungering

through want of the food of truth, they sink under the toil of this

life.

Ambrose, in Luc., 6, 73: The good Lord indeed whilst He requires

diligence, gives strength; nor will He dismiss them fasting, "lest they

faint by the way," that is, either in the course of this life, or

before they have reached the fountainhead of life, that is, the Father,

and have learnt that Christ is of the Father, lest haply, after

receiving that He is born of a virgin, they begin to esteem His virtue

not that of God, but of a man.

Therefore the Lord Jesus divides the food, and His will indeed is to

give to all, to deny none; He is the Dispenser of all things, but if

thou refusest to stretch forth thy hand to receive the food, thou wilt

faint by the way; nor canst thou find fault with Him, who pities and

divides.

Bede: But they who return to repentance after the crimes of the flesh,

after thefts, violence, and murders, come to the Lord from afar; for in

proportion as a man has wandered farther in evil working, so he has

wandered farther from Almighty God. The believers amongst the Gentiles

came from afar to Christ, but the Jews from near, for they had been

taught concerning Him by the letter of the law and the prophets. In the

former case, however, of the feeding with five loaves, the multitude

lay upon the green grass: here, however, upon the ground, because by

the writing of the law, we are ordered to keep under the desires of the

flesh, but in the New Testament we are ordered to leave even the earth

itself and our temporal goods.

Theophylact: Further, the seven loaves are spiritual discourses, for

seven is the number, which points out the Holy Ghost, who perfects all

things; for our life is perfected in the number of seven days. [ed.

note: The number seven seems to be taken in the Fathers to mean a

whole, from the world having been completed in seven days; and St.

Ambrose lays it down as a principle of interpretation, in Luc. 7, 95.

Theophylact here alludes to the seven ages of man's life; a very

similar passage is found in St. Ambrose's 44th Letter, where the whole

subject is discussed.]

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, the seven loaves are the gifts of the Holy

Spirit, the fragments of the loaves are the mystical understanding of

the first week.

Bede: For our Lord's breaking the bread means the opening of mysteries;

His giving of thanks shews how great a joy He feels in the salvation of

the human race; His giving the loaves to His disciples that they might

set them before the people, signifies that He assigns the spiritual

gifts of knowledge to the Apostles, and that it was His will that by

their ministry the food of life should be distributed to the Church.

Pseudo-Jerome: The small fishes blessed are the books of the New

Testament, for our Lord when risen asks for a piece of broiled fish.

Or else, in these little fishes, we receive the saints, seeing that in

the Scriptures of the New Testament are contained the faith, life, and

sufferings of them who, snatched away from the troubled waves of this

world, have given us by their example spiritual refreshment.

Bede: Again, what was over and above, after the multitude was

refreshed, the Apostles take up, because the higher precepts of

perfection, to which the multitude cannot attain, belong to those whose

life transcends that of the generality of the people of God;

nevertheless, the multitude is said to have been satisfied, because

though they cannot leave all that they possess, nor come up to that

which is spoken of virgins, yet by listening to the commands of the law

of God, they attain to everlasting life.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, the seven baskets are the seven Churches. By the

four thousand is meant the year of the new dispensation, with its four

seasons. Fitly also are there four thousand, that in the number itself

it might be taught us that they were filled with the food of the

Gospel.

Theophylact: Or there are four thousand, that is, men perfect in the

four virtues; and for this reason, as being more advanced, they ate

more, and left fewer fragments. For in this miracle, seven baskets full

remain, but in the miracle of the five loaves, twelve, for there were

five thousand men, which means men enslaved to the five senses, and for

this reason they could not eat, but were satisfied with little, and

many remains of the fragments were over and above.

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10. And straightway He entered into a ship with His disciples, and came

into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11. And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with Him,

seeking of Him a sign from heaven, tempting Him.

12. And He sighed deeply in His spirit, and saith, "Why doth this

generation seek after a sign? Verily, I say unto you, there shall be no

sign given unto this generation."

13. And He left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the

other side.

14. Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in

the ship with them more than one loaf.

15. And He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of

the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod."

16. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have

no bread."

17. And when Jesus knew it, He saith unto them, "Why reason ye, because

ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your

heart yet hardened?

18. Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye

not remember?

19. When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets

full of fragments took ye up?" They say unto Him, "Twelve."

20. "And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of

fragments took ye up?" And they said, "Seven."

21. And He said unto them, "How is it that ye do not understand?"

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Theophylact: After that our Lord had worked the miracle of the loaves,

He immediately retires into another spot, lest on account of the

miracle, the multitudes should take Him to make Him a king.

Wherefore it is said, "And straightway He entered into a ship with His

disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 2, 51: Now in Matthew we read that He entered

into the parts of Magdala [ed. note: Magedam]. But we cannot doubt that

it is the same place under another name; for several manuscripts even

of St. Mark have only Magdala.

It goes on, "And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with

Him, seeking of Him a sign from heaven, tempting Him."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 33: The Pharisees, then, seek a sign from heaven,

that He, Who had for the second time fed many thousands of men with a

few loaves of bread, should now, after the example of Moses, refresh

the whole nation in the last time with manna sent down from heaven, and

dispersed amongst them all.

Theophylact: Or they seek for a sign from heaven, that is, they wish

Him to make the sun and moon stand still, to bring down hail, and

change the atmosphere; for they thought that He could not perform

miracles from heaven, but could only in Beelzebub perform a sign on

earth.

Bede: When, as related above, He was about to refresh the believing

multitude, He gave thanks, so now, on account of the foolish petition

of the Pharisees, He groans; because, bearing about with Him the

feelings of human nature, as He rejoices over the salvation of men, so

He grieves over their errors.

Wherefore it goes on, "And He groaned in spirit, and saith, Why doth

this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, If a sign

shall be given to this generation."

That is, no sign shall be given; as it is written in the Psalms, "I

have sworn once by my holiness, if I shall fail David," [Ps 80:36] that

is, I will not fail David.

Augustine: Let no one, however, be perplexed that the answer which Mark

says was given to them, when they sought a sign from heaven, is not the

same as that which Matthew relates, namely, that concerning Jonah. He

says that the Lord's answer was, that no sign should be given to it; by

which we must understand such an one as they asked for, that is, one

from heaven; but he has omitted to say, what Matthew has related.

Theophylact: Now, the reason why the Lord did not listen to them was,

that the time of signs from heaven had not arrived, that is, the time

of the second Advent, when the powers of the heaven shall be shaken,

and the moon shall not give her light. But in the time of the first

Advent, all things are full of mercy, and such things do not take

place.

Bede: For a sign from heaven was not to be given to a generation of

men, who tempted the Lord; but to a generation of men seeking the Lord,

He shews a sign from heaven, when in the sight of the Apostles He

ascended into heaven.

It goes on, "And He left them, and entering into a ship again, He

departed to the other side."

Theophylact: The Lord indeed quits the Pharisees, as men uncorrected;

for where there is a hope of correction, there it is right to remain;

but where the evil is incorrigible, we should go away.

There follows: "Now they had forgotten to take bread, neither had they

in the ship with them more than one loaf."

Bede: Some may ask, how they had no bread, when they had filled seven

baskets just before they embarked in the ship. But Scripture relates

that they had forgotten to take them with them, which is a proof how

little care they had for the flesh in other things, since in their

eagerness to follow the Lord, even the necessity of refreshing their

bodies had escaped from their mind.

Theophylact: By a special providence also the disciples forgot to take

bread, that they might be blamed by Christ, and thus become better, and

arrive at a knowledge of Christ's power.

For it goes on, "And He charged them, saying, Take heed, and beware of

the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Matthew says, "of the leaven

of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees;" Luke, however, of the Pharisees

only. All three, therefore, name the Pharisees, as being the most

important of them, but Matthew and Mark have each mentioned one of the

secondary sects; and fitly has Mark added "of Herod," as a supplement

to Matthew's narrative, in which they were left out.

But in saying this, He by degrees brings the disciples to understanding

and faith.

Theophylact: He means by leaven their hurtful and corrupt doctrine,

full of the old malice, for the Herodians were the teachers, who said

that Herod was the Christ.

Bede: Or, the leaven of the Pharisees is making the decrees of the

divine law inferior to the traditions of men, preaching the law in

word, attacking it in deed, tempting the Lord, and disbelieving His

doctrine and His works; but the leaven of Herod is adultery, murder,

rash swearing, a pretence of religion, hatred to Christ and His

forerunner.

Theophylact: But the disciples themselves thought that the Lord spoke

of the leaven of bread.

Wherefore it goes on, "And they reasoned amongst themselves, saying, it

is because we have no bread;" and this they said, as not understanding

the power of Christ, who could make bread out of nothing; wherefore the

Lord reproves them.

For there follows: "And when Jesus knew it, He said unto them, Why

reason ye because ye have no bread?"

Bede: Taking occasion then from the precept, which He had commanded,

saying, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of

Herod," our Saviour teaches them what was the meaning of the five and

the seven loaves, concerning which He adds, "And do ye not remember,

when I brake the five loaves amongst five thousand, and how many

baskets full of fragments ye took up?"

For if the leaven mentioned above means perverse traditions, of course

the food, with which the people of God was nourished, means the true

doctrine.

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22. And He cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto Him,

and besought Him to touch him.

23. And He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town;

and when He had spit on his eyes, and put His hands upon him, He asked

him if he saw ought.

24. And he looked up and said, "I see men as trees, walking."

25. After that He put His hands again upon his eyes, and made him look

up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26. And He sent him away to his house, saying, "Neither go into the

town, nor tell it to any in the town."

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Gloss.: After the feeding of the multitude, the Evangelist proceeds to

the giving sight to the blind, saying, "And they came to Bethsaida, and

they bring a blind man to Him, and besought Him to touch him."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 34: Knowing that the touch of the Lord could give

sight to a blind man as well as cleanse a leper.

It goes on, "And He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of

the town."

Theophylact: For Bethsaida appears to have been infected with much

infidelity, wherefore the Lord reproaches it, "Woe to thee, Bethsaida,

for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre

and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

[Matt. 11, 21] He then takes out of the town the blind man, who had

been brought to Him, for the faith of those who brought him was not

true faith.

It goes on, "And when He had spit in his eyes, and put His hands upon

him, He asked him if he saw ought."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He spat indeed, and put His

hand upon the blind man, because He wished to shew that wonderful are

the effects of the Divine word added to action; for the hand is the

symbol of working, but the spittle, of the word proceeding out of the

mouth. Again He asked him whether he could see any thing, which He had

not done in the case of any whom He had healed, thus shewing that by

the weak faith of those who brought him, and of the blind man himself,

his eyes could not altogether be opened.

Wherefore there follows: "And He looked up, and said, I see men as

trees walking;" because he was still under the influence of

unfaithfulness, he said that he saw men obscurely.

Bede: Seeing indeed the shapes of bodies amongst the shadows, but

unable to distinguish the outlines of the limbs, from the continued

darkness of his sight; just as trees standing thick together are wont

to appear to men who see them from afar, or by the dim light of the

night, so that it cannot easily be known whether they be trees or men.

Theophylact: But the reason why he did not see at once perfectly, but

in part, was, that he had not perfect faith; for healing is bestowed in

proportion to faith.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: From the commencement,

however, of the return of his senses, He leads him to apprehend things

by faith, and thus makes him see perfectly; wherefore it goes on,

"After that, He put His hands again upon his eyes, and he began to

see," and afterwards he adds, "And he was restored, and saw all things

clearly," that is, being perfectly healed in his senses and his

intellect.

It goes on, "And He sent him away to his house, saying, Go into thy

home, and if thou enter into the town, tell it not to any one."

Theophylact: These precepts He gave him, because they were unfaithful,

as has been said, lest perchance he should receive hurt in his soul

from them, and they by their unbelief should run into a more grievous

crime.

Bede: Or else, He leaves an example to His disciples that they should

not seek for popular favour by the miracles which they did.

Pseudo-Jerome: Mystically, however, Bethsaida is interpreted, the house

of the valley', that is, the world, which is the vale of tears. Again,

they bring to the Lord a blind man, that is, one who neither sees what

he has been, what he is, nor what he is to be. They ask Him to touch

him, for what is being touched, but feeling compunction?

Bede: For the Lord touches us, when He enlightens our minds with the

breath of His Spirit, and He stirs us up that we may recognise our own

infirmity, and be diligent in good actions. He takes the hand of the

blind man, that He may strengthen him to the practice of good woks.

Pseudo-Jerome: And He brings him out of the town, that is, out of the

neighborhood of the wicked; and He puts spittle into his eyes, that he

may see the will of God, by the breath of the Holy Ghost; and putting

His hands upon him, He asked him if he could see, because by the works

of the Lord His majesty is seen.

Bede: Or else, putting spittle into the eyes of the blind man, He lays

His hands upon him that he may see, because He has wiped away the

blindness of the human race both by invisible gifts, and by the

Sacrament of His assumed humanity; for the spittle, proceeding from the

Head, points out the grace of the Holy Ghost. But though by one word He

could cure the man wholly and all at once, still He cures him by

degrees, that He may shew the greatness of the blindness of man, which

can hardly, and only as it were step by step, be restored to light; and

He exhibits to us His grace, by which He furthers each step towards

perfection.

Again, whoever is weighed down by a blindness of such long continuance,

that he is unable to distinguish between good and evil, sees as it were

men like trees walking, because he sees the deeds of the multitude

without the light of discretion.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, he sees men as trees, because he thinks all men

higher than himself. But He put His hands again upon his eyes, that he

might see all things clearly, that is, understand invisible things by

visible, and with the eye of a pure mind contemplate, what the eye hath

not seen, the glorious state of his own soul after the rust of sin. He

sent him to his home, that is, to his heart; that he might see in

himself things which he had not seen before; for a man despairing of

salvation does not think that he can do at all what, when enlightened,

he can easily accomplish.

Theophylact: Or else, after He has healed him, He sends him to his

home; for the home of every one of us is heaven, and the mansions which

are there.

Pseudo-Jerome: And He says to him, "If thou enter into the town, tell

it not to any one," that is, relate continually to thy neighbours thy

blindness, but never tell them of thy virtue.

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27. And Jesus went out, and His disciples, into the towns of Caesarea

Philippi: and by the way He asked His disciples, saying unto them,

"Whom do me say that I am?"

28. And they answered, "John the Baptist: but some say, Elias;' and

others, One of the prophets.' "

29. And He saith unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" And Peter

answereth and saith unto Him, "Thou art the Christ."

30. And He charged them that they should tell no man of Him.

31. And He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many

things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and

scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32. And He spake that saying openly. And Peter took Him, and began to

rebuke Him.

33. But when He had turned about and looked on His disciples, He

rebuked Peter, saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: for thou savourest

not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men."

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Theophylact: After taking His disciples afar from the Jews, He then

asks them concerning Himself, that they might speak the truth without

fear of the Jews.

Wherefore it is said, "And Jesus entered, and His disciples, into the

towns of Caesarea Philippi."

Bede, in Marc., 2, 35: Philip was that brother of Herod, of whom we

spoke above, who in honour of Tiberius Caesar called that town, which

is now called Paneas, Caesarea Philippi.

It goes on, "And by the way He asked His disciples, saying unto them,

Whom do men say that I am?"

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He asks the question with a

purpose, for it was right that His disciples should praise Him better

than the crowd.

Bede: Wherefore He first asks what is the opinion of men, in order to

try the faith of the disciples, lest their confession should appear to

be founded on the common opinion.

It goes on, "And they answered, saying, Some say John the Baptist, some

Elias, and others, One of the prophets."

Theophylact: For many thought that John had risen from the dead, as

even Herod believed, and that he had performed miracles after his

resurrection. After however having enquired into the opinion of others,

He asks them what was the belief of their own minds on this point.

Wherefore it continues, "And He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I

am?"

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 54: From the manner, however, itself of the

question, He leads them to a higher feeling, and to higher thoughts,

concerning Him, that they might not agree with the multitude. But the

next words shew what the head of the disciples, the mouth of the

Apostles, answered; when all were asked, "Peter answereth and saith

unto Him, Thou art the Christ."

Theophylact: He confesses indeed that He is the Christ announced by the

Prophets; but the Evangelist Mark passes over what the Lord answered to

his confession, and how He blessed him, lest by this way of relating

it, he should seem to be favouring his master Peter; Matthew plainly

goes through the whole of it.

Origen, in Matt. Tom., 12, 15: Or else, Mark and Luke, as they wrote

that Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ," without adding what is put

down in Matthew, "the Son of the living God," so they omitted to relate

the blessing which was conferred on this confession.

It goes on, "And He charged them that they should tell no man of Him."

Theophylact: For He wished in the meantime to hide His glory, lest many

should be offended because of Him, and so earn a worse punishment.

Chrys.: Or else, that He might wait to fix the pure faith in their

minds, till the Crucifixion, which was an offence to them, was over,

for after it was once perfected, about the time of His ascension, He

said unto the Apostles, "Go ye and teach all nations."

Theophylact: But after the Lord had accepted the confession of the

disciples, who called Him the true God, He then reveals to them the

mystery of the Cross.

Wherefore it goes on, "And He began to teach them that the Son of man

must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and of the chief

priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise

again; and He spake that saying openly," that is, concerning His future

passion.

But His disciples did not understand the order of the truth, neither

could they comprehend His resurrection, but thought it better that He

should not suffer.

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The reason, however, why the Lord

told them this, was to shew, that after His cross and resurrection,

Christ must be preached by His witnesses. Again, Peter alone, from the

fervour of his disposition, had the boldness to dispute about these

things.

Wherefore it goes on, "And Peter took Him up, and began to rebuke Him."

Bede: This, however, he speaks with the feelings of a man who loves and

desires; as if he said, This cannot be, neither can mind ears receive

that the Son of God is to be slain.

Chrys.: But how is this, that Peter, gifted with a revelation from the

Father, has so soon fallen, and become unstable? Surely, however, it

was not wonderful that one who had received no revelation concerning

the Passion should be ignorant of this. For that He was the Christ, the

Son of the living God, he had learnt by revelation; but the mystery of

His cross and resurrection had not yet been revealed to him. He

Himself, however, shewing that He must come to His Passion, rebuked

Peter.

Wherefore there follows, "And when He had turned about and looked on

His disciples, He rebuked Peter, &c."

Theophylact: For the Lord, wishing to shew that His Passion was to take

place on account of the salvation of men, and that Satan alone was

unwilling that Christ should suffer, and the race of man be saved,

called Peter Satan, because he savoured the things that were of Satan,

and, from unwillingness that Christ should suffer, became His

adversary; for Satan is interpreted the adversary.'

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But He saith not to the

devil, when tempting Him, "Get thee behind me," but to Peter He saith,

"Get thee behind me," that is, follow Me, and resist not the design of

My voluntary Passion.

There follows, "For thou savourest not the things which be of God, but

which be of men."

Theophylact: He says that Peter savours the things which be of men, in

that he in some way savoured carnal affections, for Peter wished that

Christ should spare Himself and not be crucified.

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34. And when He had called the people unto Him with His disciples also,

He said unto them, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself,

and take up his cross, and follow Me.

35. For whosoever will save his life shall lost it; but whosoever shall

lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it.

36. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world,

and lost his own soul?

37. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this

adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be

ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy

angels."

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Bede: After shewing to His disciples the mystery of His passion and

resurrection, He exorts them, as well as the multitude, to follow the

example of His passion.

Wherefore it goes on, "And when He had called the people unto Him with

His disciples also, He said unto them, Whosoever wishes to come after

Me, let him deny himself."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 55: As is He would say to Peter, Thou indeed

dost rebuke Me, who am willing to undergo My passion, but I tell thee,

that not only is it wrong to prevent Me from suffering, but neither

canst thou be saved unless thou thyself diest.

Again He says, "Whosoever wishes to come after Me;" as if He said, I

call you to those good things which a man should wish for, I do not

force you to evil and burdensome things; for he who does violence to

his hearer, often stands in his way; but he who leaves him free, rather

draws him to himself. And a man denies himself when he cares not for

his body, so that whether it be scourged, or whatever of like nature it

may suffer, he bears it patiently.

Theophylact: For a man who denies another, be it brother or father,

does not sympathize with him, nor grieve at his fate, though he be

wounded and die; thus we ought to despise our body, so that if it

should be wounded or hurt in any way, we should not mind its suffering.

Chrys.: But He says not, a man should not spare himself, but what is

more, that he should deny himself, as if he had nothing in common with

himself, but face danger, and look upon such things as if another were

suffering; and this is really to spare himself; for parents then most

truly act kindly to their children, when they give them up to their

masters, with an injunction not to spare them. Again, He shews the

degree to which a man should deny himself, when He says, "And take up

his cross," by which He means, even to the most shameful death.

Theophylact: For at that time the cross appeared shameful, because

malefactors were fixed to it.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, as a skilful pilot, foreseeing a storm in a

calm, wishes his sailors to be prepared; so also the Lord says, "If any

one will follow me, &c."

Bede: For we deny ourselves, when we avoid what we were of old, and

strive to reach that point, whither we are newly called. And the cross

is taken up by us, when either our body is pained by abstinence, or our

soul afflicted by fellow-feeling for our neighbour.

Theophylact: But because after the cross we must have a new strength,

He adds, "and follow me."

Chrys.: And this He says, because it may happen that a man may suffer

and yet not follow Christ, that is, when he does not suffer for

Christ's sake; for he follows Christ, who walks after Him, and conforms

himself to His death, despising those principalities and powers under

whose power, before the coming of Christ, he committed sin.

Then there follows, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it;

but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's , the

same shall save it."

I give you these commands, as it were to spare you; for whosoever

spares his son, brings him to destruction, but whosoever does not spare

him, saves him. It is therefore right to be always prepared for death;

for if in the battles of this world, he who is prepared for death

fights better than others, though none can restore him to life after

death, much more is this the case in spiritual battle, when so great a

hope of resurrection is set before him, since he who gives up his soul

unto death saves it.

Remig.: And life is to be taken in this place for the present life, and

not for the substance itself of the soul.

Chrys.: And therefore He had said, "For whomsoever will save his life

shall lose it," lest any one should suppose this loss to be equivalent

to that salvation, He adds, "For what shall it profit a man, if he

shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, &c." As if He said,

Think not that he has saved his soul, who has shunned the perils of the

cross; for when a man, at the cost of his soul, that is, his life,

gains the whole world, what has he besides, now that his soul is

perishing? Has he another soul to give for his soul? For a man can give

the price of his house in exchange for the house; but in losing his

soul, he has not another soul to give. And it is with a purpose that He

says, "Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" for God, in

exchange for our salvation, has given the precious blood of Jesus

Christ.

Bede, in Marc. 2, 36: Or else He says this, because in time of

persecution, our life is to be laid aside, but in time of peace, our

earthly desires are to be broken, which He implies when He says, "For

what shall it profit a man, &c."

But we are often hindered by a habit of shamefacedness, from expressing

with our voice the rectitude which we preserve in our hearts; and

therefore it is added, "For whosoever shall confess Me and My words in

this adulterous and sinful generation, him also shall the Son of man

confess, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy

angels."

Theophylact: For that faith which only remains in the mind is not

sufficient, but the Lord requires also the confession of the mouth; for

when the soul is sanctified by faith, the body ought also to be

sanctified by confession.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He then who has learned

this, is bound zealously to confess Christ without shame. And this

generation is called adulterous, because it has left God the true

Bridegroom of the soul, and has refused to follow the doctrine of

Christ, but has prostrated itself to the devil and taken up the seeds

of impiety, for which reason also it is called sinful. Whosoever

therefore amongst them has denied the kingdom of Christ, and the words

of God revealed in the Gospel, shall receive a reward befitting His

impiety, when He hears in the second advent, "I know you not." [Matt

7:23]

Theophylact: Him then who shall leave confessed that his God was

crucified, Christ Himself also shall confess, not here, where He is

esteemed poor and wretched, but in His glory and with a multitude of

Angels.

Greg., Hom. in 32, in Evang.: There are however some, who confess

Christ, because they see that all men are Christians; for if the name

of Christ were not at this day in such great glory, the Holy Church

would not have so many professors. The voice of the profession

therefore is not sufficient for a trial of faith whilst the profession

of the generality defends it from shame.

In the time of peace therefore there is another way, by which we may be

known to ourselves. We are ever fearful of being despised by our

neighbours, we think it shame to bear injurious words; if perchance we

have quarrelled with our neighbour, we blush to be the first to give

satisfaction; for our carnal heart, in seeking the glory of this life,

disdains humility.

Theophylact: But because He had spoken of His glory, in order to shew

that His promises were not vain, He subjoins, "Verily I say unto you,

That there be some of them that stand here who shall not taste of

death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

As if He said, Some, that is, Peter, James, and John, shall not taste

of death, until I shew them, in my transfiguration, with what glory I

am to come in my second advent; for the transfiguration was nothing

else, but an announcement of the second coming of Christ, in which also

Christ Himself and the Saints will shine.

Bede, in Marc., 3, 36: Truly it was done with a loving foresight, in

order that they, having tasted for a brief moment the contemplation of

everlasting joy, might with the greater strength bear up under

adversity.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 56: And He did not declare the names of those

who were about to go up, lest the other disciples should feel some

touch of human frailty, and He tells it to them beforehand, that they

might come with minds better prepared to be taught all that concerned

that vision.

Bede: Or else the present Church is called the kingdom of God; and some

of the disciples were to live in the body until they should see the

Church built up, and raised against the glory of the world; for it was

right to make some promises concerning this life to the disciples who

were uninstructed, that they might be built up with greater strength

for the time to come.

Pseudo-Chrys., Orig. in Matt. tom., 12, 33, 35: But in a mystical

sense, Christ is life, and the devil is death, and he tastes of death,

who dwells in sin; even now every one, according as he has good or evil

doctrines, tastes the bread either of life or of death. And indeed, it

is a less evil to see death, a greater to taste of it, still worse to

follow it, worst of all to be subject to it.

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Chapter 9

1. And He said unto them, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of

them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have

seen the kingdom of God come with power."

2. And after six days Jesus taketh with Him, Peter and James and John,

and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and He

was transfigured before them.

3. And His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no

fuller on earth can white them.

4. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking

with Jesus.

5. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to

be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for

Moses, and one for Elias."

6. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them; and a voice came out

of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son: hear Him."

8. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any

more, save Jesus only with themselves.

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Pseudo-Jerome: After the consummation of the cross, the glory of the

resurrection is shewn, that they, who were to see with their own eyes

the glory of the resurrection to come, might not fear the shame of the

cross.

Wherefore it is said, "And after six days Jesus taketh with Him, Peter

and James and John, and led them up into an high mountain apart by

themselves, and He was transfigured before them."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt. 65: Luke in saying , "After eight days," does not

contradict this; for he reckoned in both the day on which Christ had

spoken what goes before, and the day on which He took them up. And the

reason that He took them up after six days, was that they might be

filled with a more eager desire during the space of these days, and

with a watchful and anxious mind attend to what they saw.

Theophylact: And He takes with Him the three chief of the Apostles,

Peter, as confessing and loving Him, John, as the beloved one, James,

as being sublime in speech and as a divine; for so displeasing was he

to the Jews, that Herod wishing to please the Jews slew him.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: He does not however shew His

glory in a house, but He takes them up into a high mountain, for the

loftiness of the mountain was adapted to shewing forth the loftiness of

His glory.

Theophylact: And He took them apart, because He was about to reveal

mysteries to them. We must also understand by transfiguration not the

change of His features, but that, whilst His features remained as

before, there was added unto Him a certain ineffable brightness.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: It is not therefore fitting

that in the kingdom of God any change of feature should take place,

either in the Saviour Himself, or in those who are to be made like unto

Him, but only an addition of brightness.

Bede, 3, 37: Our Saviour then when transfigured did not lose the

substance of real flesh, but shewed forth the glory of His own or of

our future resurrection; for such as He then appeared to the Apostles,

He will after the judgment appear to all His elect.

It goes on, "And His raiment became shining."

Greg., Mor. 32: Because, in the height of the brightness of heaven

above, they who shine in righteousness of life, will cling to Him; for

by the name of garments, He means the just whom He joins to Himself.

There follows, "And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses, and they

were talking with Jesus."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 56: He brings Moses and Elias before them;

first, indeed, because the multitudes said that Christ was Elias, and

one of the Prophets. He shews Himself to the Apostles with them, that

they might see the difference between the Lord, and His servants.

And again because the Jews accused Christ of transgressing the law, and

thought Him a blasphemer, as if He arrogated to Himself the glory of

His Father, He brought before them those who shone conspicuous in both

ways; for Moses gave the Law, and Elias was zealous for the glory of

God; for which reason neither would have stood near Him, if He had been

opposed to God and to His law.

And that they might know that He holds the power of life and of death,

He brings before them both Moses who was dead, and Elias who had not

yet suffered death. Furthermore He signified by this that the doctrine

of the Prophets was the schoolmaster to the doctrine of Christ. He also

signified the junction of the New and Old Testament, and that the

Apostles shall be joined in the resurrection with the Prophets, and

both together shall go forth to meet their common King.

It goes on, "And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good

for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, and

one for Moses, and one for Elias."

Bede: If the transfigured humanity of Christ and the society of but two

saints seen for a moment, could confer delight to such a degree that

Peter would, even by serving them, stay their departure, how great a

happiness will it be to enjoy the vision of Deity amidst choirs of

Angels forever?

It goes on, "For he wist not what to say;" although, however, Peter

from the stupor of human frailty knew not what to say, still he gives a

proof of the feelings which were within him; for the cause of his not

knowing what to say, was his forgetting that the kingdom was promised

to the Saints by the Lord not in any earthly region, but in heaven; he

did not remember that he and his fellow Apostles were still hemmed in

by mortal flesh and could not bear the state of immortal life, to which

his soul had already carried him away, because in our Father's house in

heaven, a house made with hands is not needed.

But again even up to this time he is pointed at, as an ignorant man,

who wishes to make three tabernacles for the Law, the Prophets, and the

Gospel, since they in no way can be separated from each other.

Chrys. [ed. note: This passage is found neither in St. Chrysostom, nor

in Possious' Catena, nor in Peitanus' translation of Victor: it is

however in the Catena of St. Mark, edited by Dr. Cramer. As it stands

in the text, a part of it is so unintelligible, that recourse has been

had to the Greek.]

Again, Peter neither comprehended that the Lord worked His

transfiguration for the shewing forth of His true glory, nor that He

did this in order to teach men, nor that it was impossible for them to

leave the multitude and dwell in the mountain.

It goes on, "For they were sore afraid."

But this fear of theirs was one by which they were raised from their

usual state of mind to one higher, and they recognised that those who

appeared to them were Moses and Elias. The soul also was drawn on to a

state of heavenly feeling, as though carried away from human sense by

the heavenly vision.

Theophylact: Or else, Peter, fearing to come down from the mount

because he had now a presentiment that Christ must be crucified, said,

"It is good for us to be here," and not to go down there, that is, in

the midst of the Jews; but if they who are furious against Thee come

hither, we have Moses who beat down the Egyptians, we have also Elias,

who brought fire down from heaven and destroyed the five hundred.

Origen, in Matt. tom. 12, 40: Mark says in his own person, "For he wist

not what to say." Where it is matter for consideration, whether

perchance Peter spoke this in the confusion of his mind, by the motion

of a spirit not his own; whether perchance that spirit himself who

wished, as far as in him lay, to be a stumbling block to Christ, so

that He might shrink from that Passion, which was the saving of all

men, did not here work as a seducer and wish under the colour of good

to prevent Christ from condescending to men, from coming to them, and

taking death upon Himself for their sakes.

Bede: Now because Peter sought for a material tabernacle, he was

covered with the shadow of the cloud, that he might learn that in the

resurrection they are to be protected not by the covering of houses,

but by the glory of the Holy Ghost.

Wherefore it goes on, "There was a cloud that overshadowed them."

And the reason why they obtained no answer from the Lord was that they

asked unadvisedly; but the Father answered for the Son.

Wherefore there follows, "And a voice came out of the cloud, saying,

This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 56: The voice proceeded from a cloud in which

God is wont to appear, that they might believe that the voice was sent

forth from God. But in that He says, "This is My beloved Son," He

declares that the will of the Father and the Son is one, and that, save

in that He is the Son, He is in all things One with Him who begot Him.

Bede: He then whose preaching, as Moses foretold, every soul that

wished to be saved should hear when He came in the flesh, He now come

in the flesh is proclaimed by God the Father to the disciples as the

one whom they were to hear.

There follows: "And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they

saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves;" for as soon as

the Son was proclaimed, at once the servants disappeared, lest the

voice of the Father should seem to have been sent forth to them.

Theophylact: Again, mystically; after the end of this world, which was

made in six days, Jesus will take us up (if we be His disciples) into

an high mountain, that is, into heaven, where we shall see His

exceeding glory.

Bede: And by the garments of the Lord are meant His saints, who will

shine with a new whiteness. By the fuller we must understand Him, to

whom the Psalmist says, "Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and

cleanse me from my sin;" [Ps 51] for He cannot give to His faithful

ones upon earth that glory which remains laid up for them in heaven.

Remig.: Or else, by the fuller are meant holy preachers and purifiers

of the soul, none of whom in this life can so live as not to be stained

with some spots of sin; but in the coming resurrection all the saints

shall be purged from every stain of sin. Therefore the Lord will make

them such as neither they themselves by taking vengeance on their own

members, nor any preacher by his example and doctrine, can make.

Chrys.: Or else, white garments are the writings of Evangelists and

Apostles, the like to which no interpreter can frame.

Origen, in Matt. tom. 12, 39: Or else, fullers upon earth may by a

moral interpretation be considered to be the wise of this world, who

are thought to adorn even their foul understandings and doctrines with

a false whitening drawn from their own minds. But their skill as

fullers cannot produce any thing like a discourse which shews forth the

brightness of spiritual conceptions in the unpolished words of

Scripture, which by many are despised.

Bede: Moses and Elias, of whom one, as we read, died, the other was

carried away to heaven, signify the coming glory of all the Saints,

that is, of all who in the judgment time are either to be found alive

in the flesh, or to be raised up from that death of which they tasted,

and who are all equally to reign with Him.

Theophylact: Or else it means, that we are to see in glory both the Law

and the Prophets speaking with Him, that is, we shall then find that

all those things which were spoken of Him by Moses and the other

prophets agree with the reality; then too we shall hear the voice of

the Father, revealing to us the Son of the Father, and saying, "This is

My beloved Son," and the cloud, that is, the Holy Ghost, the fount of

truth, will overshadow us.

Bede: And we must observe, that, as when the Lord was baptized in

Jordan, so on the mountain, covered with brightness, the whole mystery

of the Holy Trinity is declared, because we shall see in the

resurrection that glory of the Trinity which we believers confess in

baptism, and shall praise it all together.

Nor is it without reason that the Holy Ghost appeared here in a bright

cloud, there in the form of a dove; because he who now with a simple

heart keeps the faith which he hath embraced, shall then contemplate

what he had believed with the brightness of open vision. But when the

voice had been heard over the Son, He was found Himself alone, because

when He shall have manifested Himself to His elect, God shall be all in

all, yea Christ with His own, as the Head with the body, shall shine

through all things. [1 Cor 15:28]

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9. And as they came down from the mountain, He charged them that they

should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were

risen from the dead.

10. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with

another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11. And they asked Him, saying, "Why say the Scribes that Elias must

first come?"

12. And He answered and told them, "Elias verily cometh first, and

restoreth all things: and how it is written of the Son of man, that He

must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13. But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done

unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him."

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Origen, in Matt. tom. 12, 43: After the shewing of the mystery on the

mount, the Lord commanded His disciples, as they were coming down from

the mount, not to reveal His transfiguration, before the glory of His

Passion and Resurrection.

Wherefore it is said, "And as they came down from the mountain, He

charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen,

till the Son of man were risen from the dead."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 56: Where He not only orders them to be silent,

but mentioning His Passion, He implies the cause why they were to be

silent.

Theophylact: Which He did lest men should be offended, hearing such

glorious things of Him Whom they were about to see crucified. It was

not therefore fitting to say such things of Christ before He suffered,

but after His resurrection they were likely to be believed.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: But they, being ignorant of

the mystery of the resurrection, took hold of that saying, and disputed

one with another.

Wherefore there follows, "And they kept that saying with themselves,

questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should

mean."

Pseudo-Jerome: This, which is peculiar to Mark, means, that when death

shall have been swallowed up in victory, we shall have no memory for

the former things.

It goes on, "And they asked Him, saying, "Why say the Scribes that

Elias must first come?"

Chrys.: The design of the disciples in asking this question seems to me

to be this. We indeed have seen Elias with Thee, and have seen Thee

before seeing Elias, but the Scribes say that Elias cometh first; we

therefore believe that they have lied.

Bede: Or thus; the disciples thought that the change which they had

seen in Him in the mount, was His transformation to glory; and they

say, If Thou hast already come in glory, wherefore doth not Thy

forerunner appear? chiefly because they had seen Elias go away.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt. 57: But what Christ answered to this, is seen by

what follows, "And He answered and told them, Elias verily cometh

first, and restoreth all things;" in which He shews that Elias will

come before His second advent. For the Scriptures declare two advents

of Christ, namely, one which has taken place, and another which is to

come; but the Lord asserts that Elias is the forerunner of the second

advent.

Bede: Again, He will restore all things, that is to say, those things

which Malachi points out, saying, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the

prophet, and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,

and the heart of the children to their fathers;" [Mal 4:5-6] he will

yield up also to death that debt, which by his prolonged life he has

delayed to render.

Theophylact: Now the Lord puts this forward to oppose the notion of the

Pharisees, who held that Elias was the forerunner of the first advent,

shewing that it led them to a false conclusion; wherefore he subjoins,

"And how it is written of the Son of man, that He must suffer many

things, and be set at nought." As if He had said, When Elias the

Tishbite cometh, he will pacify the Jews, and will bring them to the

faith, and thus be the forerunner of the second advent.

If then Elias is the forerunner of the first advent, how is it written

that the Son of man must suffer? One of these two things therefore will

follow; either that Elias is not the forerunner of the first advent,

and thus the Scripture will be true; or that he is the forerunner of

the first advent, and then the Scripture will not be true, which say

that Christ must suffer; for Elias must restore all things, in which

case there will not be an unbelieving Jew, but all, whosoever hear him,

must believe on his preaching.

Bede: Or this, "And how it is written;" that is, in the same way as the

prophets have written many things in various places concerning the

Passion of Christ, Elias also, when he comes, is to suffer many things,

and to be despised by the wicked.

Chrys.: Now as the Lord asserted that Elias was to be the forerunner of

the second advent, so consequently He asserted that John was the

forerunner of the first.

Wherefore He subjoins, "But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come."

Gloss.: He calls John Elias, not because he was Elias in person, but

because he fulfilled the ministry of Elias; for as the latter will be

the forerunner of the second advent, so the former has been that of the

first.

Theophylact: For again, John rebuked vice, and was a zealous man, and a

hermit like Elias; but they heard him not, as they will hear Elias, but

killed him in wicked sport, and cut off his head.

Wherefore there follows, "And they have done unto him whatsoever they

listed, as it is written of him."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else, the disciples asked

Jesus, how it was written that the Son of man must suffer? Now in

answer to this, He says, As John came in the likeness of Elias, and

they evil intreated him, so according to the Scriptures must the Son of

man suffer.

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14. And when He came to His disciples, He saw a great multitude about

them, and the Scribes questioning with them.

15. And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly

amazed, and running to Him saluted Him.

16. And He asked the Scribes, "What question ye with them?"

17. And one of the multitude answered and said, "Master, I have brought

unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

18. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and

gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples

that they should cast him out; and they could not."

19. He answereth him, and saith, "O faithless generation, how long

shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto Me."

20. And they brought him unto Him: and when He saw him, straightway the

spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

21. And He asked his father, "How long is it ago since this came unto

him?" And he said, "Of a child.

22. And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters,

to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us,

and help us."

23. Jesus said unto him, "If thou canst believe, all things are

possible to him that believeth."

24. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with

tears, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

25. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked

the foul spirit, saying unto him, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge

thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him."

26. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and

he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, "He is dead."

27. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him

privately, "Why could not we cast him out?"

29. And He said unto them, "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by

prayer and fasting."

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Theophylact: After He had shewn His glory in the mount to the three

disciples, He returns to the other disciples, who had not come up with

Him into the mount; wherefore it is said, "And when He came to His

disciples, He saw a great multitude about them, and the Scribes

questioning with them."

For the Pharisees, catching the opportunity of the hour when Christ was

not present, came up to them, to try to draw them over to themselves.

Pseudo-Jerome: But there is no peace for man under the sun; envy is

ever slaying the little ones, and lightnings strike the tops of the

great mountains. Of all those who run to the Church, some as the

multitudes come in faith to learn, others, as the Scribes, with envy

and pride.

It goes on, "And straightway all the people, when they beheld Jesus,

were greatly amazed, and feared."

Bede, in Marc., 3, 38: In all cases, the difference between the mind of

the Scribes and of the people ought to be observed; for the Scribes are

never said to have shewn any devotion, faith, humility, and reverence,

but as soon as the Lord was come, the whole multitude was greatly

amazed and feared, and ran up to Him, and saluted Him; wherefore there

follows, "And running to Him, saluted Him."

Theophylact: For the multitude was glad to see Him, so that they

saluted Him from afar, as He was coming to them; but some suppose that

His countenance had become more beautiful from His transfiguration, and

that this induced the crowd to salute Him.

Pseudo-Jerome: Now it was the people, and not the disciples, who on

seeing Him were amazed and feared, for there is no fear in love; fear

belongs to servants, amazement to fools.

It goes on: "And He asked them, What question ye with them?"

Why does the Lord put this question? That confession may produce

salvation, and the murmuring of our hearts may be appeased by religious

works.

Bede: The question, indeed, which was raised may, if I am not deceived,

have been this, wherefore they, who were the disciples of the Saviour,

were unable to heal the demoniac, who was placed in the midst, which

may be gathered from the following words; "And one of the multitude

answered and said, "Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath

a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he

foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away."

Chrys.: The Scriptures declare that this man was weak in faith, for

Christ says, "O faithless generation:" and He adds, "If thou canst

believe."

But although his want of faith was the cause of their not casting out

the devil, he nevertheless accuses the disciples.

Wherefore it is added, "And I spake to thy disciples that they should

cast him out; but they could not."

Now observe his folly; in praying to Jesus in the midst of the crowd,

he accuses the disciples, wherefore the Lord before the multitude so

much the more accuses him, and not only aims the accusation at himself,

but also extends it to all the Jews; for it is probable that many of

those present had been offended, and had held wrong thoughts concerning

His disciples.

Wherefore there follows, "He answereth them and saith, O faithless

generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?"

By which He shewed both that He desired death, and that it was a burden

to Him to converse with them.

Bede: So far, however, is He from being angry with the person, though

He reproved the sin, that He immediately added, "Bring him unto Me; and

they brought him unto Him. And when He saw him, straightway the spirit

tare him, and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming."

Chrys.: But this the Lord permitted for the sake of the father of the

boy, that when he saw the devil vexing his child, he might be brought

on to believe that the miracle was to be wrought.

Theophylact: He also permits the child to be vexed, that in this way we

might know the devil's wickedness, who would have killed him, had he

not been assisted by the Lord.

It goes on: "And He asked his father, How long is it ago since this

come unto him? And he said, Of a child; and ofttimes it has cast him

into the fire and into the waters to destroy him."

Bede: Let Julian [ed. note: Julian was bishop of Eclanum in Campania;

he was well known to St. Augustine, who before his fall speaks of him

with great affection. On refusing however to agree to Pope Zosimus'

condemnation of Pelagius, he was deposed, and expelled from Italy. He

wrote a great deal against St. Augustine, by whom he was refuted in

works now extant. The opinion specially referred to in the text was,

that Adam would have died, even though he had remained innocent, and

therefore that death and sickness are not the consequences of original

sin. He died in Sicily in great poverty, about A.D. 453.] blush, who

dares to say that all men are born in the flesh without the infection

of sin, as though they were innocent in all respects, just as Adam was

when he was created.

For what was there in the boy, that he should be troubled from infancy

with a cruel devil, if he were not held at all by the chain of original

sin? since it is evident that he could not yet have had any sin of his

own.

Gloss.: Now he expresses in the words of his petition his want of

faith; for that is the reason why he adds, "But if thou canst do any

thing, have compassion on us, and help us."

For in that he says, "If thou canst do any thing," he shews that he

doubts His power, because he had seen that the disciples of Christ had

failed in curing him; but he says, "have compassion on us," to shew the

misery of the sons, who suffered, and the father, who suffered with

him.

It goes on: "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are

possible to him that believeth."

Pseudo-Jerome: This saying, "If thou canst," is a proof of the freedom

of the will. Again, all things are possible to him that believeth,

which evidently means all those things which are prayed for with tears

in the name of Jesus, that is, of salvation.

Bede: The answer of the Lord was suited to the petition; for the man

said, "If thou canst do any thing, help us;" and to this the Lord

answered, "If thou canst believe." On the other hand, the leper who

cried out, with faith, "Lord, if Thou will, Thou canst make me clean,"

[Matt 8:2] received an answer according to his faith, "I will, be thou

clean."

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: His meaning is; such a plenitude of

virtue is there in Me, that not only can I do this, but I will make

others to have that power; wherefore if thou canst believe as thou

oughtest to do, thou shalt be able to cure not only him, but many more.

In this way then, He endeavoured to bring back to the faith, the man

who as yet speaks unfaithfully.

There follows, "And straightway the father of the child cried out, and

said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

But if he had already believed, saying, "I believe," how is it that he

adds, "help thou mine unbelief?" We must say then that faith is

manifold, that one sort of faith is elementary, another perfect; but

this man, being but a beginner in believing, prayed the Saviour to add

to his virtue what was wanting.

Bede: For no man at once reaches to the highest point, but in holy

living a man begins with the least things that he may reach the great;

for the beginning of virtue is different from the progress and the

perfection of it. Because then faith mounts up through the secret

inspiration of grace, by the steps of its own merits, [ed. note: This

sentence of Bede may be considered to be an exposition of our Lord's

words: "for he that hath not from him shall be taken even that which he

hath." The connection between grace and merit, as used by the Fathers,

may be illustrated from St. Thomas, their faithful disciple. He defines

a meritorious operation to be one the reward of which is beyond the

nature of the worker; so that merit implies the infusion of a

supernatural habit, that is, of grace, not only as its efficient, but

as its formal cause. Summa 1 Q62, Art 4] he who had not yet believed

perfectly was at once a believer and an unbeliever.

Pseudo-Jerome: By this also we are taught that our faith is tottering,

if it lean not on the stay of the help of God. But faith by its tears

receives the accomplishment of its wishes.

Wherefore it continues, "When Jesus saw that the multitude came running

together, He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and

deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into

him."

Theophylact: The reason that He rebuked the foul spirit, when He saw

the crowd running together, was that He did not wish to cure him before

the multitude, that He might give us a lesson to avoid ostentation.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: And His rebuking him, and

saying, "I charge thee," is a proof of Divine power. Again, in that He

says not only, "come out of him," but also "enter no more into him," He

shews that the evil spirit was ready to enter again, because the man

was weak in faith, but was prevented by the commend of the Lord.

It goes on, "And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of

him; and he was as one dead, insomuch that many said, He is dead."

For the devil was not able to inflict death upon him, because the true

Life was come.

Bede: But him, whom the unholy spirit made like unto death, the holy

Saviour saved by the touch of His hold hand; wherefore it goes on, "But

Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose."

Thus as the Lord had shewn Himself to be very God by the power of

healing, so He shewed that He had the very nature of our flesh, by the

manner of His human touch. The Manichaean [ed. note: "Their fundamental

maxim of the intrinsic evil of matter and the degraded state of mind,

which their speculations on the birth after the flesh brought with it

involved the denial of the Incarnation of our Lord and, as a

consequence, of the reality of His whole life." (Note a, upon St.

Augustine's Confessions, Oxf. Tr. p. 325)] indeed madly denies that He

was truly clothed in flesh; He Himself, however, by raising, cleansing,

enlightening so many afflicted persons by His touch, condemned his

heresy before its birth.

It goes on: "And when He was come into the house, His disciples asked

Him privately, Why could not we cast him out?"

Chrys.: They feared that perchance they had lost the grace conferred

upon them; for they had already received power over unclean spirits.

It goes on: "And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing

but by prayer and fasting."

Theophylact: That is, the whole class of lunatics, or simply, of all

persons possessed with devils. Both the man to be cured, and he who

cures him, should fast; for a real prayer is offered up, when fasting

is joined with prayer, when he who prays is sober and not heavy with

food.

Bede: Again, in a mystical sense, on high the Lord unfolds the

mysteries of the kingdom to His disciples, but below He rebukes the

multitude for their sins of unfaithfulness, and expels devils from

those who are vexed by them. Those who are still carnal and foolish, He

strengthens, teaches, punishes, whilst He more freely instructs the

perfect concerning the things of eternity.

Theophylact: Again, this devil is deaf and dumb; deaf, because he does

not choose to hear the words of God; dumb, because he is unable to

teach others their duty.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, a sinner foameth forth folly, gnasheth with

anger, pineth away in sloth. But the evil spirit tears him, when coming

to salvation, and in like manner those whom he would drag into his maw

he tears asunder by terrors and losses, as he did Job.

Bede: For oftentimes when we try to turn to God after sin, our old

enemy attacks us with new and greater snares, which he does, either to

instill into us a hatred of virtue, or to avenge the injury of his

expulsion.

Greg., Mor. x., 30: But he who is freed from the power of the evil

spirit is thought to be dead; for whosoever has already subdued earthly

desires, puts to death within himself his carnal mode of life, and

appears to the world as a dead man, and many look upon him as dead; for

they who know not how to live after the Spirit, think that he who does

not follow after carnal pleasures is altogether dead.

Pseudo-Jerome: Further, in his being vexed from his infancy, the

Gentile people is signified, from the very birth of whom the vain

worship of idols arose, so that they in their folly sacrificed their

children to devils. And for this reason it is said that "it cast him

into the fire and into the water;" for some of the Gentiles worshipped

fire, others water.

Bede: Or by this demoniac are signified those who are bound by the

guilt of original sin, and coming into the world as criminals, are to

be saved by grace; and by fire is meant the heat of anger, by water,

the pleasures of the flesh, which melt the soul by their sweetness.

But He did not rebuke the boy, who suffered violence, but the devil,

who inflicted it, because he who desires to amend a sinner, ought,

whilst he exterminates his vice by rebuking and cursing it, to love and

cherish the man.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, the Lord applies to the evil spirit what he had

inflicted on the man, calling him a "deaf and dumb spirit," because he

never will hear and speak what the penitent sinner can speak and hear.

But the devil, quitting a man, never returns, if the man keep his heart

with the keys of humility and charity, and hold possession of the gate

of freedom [ed. note: of "fastness".]. The man who was healed became as

one dead, for it is said to those who are healed, "Ye are dead, and

your life is hid with Christ in God."

Theophylact: Again, when Jesus, that is, the word of the Gospel, takes

hold of the hand, that is, of our powers of action, then shall we be

freed from the devil. And observe that God first helps us, then it is

required of us that we do good; for which reason it is said that Jesus

"raised him;" in which is shewn the aid of God, and that "he arose," in

which is declared the zeal of man.

Bede: Further, our Lord, while teaching the Apostles how the worst

devil is to be expelled, gives all of us rules for our life; that is,

He would have us know that all the more grievous attacks of evil

spirits or of men are to be overcome by fastings and prayers; and

again, that the anger of the Lord, when it is kindled for vengeance on

our crimes, can be appeased by this remedy alone.

But fasting in general is not only abstinence from food, but also from

all carnal delights, yea, from all vicious passions. In like manner,

prayer taken generally consists not only in the words by which we call

upon the Divine mercy, but also in all those things which we do with

the devotedness of faith in obedience to our Maker, as the Apostle

testifies, when he says, "Pray without ceasing." [Thes 5:17]

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, the folly which is connected with the softness

of the flesh, is healed by fasting; anger and laziness are healed by

prayer. Each would has its own medicine, which must be applied to it;

that which is used for the heel will not cure the eye; by fasting, the

passions of the body, by prayer, the plagues of the soul, are healed.

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30. And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and He would

not that any man should know it.

31. For He taught He disciples, and said unto them, "The Son of man is

delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after

that He is killed, He shall rise the third day."

32. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

33. And He came to Capernaum: and being in the house He asked them,

"What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?"

34. But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among

themselves, who should be the greatest.

35. And He sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, "If

any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant

of all."

36. And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He

had taken him in His arms, He said unto them,

37. "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth

Me: and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent

Me."

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Theophylact: It is after miracles that the Lord inserts a discourse

concerning His Passion, lest it should be thought that He suffered

because He could not help it.

Wherefore it is said, "And they departed thence, and passed through

Galilee; and He would not that any man should know it. For He taught

His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the

hands of men, and they shall kill Him."

Bede, in Marc., 1, 39: He always mingles together sorrowful and joyful

things, that sorrow should not by its suddenness frighten the Apostles,

but be borne by them with prepared minds.

Theophylact: After, however, saying what was sorrowful, He adds what

ought to rejoice them; wherefore it goes on: "And after that He is

killed, He shall rise the third day;" in order that we may learn that

joys come on after struggles.

There follows: "But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to

ask Him."

Bede: This ignorance of the disciples proceeds not so much from

slowness of intellect, as from love for the Saviour, for they were as

yet carnal, and ignorant of the mystery of the cross, they could not

therefore believe that He whom they had recognized as the true God, was

about to die; being accustomed then to hear Him often talk in figures,

and shrinking from the events of His death, they would have it that

something was conveyed figuratively in those things, which He spoke

openly concerning His betrayal and passion.

It goes on: "And they came to Capernaum."

Pseudo-Jerome: Capernaum means the city of consolation, and agrees with

the former sentence, which He had spoken: "And after that He is killed,

He shall arise the third day."

There follows: "And being in the house He asked them, What was it that

ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Matthew however says that

the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the

kingdom of heaven?" [Matt 18:1]

The reason is, that He did not begin the narrative from its

commencement, but omitted our Saviour's knowledge of the thoughts and

words of His disciples; unless we understand Him to mean, that even

what they thought and said, when away from Christ, was said unto Him,

since it was as well known to Him as if it had been said to Him.

It goes on: "For by the way they had disputed among themselves, who

should be the greatest."

But Luke says [ed. note: Luke 9:46, Vulgate] that "the thought entered

into the disciples which of them should be the greatest;" for the Lord

laid open their thought and intention from their private discourse

according to the Gospel narrative.

Pseudo-Jerome: It was fit also that they should dispute concerning the

chief place by the way; the dispute is like the place where it is held;

for lofty station is only entered upon to be quitted: as long as a man

keeps it, it is slippery, and it is uncertain at what stage, that is,

on what day, it will end.

Bede: The reason why the dispute concerning the chief place arose

amongst the disciples seems to have been, that Peter, James and John,

were led apart from the rest into the mountain, and that something

secret was there entrusted to them, also that the keys of the kingdom

of heaven were promised to Peter, according to Matthew.

Seeing however the thoughts of the disciples, the Lord takes care to

heal the desire of glory by humility; for He first, by simply

commanding humility, admonishes them that a high station was not to be

aimed at.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He sat down, and called the twelve and saith

unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of

all, and servant of all."

Jerome: Where it is to be observed, that the disciples disputed by the

way concerning the chief place, but Christ Himself sat down to teach

humility; for princes toil while the humble repose.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The disciples indeed wished

to receive honour at the hands of the Lord; they also had a desire to

be made great by Christ, for the great a man is, the more worthy of

honour he becomes, for which reason He did not throw an obstacle in the

way of that desire, but brought in humility.

Theophylact: For His wish is not that we should usurp for ourselves

chief places, but that we should attain to lofty heights by lowliness.

He next admonishes them by the example of a child's innocence.

Wherefore there follows, "And He took a child, and set him in the midst

of them."

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc. see Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 58: By

the very sight, persuading them to humility and simplicity; for this

little one was pure from envy and vain glory, and from a desire of

superiority. But He does not only say, If ye become such, ye shall

receive a great reward, but also, if ye will honour others, who are

such for My sake.

Wherefore there follows: "And when He had taken him in His arms, He

said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My

name, receiveth Me."

Bede: By which, He either simply shews that those who would become

greater must receive the poor of Christ in honour of Him, or He would

persuade them to be in malice children, to keep simplicity without

arrogance, charity without envy, devotedness without anger. Again, by

taking the child into His arms, He implies that the lowly are worthy of

his embrace and love.

He adds also, "In My name," that they might, with the fixed purpose of

reason, follow for His name's sake that mould of virtue to which the

child keeps, with nature for his guide. And because He taught that He

Himself was received in children, lest it should be thought that there

was nothing in Him but what was seen, He added, "And whosoever shall

receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me.;" thus wishing that

we should believe Him to be of the same nature and of equal greatness

with His Father.

Theophylact: See, how great is humility, for it wins for itself the

indwelling of the Father, and of the Son, and also of the Holy Ghost.

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38. And John answered Him, saying, "Master, we saw one casting out

devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because

he followeth not us."

39. But Jesus said, "Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do

a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me.

40. For He that is not against us is on our part.

41. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name,

because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose

his reward.

42. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in

me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck,

and he were cast into the sea."

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Bede: John, loving the Lord with eminent devotion, thought that He who

performed an office to which He had no right was to be excluded from

the benefit of it.

Wherefore it is said, "And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw

one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we

forbad him, because he followeth not us."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: For many believers received

gifts, and yet were not with Christ, such was this man who cast out

devils; for there were many of them deficient in some way; some were

pure in life, but were not so perfect in faith; others again,

contrariwise.

Theophylact: Or again, some unbelievers, seeing that the name of Jesus

was full of virtue, themselves used it, and performed signs, though

they were unworthy of Divine grace; for the Lord wished to extend His

name even by the unworthy.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: It was not from jealousy or

envy, however, that John wished to forbid him who cast out devils, but

because he wished that all who called on the name of the Lord should

follow Christ and be one body with His disciples. But the Lord, however

unworthy they who perform the miracles may be, incites others by their

means to believe on Him, and induces themselves by this unspeakable

grace to become better.

Wherefore there follows: "But Jesus said, Forbid him not."

Bede: By which He shews that no one is to be driven away from that

partial goodness which he possesses already, but rather to be stirred

up to that which he has not as yet obtained.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: In conformity to this, He

shews that he is not to be forbidden, adding immediately after, "For

there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly

speak evil of Me." He says "lightly" to meet the case of those who fell

into heresy, such as were Simon and Menander, and Cerinthus [ed. note:

Irenaeus, cont. Haer. 2, 31, seems to imply that the early heretics

actually worked wonders, but that these differed from Christian

miracles in that they were done by magic through the aid of the devil,

and were not works of mercy; he contrasts with these the ecclesiastical

miracles of his day.]; not that they did miracles in the name of

Christ, but by their deceptions had the appearance of doing them.

But these others, though they do not follow us, cannot however set

themselves to say any thing against us, because they honour My name by

working miracles.

Theophylact: For how can he speak evil of Me, who draws glory from My

name, and works miracles by the invocation of this very name.

There follows, "For he that is not against you is on your part."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 4, 5: We must take care that this saying of

the Lord appear not to be contrary to that where He says, "He who is

not with Me is against Me." [Luke 11:23] Or will any one say that the

difference lies in that here He says to His disciples, "For he that is

not against you is on your part," but in the other He speaks of

Himself, "He who is not with Me is against Me?" As if indeed it were

possible [ed. note: St. Augustine has here quasi vero, instead of quasi

non, which hardly makes sense; the latter reading has also been found

in an old edition of the Catena Aurea, A.D. 1417.] that he who is

joined to Christ's disciples, who are as His members, should not be

with Him.

How if it were so, could it be true that "he that receiveth you

receiveth Me?" [Matt. 10:40] Or how is he not against Him who is

against His disciples? Where then will be that saying, "He who

despiseth you, despiseth Me? [Luke 10:16] But surely what is implied is

that a man is not with Him in as far as he is against Him, and is not

against Him in as far as he is with Him.

For instance, he who worked miracles in the name of Christ, and yet did

not join himself to the body of His disciples, in as far as he worked

the miracles in His name, was with them, and was not against them;

again, in that he did not join their society, he was not with them, and

was against them.

Be because they forbade his doing that in which he was with them, the

Lord said unto them, "Forbid him not:" for they ought to have forbidden

his being without their society, and thus to have persuaded him of the

unity of the Church, but they should not have forbidden that in which

he was with them, that is, his commendation of the name of their Lord

and Master by the expulsion of devils.

Thus the Church Catholic does not disapprove in heretics the

sacraments, which are common, but she blames their division, or some

opinion of theirs adverse to peace and to truth; for in this they are

against us.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Or else, this is said of

those who believe on Him, but nevertheless do not follow Him from the

looseness of their lives. Again, it is said of devils, who try to

separate all from God, and to disperse His congregation.

There follows, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water to

drink in My name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you,

he shall not lose his reward."

Theophylact: Not only will I not forbid him who works miracles in My

name, but also whosoever shall give you the smallest thing for My

name's sake, and shall receive you, not on account of human and worldly

favour, but from love to Me, shall not lose his reward.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., 4, 6: By which He shews, that he of whom John

had spoken was not so far separated from the fellowship of the

disciples, as to reject it, as a heretic, but as men are wont to hang

back from receiving the Sacraments of Christ, and yet favour the

Christian name, so as even to succour Christians, and do them service

only because they are Christians. Of these He says they shall not lose

their reward; not that they ought already to think themselves secure on

account of this good will which they have towards Christians, without

being washed with His baptism, and incorporated in His unity, but that

they are already so guided by the mercy of God, as also to attain to

these, and thus to go away from this life in security.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: And that no man may allege

poverty, He mentions that of which none can be destitute, that is, a

cup of cold water, for which also he will obtain a reward; for it is

not the value of the gift, but the dignity of those who receive it, and

the feelings of the giver, which makes a work worthy of reward.

His words shew that His disciples are to be received, not only on

account of the reward, which he who receives them obtains, but also,

because he thus saves himself from punishment.

There follows: "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones

that believe in Me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged

about his neck, and he were cast into the sea:" as though He would say

[ed. note: see Chrys., Hom. in Matt. 58], All who honour you for My

sake have their reward, so also those who dishonour you, that is,

offend you, shall receive the worst of vengeance.

Further, from things which are palpable to us, He describes an

intolerable torment, making mention of a millstone, and of being

drowned; and He says not, let a millstone be hanged about his neck,

but, it is better for him to suffer this, shewing by this that some

more heavy evil awaits him. But He means by "little ones that believe

on Me," not only those who follow Him, but those who call upon His

name, those also who offer a cup of cold water, though they do not any

greater works. Now He will have none of these offended or plucked away;

for this is what is meant by forbidding them to call upon His name.

Bede: And fitly the man who if offended is called a little one, for he

who is great, whatever he may suffer, departs not from the faith; but

he who is little and weak in mind looks out for occasions of stumbling.

For this reason we must most of all look to those who are little ones

in the faith, lest by our fault they should be offended, and go back

from the faith, and fall away from salvation.

Greg., in Faeceh., 1, Hom. 7: We must observe, however, that in our

good works we must sometimes avoid the offence of our neighbour,

sometimes look down upon it as of no moment. For in as far as we can do

it without sin, we ought to avoid the offence of our neighbour; but if

a stumblingblock is laid before men in what concerns the truth, it is

better to allow the offence to arise, than that the truth should be

abandoned.

Greg, de eura, past. p.i.v.2: Mystically by a millstone is expressed

the tedious round and toil of a secular life, and by the depths of the

sea, the worst damnation is pointed out. He who therefore, after having

been brought to a profession of sanctity, destroys others, either by

word or example, it had been indeed better for him that his worldly

deeds should render him liable to death, under a secular garb, than

that his holy office should hole him out as an example for others in

his faults, because doubtless if he had fallen alone, his pain in hell

would have been of a more endurable kind.

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43. "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to

enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the

fire that never shall be quenched:

44. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to

enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into

the fire that never shall be quenched:

46. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee

to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to

be cast into hell fire:

48. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall

be salted with salt.

50. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith

will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with

another."

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Bede: Because the Lord had taught us not to offend those who believe on

Him, He now as next in order warns us how much we should beware of

those who offend us, that is, who by their words or conduct strive to

drag us into the perdition of sin; wherefore He says, "And if thy hand

offend thee, cut it off."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 59: He says not this of our limbs, but of our

intimate friends, whom as being necessary to us we look upon as our

limbs; for nothing is so hurtful as mischievous society.

Bede: That is, He calls by the name of hand, our intimate friend, of

whose aid we daily stand in need; but if such an one should wish to do

us a hurt in what concerns our soul, he is to be driven away from our

society, lest by choosing a portion in this life with one who is lost,

we should perish together with him in that which is to come.

Wherefore there follows, "It is better for thee to enter into life

maimed, than having two hands to enter into hell."

Gloss.: By maimed He means, deprived of the help of some friend, for it

is better to enter into life without a friend, than to go with him into

hell.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, "It is better for thee to enter into life

maimed," that is, without the chief place, for which you have wished,

than having two hands to go into eternal fire. The two hands for high

station are humility and pride; cut off pride, keeping to the estate of

lowliness.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Then He introduces the

witness of prophecy from the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Where their worm

dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." [Isa 65:24] He says not this

of a visible worm, but He calls conscience, a worm, gnawing the soul

for not having done any good thing; for each of us shall be made his

own accuser, by calling to mind what he has done in this mortal life,

and so their worm remains forever.

Bede: And as the worm is the pain which inwardly accuses, so the fire

is a punishment which rages without us; or by the worm is meant the

rottenness of hell, by the fire, its heat.

Augustine, de Civ. Dei, 21, 9: But those who hold that both of these,

namely, the fire and the worm, belong to the pains of the soul, and not

of the body, say also that those who are separated from the kingdom of

God are tortured, as with fire, by the pangs of a soul repenting too

late and hopelessly; and they not unfitly contend that fire may be put

for that burning grief, as says the Apostle, "Who is offended, and I

burn not?" [2 Cor 11:29]

They also think that by the worm must be understood the same grief, as

is said: "As a moth destroys a garment, and a worm wood, so grief

tortures the heart of man." [Prov 25:20 Vulgate]

All those who hesitate not to affirm that there will be pain both of

body and soul in that punishment affirm that the body is burnt by the

fire. But although this is more credible, because it is absurd that

there either the pains of body or of soul should be wanting, still I

think that it is easier to say that both belong to the body than that

neither: and therefore it seems to me that Holy Scripture in this place

is silent about the pains of the soul, because it follows that the soul

also is tortured in the pains of the body.

Let each man therefore choose which he will, either to refer the fire

to the body, the worm to the soul, the one properly, the other in a

figure, or else both properly to the body; for living things may exist

even in fire, in burnings without being wasted, in pain without death,

by the wondrous power of the Almighty Creator.

It goes on: "And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for

thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into

hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm

dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Bede: A friend is called a foot, on account of its service in going

about for us, since he is as it were ready for our use.

It goes on: "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better

for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two

eyes to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and the

fire is not quenched."

A friend who is useful, and anxious, and sharp in perception, is called

an eye.

Augustine, de. Con. Evan., 4, 6: Here truly it appears that they who do

acts of devotedness in the name of Christ, even before they have joined

themselves to the company of Christians, and have been washed in the

Christian Sacraments, are more useful than those who though already

bearing the name of Christians, by their doctrine drag their followers

with themselves into everlasting punishment; whom also under the name

of members of the body, He orders, as an offending eye or hand, to be

torn from the body, that is, from the fellowship itself of unity, that

we may rather come to everlasting life without them, than with them go

into hell.

But the separation of those who separate themselves from them consists

in the very circumstance of their not yielding to them, when they would

persuade them to evil, that is, offend them. If indeed their wickedness

becomes known to all the good men with whom they are connected, they

are altogether cut off from all fellowship, and even from partaking in

the heavenly Sacraments.

If however they are thus known only to the smaller number, whilst their

wickedness is unknown to the generality, they are to be tolerated in

such a way that we should not consent to join in their iniquity, and

that the communion of the good should not be deserted on their account.

Bede: But because the Lord had three times made mention of the worm and

the fire, that we might be able to avoid this torment, He subjoins,

"For every one shall be salted with fire."

For the stink of worms always arises from the corruption of flesh and

blood, and therefore fresh meat is seasoned with salt, that the

moisture of the blood may be dried off, and so it may not breed worms.

And if, indeed, that which is salted with salt, keeps off the

putrefying worm, that which is salted with fire, that is, seasoned

again with flames, on which salt is sprinkled, not only casts off

worms, but also consumes the flesh itself.

Flesh and blood therefore breed worms, that is, carnal pleasure, if

unopposed by the seasoning of continence, produces everlasting

punishment for the luxurious; the stink of which if any man would

avoid, let him take care to chasten his body with the salt of

continence, and his mind with the seasoning of wisdom, from the stain

of error and vice.

For salt means the sweetness of wisdom; and fire, the grace of the Holy

Spirit.

He says, therefore, "Every one shall be salted with fire," because all

the elect ought to be purged by spiritual wisdom, from the corruption

of carnal concupiscence.

Or else, the fire is the fire of tribulation, by which the patience of

the faithful is proved, that it may have its perfect work.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: Similar to this is that

which the Apostle says, "And the fire shall try every man's work of

what sort it is." [1 Cor 3:13]

Afterwards he brings in a witness from Leviticus: which says, "And

every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt." [Lev

2:13]

Pseudo-Jerome: The oblation of the Lord is the race of man, which is

here salted by means of wisdom, whilst the corruption of blood, the

nurse of rottenness, and the mother of worms, is being consumed, which

there also shall be tried by the purgatorial fire. [ed. note: On the

subject of the purgatorial fire, see Fluery's Hist., xix, 31, p. 102,

note i, and Chrysostom, de Statuis, vi, 10, p. 130, note c, Oxford

trans.]

Bede: We may also understand the altar to be the heart of the elect,

and the victims and sacrifices to be offered on the altar are good

works. But in all sacrifices salt ought to be offered, for that is not

a good work which is not purged by the salt of wisdom from all

corruption of vain glory, and other evil and superfluous thoughts.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. in Cat.: Or else it is meant, that every gift

of our victim, which is accompanied by prayer and the assisting of our

neighbour, is salted with that divine fire, of which it is said, "I am

come to send fire on earth." [Luke 12:49] Concerning which it is added:

"Salt is good;" that is, the fire of love.

"But if the salt have lost his saltness," that is, is deprived of

itself, and that peculiar quality, by which it is called, good, "where

with will ye season it?" For there is salt, which has saltness, that

is, which has the fulness of grace; and there is salt, which has no

saltness, for that which is not peaceful is salt unseasoned.

Bede: Or the good salt is the frequent hearing of God's word, and the

seasoning the hidden parts of the heart with the salt of spiritual

wisdom.

Theophylact: For as salt preserves flesh, and suffers it not to breed

worms, so also the discourse of the teacher, if it can dry up what is

evil, constrains carnal men, and suffers not the undying worm to grow

up in them.

But if it be without saltness, that is, if its virtue of drying up and

preserving be gone, with what shall it be salted?

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. in Cat.: Or, according to Matthew, the

disciples of Christ are the salt, which preserves the whole world,

resisting the rottenness which proceeds from idolatry and sinful

fornication. For it may also be meant, that each of us has salt, in as

far as he contains in himself the graces of God.

Wherefore also the Apostle joins together grace and salt, saying, "Let

your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt.: [Col 4:6]

For salt is the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was able to preserve the whole

earth, and made many to be salt in the earth: and if any of these be

corrupted, (for it is possible for even the good to be changed into

corruption,) they are worthy to be cast out.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or otherwise; That salt is saltless which loves the

chief place, and dares not rebuke others.

Wherefore there follows, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one

with another."

That is, let the love of your neighbour temper the saltness of rebuke,

and the salt of justice season the love of your neighbour.

Greg., De cura past., iii, e.22: Or this is said against those whom

greater knowledge, while it raises above their neighbours, cuts off

from the fellowship of others; thus the more their learning increases,

the more they unlearn the virtue of concord.

Greg., De cura past., ii, 4: He also who strives to speak with wisdom

should be greatly afraid, lest by his eloquence the unity of his

hearers be thrown into confusion, lest, while he would appear wise, he

unwisely cut asunder the bonds of unity.

Theophylact: Or else, he who binds himself to his neighbour by the tie

of love, has salt, and in this way peace with his neighbour.

Augustine, de. Con, iv. 6: Mark relates that the Lord said these things

consecutively, and has put down some things omitted by every other

Evangelist, some which Matthew has also related, others which both

Matthew and Luke relate, but on other occasions, and in a different

series of events. Wherefore it seems to me that our Lord repeated in

this place discourses which He had used in other places, because they

were pertinent enough to this saying of His, by which He prevented

their forbidding miracles to be wrought in His name, even by him who

followed Him not together with His disciples.

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Chapter 10

1. And He arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by

the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto Him again; and,

as He was wont, He taught them again.

2. And the Pharisees came to Him, and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a

man to put away his wife?," tempting Him.

3. And He answered and said unto them, "What did Moses command you?"

4. And they said, "Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and

to put her away."

5. And Jesus answered and said unto them, "For the hardness of your

heart he wrote you this precept."

6. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and

female.

7. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave

to his wife;

8. And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain,

but one flesh.

9. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

10. And in the house, His disciples asked Him again of the same matter.

11. And He saith unto them, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and

marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to

another, she committeth adultery."

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Bede, In Marcum, 3, 40: Up to this time, Mark hath related what Our

Lord said and did in Galilee; here he begins to relate what He did,

taught, or suffered in Judaea, and first indeed across the Jordan on

the east; and this is what is said in these words: "And He arose from

thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea, by the farther side of

Jordan"; then also on this side Jordan, when He came to Jericho,

Bethany, and Jerusalem. And though all the province of the Jews is

generally called Judaea, to distinguish it from other nations, more

especially, however, its southern portion was called Judaea, to

distinguish it from Samaria, Galilee, Decapolis, and the other regions

in the same province.

Theophylact: But He enters the region of Judaea, which the envy of the

Jews had often caused Him to leave, because His Passion was to take

place there. He did not, however, then go up to Jerusalem, but to the

confines of Judaea, that He might do good to the multitudes, who were

not evil; for Jerusalem was, from the malice of the Jews, the worker of

all the wickedness.

Wherefore it goes on: "And the people resort unto Him again, and, as He

was wont, He taught them again."

Bede: Mark the difference of temper in the multitude and in the

Pharisees. The former meet together, in order to be taught, and that

their sick may be healed, as Matthew relates [Matt 19:2]; the latter

come to Him, to try to deceive their Saviour by tempting Him.

Wherefore there follows: "And the Pharisees came to Him, and asked Him,

Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting Him."

Theophylact: They come to Him indeed, and do not quit Him, lest the

multitudes should believe on Him; and by continually coming to Him,

they thought to bring Him into difficulty, and to confuse Him by their

questions. For they proposed to Him a question, which had on either

side a precipice, so that whether He said that it was lawful for a man

to put away his wife, or that it was not lawful, they might accuse Him,

and contradict what He said, out of the doctrines of Moses. Christ,

therefore, being Very Wisdom, in answering their question, avoids their

snares.

Chrys., Vict. Ant., Cat. in Marc., and see Chrys. Hom. 62 [note: the

same sort of comment is to be found in Origin, in Matt. tom. 14, 17,

IIii in Matt. 19, Ambr. in Luc. 8, 9. Auct. Op. Imperfecti in loc.

Theophyl. in Matt. 19.]: For being asked, whether it is lawful, he does

not immediately reply, it is not lawful, lest they should raise an

outcry, but He first wished them to answer Him as to the sentence of

the law, that they by their answer might furnish Him with what it was

right to say.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He answered and said unto them, What did

Moses command you?"

And afterwards, "And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of

divorcement, and to put her away."

They put forward indeed this that Moses had said either on account of

the question of our Saviour, or wishing to excite against Him a

multitude of men. For divorce was an indifferent thing among the Jews,

and all practised it, as though it were permitted by the law.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 62: It makes nothing, however, to the

truth of the fact, whether, as Matthew says, they themselves addressed

to the Lord the question concerning the bill of divorcement, allowed to

them by Moses, on our Lord's forbidding the separation, and confirming

His sentence from the law, or whether it was in answer to a question of

His, that they said this concerning the command of Moses, as Mark here

says. For His wish was to give them no reason why Moses permitted it,

before they themselves had mentioned the fact; since then the wish of

the parties speaking, which is what the words ought to express, is in

either way shewn, there is no discrepancy, though there be a difference

in the way of relating it. It may also be meant that, as Mark expresses

it, the question put to them by the Lord, What did Moses command?, was

in answer to those who had previously asked His opinion concerning the

putting away of a wife. And when they had replied that Moses permitted

them to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away, His answer

was concerning that same law, given by Moses, how God instituted the

marriage of a male, and a female, saying those things which Matthew

relates [Matt 19:4]; on hearing which they again rejoined what they had

replied to Him when He first asked them, namely - Why then did Moses

command?

Augustine, cont. Faust, XIX, 26: Moses, however, was against a man's

dismissing his wife, for he interposed this delay, that a person whose

mind was bent on separation, might be deterred by the writing of the

bill, and desist; particularly, since, as is related, among the

Hebrews, no one was allowed to write Hebrew characters but the scribes.

The law therefore wished to send him, whom it ordered to give a bill of

divorcement, before he dismissed his wife, to them, who ought to be

wise interpreters of the law, and just opponents of quarrel. For a bill

could only be written for him by men, who by their good advice might

overrule him, since his circumstances and necessity had put him into

their hands, and so by treating between him and his wife they might

persuade them to love and concord.

But if a hatred so great had arisen that it could not be extinguished

and corrected, then indeed a bill was to be written, that he might not

lightly put away her who was the object of his hate, in such a way as

to prevent his being recalled to the love, which he owed her by

marriage, through the persuasion of the wise. For this reason it is

added, "For the hardness of your heart, he wrote this precept"; for

great was the hardness of heart which could not be melted or bent to

the taking back and recalling the love of marriage, even by the

interposition of a bill in a way which gave room for the just and wise

to dissuade them.

Pseudo-Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon: Or else, it is said, "For the

hardness of your hearts," because it is possible for a soul purged from

desires and from anger to bear the worst of women; but if those

passions have a redoubled force over the mind, many evils will arise

from hatred in marriage.

Chrys.: Thus then, He saves Moses, who had given the law, from their

accusation, and turns the whole upon their head. But since what He had

said was grievous to them, He at once brings back the discourse to the

old law, saying, "But from the beginning of the creation, God made them

male and female."

Bede: He says not male and females, which the sense would have required

had it referred to the divorce of former wives, but "male" and

"female", so that they might be bound by the tie of one wife.

Chrys.: If however he had wished one wife to be put away and another to

be brought in, He would have created several women. Nor did God only

join one woman to one man, but He also bade a man quit his parents and

cleave to his wife.

Wherefore it goes on: "And he said, (that is, God, said by Adam) For

this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his

wife.

From the very mode of speech, shewing the impossibility of severing

marriage, because He said, "He shall cleave."

Bede: And in like manner, because He says, he shall cleave to his wife,

not wives.

It goes on: "And they twain shall be one flesh."

Chrys.: Being framed out of one root, they will join into one body.

It goes on: "So then they are no more twain, but one flesh."

Bede: The reward then of marriage is of two to become one flesh.

Virginity being joined to the Spirit, becomes of one spirit.

Chrys.: After this, bringing forward an awful argument, He said not, do

not divide, but He concluded, "What therefore God hath joined together,

let not man put asunder."

Augustine, cont. Faust, XIX, 29: Behold the Jews are convinced out of

the books of Moses, that a wife is not to be put away, while they

fancied that in putting her away, they were doing the will of Moses. In

like manner from this place, from the witness of Christ Himself, we

know this, that God made and joined male and female, for denying which

the Manichees are condemned, resisting now not the books of Moses, but

the Gospel of Christ.

Bede: What therefore God hath conjoined by making one flesh of a man

and a woman, that man cannot separate, but God alone. Man separates,

when we dismiss the first wife because we desire a second; but it is

God who separates, when by common consent [1 Cor 7:5], for the sake of

serving God, we so have wives as though we had none [1 Cor 7:29].

Chrys.: But if two persons, whom God has joined together, are not to be

separated; much more is it wrong to separate from Christ, the Church,

which God has joined to Him.

Theophylact: But the disciples were offended, as not being fully

satisfied with what had been said; for this reason they again question

Him.

Wherefore there follows: "And in the house, His disciples asked Him

again of the same matter."

Pseudo-Jerome: This second question is said to be asked "again" by the

Apostles, because it is on the subject of which the Pharisees had asked

Him, that is, concerning the state of marriage; and this is said by

Mark in his own person.

Gloss: For a repetition of a saying of the Word, produces not

weariness, but thirst and hunger.

Wherefore it is said, "They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they

that drink me shall yet be thirsty"; for the tasting of the honied

words of wisdom yields all manner of savour to them who love her.

Wherefore the Lord instructs His disciples over again; for it goes on,

"And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry

another, committeth adultery upon her."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant., e Cat. in Marc.: The Lord calls by the name

of adultery cohabitation with her who is not a man's wife; she is not,

however, a wife, whom a man has taken to him, after quitting the first;

and for this reason he commits adultery upon her, that is, upon the

second, whom he brings in. And the same thing is true in the case of

the woman; wherefore it goes on, "And if a woman shall put away her

husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery"; for she cannot be

joined to another as her own husband, if she leave him who is really

her own husband. The law indeed forbade what was plainly adultery; but

the Saviour forbids this, which was neither plain, nor known to all,

though it was contrary to nature.

Bede: In Matthew it is more fully expressed, "Whosoever shall put away

his wife, except it be for fornication." [Matt 19:9] The only carnal

cause then is fornication; the only spiritual cause is the fear of God,

that a man should put away his wife to enter into religion [ed. note:

Husbands and wives have never been allowed to take monastic vows

without mutual consent, see Bingham, book 7, ch 3; where also are

incidentally given many instances of married persons thus giving up the

world.], as we read that many have done. But there is no cause allowed

by the law of God for marrying another, during the lifetime of her who

is quitted.

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: There is no contrariety in

Matthew's relating that He spoke these words to the Pharisees, though

Mark says that they were spoken to the disciples; for it is possible

that He may have spoken them to both.

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13. And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them:

and His disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them,

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for

of such is the kingdom of God."

15. Verily I say unto you, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of

God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

16. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and

blessed them.

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Theophylact: The wickedness of the Pharisees in tempting Christ, has

been related above, and now is shewn the great faith of the multitude,

who believed that Christ conferred a blessing on the children whom they

brought to Him, by the mere laying on of His hands.

Wherefore it is said: "And they brought young children to Him, that He

might touch them."

Chrys.: But the disciples, out of regard for the dignity of Christ,

forbade those who brought them. And this is what is added: "And His

disciples rebuked those who brought them." But our Saviour, in order to

teach His disciples to be modest in their ideas, and to tread under

foot worldly pride, takes the children to Him, and assigns to them the

kingdom of God.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He said unto them, Suffer the little

children to come unto Me, and forbid them not."

Origin, in Matt., XV, 7: If any of those who profess to hold the office

of teaching in the Church should see a person bringing to them some of

the foolish of this world, and low born, and weak, who for this reason

are called children and infants, let him not forbid the man who offers

such an one to the Saviour, as though he were acting without judgment.

After this He exhorts those of His disciples who are already grown to

full stature to condescend to be useful to children, that they may

become to children as children, that they may gain children [1 Cor

9:22]; for He Himself, when He was in the form of God, humbled Himself,

and became a child.

One which He adds: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Chrys.: For indeed the mind of a child is pure from all passions, for

which reason, we ought by free choice to do those works, which children

hate by nature.

Theophylact: Wherefore He says not, "for of" these, but "of such is the

kingdom of God," that is, of persons who have both in their intention

and their work the harmlessness and simplicity which children have by

nature. For a child does not hate, does nothing of evil intent, nor

though beaten does he quit his mother; and though she clothe him in

vile garments, prefers them to kingly apparel; in like manner he, who

lives according to the good ways of his mother the Church, honours

nothing before her, nay, not pleasure, which is the queen of many;

wherefore also the Lord subjoins, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever

shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not

enter therein."

Bede: That is, if ye have not innocence and purity of mind like that of

children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Or else, we are

ordered to receive the kingdom of God, that is, the doctrine of the

Gospel, as a little child, because as a child, when he is taught, does

not contradict his teachers, nor put together reasonings and words

against them, but receives with faith what they teach, and obeys them

with awe, so we also are to receive the word of the Lord with simple

obedience, and without any gainsaying.

It goes on: "And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them,

and blessed them."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant, e Cat. in Marc.: Fitly does He take them up

into His arms to bless them, as it were, lifting into His own bosom,

and reconciling Himself to His creation, which in the beginning fell

from Him, and was separated from Him. Again, He puts His hands upon the

children, to teach us the working of his divine power; and indeed, He

puts His hands upon them, as others are wont to do, though His

operation is not as that of others, for though He was God, He kept to

human ways of acting, as being very man.

Bede: Having embraced the children, He also blessed them, implying that

the lowly in spirit are worthy of His blessing, grace and love.

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17. And when He was gone forth into the way, there came one running,

and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I

may inherit eternal life?"

18. And Jesus said unto Him, "Why callest thou me good? there is none

good but one, that is, God.

19. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill,

Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father

and mother."

20. And he answered and said unto Him, "Master, all these have I

observed from My youth."

21. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, "One thing

thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the

poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the

cross, and follow Me."

22. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had

great possessions.

23. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto His disciples, "How

hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

24. And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answereth

again, and saith unto them, "Children, how hard is it for them that

trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than

for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

26. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves,

"Who then can be saved?"

27. And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, "With men it is impossible,

but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

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Bede: A certain man had heard from the Lord that only they who are

willing to be like little children are worthy to enter into the kingdom

of heaven, and therefore he desires to have explained to him, not in

parables, but openly, by the merits of what works a man may attain

everlasting life.

Wherefore it is said: "And when He was gone forth into the way, there

came one running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, Good Master, what

shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

Theophylact: I wonder at this young man, who when all others come to

Christ to be healed of their infirmities, begs of Him the possession of

everlasting life, notwithstanding his love of money, the malignant

passion which afterwards caused his sorrow.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 63: Because however he had come to Christ as he

would to a man, and to one of the Jewish doctors, Christ answered him

as Man.

Wherefore it goes on: "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me

good? there is none good but the One God."

In saying which He does not exclude men from goodness, but from a

comparison with the goodness of God.

Bede: But by this one God, Who is good, we must not only understand the

Father, but also the Son, who says, "I am the good Shepherd;" [John

10:11] and also the Holy Ghost, because it is said, "The Father which

is in heaven will give the good Spirit to them that ask him." [Luke

11:13] For the One and Undivided Trinity itself, Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost, is the Only and One good God. The Lord, therefore, does not deny

Himself to be good, but implies that He is God; He does not deny that

He is good Master, but He declares that no master is good but God.

Theophylact: Therefore the Lord intended by these words to raise the

mind of the young man, so that he might know Him to be God. But He also

implies another thing by these words, that when you have to converse

with a man, you should not flatter him in your conversation, but look

back upon God, the root and fount of goodness, and do honour to Him.

Bede: But observe that the righteousness of the law, when kept in its

own time, conferred not only earthly goods, but also eternal life on

those who chose it. Wherefore the Lord's answer to one who enquires

concerning everlasting life is, "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not

commit adultery, Do not kill"; for this is the childlike blamelessness

which is proposed to us, if we would enter the kingdom of heaven.

On which there follows, "And he answered and said unto Him, Master, all

these have I observed from my youth."

We must not suppose that this man either asked the Lord, with a wish to

tempt Him, as some have fancied, or lied in his account of his life;

but we must believe that he confessed with simplicity how he had lived;

which is evident, from what is subjoined, "Then Jesus beholding him

loved him, and said unto him." If however he had been guilty of lying

or of dissimulation, by no means would Jesus, after looking on the

secrets of his heart, have been said to love him.

Origen, in Evan. tom. xv, 14: For in that He loved, or kissed him [ed.

note: osculaius, interpretation in Ed. Ben. (?)], He appears to affirm

the truth of his profession, in saying that he had fulfilled all those

things; for on applying His mind to him, He saw that the man answered

with a good conscience.

Pseudo-Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon.: It is worthy of enquiry, however,

how He loved a man, who, He knew, would not follow Him? But this is so

much as to say, that since he was worthy of love in the first instance,

because he observed the things of the law from his youth, so in the

end, though he did not take upon himself perfection, he did not suffer

a lessening of his former love. For although he did not pass the bounds

of humanity, nor follow the perfection of Christ, still he was not

guilty of any sin, since he kept the law according to the capability of

a man, and in this mode of keeping it, Christ loved him [ed. note: The

general meaning corresponds with the original, and is, that the young

man is a type of those who keep the Gospel precepts, without going on

to counsels of perfection; but the sense of the Greek has been missed

by the Latin translator].

Bede: For God loves those who keep the commandments of the law, though

they be inferior; nevertheless, He shews to those who would be perfect

the deficiency of the law, for He came not to destroy the law, but to

fulfil it. [Matt 5:17]

Wherefore there follows: "And said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go

thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou

shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me;" for whosoever

would be perfect ought to sell all that he has, not a part, like

Ananias and Sapphira, but the whole. Theophylact: And when he has sold

it, to give it to the poor, not to stage-players and luxurious persons.

Chrys.: Well too did He say, not eternal life, but "treasure", saying,

"And thou shalt have treasure in heaven"; for since the question was

concerning wealth, and the renouncing of all things, He shews that He

returns more things than He has bidden us leave, in proportion as

heaven is greater than earth.

Theophylact: But because there are many poor who are not humble, but

are drunkards or have some other vice, for this reason He says, "And

come, follow me."

Bede: For he follows the Lord, who imitates Him, and walks in His

footsteps.

It goes on: "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved.

Chrys.: And the Evangelist adds the cause of his grief, saying, "For he

had great possession." The feelings of those who have little and those

who have much are not the same, for the increase of acquired wealth

lights up a greater flame of covetousness.

There follows: "And Jesus looked round about, and said unto His

disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the

kingdom of God."

Theophylact: He says not here, that riches are bad, but that those are

bad who only have them to watch them carefully; for He teaches us not

to have them, that is, not to keep or preserve them, but to use them in

necessary things.

Chrys.: But the Lord said this to His disciples, who were poor and

possessed nothing, in order to teach them not to blush at their

poverty, and as it were to make an excuse to them, and given them a

reason, why He had not allowed them to possess any thing.

It goes on: "And the disciples were astonished at His words"; for it is

plain, since they themselves were poor, that they were anxious for the

salvation of others.

Bede: But there is a great difference between having riches, and loving

them; wherefore also Solomon says not, He that hath silver, but, "He

that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver." [Eccles 5:10]

Therefore the Lord unfolds the words of His former saying to His

astonished disciples, as follows: "But Jesus answereth again, and saith

unto them, Children, how hard it is for them that trust in their riches

to enter the kingdom of God." Where we must observe that He says not,

how impossible, but "how hard"; for what is impossible cannot in any

way come to pass, what is difficult can be compassed, though with

labour.

Chrys.: Or else, after saying, "difficult," He then shews that it is

impossible, and that not simply, but with a certain vehemence; and He

shews this by an example, saying, "It is easier for a camel to pass

through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom

of heaven."

Theophylact: It may be that by camel, we should understand the animal

itself, or else that thick cable, which is used for large vessels.

Bede: How then could either in the Gospel, Matthew and Joseph, or in

the Old Testament, very many rich persons, enter into the kingdom of

God, unless it be that they learned through the inspiration of God

either to count their riches as nothing, or to quit them altogether. Or

in a higher sense, it is easier for Christ to suffer for those who love

Him, than for the lovers of this world to turn to Christ; for under the

name of camel, He wished Himself to be understood, because He bore the

burden of our weakness; and by the needle, He understands the

prickings, that is, the pains of His Passion. By the eye of a needle,

therefore, He means the straits of His Passion, by which He, as it

were, deigned to mend the torn garments of our nature.

It goes on: "And they were astonished above measure, saying among

themselves, Who then can be saved?"

Since the number of poor people is immeasurably the greater, and these

might be saved, though the rich perished, they must have understood Him

to mean that all who love riches, although they cannot obtain them, are

reckoned in the number of the rich.

It goes on: "And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is

impossible, but not with God"; which we must not take to mean, that

covetous and proud persons can enter into the kingdom of Heaven with

their covetousness and pride, but that it is possible with God that

they should be converted from covetousness and pride to charity and

lowliness.

Chrys.: And the reason why He says that this is the work of God is,

that He may shew that he who is put into this path by God, has much

need of grace; from which it is proved, that great is the reward of

those rich men, who are willing to follow the discipline [ed. note:

philosophia] of Christ.

Theophylact: Or we must understand that by, "with men it is impossible,

but not with God," He means, that when we listen to God, it becomes

possible, but as long as we keep our human notions, it is impossible.

There follows, "For all things are possible with God"; when He says

"all things", you must understand, that have a being, which sin has

not, for it is a thing without being and substance [ed. note: This is

often urged by St. Augustine against the Manichees, who held that evil

was a principle and a substance, coeternal with good. It also appears

in the Pelagian controversy, for Pelagius argued that the Catholic

doctrine of original sin implied that it was a substance; St. Augustine

answers that though not a substance, it was a privation or

disorganization of parts, just as darkness is a privation of light, and

sickness a disordered state of body; which illustrates what Theophylact

means by saying, that sin, though so great an evil, has no being or

substance. see Aug. Conf. 7, 12, de Nat. et Grac. 21].

Or else: sin does not come under the notion of strength, but of

weakness, therefore sin, like weakness, is impossible with God. But can

God cause that not to have been done which has been done? To which we

answer, that God is Truth, but to cause that what has been done should

not have been done, is falsehood. How then can truth do what is false?

He must first therefore quit His own nature, so that they who speak

thus really say, Can God cease to be God? which is absurd.

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28. Then Peter began to say unto him, "Lo, we have left all, and have

followed thee."

29. And Jesus answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, There is no

man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or

mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the Gospel's,

30. But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and

brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with

persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first."

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Gloss.: Because the youth, on hearing the advice of our Saviour

concerning the casting away of his goods, had gone away sorrowful, the

disciples of Christ, who had already fulfilled the foregoing precept,

began to question Him concerning their reward, thinking that they had

done a great thing, since the young man, who had fulfilled the

commandments of the law, had not been able to hear it without sadness.

Wherefore Peter questions the Lord for himself and the others, in these

words, "Then Peter began to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all, and

have followed thee."

Theophylact: Although Peter had left but few things, still he calls

these his all; for even a few things keep us by the bond of affection,

so that he shall be beatified who leaves a few things.

Bede: And because it is not sufficient to have left all, he adds that

which makes up perfection, "and have followed thee." As if he said, We

have done what Thou hast commanded. What reward therefore wilt Thou

give us?

Theophylact: But while Peter asks only concerning the disciples, our

Lord makes a general answer; wherefore it goes on: "Jesus answered and

said, Verily I say unto you, There is no one that hath left house, or

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands." But

in saying this, He does not mean that we should leave our fathers,

without helping them, or that we should separate ourselves from our

wives; but He instructs us to prefer the glory of God to the things of

this world.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 64: But it seems to me that by these words He

intended covertly to proclaim that there were to be persecutions, as it

would come to pass that many fathers would allure their sons to

impiety, and many wives their husbands.

Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon.: Again He delays not to say, "for my name's

sake and the Gospel's " and Mark says, or "for the kingdom of God," as

Luke says; the name of Christ is the power of the Gospel, and of His

kingdom; for the Gospel is received in the name of Jesus Christ, and

the kingdom is made known, and comes by His name.

Bede: Some, however, taking occasion from this saying, in which it is

announced that he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, teach

that Jewish fable of a thousand years after the resurrection of the

just, when all that we have left for the Lord's sake is to be restored

with manifold usury, besides which we are to receive the crown of

everlasting life. These persons do no perceive, that although the

promise in other respects be honourable, yet in the hundred wives,

which the other Evangelists mention, its foulness is made manifest:

particularly when the Lord testifies that there shall be not marriage

in the resurrection, and asserts that those things which are put away

from us for His sake are to be received again in this life with

persecutions, which, as they affirm, will not take place in their

thousand years. [ed. note: Certain early Fathers, as, for instance, St.

Austin and Irenaeus, held the doctrine of the Millennium; Bede however

mentions the Chilliasts (though their name is omitted in the Catena)

and thus shews that he means the Corinthians, to whom that name was

applied, on account of their shocking doctrine, that after the

resurrection the Christians were to reign on earth for a thousand years

in sensual pleasures, see Aug, de. Her. 8]

Pseudo-Chrys.: This hundredfold reward therefore must be in

participation, not in possession, for the Lord fulfilled this to them

not carnally, but spiritually.

Theophylact: For a wife is busied in a house about her husband's food

and raiment. See also how this is the case with the Apostles; for many

women busied themselves about their food and their clothing, and

ministered unto them. In like manner the Apostles had many fathers and

mothers, that is, persons who loved them; as Peter, for instance,

leaving one house, had afterwards the houses of all the disciples. And

what is more wonderful, they are to be persecuted and oppressed, for it

is "with persecutions" that the Saints are to possess all things, for

which reason there follows, "But many that are first shall be last, and

the last first." For the Pharisees who were first became the last; but

those who left all and followed Christ were last in this world through

tribulation and persecutions, but shall be first by the hope which is

in God.

Bede: This which is here said, "shall receive an hundredfold," may be

understood in a higher sense. [see note, p. 78] For the number a

hundred which is reckoned by changing from the left to the right hand,

although it has the same appearance in the bending of the fingers as

the ten had on the left, nevertheless is increased to a much greater

quantity. This means, that all who have despised temporal things for

the sake of the kingdom of heaven through undoubting faith, taste the

joy of the same kingdom in this life which is full of persecutions, and

in the expectation of the heavenly country, which is signified by the

right hand, have a share in the happiness of all the elect. But because

all do not accomplish a virtuous course of life with the same ardour as

they began it, it is presently added, "But many that are first shall be

last, and the last first"; for we daily see many persons who, remaining

in a lay habit, are eminent for their meritorious life; but others, who

from their youth have been ardent in a spiritual profession, at last

wither away in the sloth of ease, and with a lazy folly finish in the

flesh, what they had begun in the Spirit.

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32. And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went

before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were

afraid. And He took again the twelve, and began to tell them what

things should happen unto Him,

33. Saying, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be

delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall

condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles:

34. And they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon

Him, and shall kill Him: and the third day He shall rise again."

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Bede: The disciples remembered the discourse in which the Lord had

foretold that He was about to suffer many things from the chief priests

and scribes, and therefore in going up to Jerusalem, they were amazed.

And this is what is meant, when it is said, "And they were in the way

going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them."

Theophylact: To shew that He runs to meet His Passion, and that He does

not refuse death, for the sake of our salvation; and they were amazed,

and as they followed, they were afraid.

Bede: Either lest they themselves should perish with Him, or at all

events lest He, whose life and ministry was their joy, should fall

under the hand of His enemies. But the Lord, foreseeing that the minds

of His disciples would be troubled by His Passion, foretells to them

both the pain of His Passion, and the glory of His Resurrection.

Wherefore there follows: "And He took again the twelve, and began to

tell them what things should happen unto Him."

Theophylact: He did this to confirm the hearts of the disciples, that

from hearing these things beforehand, they might the better bear them

afterwards, and might not be alarmed at their suddenness, and also in

order to shew them that He suffered voluntarily; for he who foreknows a

danger, and flies not, though flight is in his power, evidently of his

own will gives himself up to suffering. But He takes His disciples

apart, because it was fitting that He should reveal the mystery of His

Passion to those who were more closely connected with Him.

Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc. sed v. Chrys. Hom. 65: And He

enumerates each thing that was to happen to Him; lest if He should pass

any thing over, they should be troubled afterwards at suddenly seeing

it.

Wherefore He adds, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man."

Gloss.: That is, He to whom suffering belongs; for the Godhead cannot

suffer. "Shall be delivered," that is, by Judas, "unto the Chief

Priests, and unto the Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death";

judging Him to be guilty of death; "and shall deliver Him to the

Gentiles," that is, to Pilate the Gentile; and his soldiers "shall mock

Him, and shall spit upon Him, and scourge Him, and put Him to death."

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 65: But that when they were saddened on account

of His Passion and death, they should then also look for His

Resurrection, He adds, "And the third day He shall rise again"; for

since He had not hid from them the sorrows and insults which happened,

it was fitting that they should believe Him on other points.

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35. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto Him, saying,

"Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall

desire."

36. And He said unto them, "What would ye that I should do for you?"

37. They said unto Him, "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy

right hand, and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory."

38. But Jesus said unto them, "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of

the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am

baptized with?"

39. And they said unto Him, "We can." And Jesus said unto them, "Ye

shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism

that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40. But to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not mine to

give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared."

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Chrys.: The disciples hearing Christ oftentimes speaking of His

kingdom, thought that this kingdom was to be before His death, and

therefore now that His death was foretold to them, they came to Him,

that they might immediately be made worthy of the honours of the

kingdom.

Wherefore it is said, "And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came

unto Him, saying, Master, we would that Thou shouldest do for us

whatsoever we shall desire."

For ashamed of the human weakness which they felt, they came to Christ,

taking Him apart from the disciples; but our Saviour, not from

ignorance of what they wanted to ask, but from a wish of making them

answer Him, puts this question to them; "And He said unto them, What

would ye that I should do for you?"

Theophylact: Now the abovementioned disciples thought that He was going

up to Jerusalem, to reign there, and then to suffer what He had

foretold. And with these thoughts, they desired to sit on the right

hand and the left hand.

Wherefore there follows: "They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may

sit, one on Thy right hand, the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 64: Matthew has expressed that this was

said not by themselves, but by their mother, since she brought their

wishes to the Lord; wherefore Mark briefly implies rather that they

themselves, rather than their mother, had used the words.

Chrys.: Or we may fitly say that both took place; for seeing themselves

honoured above the rest, they thought that they could easily obtain the

foregoing petition; and that they might the more easily succeed in

their request, they took their mother with them, that they might pray

unto Christ together with her.

Augustine: Then the Lord both according to Mark, and to Matthew,

answered them rather than their mother.

For it goes on: "But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask."

Theophylact: It will not be as ye think, that I am to reign as a

temporal king in Jerusalem, but all these things, that is, these which

belong to My kingdom, are beyond your understanding; for to site on My

right hand is so great a thing that it surpasses the Angelic orders.

Bede: Or else, they know not what they ask, who seek from the Lord a

seat of glory, which they do not yet merit.

Chrys.: Or else He says, "Ye know not what ye ask"; as if He said, Ye

speak of honours, but I am discoursing of wrestlings and toil; for this

is not a time of rewards, but of blood, of battles, and dangers.

Wherefore He adds, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be

baptized with the baptism that I am baptized withal?"

He draws them on by way of question, that by communication with

Himself, their eagerness might increase.

Theophylact: But by the cup and baptism, He means the cross; the cup,

that is, as being a potion by Him sweetly received, but baptism as the

cause of the cleansing of our sins. And they answer Him, without

understanding what He had said; wherefore it goes on: "And they said

unto Him, We can;" for they thought that He spoke of a visible cup, and

of the baptism of which the Jews made use, that is, the washings before

their meals.

Chrys.: And they answered thus quickly, because they expected that what

they had asked would be listened to; it goes on: "And Jesus said unto

them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and with the

baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized;" that is, ye

shall be worthy of martyrdom, and suffer even as I.

Bede: A question is raised, however, how James and John drank the cup

of martyrdom, or how they were baptized with the baptism of the Lord,

when the Scripture relates, that only James the Apostle was beheaded by

Herod whilst John finished his life by a natural death. But if we read

ecclesiastical histories, in which it is related, that he also on

account of the witness which he bore was cast into a cauldron of

burning oil, and was immediately sent away to the island of Patmos, we

shall then see that the spirit of martyrdom was in him, and that John

drank the cup of confession, which the Three Children also drank in the

furnace of fire, though the persecutor did not spill their blood.

It goes on: "But to sit on My right hand and on My left hand is not

mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared."

Chrys.: Where two questions are raised, one is, whether a seat on His

right hand is prepared for any one; the other, whether the Lord of all

has it not in His power to give it to those for whom it is prepared. To

the first then we say, that no one sits on His right hand or on His

left, for that throne is inaccessible to a creature.

How then did He say, "To sit on My right hand or on My left is not mine

to give you," as though it belonged to some who were to sit there? He

however answers the thoughts of those who asked Him, condescending to

their meaning; for they did not know that lofty throne and seat, which

is on the right hand of the Father, but sought one thing alone, that

is, to possess the chief place, and to be set over others. And since

they had heard it said of the Apostles, that they were to sit on twelve

thrones, they begged for a place higher than all the rest, not knowing

what was said. To the second question we must say, that such a gift

does not transcend the power of the Son of God, but what is said by

Matthew, "it is prepared by My Father," [Matt. 20:23] is the same as if

it were said, "by Me," wherefore also Mark did not say here, by My

Father.

What therefore Christ says here is this, Ye shall die, He says, for Me,

but this is not enough to enable you to obtain the highest place, for

if another person comes possessing besides martyrdom all other virtues,

he will possess much more than you; for the chief place is prepared for

those, who by works are enabled to become the first. Thus then the Lord

instructed them not to trouble themselves vainly and absurdly for high

places; at the same time He would not have them made sad.

Bede: Or else, it is not mine to give to you, that is, to proud

persons, for such as yet they were. It is prepared for other persons,

and be ye other, that is, lowly, and it is prepared for you.

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41. And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with

James and John.

42. But Jesus called them to Him, and saith unto them, "Ye know that

they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship

over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among

you, shall be your minister:

44. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to

minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

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Theophylact: The other Apostles are indignant at seeing James and John

seeking for honour; wherefore it is said, "And when the ten heard it,

they began to be much displeased with James and John." For being

influenced by human feelings, they were moved with envy; and their

first displeasure arose from their seeing that they were not taken up

by the Lord; before that time they were not displeased, because they

saw that they themselves were honoured before other men. At this time

the Apostles were thus imperfect, but afterwards they yielded the chief

place one to another.

Christ however cures them; first indeed by drawing them to Himself in

order to comfort them; and this is meant, when it is said, "But Jesus

called them to Him"; then by shewing them that to usurp honour, and to

desire the chief place, belongs to Gentiles.

Wherefore there follows: "And saith unto them, Ye know that they which

are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship; and their

great ones exercise authority over them."

The great ones of the Gentiles thrust themselves into the chief place

tyrannically and as lords.

It goes on: "But so shall it not be among you."

Bede: In which He teaches, that he is the greater, who is the less, and

that he becomes the lord, who is servant of all: vain, therefore, was

it both for the one party to seek for immoderate things, and the other

to be annoyed at their desiring greater things, since we are to arrive

at the height of virtue not by power but by humility.

Then He proposes an example, that if they lightly regarded His words,

His deeds might make them ashamed, saying, "For even the Son of man

came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a

ransom for many."

Theophylact: Which is a greater thing than to minister. For what can be

greater or more wonderful than that a man should die for him to whom he

ministers? Nevertheless, this serving and condescension of humility was

His glory, and that of all; for before He was made man, He was known

only to the Angels; but now that He has become man and has been

crucified, He not only has glory Himself, but also has taken up others

to a participation in His glory, and ruled by faith over the whole

world.

Bede: He did not say, however, that He gave His life a ransom for all,

but for many, that is, for those who would believe on Him.

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46. And they came to Jericho: and as He went out of Jericho with His

disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of

Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry

out, and say, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

48. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried

the more a great deal, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

49. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they

call the blind man, saying unto him, "Be of good comfort, rise; He

calleth thee."

50. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51. And Jesus answered and said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should

do unto thee?" The blind man said unto Him, "Lord, that I might receive

my sight."

52. And Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee

whole." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in

the way.

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Jerome: The name of the city agrees with the approaching Passion of our

Lord; for it is said, "And they came to Jericho." Jericho means moon or

anathema; but the failing of the flesh of Christ is the preparation of

the heavenly Jerusalem.

It goes on: "And as He went out of Jericho with His disciples, and a

great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by

the wayside begging."

Bede: Matthew says, that there were two blind men sitting by the

wayside, who cried to the Lord, and received their sight; but Luke

relates that one blind man was enlightened by Him, with a like order of

circumstances, as He was going into Jericho; where no one, at least no

wise man, will suppose that the Evangelists wrote things contrary to

one another, but that one wrote more fully, what another has left out.

We must therefore understand that one of them was the more important,

which appears from this circumstance, that Mark has related his name

and the name of his father.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 65: It is for this reason that Mark

wished to relate his case alone, because his receiving his sight had

gained for the miracle a fame, illustrious in proportion to the extent

of the knowledge of his affliction. But although Luke relates a miracle

done entirely in the same way, nevertheless we must understand that a

similar miracle was wrought on another blind man, and a similar method

of the same miracle.

It goes on: "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began

to cry out, and say, Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me."

Pseudo-Chrys., Vict. Ant. e Cat. in Marc.: The blind man calls the

Lord, the Son of David, hearing the way in which the passing multitude

praised Him, and feeling sure that the expectation of the prophets was

fulfilled.

There follows: "And many charged him that he should hold his peace."

Origen, in Matt. tom. xvi, 13 [ed. note: these preceding words of

Origen are necessary to make up the sense: "Next observe, that on the

blind man's crying out, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me, it was

they who went before that charged him that he should hold his peace."

see Luke 18:39]: As if he said, Those who were foremost in believing

rebuked him when he cried, "Thou Son of David," that he might hold his

peace, and cease to call Him by a contemptible name, when he ought to

say, Son of God, have pity upon me. He however did not cease; wherefore

it goes on: "But he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David,

have mercy upon me;" and the Lord heard his cry; wherefore there

follows: "And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called."

But observe, that the blind man, of whom Luke speaks, is inferior to

this one; for neither did Jesus call him, nor order him to be called,

but He commanded him to be brought to Him, as though unable to come by

himself; but this blind man by the command of our Lord is called to

Him.

Wherefore it goes on: "And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be

of good comfort, rise, He calleth thee;" but he casting away his

garment, comes to Him. It goes on: "And he casting away his garment,

rose, and came to Jesus."

Perchance, the garment of the blind man means the veil of blindness and

poverty, with which he was surrounded, which he cast away and came to

Jesus; and the Lord questions him, as he is approaching.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, What

will thou that I should do unto thee."

Bede: Could He who was able to restore sight be ignorant of what the

blind man wanted? His reason then for asking is that prayer may be made

to Him; He puts the question, to stir up the blind man's heart to pray.

Chrys., Hom. in Matt., 56: Or He asks, lest men should think that what

He granted the man was not what he wanted. For it was His practice to

make the good disposition of those who were to be cured known to all

men, and then to apply the remedy, in order to stir up others to

emulation, and to shew that he who was to be cured was worthy to obtain

the grace.

It goes on: "The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I may receive my

sight."

Bede: For the blind man looks down upon every gift except light,

because, whatever a blind man may possess, without light he cannot see

what he possesses.

Pseudo-Jerome: But Jesus, considering his ready will, rewards him with

the fulfilment of his desire.

Origen: Again, it is more worthy to say Rabboni, or, as it is in other

places, Master, than to say Son of David; wherefore He given him

health, not on his saying, Son of David, but when he said Rabboni.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy

faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and

followed Him in the way."

Theophylact: The mind of the blind man is grateful, for when he was

made whole, he did not leave Jesus, but followed Him.

Bede: In a mystical sense, however, Jericho, which means the moon,

points out the waning of our fleeting race. The Lord restored sight to

the blind man, when drawing near to Jericho, because coming in the

flesh and drawing near to His Passion, He brought many to the faith;

for it was not in the first years of His Incarnation, but in the few

years before He suffered, that He shewed the mystery of the Word to the

world.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the blindness in part, brought upon the Jews [Rom

11:25], will in the end be enlightened when He sends unto them the

Prophet Elias.

Bede: Now in that on approaching Jericho, He restored sight to one man,

and on quitting it to two, He intimated, that before His Passion He

preached only to one nation, the Jews, but after His Resurrection and

Ascension, through His Apostles He opened the mysteries both of His

Divinity and His Humanity to Jews and Gentiles. Mark indeed, in writing

that one received his sight, refers to the saving of the Gentiles, that

the figure might agree with the salvation of those, whom he instructed

in the faith; but Matthew, who wrote his Gospel to the faithful among

the Jews, because it was also to reach the knowledge of the Gentiles,

fitly says that two received their sight, that He might teach us that

the grace of faith belonged to each people.

Therefore, as the Lord was departing with His disciples and a great

multitude from Jericho, the blind man was sitting, begging by the

way-side; that is, when the Lord ascended into heaven, and many of the

faithful followed Him, yea when all the elect from the beginning of the

world entered together with Him the gate of heaven [ed. note: This

refers to the opinion that by the descent of our Lord into hell, the

Patriarchs were freed from the limbus Patrum, where they had been

confined, and were carried by Him into a place of happiness; see

authorities quoted in Pearson on the Creed, Art. 5], presently the

Gentile people began to have hope of its own illumination; for it now

sits begging by the wayside, because it has not entered upon and

reached the path of truth.

Pseudo-Jerome: The people of the Jews also, because it kept the

Scriptures and did not fulfill them, begs and starves by the wayside;

but he cries out, "Son of David, have mercy upon me," because the

Jewish people are enlightened by the merits of the Prophets. Many

rebuke him that he may hold his peace, that is, sins and devils

restrain the cry of the poor; and he cried the more, because when the

battle waxes great, hands are to be lifted up with crying to the Rock

of help, that is, Jesus of Nazareth.

Bede: Again, the people of the Gentiles, having heard of the fame of

the name of Christ, sought to be made a partaker of Him, but many spoke

against Him, first the Jews, then also the Gentiles, lest the world

which was to be enlightened should call upon Christ. The fury of those

who attacked Him, however, could not deprive of salvation those who

were fore-ordained to life. And He heard the blind man's cry as He was

passing, but stood when He restored his sight, because by His Humanity

He pitied him, who by the power of His Divinity has driven away the

darkness from our mind; for in that Jesus was born and suffered for our

sakes, He as it were passed by, because this action is temporal; but

when God is said to stand, it means, that, Himself without change, He

sets in order all changeable things. But the Lord calls the blind man,

who cries to Him, when He sends the word of faith to the people of the

Gentiles by preachers; and they call on the blind man to be of good

cheer and to rise, and bid him come to the Lord, when by preaching to

the simple, they bid them have hope of salvation, and rise from the

sloth of vice, and gird themselves for a life of virtue.

Again, he throws away his garment and leaps, who, throwing aside the

bonds of the world, with unencumbered pace hastens to the Giver of

eternal light.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, the Jewish people comes leaping, stripped of the

old man, as a hart [red stag, male deer] leaping on the mountains, that

is, laying aside sloth, it meditates on Patriarchs, Prophets, and

Apostles on high, and raises itself to heights of holiness. How

consistent also is the order of salvation. First we heard by the

Prophets, then we cry aloud by faith, next we are called by Apostles,

we rise up by penitence, we are stripped of our old garment by baptism,

and of our choice we are questioned. Again, the blind man when asked

requires, that he may see the will of the Lord.

Bede: Therefore let us also imitate him, let us not seek for riches,

earthly goods, or honours from the Lord, but for that Light, which we

alone with the Angels can see, the way to which is faith; wherefore

also Christ answers to the blind man, "Thy faith hath saved thee." But

he sees and follows who works what his understanding tells him is good;

for he follow Jesus, who understands and executes what is good, who

imitates Him, who had no wish to prosper in this world, and bore

reproach and derision. And because we have fallen from inward joy, by

delight in the things of the body, He shews us what bitter feelings the

return thither will cost us.

Theophylact: Further, it says that he followed the Lord in the way,

that is, in this life, because, after it, all are excluded who follow

Him not here, by working His commandments.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or, this is the way of which He said, "I am the Way, the

Truth, and the Life." This is the narrow way, which leads to the

heights of Jerusalem, and Bethany, to the mount of Olives, which is the

mount of light and consolation.

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Chapter 11

1. And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethpage and Bethany, at

the mount of Olives, He sendeth forth two of His disciples,

2. And saith unto them, "Go your way into the village over against you:

and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied,

whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

3. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord

hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither."

4. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without

in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, "What do ye,

loosing the colt?"

6. And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let

them go.

7. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him;

and He sat upon him.

8. And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down

branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way.

9. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying,

"Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name

of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest."

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Chrys.: Now that the Lord had given sufficient proof of His virtue, and

the cross was at hand, even at the door, He did those things which were

about to excite them against Him with a greater openness; therefore

although He had so often gone up to Jerusalem, He never however had

done so in such a conspicuous manner as now.

Theophlyact: That thus, if they were willing, they might recognize His

glory, and by the prophecies, which were fulfilled concerning Him, know

that He is very God; and that if they would not, they might receive a

greater judgment, for not having believed so many wonderful miracles.

Describing therefore this illustrious entrance, the Evangelist say,

"And when they came nigh unto Jerusalem, and Bethany, at the mount of

Olives, he sendeth forth two of His disciples."

Bede, in Marc., 3, 41: Bethany is a little village or town by the side

of mount Olivet, where Lazarus was raised from the dead. But in what

way He sent His disciples and for what purpose is shewn in these words,

"And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you."

Theophylact: Now consider how many things the Lord foretold to His

disciples, that they should find a colt; wherefore it goes on, "And as

soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never

man sat, loose him, and bring him;" and that they should be impeded in

taking it, wherefore there follows, "And if any man say unto you, Why

do ye this? say ye, The Lord hath need of him;" and that on saying

this, they should be allowed to take him; wherefore there follows, "And

straightway he will send him hither;" and as the Lord had said, so it

was fulfilled. Thus it goes on: "And they went their way, and found the

colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways meet; and they

loose him."

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 66: Matthew says, an ass and a colt, the

rest however do not mention the ass. Where then both may be the case,

there is no disagreement, though one Evangelist mentions one thing, and

a second mentions another; how much less should a question be raised,

when one mentions one, and another mentions that same one and another.

It goes on: "And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What

do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had

commanded, and they let them take it," that is, the colt.

Theophylact: But they would not have allowed this, if the Divine power

had not been upon them, to compel them, especially, as they were

country people and farmers, and yet allowed them to take away the colt.

It goes on: "And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their

garments on him; and He sat upon him."

Pseudo-Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon.: Not indeed that He was compelled by

necessity to ride on a colt from the mount of Olives to Jerusalem, for

He had gone over Judaea and all Galilee on foot, but this action of His

is typical.

It goes on: "And many spread their garments in the way;" that is, under

the feet of the colt; "and others cut down branches off the trees, and

strawed them in the way."

Pseudo-Jerome: This, however, was rather done to honour Him, and as a

Sacrament, than of necessity.

It goes on: "and they that went before, and they that followed, cried,

saying, Hosanna; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Theophylact: For the multitude, until it was corrupted, knew what was

its duty, for which reason each honoured Jesus according to his own

strength. Wherefore they praised Him, and took up the hymns of the

Levites, saying, Hosanna, which according to some is the same as "save

me," but according to others means a hymn. I however suppose the former

to be more probable, for there is in the 117th Psalm, "Save now, I

beseech thee, O Lord," which in the Hebrew is, "Hosanna" [Ps 117:25].

Bede: But "Hosanna" is a Hebrew word, made out of two, one imperfect

the other perfect. For "save", or "preserve", is in their language,

"hosy"; but "anna" is a supplicatory interjection, as in Latin, "heu",

is an exclamation of grief.

Pseudo-Jerome: They cry out Hosanna, that is, save us, that men might

be saved by Him who was blessed, and was a conqueror and came in the

name of the Lord, that is, of His Father, since the Father is so called

because of the Son, and the Son, because of the Father.

Psuedo-Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon.: Thus then they give glory to God,

saying, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They also

bless the kingdom of Christ, saying, "Blessed by the kingdom of our

father, David, which cometh."

Theophylact: But they called the kingdom of Christ, that of David, both

because Christ was descended from the seed of David, and because David

means a man of a strong hand. For whose hand is stronger than the

Lord's , by which so many and so great miracles were wrought.

Pseudo-Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon.: Wherefore also the prophets so

often call Christ by the name of David, on account of the descent

according to the flesh of Christ from David.

Bede: Now we read in the Gospel of John that He fled into a mountain,

lest they should make Him their king. Now, however, when He comes to

Jerusalem to suffer, He does not shun those who call Him king, that He

might openly teach them that He was King over an empire not temporal

and earthly, but everlasting in the heavens, and that the path to this

kingdom was through contempt of death.

Observe, also, the agreement of the multitude with the saying of

Gabriel, "The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David;"

[Luke 1:32] that is, that He Himself may call by word and deed to a

heavenly kingdom the nation to which David once furnished the

government of a temporal rule.

Pseudo-Chrys., Cat. in Marc. Oxon.: And further, they give glory to

God, when they add, "Hosanna in the highest," that is, praise and glory

be to the God of all, Who is in the highest.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or Hosanna, that is, save "in the highest" as well as in

the lowest, that is, that the just be built on the ruin of Angels, and

also that both those on the earth and those under the earth should be

saved. In a mystical sense, also, the Lord approaches Jerusalem, which

is the vision of peace,' in which happiness remains fixed and unmoved,

being, as the Apostle says, the mother of all believers. [Gal 4:26]

Bede: Bethany again means the house of obedience, because by teaching

many before His Passion, he made for Himself a house of obedience; and

it is said to be placed on the mount of Olives, because He cherishes

His Church with the unction of spiritual gifts, and with the light of

piety and knowledge. But He sent His disciples to a hold [ed. note:

castellum], which was over against them, that is, He appointed doctors

to penetrate into the ignorant parts of the whole world, into, as it

were, the walls of the hold placed against them.

Pseudo-Jerome: The disciples of Christ are called two by two, and sent

two by two, since charity implies more than one, as it is written, "Woe

to him that is alone." [Eccles 4:10] Two persons lead the Israelites

out of Egypt: two bring down the bunch of grapes from the Holy Land,

that men in authority might ever join together activity and knowledge,

and bring forward two commandments from the Two Tables, and be washed

from two fountains, and carry the ark of the Lord on two poles, and

know the Lord between the two Cherubim, [p 223" /&gt; and sing to Him

with both mind and spirit.

Theophylact: The colt, however, was not necessary to Him, but He sent

for it to shew that He would transfer Himself to the Gentiles.

Bede: For the colt of the ass, wanton and unshackled, denotes the

people of the nations, on whom no man had yet sat, because no wise

doctor had, by teaching them the things of salvation, put upon them the

bridle of correction, to oblige them to restrain their tongues from

evil, or to compel them into the narrow path of life.

Pseudo-Jerome: But "they found the colt tied by the door without,"

because the Gentile people were bound by the chain of their sins before

the door of faith, that is, without the Church.

Ambrose, in Luc. 9, 6: Or else, they found it bound before the door,

because whosoever is not in Christ is without, in the way; but he who

is in Christ, is not without. He has added "in the way," or "in a place

where two ways meet," where there is no certain possession for any man,

not stall, nor food, nor stable; miserable is his service, whose rights

are unfixed; for he who has not the one Master, has many. Strangers

bind him that they may possess him, Christ looses him in order to keep

him, for He knows that gifts are stronger ties than bonds.

Bede: Or else, fitly did the colt stand in a place where two ways meet,

because the Gentile people did not hold on in any certain road of life

and faith, but followed in its error many doubtful paths of various

sects.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or, in a place where two roads meet, that is, in the

freedom of will, hesitating between life and death.

Theophylact: Or else, in a place where two roads meet, that is, in this

life, but it was loosed by the disciples, through faith and baptism.

Pseudo-Jerome: "But some said, What do ye?" as if they would say, Who

can remit sins?

Theophylact: Or else, those who prevent them are the devils, who were

weaker than the Apostles.

Bede: Or else, the master of error, who resisted the teachers, when

they came to save the Gentiles; but after that the power of the faith

of the Lord appeared to believers, the faithful people were freed from

the cavils of the adversaries, and were brought to the Lord, whom they

bore in their hearts. But by the garments of the Apostles, which they

put upon it, we may understand the teaching of virtues, or the

interpretation of the Scriptures, or the various doctrines of the

Church, by which they clothe the hearts of men, once naked and cold and

fit them to become the seats of Christ.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, they put upon it their garments, that is, they

bring to them the first robe of immortality by the Sacrament of

Baptism. "And Jesus sat upon it," that is, began to reign in them, so

that sin should not reign in their wanton flesh, but righteousness, and

peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Again, "many spread their garments in the way," under the feet of the

foal of the ass. What are feet, but those who carry, and the least

esteemed, whom the Apostle has set to judge? [1 Cor 6:4] And these too,

though they are not the back on which the Lord sat, yet are instructed

by John with the soldiers.

Bede: Or else, many strew their garments in the way, because the holy

martyrs put off from themselves the garment of their own flesh, and

prepare a way for the more simple servants of God with their own blood.

Many also strew their garments in the way, because they tame their

bodies with abstinence, that they may prepare a way for God to the

mount, or may give good examples to those who follow them.

And they cut down branches from the trees, who in the teaching of the

truth cull the sentences of the Fathers from their words, and by their

lowly preaching scatter them in the path of God, when He comes into the

soul of the hearer.

Theophylact: Let us also strew the way of our life with branches which

we cut from the trees, that is, imitate the saints, for these are holy

trees, from which, he who imitates their virtues cuts down branches.

Pseudo-Jerome: "For the righteous shall flourish as a palm tree,"

straitened in their roots, but spreading out wide with flowers and

fruits; for they are a good odour unto Christ, and strew the way of the

commandments of God with their good report. Those who went before are

the prophets, and those who followed are the Apostles.

Bede: And because all the elect, whether those who were able to become

such in Judaea, or those who now are such in the Church, believed and

now believe on the Mediator between God and man, both those who go

before and those who follow cried out Hosanna.

Theophylact: But both those of our deeds which go before and those

which follow after must be done to the glory of God; for some in their

past life make a good beginning, but their following life does not

correspond with their former, neither does it end to the glory of God.

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11. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when He

had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come,

He went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12. And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, He was hungry:

13. And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, He came, if haply He

might find any thing thereon: and when He came to it, He found nothing

but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

14. And Jesus answered and said unto it, "No man eat fruit of thee

hereafter for ever." And His disciples heard it.

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Bede: As the time of His Passion approached, the Lord wished to

approach to the place of His Passion, in order to intimate that He

underwent death of His own accord: wherefore it is said, "And Jesus

entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple." And by His going to the

temple on first entering the city, He shews us beforehand a form of

religion, which we are to follow, that if by chance we enter a place,

where there is a house of prayer, we should first turn aside to it.

We should also understand from this, that such was the poverty of the

Lord, and so far was He from flattering man, that in so large a city,

He found no one to be His host, no abiding place, but lived in a small

country place with Lazarus and his sisters; for Bethany is a hamlet of

the Jews.

Wherefore there follows: "And when He had looked round about upon all

things, (that is, to see whether any one would take Him in,) and now

the eventide was come, He went out into Bethany with the twelve."

Nor did He do this once only, but during all the five days, from the

time that He came to Jerusalem, to the day of His Passion, He used

always to do the same thing; during the day He taught in the temple,

but at night, He went out and dwelt in the mount of Olives.

It goes on, "And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, He

was hungry."

Chrys., in Matt. Hom., 87: How is it that He was hungry in the morning,

as Matthew says, if it were not that by an economy He permitted it to

His flesh?

There follows, "And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, He came,

if haply He might find any thing theron."

Now it is evident that this expresses a conjecture of the disciples,

who thought that it was for this reason that Christ came to the fig

tree, and that it was cursed, because He found no fruit upon it.

For it goes on: "And when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves;

for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it,

No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever."

He therefore curses the fig tree for His disciples' sake, that they

might have faith in Him. For He everywhere distributed blessings, and

punished no one, yet at the same time, it was right to give them a

proof of His chastising power, that they might learn that He could even

cause the persecuting Jews to wither away; He was however unwilling to

give this proof on men, wherefore He shewed them on a plant a sign of

His power of punishing. This proves that He came to the fig tree

principally for this reason, and not on account of His hunger, for who

is so silly as to suppose that in the morning He felt so greatly the

pains of hunger, or what prevented the Lord from eating before He left

Bethany? Nor can it be said that the sight of the figs excited His

appetite to hunger, for it was not the season of figs; and if He were

hungry, why did He not seek food elsewhere, rather than from a fig-tree

which could not yield fruit before its time? What punishment also did a

fig tree deserve for not having fruit before its time? From all this

then we may infer, that He wished to shew His power, that their minds

might not be broken by His Passion.

Theophylact: Wishing to shew His disciples that if He chose He could in

a moment exterminate those who were about to crucify Him. In a mystical

sense, however, the Lord entered into the temple, but came out of it

again, to shew that He left it desolate, and open to the spoiler.

Bede: Farther, He looks round about upon the hearts of all, and when in

those who opposed the truth, He found no place to lay His head, He

retires to the faithful, and takes up His abode with those who obey

Him. For Bethany means, the house of obedience.

Pseudo-Jerome: He went in the morning to the Jews, and visits us in the

eventide of the world.

Bede: Just in the same way as He speaks parables, so also His deeds are

parables; therefore He comes hungry to seek fruit off the fig tree, and

though He knew the time of figs was not yet, He condemns it to

perpetual barrenness, that He might shew that the Jewish people could

not be saved through the leaves, that is, the words of righteousness

which it had, without fruit, that is, good works, but should be cut

down and cast into the fire.

Hungering therefore, that is, desiring the salvation of mankind, He saw

the fig tree, which is, the Jewish people, having leaves, or, the words

of the Law and the Prophets, and He sought upon it the fruit of good

works, by teaching them, by rebuking them, by working miracles, and He

found it not, and therefore condemned it. Do thou too, unless thou

wouldest be condemned by Christ in the judgment, beware of being a

barren tree, but rather offer to Christ the fruit of piety which He

requires.

Chrys.: We may also say, in another sense, that the Lord sought for

fruit on the fig tree before its time, and not finding it, cursed it,

because all who fulfil the commandments of the Law, are said to bear

fruit in their own time, as, for instance, that commandment, "Thou

shalt not commit adultery;" but he who not only abstains from adultery

but remains a virgin, which is a greater thing, excels them in virtue.

But the Lord exacts from the perfect not only the observance of virtue,

but also that they bear fruit over and above the commandments.

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15. And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and

began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and

overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that

sold doves;

16. And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through

the temple.

17. And He taught, saying unto them, "Is it not written, My house shall

be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den

of thieves."

18. And the Scribes and Chief Priests heard it, and sought how they

might destroy Him: for they feared Him, because all the people was

astonished at His doctrine.

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Bede: What the Lord had done in figure, when He cursed the barren fig

tree, He now shews more openly, by casting out the wicked from the

temple. For the fig tree was not in fault, in not having fruit before

its time, but the priests were blameable; wherefore it is said, "And

they come to Jerusalem; and Jesus went into the temple, and began to

cast out them that sold and bought in the temple." Nevertheless, it is

probable that He found them buying and selling in the temple things

which were necessary for its ministry. If then the Lord forbids men to

carry on in the temple worldly matters, which they might freely do any

where else, how much more do they deserve a greater portion of the

anger of Heaven, who carry on in the temple consecrated to Him those

things, which are unlawful wherever they may be done.

It goes on: "and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers."

Theophylact: He calls moneychangers, changers of a particular sort of

money, for the word means a small brass coin.

Bede: Because the Holy Spirit appeared over the Lord in the shape of a

dove, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are fitly pointed out under the name

of doves. The Dove therefore is sold, when the laying on of hands by

which the Holy Spirit is received is sold for a price. Again, He

overturns the seats of them who sell doves, because they who sell

spiritual grace, are deprived of their priesthood, either before men,

or in the eyes of God.

Theophylact: But if a man by sinning gives up to the devil the grace

and purity of baptism, he has sold his Dove, and for this reason is

cast out of the temple.

There follows: "And would not suffer that any man should carry any

vessel through the temple."

Bede: He speaks of those vessels which were carried there for the

purpose of merchandise. But God forbid that it should be taken to mean,

that the Lord cast out of the temple, or forbade men to bring into it,

the vessels consecrated to God; for here He shews a type of the

judgment to come, for He thrusts away the wicked from the Church, and

restrains them by His everlasting word from ever again coming in to

trouble the Church. Furthermore, sorrow, sent into the heart from

above, takes away from the souls of the faithful those sins which were

in them, and Divine grace assists them so that they should never again

commit them.

It goes on: "And He taught, saying unto them, My house shall be called

of all nations the house of prayer."

Pseudo-Jerome: [This] according to Isaiah [Isa 56:7]. "But ye have made

it a den of thieves," according to Jeremiah. [Jer 7:11]

Bede: He says, "to all nations," not to the Jewish nation alone, nor in

the city of Jerusalem alone, but over the whole world; and he does not

say a house of bulls, goats, and rams, but of prayer.

Theophylact: Further, He calls the temple, "a den of thieves," on

account of the money gained there; for thieves always troop together

for gain. Since then they sold those animals which were offered in

sacrifice for the sake of gain, He called them thieves.

Bede: For they were in the temple for this purpose, either that they

might persecute with corporal pains those who did not bring gifts, or

spiritually kill those who did. The mind and conscience of the faithful

is also the temple and the house of God, but if it puts forth perverse

thoughts, to the hurt of any one, it may be said that thieves haunt it

as a den; therefore the mind of the faithful becomes the den of a

thief, when leaving the simplicity of holiness, it plans that which may

hurt others.

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 67: John, however, relates this in a very

different order, wherefore it is manifest that not once only, but

twice, this was done by the Lord, and that the first time was related

by John, the last, by all the other three.

Theophylact: Which also turns to the greater condemnation of the Jews,

because though the Lord did this so many times, nevertheless they did

not correct their conduct.

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 68: In this again, Mark does not keep the

same order as Matthew; because however Matthew connects the facts

together by this sentence, "And He left them, and went out of the city

into Bethany," [Matt 21:17] returning from whence in the morning,

according to his relation, Christ cursed the tree, therefore it is

supposed with greater probability that he rather has kept to the order

of time, as to the ejection from the temple of the buyers and sellers.

Mark therefore passed over what was done the first day when He entered

into the temple, and on remembering it inserted it, when he had said

that He found nothing on the fig tree but leaves, which was done on the

second day, as both testify.

Gloss: But the Evangelist shews what effect the correction of the Lord

had on the ministers of the temple, when he adds: "and the Scribes and

Chief Priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him;"

according to that saying of Amos: "They hate him that rebuketh in the

gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly." [Amos 5:10] From

this wicked design, however, they were kept back for a time solely by

fear.

Wherefore it is added, "For they feared Him, because all the people

were astonished at His doctrine. For He taught them as one having

authority, and not as the Scribes" and Pharisees, as is said elsewhere.

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19. And when even was come, He went out of the city.

20. And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried

up from the roots.

21. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto Him, "Master, behold,

the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

22. And Jesus answering saith unto them, "Have faith in God.

23. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this

mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not

doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith.

24. Therefore, I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye

pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

25. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any:

that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your

trespasses.

26. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in

heaven forgive your trespasses."

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Pseudo-Jerome: The Lord, leaving darkness behind Him in the hearts of

the Jews, went out, as the sun, from that city to another which is

well-disposed and obedient. And this is what is meant, when it is said,

"And when even was come, He went out of the city."

But the sun sets in one place, rises in another, for the light, taken

from the Scribes, shines in the Apostles; wherefore He returns into the

city; on which account there is added, "And in the morning, as they

passed by, (that is, going into the city,) they saw the fig tree dried

up from the root."

Theophylact: The greatness of the miracle appears in the drying up so

juicy and green a tree. But though Matthew says that the fig tree was

at once dried up, and that the disciples on seeing it wondered, there

is no reason for perplexity, though Mark now says, that the disciples

saw the fig tree dried up on the morrow; for what Matthew says must be

understood to mean that they did not see it at once, but on the next

day.

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 68: The meaning is not that it dried up at

the time, when they saw it, but immediately after the word of the Lord;

for they saw it, not beginning to dry up, but completely dried up; and

they thus understood that it had withered immediately after our Lord

spoke.

Pseudo-Jerome: Now the fig tree withered from the roots is the

synagogue withered from Cain, and the rest, from whom all the blood

from Abel up to Zechariah is required.

Bede: Further, the fig tree was dried up from the roots to shew that

the nation was impious not only for a time and in part, and was to be

smitten forever, not merely to be afflicted by the attacks of nations

from without and then to be freed, as had often been done; or else it

was dried up from the roots, to shew that is was stripped not only of

the external favour of man, but altogether of the favour of heaven

within it; for it lost both its life in heaven, and its country on

earth.

Pseudo-Jerome: Peter perceives the dry root, which is cut off, and has

been replaced by the beautiful and fruitful olive, called by the Lord.

Wherefore it goes on: "And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto Him,

Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

Chrys.: The wonder of the disciples was the consequence of imperfect

faith, for this was no great thing for God to do; since then they did

not clearly know His power, their ignorance made them break out into

wonder.

And therefore it is added, "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have

faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto

this mountain," &c. That is; Thou shalt not only be able to dry up a

tree, but also to change a mountain by they command and order.

Theophylact: Consider the Divine mercy, how it confers on us, if we

approach Him in faith, the power of miracles, which He Himself

possesses by nature, so that we should be able even to change

mountains.

Bede: The Gentiles, who have attacked the Church, are in the habit of

objecting to us, that we have never had full faith in God, for we have

never been able to change mountains. It could, however, be done, if

necessity called for it, as once we read that it was done by the

prayers of the blessed Father Gregory of Neocaesarea, Bishop of Pontus,

by which a mountain left as much space of ground for the inhabitants of

a city as they wanted.

Chrys.: Or else, as He did not dry up the fig tree for its own sake,

but for a sign that Jerusalem should come to destruction, in order to

shew His power, in the same way we must also understand the promise

concerning the mountain, though a removal of this sort is not

impossible with God.

Pseudo-Jerome: Christ then who is the mountain, which grew from the

stone, cut out without hands, is taken up and cast into the sea, when

the Apostles with justice say, Let us turn ourselves to other nations,

[Acts 13:46] since ye judged yourselves unworthy of hearing the word of

God.

Bede: Or else, because the devil is often on account of his pride

called by the name of a mountain, this mountain, at the command of

those who are strong in the faith, is taken up from the earth and cast

into the sea, whenever, at the preaching of the word of God by the holy

doctors, the unclean spirit is expelled from the hearts of those who

are fore-ordained to life, and is allowed to exert the tyranny of his

power over the troubled and embittered souls of the faithless. At which

time, he rages the more fiercely, the more he grieves at being turned

away from hurting the faithful.

It goes on: "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire,

when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Theophylact: For whosoever sincerely believes evidently lifts up his

heart to God, and is joined to Him, and his burning heart feels sure

that he has received what he asked for, which he who has experienced

will understand; and those persons appear to me to experience this, who

attend to the measure and the manner of their prayers. For this reason

the Lord says, "Ye shall receive whatsoever ye ask in faith;" for he

who believes that he is altogether in the hands of God, and interceding

with tears, feels that he as it were has hold of the feet of the Lord

in prayer, he shall receive what he has rightly asked for. Again, would

you in another way receive what you ask for? Forgive your brother, if

he has in any way sinned against you; this is also what is added: "And

when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your

Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

Pseudo-Jerome: Mark has, as he is wont, expressed seven verses of the

Lord's prayer in one prayer. But what can he, whose sins are all

forgiven, require more, save that he may persevere in what has been

granted unto him.

Bede: But we must observe that there is a difference in those who pray;

he who has perfect faith, which worketh by love, can by his prayer or

even his command remove spiritual mountains, as Paul did with Elymas

the sorcerer. But let those who are unable to mount up to such a height

of perfection pray that their sins should be forgiven them, and they

shall obtain what they pray for, provided that they themselves first

forgive those who have sinned against them.

If however they disdain to do this, not only shall they be unable to

perform miracles by their prayers, but they shall not even be able to

obtain pardon for their sins, which is implied in what follows; "But if

ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive

your trespasses."

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27. And they come again to Jerusalem: and as He was walking in the

temple, there come to Him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the

elders,

28. And say unto Him, "By what authority doest thou these things? and

who gave thee this authority to do these things?"

29. And Jesus answered and said unto them, "I will also ask of you one

question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do

these things.

30. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me."

31. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From

heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32. But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men

counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33. And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus

answering saith unto them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I

do these things."

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Theophylact: They were angry with the Lord, for having cast out of the

temple those who had made it a place of merchandize, and therefore they

come up to Him, to question and tempt Him.

Wherefore it is said: "And they come again to Jerusalem: and as He was

walking in the temple, there come to Him the Chief Priests, and the

Scribes, and the elders, and say unto Him, By what authority doest thou

these things? and who gave thee authority to do these things?"

As if they had said, Who art thou that doest these things? Dost thou

make thyself a doctor, and ordain thyself Chief Priest?

Bede: And, indeed, when they say, "By what authority doest thou these

things," they doubt its being the power of God, and wish it to be

understood that what He did was the devil's work. When they add also,

"Who gave thee this authority," they evidently deny that He is the Son

of God, since they believe He works miracles, not by His own but by

another's power.

Theophylact: Further, they said this, thinking to bring Him to

judgment, so that if He said, by mine own power, they might lay hold

upon Him; but if He said, by the power of another, they might make the

people leave Him, for they believed Him to be God. But the Lord asks

them concerning John, not without a reason, nor in a sophisticated way,

but because John had borne witness of Him.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will

also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by

what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from

heaven, or of me? answer me."

Bede: The Lord might indeed have confuted the cavils of his tempters by

a direct answer, but prudently puts them a question, that they might be

condemned either by their silence or their speaking, which is evident

from what is added, "And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we

shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?"

As if He had said, He whom you confess to have had his prophecy from

heaven bore testimony of Me, and ye have heard from him, by what

authority I do these things.

It goes on: "But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people."

They saw then that whatever they answered, they should fall into a

snare; fearing to be stoned, they feared still more the confession of

the truth.

Wherefore it goes on: "And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot

tell."

Pseudo-Jerome: They envied the Lamp, and were in the dark, wherefore it

is said, "I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed; his enemies will I

clothe with shame." [Ps 131:17-18]

There follows: "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell

you by what authority I do these things."

Bede: As if He had said, I will not tell you what I know, since ye will

not confess what ye know. Further, we must observe that knowledge is

hidden from those who seek it, principally for two reasons, namely,

when he who seeks for it either has not sufficient capacity to

understand what he seeks for, or when through contempt for the truth,

or some other reason, he is unworthy of having that for which he seeks

opened to him.

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Chapter 12

1. And He began to speak unto them by parables. "A certain man planted

a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and dug a place for the winefat,

and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far

country.

2. And at the season he sent to husbandmen a servant, that he might

receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast

stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully

handled.

5. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others;

beating some, and killing some.

6. Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also

last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.'

7. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come,

let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.'

8. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

9. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and

destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10. And have ye not read this Scripture; The stone which the builders

rejected is become the head of the corner:

11. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?' "

12. And they sought to lay hold on Him, but feared the people: for they

knew that He had spoken the parable against them: and they left Him,

and went their way.

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Gloss: After the Lord had closed the mouths of His tempters by a wise

question, He next shews their wickedness in a parable.

Wherefore it is said: "And He began to speak unto them by parable. A

certain man planted a vineyard."

Pseudo-Jerome: God the Father is called a man by a human conception.

The vineyard is the house of Israel; the hedge is the guardianship of

Angels; the winefat is the law, the tower is the temple, and the

husbandmen, the priests.

Bede, in Marc., 3, 42: Or else, the hedge is the wall of the city, the

winefat is the altar, or those winefats, by which three psalms receive

their name.

Theophylact: Or, the hedge is the law, which prohibited their mingling

with strangers.

There follows: "And went into a far country."

Bede: Not by any change of place, but He seemed to go away from the

vineyard, that He might leave the husbandmen to act on their own

freewill.

It goes on: "And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant,

that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the

vineyard."

Pseudo-Jerome: The servants who were sent were the prophets, the fruit

of the vineyard is obedience; some of the prophets were beaten, others

wounded, others slain.

Wherefore it goes on: "And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him

away empty."

Bede: By the servant who was first sent we must understand Moses, but

they beat him, and sent him away empty, because "they angered Moses in

the tents." [Ps 106:6]

There follows: "And again he sent unto them another servant, and they

wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled."

This other servant means David and the other Psalmists, but they

wounded Him in the head and shamefully handled him, because they

despised the songs of the Psalmists, and rejected David himself,

saying, "What portion have we in David?" [1 Kings 12,16]

It goes on: "And he sent another; and him they killed, and many others;

beating some, and killing some."

By the third servant and his companions, understand the band of the

prophets. But which of the prophets did they not persecute? In these

three kinds of servants, as the Lord Himself elsewhere pronounces, may

be included in a figure all the doctors under the law, when He says,

"that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of

Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me." [Luke

24:44]

Theophylact: Or else, by the first servant, understand the prophets who

lived about the time of Elias, for Zedekiah the false prophet beat

Micaiah [2 Chron. 18:23]; and by the second servant whom they wounded

in the head, that is, evil entreated, we may understand the prophets

who lived about the time of Hosea and Isaiah; but by the third servant

understand the prophets who flourished about the time of Daniel and

Ezekiel.

It goes on: "Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent

him also last unto them, saying, Perchance they will reverence my son."

Pseudo-Jerome: The well-beloved son and the last is the Only-begotten;

and in that He says, "They will reverence my son," He speaks in irony.

Bede: Or else, this is not said in ignorance, but God is said to doubt,

that freedom of will may be left to man.

Theophylact: Or else, He said this not as thought He were ignorant of

what was to happen, but to shew what it was right and fitting that they

should do.

"But those husbandmen said amongst themselves, This is the heir, come,

let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours."

Bede: The Lord proves most clearly that the chiefs of the Jews did not

crucify the Son of God through ignorance, but through envy; for they

understood that this was He to whom it was said, "I will give thee the

heathen for thine inheritance." [Ps 2:8]

But these evil husbandmen strove to seize upon it by slaying Him, when

the Jews crucifying Him tried to extinguish the faith which is by Him,

and rather to bring forward their own righteousness which is by the

Law, and to thrust it on the nations, and to imbue them with it.

There follows: "And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of

the vineyard."

Theophylact: That is, without Jerusalem, for the Lord was crucified out

of the city.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, they case Him out of the vineyard, that is, out

of the people, saying "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil." [John

8:48]

Bede: Or, as far as in them lay, they cast Him out of their own

borders, and gave Him up to the Gentiles that they might receive Him.

There follows: "What then will the Lord of the vineyard do? he will

come and destroy those husbandmen, and give the vineyard unto others."

Augustine, de Con Evan, ii, 70: Matthew indeed subjoins that they

answered and said, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men," [Matt

21:41] which Mark here says was not their answer, but that the Lord

after putting the question, as it were answered Himself. But we may

easily understand either that their answer was subjoined without the

insertion of, "they answered," or "they said," which at the same time

was implied; or else, that their answer, being the truth, was

attributed to the Lord, since He also Himself gave this answer

concerning them, being the Truth.

Theophylact: The Lord of the vineyard then is the Father of the Son who

was slain, and the Son Himself is He who was slain, who will destroy

those husbandmen, by giving them up to the Romans, and who will give

the people to other husbandmen, that is, to the Apostles.

Read the Acts of the Apostles, and you will find three thousand, and

five thousand on a sudden believing and bearing fruit to God.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, the vineyard is given to others, that is, to

those who come from the east, and from the west, and from the south,

and from the north, and who sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in

the kingdom of heaven.

Bede: But that this was done by Divine interposition He affirms, by

immediately afterwards adding, "And have ye not read this Scripture,

The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone in the

corner?"

As if He had said, how is this prophecy to be fulfilled, save in that

Christ, being rejected and slain by you, is to be preached to the

Gentiles, who will believe on Him? Thus then as a corner stone, He will

found the two people on Himself, and of the two people will build for

Himself a city of the faithful, one temple. For the masters of the

synagogue, whom He had just called husbandmen, He now calls "builders",

because the same persons, who seemed to cultivate His people, that they

might bear the fruits of life, like a vineyard, were also commanded to

construct and adorn this people, to be, as it were, a house worthy to

have God for its inhabitant.

Theophylact: The stone then which the builders refused, the same has

become the head-stone of the corner, that is, of the Church. For the

Church is, as it were, the corner, joining together Jews and Gentiles;

and this corner has been made by the Lord, and is wonderful in our

eyes, that is, in the eyes of the faithful; for miracles meet with

detraction from the faithless.

The Church indeed is wonderful, as it were resting on wonders, for the

Lord worked with the Apostles, and confirmed the word with signs. And

this is what is meant, when it is said, "This was the Lord's doing, and

it is marvellous in our eyes."

Pseudo-Jerome: This rejected stone, which is borne by that corner where

the lamb and the bread met in the supper, ending the Old and beginning

the New Testament, does things marvellous in our eyes [Ps 118:23] as

the topaz.

Bede: But the Chief Priests shewed that those things which the Lord had

spoken were true; which is proved from what follows: "And they sought

to lay hold on him;" for He Himself is the heir, whose unjust death He

said was to be revenged by the Father. Again, in a moral sense, each of

the faithful, when the Sacrament of Baptism is intrusted to him,

receives on hire a vineyard, which he is to cultivate. But the servant

sent to him is evil intreated, beaten, and cast out, when the word is

heard by him and despised, or, what is worse, even blasphemed; further,

he kills, as far as in him lies, the heir, who has trampled under foot

the Son of God.

The evil husbandman is destroyed; and the vineyard given to another,

when the humble shall be enriched with that gift of grace, which the

proud man has scorned. And it happens daily in the Church, that the

Chief Priests wishing to lay hands on Jesus, are held back by the

multitude, when some on, who is a brother only in name, either blushes

or fears to attack the unity of the faith of the Church, and of its

peace, though he loves it not, on account of the number of good

brethren who dwell together within it.

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13. And they send unto Him certain of the Pharisees and of the

Herodians, to catch Him in His words.

14. And when they were come, they say unto Him, "Master, we know that

thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person

of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give

tribute to Caesar, or not?

15. Shall we give, or shall we not give?" But He, knowing their

hypocrisy, said unto them, "Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I

may see it."

16. And they brought it. And He saith unto them, "Whose is this image

and superscription?" And they said unto Him, "Caesar's."

17. And Jesus answering said unto them, "Render to Caesar the things

that are Caesar's , and to God the things that are God's ." And they

marvelled at Him.

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Bede: The Chief Priests though they sought to take Him, feared the

multitude, and therefore they endeavored to effect what they could not

do of themselves, by means of earthly powers, that they might

themselves appear to be guiltless of His death.

And therefore it is said, "And they send unto Him certain of the

Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch Him in His words."

Theophylact: We have said elsewhere of the Herodians, that they were a

certain new heresy, who said that Herod was the Christ, because the

succession of the kingdom of Judah had failed. Others however say that

the Herodians were the soldiers of Herod, whom the Pharisees brought as

witnesses of the words of Christ, that they might take Him, and lead

Him away. But observe how in their wickedness they wished to deceive

Christ by flattery; for it goes on: "Master, we know that thou art

true."

Pseudo-Jerome: For they questioned Him with honied words, and they

surrounded Him as bees, who carry honey in their mouth, but a sting in

their tail.

Bede: But this bland and crafty question was intended to induce Him in

His answer rather to fear God than Caesar, and to say that tribute

should not be paid, so that the Herodians immediately on hearing it

might hold Him to be an author of sedition against the Romans.

And therefore they add, "And carest for no man: for thou regardest not

the person of any."

Theophylact: So that thou wilt not honour Caesar, that is, against the

truth.

Therefore they add, "But teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful

to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not

give?"

For their whole plot was one which had a precipice on both sides, so

that if He said that it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar, they

might provoke the people against Him, as though He wished to reduce the

nation itself to slavery; but if He said, that it was not lawful, they

might accuse Him, as though He was stirring up the people against

Caesar; the Fountain of wisdom escaped their snares.

Wherefore there follows: "But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto

them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they

brought it."

Bede: A denarius was a piece of money, accounted equal to ten smaller

coins, and bearing the image of Caesar; wherefore there follows: "And

He saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they

said unto Him, Caesar's .

Let those who think that our Saviour asked the question through

ignorance and not by an economy, learn from this that He might have

known whose image it was; but He puts the question, in order to return

them a fitting answer.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus answering said unto them, Render

unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's , and unto God the things that

are God's ."

Theophylact: As if He had said, Give what bears an image to him whose

image it bears, that is, the penny to Caesar; for we can both pay

Caesar his tribute, and offer to God what is His own.

Bede: That is, tithes, first-fruits, oblations, and victims. In the

same way as He gave tribute both for Himself and Peter, He also gave to

God the things that are God's, doing the will of his Father.

Pseudo-Jerome: Render to Caesar the money bearing his image, which is

collected for him, and render yourselves willingly up to God, for the

light of thy countenance, O Lord [Ps 4:6], and not of Caesar's, is

stamped upon us.

Theophylact: The inevitable wants of our bodies is as Caesar unto each

of us; the Lord therefore orders that there should be given to the body

its own, that is, food and raiment, and to God the things that are

God's. It goes on: "And they marvelled at Him." They who ought to have

believed, wondered at such great wisdom, because they had found no

place for their craftiness.

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18. Then come unto Him the Sadducees, which say there is no

resurrection; and they asked Him, saying,

19. "Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his

wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take

his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying

left no seed.

21. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and

the third likewise.

22. And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died

also.

23. In the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife

shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.' "

24. And Jesus answering, said unto them, "Do ye not therefore err,

because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?

25. For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are

given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

26. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the

book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God

of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?'

27. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye

therefore do greatly err."

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Gloss.: After that our Lord has prudently escaped the crafty temptation

of the Pharisees, it is shewn how He also confounds the Sadducees, who

tempt Him.

Wherefore it is said: "Then come unto Him the Sadducees, which say

there is no resurrection."

Theophylact: A certain heretical sect of the Jews called Sadducees

denied the resurrection, and said that there was neither angel nor

spirit. These then coming to Jesus, craftily proposed to Him a certain

tale, in order to shew that no resurrection should take place, or had

taken place; and therefore there is added, "And they asked Him, saying,

Master." And in this tale they lay down that seven men had married one

woman, in order to make men draw back from belief in the resurrection.

Bede: And fitly do they frame such a fable in order to prove the

madness of those who assert the resurrection of the body. Such a thing

however might really have happened at some time or other among them.

Pseudo-Jerome: But in a mystical sense: what can this woman, leaving no

seed to seven brothers, and last of all dying, mean except the Jewish

synagogue, deserted by the seven-fold Spirit, which filled those seven

patriarchs, who did not leave to her the seed of Abraham, that is,

Jesus Christ?

For although a Son was born to them, nevertheless He was given to us

Gentiles. This woman was dead to Christ, nor shall she be joined in the

resurrection to any patriarch of the seven; for by the number seven is

meant the whole company of the faithful. Thus it is said contrariwise

by Isaiah, "Seven women shall take hold of one man;" [Isa 4:1] that is,

the seven Churches, which the Lord loves, reproves, and chastises,

adore Him with one faith.

Wherefore it goes on: "And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not

therefore err, not knowing the Scripture, neither the power of God?"

Theophylact: As if He had said, Ye understand not what sort of a

resurrection the Scriptures announce; for ye believe that there will be

a restoration of our bodies, such as they are now, but it shall not be

so. Thus then ye know not the Scriptures; neither again do ye know the

power of God; for ye consider it as a difficult thing, saying, How can

the limbs, which have been scattered, be united together and joined to

the soul? But this in respect to the Divine power is as nothing.

There follows: "For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither

marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in

heaven;" as if He had said, there will be a certain heavenly and

angelic restoration to life, when there shall be no more decay, and we

shall remain unchanged; and for this reason marriage shall cease. For

marriage now exists on account of our decay, that we may be carried on

by succession of our race, and not fail; but then we shall be as the

Angels, who need no succession by marriage, and never come to an end.

Bede: We must here consider that the Latin custom does not answer to

the Greek idiom. For properly different words are used for the marriage

of men, and that of women; but here we may simply understand that,

"marry," is meant of men, and "given in marriage" of women.

Pseudo-Jerome: Thus then they do not understand the Scripture, in that

in the resurrection, men shall be as the Angels of God, that is, no man

there dies, no one is born, no infant is there, no old men.

Theophylact: In another way also they are deceived, not understanding

the Scriptures; for if they had understood them, they should also have

understood how by the Scriptures the resurrection of the dead may be

proved.

Wherefore He adds, "And as touching the dead, that they rise, have ye

not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him,

saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of

Jacob?"

Pseudo-Jerome: But I say, "in the bush," which is an image of you; for

in it the fire was kindled, but it did not consume its thorns; so my

words set you on fire, but do not burn off your thorns, which have

grown under the curse.

Theophylact: But I say, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and

the God of Jacob."

As if He had said, "The God of the living," wherefore He adds, "He is

not the God of the dead, but of the living;" for He did not say, I have

been, but "I am," as if they had been present. But some one perhaps

will say, that God spake this only of the soul of Abraham, not of his

body; to which I answer, that Abraham implies both, that is, soul and

body, so that He also is the God of the body, and the body lives with

God, that is, in God's ordinance.

Bede: Or else; because after proving that the soul remained after

death, (for God could not be God of those who did not exist at all,)

the resurrection of the body also might be inferred as a consequence,

since it had done good and evil with the soul.

Pseudo-Jerome: But when He says, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,

and the God of Jacob;" by naming God thrice, He implied the Trinity.

But when He says, "He is not the God of the dead," by naming again the

One God, He implies One Substance. But they live who make good the

portion, which they had chosen; and they are dead, who have lost what

they had made good. "Ye therefore do greatly err."

Gloss.: That is, because they contradicted the Scriptures, and

derogated from the power of God.

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28. And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning

together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked Him,

"Which is the first commandment of all?"

29. And Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is,

Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with

all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is

the first commandment.

31. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor

as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

32. And the scribe said unto Him, "Well, Master, thou hast said the

truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He:

33. And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding,

and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his

neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and

sacrifices."

34. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him,

"Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." And no man after that durst

ask Him any question.

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Gloss.: After that the Lord confuted the Pharisees, and the Sadducees,

who tempted Him, it is here shewn how He satisfied the Scribe who

questioned Him.

Wherefore it is said, "And one of the scribes came, and having heard

them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well,

asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all?"

Pseudo-Jerome: This question is only that which is a problem common to

all skilled in the law, namely, that the commandments are differently

set forth in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy. Wherefore He brought

forward not one but two commandments, by which, as by two paps rising

on the breast of the bride, our infancy is nourished.

And therefore there is added, "And Jesus answered him, The first of all

the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God." He

mentions the first and greatest commandment of all; this is that to

which each of us must give the first place in his heart, as the only

foundation of piety, that is, the knowledge and confession of the

Divine Unity, with the practice of good works, which is perfected in

the love of God and our neighbour.

Wherefore there is added, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all

thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all

thy strength: this is the first commandment."

Theophylact: See how He has enumerated all the powers of the soul; for

there is a living power in the soul, which He explains, when He says,

"With all thy soul," and to this belong anger and desire, all of which

He will have us give to Divine love.

There is also another power, which is called natural, to which belong

nutriment and growth, and this also is all to be given to God, for

which reason He says, "With all thy heart."

There is also another power, the rational, which He calls the mind, and

that too is to be given whole to God.

Gloss.: The words which are added, "And with all thy strength," may be

referred to the bodily powers.

It goes on: "And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy

neighbour as thyself."

Theophylact: He says that it is like, because these two commandments

are harmonious one with the other, and mutually contain the other. For

he who loves God, loves also His creature; but the chief of His

creatures is man, wherefore he who loves God ought to love all men. But

he who loves his neighbor, who so often offends him, ought much more to

love Him, who is ever giving him benefits. And therefore on account of

the connection between these commandments, He adds, "There is none

other commandment greater than these."

It goes on: "And the Scribe said unto Him, Well, Master, thou hast said

the truth: for there is one God, and there is none other but He: and to

love Him with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the

understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as

himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Bede: He shews when he says, "this is greater than all sacrifices,"

that a grave question was often debated between the scribes and

Pharisees, which was the first commandment, or the greatest of the

Divine law; that is, some praised offerings and sacrifices, others

preferred acts of faith and love, because many of the fathers before

the law pleased God by that faith only, which works by love. This

scribe shews that he was of the latter opinion.

But it continues: "And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He

said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

Theophylact: By which He shews that he was not perfect, for He did not

say, Thou art within the kingdom of heaven, but, "Thou art not far from

the kingdom of God."

Bede: But the reason why he was not far from the kingdom of God was,

that he proved himself to be a favourer of that opinion, which is

proper to the New Testament and to Gospel perfection.

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 73: Nor let it trouble us that Matthew

says, that he who addressed this question to the Lord tempted Him; for

it may be that though he came as a tempter, yet he was corrected by the

answer of the Lord. Or at all events, we must not look upon the

temptation as evil, and done with the intention of deceiving an enemy,

but rather as the caution of a man who wished to try a thing unknown to

him.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, he is not far who comes with knowledge; for

ignorance is farther from the kingdom of God than knowledge; wherefore

He says above to the Sadducees, "Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, or

the power of God."

It goes on: "And no man after that durst ask Him any questions."

Bede: For since they were confuted in argument, they ask Him no further

questions, but take Him without any disguise, and give Him up to the

Roman power. From which we understand that the venom of envy may be

overcome, but can hardly lie quiet.

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35. And Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, "How

say the Scribes that Christ is the Son of David?

36. For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord

- "Sit thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."

37. David therefore himself calleth Him Lord; and whence is He then his

son?" And the common people heard Him gladly.

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Theophylact: Because Christ was coming to His Passion, He corrects a

false opinion of the Jews, who said that Christ was the Son of David,

not his Lord.

Wherefore it is said, "And Jesus answered and said, while He taught in

the temple."

Pseudo-Jerome: That is, He openly speaks to them of Himself, that they

may be inexcusable.

For it goes on: "How say the Scribes that Christ is the Son of David?"

Theophylact: But Christ shews Himself to be the Lord, by the words of

David.

For it goes on: "For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord

said to my Lord, Sit thou on My right hand;" as if He had said, Ye

cannot say that David said this without the grace of the Holy Spirit,

but he called Him Lord in the Holy Spirit; and that He is Lord, he

shews, by this that is added, "Till I make Thine enemies Thy

footstool;" for they themselves were His enemies, whom God put under

the footstool of Christ.

Bede: But the putting down of His enemies by the Father, does not shew

the weakness of the Son, but the unity of nature, by which One works in

the Other; for the Son also subjects the Father's enemies, because He

glorifies His Father upon earth.

Gloss.: Thus then Lord concludes from what has gone before the doubtful

questions. For from the foregoing words of David it is proved that

Christ is the Lord of David, but according to the saying of the

Scribes, it is proved that He is his Son. And this is what is added,

"David himself then calls Him Lord, how is He then his Son?"

Bede: The question of Jesus is useful for us even now against the Jews;

for they, acknowledging that Christ is to come, assert that He is a

mere man, a holy Person descended from David. Let us then ask them, as

our Lord has taught us, if He be a mere man, and only the son of David,

how David in the Holy Spirit calls Him Lord. They are not however

reproved for calling Him David's son, but for not believing Him to be

the Son of God.

It goes on: "And the common people heard Him gladly."

Gloss.: Namely, because they saw that He answered and put questions

wisely.

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38. And He said unto them in His doctrine, "Beware of the scribes,

which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the

marketplaces,

39. And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at

feasts:

40. Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers:

these shall receive greater damnation."

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Pseudo-Jerome: After confuting the Scribes and Pharisees, He burns up

as a fire their dry and withered examples.

Wherefore it is said, "And He said unto them in His doctrine, Beware of

the Scribes, which love to go in long clothing."

Bede: To walk in long clothing is to go forth into public clad in

garments too much ornamented, in which amongst other things, that rich

man, who fared sumptuously every day, is said to have sinned.

Theophylact: But they used to walk in honourable garments, because they

wished to be highly esteemed for it, and in like manner they desired

other things, which lead to glory.

For it goes on: "And love salutations in the marketplaces, and the

chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts."

Bede: We must observe that He does not forbid that those, to whom it

falls by the rule of their office, should be saluted in the

marketplace, or have chief seats and places at feasts, but He teaches

that those who love those things unduly, whether they have them or no,

are to be avoided by the faithful as wicked men: that is, He blames the

intention and not the office; although this too is culpable, that the

very men who wish to be called masters of the synagogue in Moses' seat,

should have to do with lawsuits in the marketplace. We are in two way

ordered to beware of those who are desirous of vain glory; first, we

should not be seduced by their hypocrisy into thinking that what they

do is good; nor secondly, should we be excited to imitate them, through

a vain rejoicing in being praised for those virtues which they affect.

Theophylact: He also especially teaches the Apostles, not to have any

communication with the scribes, but to imitate Christ Himself; and in

ordaining them to be masters in the duties of life, He places others

under them. [ed. note: Theophylact's words should be translated - He

becomes their example in the duties of life.]

Bede: But they do not only seek for praise from men, but also for gain.

Where there follows, "Which devour widows' houses, under the pretence

of long prayers." For there are men who pretending to be just hesitate

not to receive money from persons who are troubled in conscience, as

though they would be their advocates in the judgment. A hand stretched

out to the poor is always an accompaniment to prayer, but these men

pass the night in prayer, that they may take away money from the poor.

Theophylact: But the Scribes used to come to women, who were left

without the protection of their husbands, as though they were their

protectors; and by a pretence of prayer, a reverend exterior and

hypocrisy, they used to deceive widows, and thus also devour the houses

of the rich.

It goes on: "These shall receive a greater damnation," that is, than

the other Jews, who sinned.

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41. And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people

cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites,

which make a farthing.

43. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, "Verily

I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they

which have cast into the treasury:

44. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want

did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

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Bede: The Lord, who had warned them to avoid the desire of high place

and vain glory, now distinguishes by a sure test those who brought in

gifts.

Wherefore it is said, "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and

beheld how the people cast money into the treasury."

In the Greek language, "phylassein", means to keep, and "gaza" is a

Persian word for treasure; wherefore the word "gazophylacium" which is

here used means a place where riches are kept, which name also was

applied to the chest in which the offerings of the people were

collected, for the necessary uses of the temple, and to the porch in

which they were kept.

You have a notice of the porch in the Gospel, "These words spake Jesus

in the treasury as He taught in the temple:" [John 8:20] and of the

chest in the book of Kings, "But Jehoiada the priest took a chest." [2

Kings 12:9]

Theophylact: Now there was a praiseworthy custom amongst the Jews, that

those who were able and willing should put something into the treasury,

for the maintenance of the priests, the poor, and the widows.

Wherefore there is added, "And many that were rich cast in much."

But whilst many people were so engaged, a poor widow came up, and

shewed her love by offering money according to her ability.

Wherefore it is said, "And there came a certain poor widow, and she

threw in two mites, which make a farthing."

Bede: Reckoners use the words "quadrans" for the fourth part of any

thing, be it place, money, or time. Perhaps then in this place is meant

the fourth part of a shekel, this is, five pence.

It goes on: "And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them,

Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all

they which have cast into the treasury:" for God does not weigh the

property but the conscience of those who offer; nor did He consider the

smallness of the sum in her offering, but what was the store from which

it came.

Wherefore He adds, "For all they did cast in of their abundance, but

she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Pseudo-Jerome: But in a mystical sense, they are rich, who bring forth

from the treasure of their heart things new and old, which are the

obscure and hidden things of Divine wisdom in both testaments; but who

is the poor woman, if it be not I and those like me, who cast in what I

can, and have the will to explain to you, where I have, not the power.

For God does not consider how much ye bear, but what is the store from

which it comes; but each at all events can bring his farthing, that is,

a ready will, which is called a farthing, because it is accompanied by

three things, that is, thought, word and deed. And in that it is said

that "she cast in all her living," it is implied that all that the body

wants is that by which it lives. Wherefore it is said, "All the labour

of man is for his mouth." [Eccl 6:7]

Theophylact: Or else; that widow is the soul of man, which leaving

Satan to which it had been joined, casts into the temple two mites,

that is, the flesh and the mind, the flesh by abstinence, the mind by

humility, that so it may be able to hear that it has cast away all its

living, and has consecrated it, leaving nothing for the world of all

that it possessed.

Bede: Again, in an allegorical way, the rich men, who cast gifts into

the treasury, point out the Jews puffed up with the righteousness of

the law; the poor widow is the simplicity of the Church: poor indeed,

because she has cast away the spirit of pride and of the desires of

worldly things; and a widow, because Jesus her husband has suffered

death for her. She casts two mites into the treasury, because she

brings the love of God and of her neighbour, or the gifts of faith and

prayer; which are looked upon as mites in their own insignificance, but

measured by the merit of a devout intention are superior to all the

proud works of the Jews. The Jew sends of his abundance into the

treasury, because he presumes on his own righteousness; but the Church

sends her whole living into God's treasury, because she understands

that even her very living is not of her own desert, but of Divine

grace.

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Chapter 13

1. And as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples saith unto

Him, "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"

2. And Jesus answering said unto him, "Seest thou these great

buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall

not be thrown down."

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Bede, in Marc., iv, 42: Because after the founding of the Church of

Christ, Judaea was to be punished for her treachery, the Lord fitly,

after praising the devotedness of the Church in the person of the poor

widow, goes out of the temple, and foretold its coming ruin, and the

contempt in which the buildings now so wonderful were soon to be held.

Wherefore it is said, "And as He went out of the temple, one of His

disciples saith unto Him, Master, see what manner of stones and what

buildings are here!"

Theophylact: For, since the Lord had spoken much concerning the

destruction of Jerusalem, His disciples wondered, that such numerous

and beautiful buildings were to be destroyed; and this is the reason

why they point out the beauty of the temple, and He answers not only

that they were to be destroyed, but also that one stone should not be

left upon another.

Wherefore it goes on: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou

these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another,

that shall not be thrown down."

Now some may endeavour to prove that Christ's words were false, by

saying that many ruins were left, but this is not at all the point; for

though some ruins had been left, still at the consummation of all

things one stone shall not be left upon another. Besides it is related,

that Aelius Adrian overturned the city and the temple from the

foundation, so that the word of the Lord here spoken was fulfilled.

Bede: But it was ordered by Divine power that after that the grace of

the faith of the Gospel was made known through the world, the temple

itself with its ceremonies should be taken away; lest perchance some

one weak in the faith, if he saw that these things which had been

instituted by God still remained, might by degrees drop from the

sincerity of the faith, which is in Christ Jesus, into carnal Judaism.

Pseudo-Jerome: Here also the Lord enumerates to His disciples the

destruction of the last time, that is of the temple, with the people,

and its letter; of which one stone shall not be left upon another, that

is, no testimony of the Prophets upon those, to whom the Jews

perversely applied them, that is, on Ezra, Zerubbabel and the

Maccabees.

Bede: Again, when the Lord left the temple, all the edifice of the law

and the framework of the commandments were destroyed, so that nothing

could be filled up by the Jews; and now that the head has been taken

away, all the limbs fight one against the other.

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3. And as He sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple,

Peter and James and John and Andrew asked Him privately,

4. "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign

when all these things shall be fulfilled?"

5. And Jesus answering them began to say, "Take heed lest any man

deceive you:

6. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ;' and shall

deceive many.

7. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not

troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.

8. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be

famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows."

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Bede: Because the Lord, when some were praising the buildings of the

temple, had plainly answered that all these were to be destroyed, the

disciples privately enquired about the time and the signs of the

destruction which was foretold.

Wherefore it is said: "And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, over

against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked Him

privately, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the

sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"

The Lord sits upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, when

He discourses upon the ruin and destruction of the temple, so that even

His bodily position may be in accordance with the words which He

speaks, pointing out mystically that, abiding in peace with the saints,

He hates the madness of the proud. For the mount of Olives marks the

fruitful sublimity of the Holy Church.

Augustine, Epist., cxcix, 9: In answer to the disciples, the Lord tells

them of things which were from that time forth to have their course;

whether He meant the destruction of Jerusalem which occasioned their

question, or His own coming through the Church, (in which He ever comes

even unto the end, for we know that He comes in His own, when His

members are born day by day,) or the end itself, in which He will

appear to judge the quick and the dead.

Theophylact: But before answering their question, He strengthens their

minds that they may not be deceived.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus answering them began to say, Take

heed lest any man deceive you?"

And this He says, because when the sufferings of the Jews began, some

arose professing to be teachers.

Wherefore there follows: "For many shall come in My name, saying, I am

Christ; and shall deceive many."

Bede: For many came forward, when destruction was hanging over

Jerusalem, saying that they were Christs, and that the time of freedom

was now approaching. Many teachers of heresy also arose in the Church

even in the time of the Apostles; and many Antichrists came in the name

of Christ, the first of whom was Simon Magus, to whom the Samaritans,

as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, listened, saying, "This man is

the great power of God." [Acts 8:10]

Wherefore also it is added here, "And shall deceive many."

Now from the time of the Passion of our Lord there ceased not amongst

the Jewish people, who chose the seditious robber and rejected Christ

the Saviour, either external wars or civil discord.

Wherefore it goes on: "And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of

wars, be ye not troubled."

And when these come, the Apostles are warned not to be afraid, or to

leave Jerusalem and Judaea, because the end was not to come at once,

nay was to be put off for forty years.

And this is what is added: "for such things must needs be; but the end

shall not be yet," that is, the desolation of the province, and the

last destruction of the city and temple.

It goes on: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against

kingdom."

Theophylact: That is, the Romans against the Jews, which Josephus

relates happened before the destruction of Jerusalem. For when the Jews

refused to pay tribute, the Romans arose, in anger; but because at that

time they were merciful, they took indeed their spoils, but did not

destroy Jerusalem. What follows shews that God fought against the Jews,

for it is said, "And there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and

there shall be famines."

Bede: Now it is on record that this literally took place at the time of

the Jewish rebellion. But "kingdom against kingdom," the pestilence of

those whose word spreads as a canker, dearth of the word of God, the

commotion of the whole earth, and the separation from the true faith,

may all rather be understood of heretics who, by fighting one against

the other, bring about the triumph of the Church.

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9. "But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to

councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be

brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony against

them.

10. And the Gospel must first be published among all nations.

11. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought

beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but

whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is

not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

12. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father

the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall

cause them to be put to death.

13. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that

shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

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Bede: The Lords shews how Jerusalem and the province of Judaea merited

the infliction of such calamities, in the following words: "But take

heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in

the synagogues ye shall be beaten."

For the greatest cause of destruction to the Jewish people was, that

after slaying the Saviour, they also tormented the heralds of His name

and faith with wicked cruelty.

Theophylact: Fitly also did He premise a recital of those things which

concerned the Apostles, that in their own tribulations they might find

some consolation in the community of troubles and sufferings.

There follows: "And ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for My

sake, for a testimony against them."

He says "kings and rulers," as, for instance, Agrippa, Nero and Herod.

Again, His saying, "for My sake," gave them no small consolation, in

that they were about to suffer for His sake. "For a testimony against

them," means, as a judgment beforehand against them, that they might be

inexcusable, in that though the Apostles were labouring for the truth,

they would not join themselves to it. Then, that they might not think

that their preaching should be impeded by troubles and dangers, He

adds: "And the Gospel must first be published among all nations."

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 77: Matthew adds, "And then shall the end

come." [Matt 24:14]

Bede: Ecclesiastical historians testify that this was fulfilled, for

they relate that all the Apostles long before the destruction of the

province of Judaea were dispersed to preach the Gospel over the whole

world, except James the son of Zebedee and James the brother of our

Lord, who had before shed their blood in Judaea for the word of the

Lord. Since then the Lord knew that the hearts of the disciples would

be saddened by the fall and destruction of their nation, He relieves

them by this consolation, to let them know that even after the casting

away of the Jews, companions in their joy and heavenly kingdom should

not be wanting, nay that many more were to be collected out of all

mankind than perished in Judaea.

Gloss.: Another anxiety might also arise in the breasts of the

disciples. Lest therefore after hearing that they were to be brought

before kings and rulers, they should fear that their want of science

and eloquence should render them unable to answer, our Lord consoles

them by saying, "But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take

no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, but whatsoever shall be

given you in that hour, that speak ye."

Bede: For when we are led before judges for Christ's sake, all our duty

is to offer up our will for Christ. As for the rest, Christ Himself who

dwells in us speaks for us, and the grace of the Holy Ghost shall be

given us, when we answer.

Wherefore it goes on: "For it is not ye that shall speak, but the Holy

Ghost."

Theophylact: He also foretells to them a worse evil, that they should

suffer persecution from their relations.

Wherefore there follows: "Now the brother shall betray the brother to

death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their

parents, and shall cause them to be put to death; and ye shall be hated

of all men for My name's sake."

Bede: This has often been seen in time of persecution, nor can there be

any firm affection amongst men who differ in faith.

Theophylact: And this He says, that on hearing it, they might prepare

themselves to bear persecutions and ills with greater patience. Then He

brings them consolation, saying, "And ye shall be hated of all men for

My name's sake;" for the being hated for Christ's sake is a sufficient

reason for suffering persecutions patiently, for it is not the

punishment, but the cause, that makes the martyr. Again, that which

follows is no small comfort amidst persecution: "But he that shall

endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

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14. "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by

Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth

understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

15. And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house,

neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:

16. And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up

his garment.

17. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in

those days!

18. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

19. For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the

beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither

shall be.

20. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should

be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom He hath chosen, He hath

shortened the days."

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Gloss.: After speaking of the things which were to happen before the

destruction of the city, the Lord now foretells those which happened

about the destruction itself of the city, saying, "But when ye shall

see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, (let him

that readeth understand)."

Augustine, de Con Evan, ii, 77: Matthew says, standing "in the holy

place;" but with this verbal difference Mark has expressed the same

meaning; for He says "where it ought not" to stand, because it ought

not to stand in the holy place.

Bede: When we are challenged to understand what is said, we may

conclude that it is mystical. But it may either be said simply of

Antichrist, or of the statue of Caesar, which Pilate put into the

temple, or of the equestrian statue of Adrian, which for a long time

stood in the holy of holies itself. An idol is also called abomination

according to the Old Testament, and He has added "of desolation"

because it was placed in the temple when desolate and deserted.

Theophylact: Or He means by "the abomination of desolation" the

entrance of enemies into the city by violence.

Augustine, Epist., cxcix, 9: But Luke, in order to shew that the

abomination of desolation happened when Jerusalem was taken, in this

same place gives the words of our Lord, "And when ye shall see

Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof

is nigh." [Luke 21:20]

It goes on: "Then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains."

Bede: It is on record that this was literally fulfilled, when on the

approach of the war with Rome and the extermination of the Jewish

people, all the Christians who were in that province, warned by the

prophecy, fled far away, as Church history relates, and retiring beyond

Jordan, remained for a time in the city of Pella under the protection

of Agrippa, the king of the Jews, to whom mention is made in the Acts,

and who with that part of the Jews, who chose to obey him, always

continued subject to the Roman empire.

Theophylact: And well does He say, "Who are in Judaea," for the

Apostles were no longer in Judaea, but before the battle had been

driven from Jerusalem.

Gloss.: [ed. note: Non in Gloss - sed ap. Theophylact] Or rather went

out of their own accord, being led by the Holy Ghost.

It goes on: "And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the

house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house;" for

it is a desirable thing to be saved even naked from such a destruction.

It goes on: "But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give

suck in those days."

Bede: That is, they whose wombs or whose hands, overladen with the

burden of children, in no small measure impede their forced flight.

Theophylact: But it seems to me, that in these words He foretells the

eating of children, for when afflicted by famine and pestilence, they

laid hands on their children.

Gloss.: Again, after having mentioned this double impediment to flight,

which might arise either from the desire of taking away property, or

from having children to carry, He touches upon the third obstacle,

namely, that coming from the season; saying, "And pray ye that your

flight be not in the winter."

Theophylact: That is, lest they who wish to fly should be impeded by

the difficulties of the season. And He fitly gives the cause for so

great a necessity for flight; saying, "For in those days shall be

affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which

God created unto this time, neither shall be."

Augustine, Epist., cxcix, 9: For Josephus, who has written the history

of the Jews, relates that such things were suffered by this people, as

are scarcely credible, wherefore it is said, not without cause, that

there was not such tribulation from the beginning of the creation until

now, nor shall ever be. But although in the time of Antichrist there

shall be one similar or greater, we must understand that it is of that

people, that it is said that there shall never happen such another. For

if they are the first and foremost to receive Antichrist, that same

people may rather be said to cause than to suffer tribulation.

Bede: The only refuge in such evils is, that God who gives strength to

suffer, should abridge the power of inflicting.

Wherefore there follows: "And except that the Lord had shortened those

days."

Theophylact: That is, if the Roman war had not been soon finished, "no

flesh should be saved;" that is, no Jew should have escaped; "but for

the elect's sake, whom He hath chosen," that is, for the sake of the

believing Jews, or who were hereafter to believe, "He hath shortened

the days," that is, the war was soon finished, for God foresaw that

many Jews would believe after the destruction of the city; for which

reason He would not suffer the whole race to be utterly destroyed.

Augustine: But some persons more fitly understand that the calamities

themselves are signified by days, as evil days are spoken of in other

parts of Holy Scripture; for the days themselves are not evil, but what

is done in them. The woes themselves therefore are said to be abridged,

because through the patience which God gave they felt them less, and

then what was great in itself was abridged.

Bede: Or else; these words, "In those days shall be affliction,"

properly agree with the times of Antichrist, when not only tortures

more frequent, and more painful than before are to be heaped on the

faithful, but also, what is more terrible, the working of miracles

shall accompany those who inflict torments. But in proportion as this

tribulation shall be greater than those which preceded, by so much

shall it be shorter.

For it is believed, that during three years and a half, as far as may

be conjectured from the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelations of John,

the Church is to be attacked. In a spiritual sense, however, when we

see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, that is,

heresies and crimes reigning amongst them, who appear to be consecrated

by the heavenly mysteries, then whosoever of us remain in Judaea, that

is, in the confession of the true faith, ought to mount the higher in

virtue, the more men we see following the broad paths of vice.

Pseudo-Jerome: For our flight is to the mountains, that he who has

mounted to the heights of virtue may not go down to the depths of sin.

Bede: Then let him who is on the house-top, that is, whose mind rises

above carnal deeds, and who lives spiritually, as it were in the free

air, not come down to the base acts of his former conversation, nor

seek again those things which he had left, the desires of the world or

the flesh. For our house either means this world, or that in which we

live, our own flesh.

Pseudo-Jerome: "Pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on

the sabbath day," that is, that the fruit of our work may not be ended

with the end of time; for fruit comes to an end in the winter and time

in the sabbath.

Bede: But if we are to understand it of the consummation of the world,

He commands that our faith and love for Christ should not grow cold,

and that we should not grow lazy and cold in the work of God, by taking

a sabbath from virtue.

Theophylact: We must also avoid sin with fervour, and not coldly and

quietly.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the tribulation shall be great, and the days short,

for the sake of the elect, lest the evil of this time should change

their understanding.

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21. "And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo,

he is there;' believe him not.:

22. For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew

signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

23. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

24. But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be

darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25. And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in

heaven shall be shaken.

26. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with

great power and glory.

27. And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His

elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the

uttermost part of heaven.

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Theophylact: After that the Lord had finished all that concerned

Jerusalem, He now speaks of the coming of Antichrist, saying, "Then if

any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, to, he is there;

believe him not." But when He says, "then," think not that it means

immediately after these things are fulfilled about Jerusalem; as

Matthew also says after the birth of Christ, "In those days came John

the Baptist;" [Matt 3:1] does he mean immediately after the birth of

Christ? No, but he speaks indefinitely and without precision. So also

here, "then" may be taken to mean not when Jerusalem shall be made

desolate, but about the time of the coming of Antichrist.

It goes on: "For false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and

shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the

elect."

For many shall take upon them the name of Christ, so as to seduce even

the faithful.

Augustine, de Civ. Dei, xx, 19: For then shall Satan be unchained, and

work through Antichrist in all his power, wonderfully indeed, but

falsely. But a doubt is often raised whether the Apostle said "signs

and lying wonders," because he is to deceive mortal sense, by phantoms,

so as to appear to do what he does not, or because those wonders

themselves, even though true, are to turn men aside to lies, because

they will not believe that any power but a Divine power could do them,

being ignorant of the power of Satan, especially when he shall have

received such power as he never had before. But for whichever reason it

is said, they shall be deceived by those signs and wonders who deserve

to be deceived.

Greg., Hom in Ezech. i, 9: Why however is it said with a doubt "if it

were possible," when the Lord knows beforehand what is to be? One of

two things is implied; that if they are elect, it is not possible; and

if it is possible, they are not elect. This doubt therefore in our

Lord's discourse expresses the trembling in the mind of the elect. And

He calls them elect, because He sees that they will persevere in faith

and good works; for those who are chosen to remain firm are to be

tempted to fall by the signs of the preachers of Antichrist.

Bede: Some however refer this to the time of the Jewish captivity,

where many, declaring themselves to be Christs, drew after them crowds

of deluded persons; but during the siege of the city there was no

Christian to whom the Divine exhortation, not to follow false teachers,

could apply. Wherefore it is better to understand it of heretics, who,

coming to oppose the Church, pretended to be Christs; the first of whom

was Simon Magus, but that last one, greater than the rest, is

Antichrist.

It goes on: "But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things."

Augustine, Epist., 78: For He did not only foretel to His disciples the

good things which He would give to His saints and faithful ones, but

also the woes in which this world was to abound, that we might look for

our reward at the end of the world with more confidence, from feeling

the woes in like manner announced as about to precede the end of the

world.

Theophylact: But after the coming of Antichrist, the frame of the world

shall be altered and changed, for the stars shall be obscured on

account of the abundance of the brightness of Christ.

Wherefore it goes on: "But in those days, after that tribulation, the

sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; and the

stars of heaven shall fall."

Bede: For the stars in the day of judgment shall appear obscure, not by

any lessening of their own light, but because of the brightness of the

true light, that is, of the most high Judge coming upon them; although

there is nothing to prevent its being taken to mean, that the sun and

moon with all the other heavenly bodies then for a time are really to

lose their light, just as we are told was the case with the sun at the

time of our Lord's Passion. But after the day of judgment, when there

shall be a new sky and a new earth, then shall happen what Isaiah says:

"Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and

the light of the sun shall be sevenfold." [Isa 30:26]

There follows: "And the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Theophylact: That is, the Angelic virtues shall be astonished, seeing

that such great things are done, and that their fellow-servants are

judged.

Bede: What wonder is it that men should be troubled at this judgment,

the sight of which makes the very Angelic powers to tremble? What will

the stories of the house do when the pillars shake? What does the shrub

of the wilderness undergo, when the cedar of paradise is moved?

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, the sun shall be darkened, at the coldness of

their hearts, as in the winter time. And the moon shall not give her

light with serenity, in this time of quarrel, and the stars of heaven

shall fail in their light, when the seed of Abraham shall all but

disappear, for to it they are likened [Gen 22:17]. And the powers of

heaven shall be stirred up to the wrath of vengeance, when they shall

be sent by the Son of Man at His coming, of whose Advent it is said,

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great

power and glory," He, that is, who first came down like rain into the

fleece of Gideon in all lowliness.

Augustine, Epist., cxcix, 11: For since it was said by the Angels to

the Apostles, "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go

into heaven," [Acts 1:11] rightly do we believe that He will come not

only in the same body, but on a cloud, since He is to come as He went

away, and a cloud received Him as He was going.

Theophylact: But they shall see the Lord as the Son of Man, that is, in

the body, for that which is seen is body.

Augustine, de Trin., i, 13: For the vision of the Son of Man is shewn

even to the bad, but the vision of the form of God to the pure in heart

alone, "for they shall see God." [Matt 5:8] And because the wicked

cannot see the Son of God, as He is in the form of God, equal to the

Father, and at the same time both just and wicked are to see Him as

Judge of the quick and dead, before Whom they shall be judged, it was

necessary that the Son of Man should receive power to judge. Concerning

the execution of which power, there is immediately added, "And then

shall He send He angels."

Theophylact: Observe that Christ sends the Angels as well as the

Father; where then are they who say that He is not equal to the Father?

For the Angels go forth to gather together the faithful, who are

chosen, that they may be carried into the air to meet Jesus Christ.

Wherefore it goes on: "And gather together His elect from the four

winds."

Pseudo-Jerome: As corn winnowed from the threshing-floor of the whole

earth.

Bede: By "the four winds," He means the four parts of the world, the

east, the west, the north, and the south. And lest any one should think

that the elect are to be gathered together only from the four edges of

the world, and not from the midland regions as well as the borders, He

has fitly added, "From the uttermost part of earth, to the uttermost

part of heaven," that is, from the extremities of the earth to its

utmost bounds, where the circle of the heavens appears to those who

look from afar to rest upon the boundaries of the earth. No one

therefore shall be elect in that day who remains behind and does not

meet the Lord in the air, when He comes to judgment. The reprobate also

shall come to judgment, that when it is finished they may be scattered

abroad and perish from before the face of God.

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28. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet

tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29. So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass,

know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30. Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till

all these things be done.

31. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass

away."

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Bede: Under the example of a tree the Lord gave a pattern of the end,

saying, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree, when her branch is yet

tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near. So ye in

like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it

is nigh, even at the doors."

Theophylact: As if He had said, As when the fig tree puts forth its

leaves, summer follows at once, so also after the woes of Antichrist,

at once, without an interval, shall be the coming of Christ, who will

be to the just as summer after winter, but to sinners, winter after

summer.

Augustine, Epist., 119, 11: All that is said by the three Evangelists

concerning the Advent of our Lord, if diligently compared together and

examined, will perchance be found to belong to His daily coming in His

body, that is, the Church, except those places where that last coming

is so promised, as if it were approaching; for instance in the last

part of the discourse according to Matthew, the coming itself is

clearly expressed, where it is said, "When the Son of Man shall come in

His glory," [Matt 25:31] For what does He refer to in the words, "when

ye shall see these things come to pass," but those things which He has

mentioned above, amongst which it is said, "And then ye shall see the

Son of Man coming in the clouds." The end therefore shall not be then,

but then it shall be near at hand.

Or are we to say, that not all those things which are mentioned above

are to be taken in, but only some of them, that is, leaving out these

words, "Then shall ye see the Son of Man coming;" for that shall be the

end itself, and not its approach only. But Matthew has declared that it

is to be received without exception, saying, "When ye shall see all

these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." That which is

said above must therefore be taken thus; "And He shall send His angels,

and gather together the elect from the four winds;" that is, He shall

collect His elect from the four winds of heaven, which He does in the

whole of the last hour, coming in His members as in clouds.

Bede: This fruitbearing of the fig tree may also be understood to mean

the state of the synagogue, which was condemned to everlasting

barrenness, because when the Lord came, it had no fruits of

righteousness in those who were then unfaithful. But the Apostle has

said that when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in [Rom 11:25], all

Israel shall be saved. What means this, but that the tree, which has

been long barren, shall then yield the fruit, which it had withheld?

When this shall happen, doubt not that a summer of true peace is at

hand.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, the leaves which come forth are words now

spoken, the summer at hand is the day of Judgment, in which every tree

shall shew what it had within it, deadness for burning, or greenness to

be planted with the tree of life.

There follows: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass,

till these things be done."

Bede: By generation He either means the whole race of mankind, or

specially the Jews.

Theophylact: Or else, "This generation shall not pass away," that is,

the generation of Christians, "until all things be fulfilled," which

were spoken concerning Jerusalem and the coming of Antichrist; for He

does not mean the generation of the Apostles, for the greater part of

the Apostles did not live up to the destruction of Jerusalem. But He

says this of the generation of Christians, wishing to console His

disciples, lest they should believe that the faith should fail at that

time; for the immoveable elements shall first fail, before the words of

Christ fail; wherefore it is added, "Heaven and earth shall pass away,

but My words shall not pass away."

Bede: The heaven which shall pass away is not the ethereal or starry

heaven, but the heaven where is the air. For wheresoever the water of

the judgment could reach, there also, according to the words of the

blessed Peter, the fire of judgment shall reach [2 Pet 3:10-12]. But

the heaven and the earth shall pass away in that form which they now

have, but in their essence they shall last without end.

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32. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels

which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33. Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.

34. For the Son of Man is a man taking a far journey, who left his

house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work,

and commanded the porter to watch.

35. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house

cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the

morning:

36. Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

37. And what I say unto you I say unto all - Watch."

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Theophylact: The Lord wishing to prevent His disciples from asking

about that day and hour, says, "But of that day and that hour knoweth

no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but

the Father."

For if He had said, I know, but I will not reveal it to you, He would

have saddened them not a little; but He acted more wisely, and prevents

their asking such a question, lest they should importune Him, by

saying, neither the Angels, nor I.

Hilary, de Trin., ix: This ignorance of the day and hour is urged

against the Only-Begotten God, as if, God born of God had not the same

perfection of nature as God. But first, let common sense decide whether

it is credible that He, who is the cause that all things are, and are

to be, should be ignorant of any out of all these things. For how can

it be beyond the knowledge of that nature, by which and in which that

which is to be done is contained? And can He be ignorant of that day,

which is the day of His own Advent? Human substances foreknow as far as

they can what they intend to do, and the knowledge of what is to be

done, follows upon the will to act. How then can the Lord of glory,

from ignorance of the day of His coming, be believed to be of that

imperfect nature, which has on it a necessity of coming, and has not

attained to the knowledge of its own advent?

But again, how much more room for blasphemy will there be, if a feeling

of envy is ascribed to God the Father, in that He has withheld the

knowledge of His beatitude from Him to whom He gave a foreknowledge of

His death. But if there are in Him all the treasures of knowledge, He

is not ignorant of this day; rather we ought to remember that the

treasures of wisdom in Him are hidden; His ignorance therefore must be

connected with the hiding of the treasures of wisdom, which are in Him.

For in all cases, in which God declares Himself ignorant, He is not

under the power of ignorance, but either it is not a fit time for

speaking, or it is an economy of not acting.

But if God is said then to have known that Abraham loved Him, when He

did not hide that His knowledge from Abraham, it follows, that the

Father is said to know the day, because He did not hide it from the

Son. If therefore the Son knew not the day, it is a Sacrament of His

being silent, as on the contrary the Father alone is said to know,

because He is not silent. But God forbid that any new and bodily

changes should be ascribed to the Father or the Son.

Lastly, lest He should be said to be ignorant from weakness, He has

immediately added, "Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when

the time is."

Pseudo-Jerome: For we must needs watch with our souls before the death

of the body.

Theophylact: But He teach us two things, watching and prayer; for many

of us watch, but watch only to pass the night in wickedness; He now

follows this up with a parable, saying, "For the Son of Man is as a man

taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave his servants power

over every work, and commanded the porter to watch."

Bede: The man who taking a far journey left his house is Christ, who

ascending as a conqueror to His Father after the Resurrection, left His

Church, as to His bodily presence, but has never deprived her of the

safeguard of His Divine presence.

Greg, Hom in Evan, 9: For the earth is properly the place for the

flesh, which was as it were carried away to a far country, when it was

placed by our Redeemer in the heavens. "And he gave his servants power

over every work," when, by giving to His faithful ones the grace of the

Holy Ghost, He gave them the power of serving every good work.

He has also ordered the porter to watch, because He commanded the order

of pastors to have a care over the Church committed to them. Not only,

however, those of us who rule over Churches, but all are required to

watch the doors of their hearts, lest the evil suggestions of the devil

enter into them, and lest our Lord find us sleeping.

Wherefore concluding this parable He adds, "Watch ye therefore: for ye

know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight,

or at cockcrow, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you

sleeping."

Pseudo-Jerome: For he who sleeps applies not his mind to real bodies,

but to phantoms, and when he awakes, he possesses not what he had seen;

so also are those, whom the love of this world seizes upon in this

life; they quit after this life what they dreamed was real.

Theophylact: See again that He has not said, I know not when the time

will be, but, "Ye know not." For the reason why He concealed it was

that it was better for us; for if, now that we know not the end, we are

careless, what should we do if we knew it? We should keep on our

wickedness even unto the end. Let us therefore attend to His words; for

the end comes at even, when a man dies in old age; a midnight, when he

dies in the midst of his youth; and at cockcrow, when our reason is

perfect within us; for when a child begins to live according to his

reason, then the cock cries loud within him, rousing him from the sleep

of sense; but the age of childhood is the morning. Now all these ages

must look out for the end; for even a child must be watched, lest he

die unbaptized.

Pseudo-Jerome: He thus concludes His discourse, that the last should

hear from those who come first this precept which is common to all;

wherefore He adds, "But what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

Augustine, Epist., 199, 3: For He not only speaks to those in whose

hearing He then spake, but even to all who came after them, before our

time, and even to us, and to all after us, even to His last coming. but

shall that day find all living, or will any man say that He speaks also

to the dead, when He says, "Watch, lest when he cometh he find you

sleeping?"

Why then does He say to all, what only belongs to those who shall then

be alive, if it be not that it belongs to all, as I have said? For that

day comes to each man when his day comes for departing from this life

such as he is to be, when judged in that day, and for this reason every

Christian ought to watch, lest the Advent of the Lord find him

unprepared; but that day shall find him unprepared, whom the last day

of his life shall find unprepared.

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Chapter 14

1. 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.

2. But they said, "Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the

people."

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Pseudo-Jerome: Let us now sprinkle our book, and our thresholds, with

blood, and put the scarlet thread around the house of our prayers, and

bind scarlet on our hand, as was done to Zarah [Gen 38:30], that we may

be able to say that the red heifer [Num 19:2] is slain in the valley

[Deut 21:4]. For the Evangelist, being about to speak of the slaying of

Christ, premises, "After two days was the feast of the Passover, and of

unleavened bread."

Bede, Marc., iv, 43: Pascha, which in Hebrew is, phase, is not called

from Passion, as many think, but from passing over, because the

destroyer, seeing the blood on the doors of the Israelites, passed by

them, and did not smite them; or the Lord Himself, bringing aid unto

His people, walked above them.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, phrase, is interpreted as a passing over, but

Pascha means sacrifice. In the sacrifice of the lamb, and the passing

of the people through the sea, or through Egypt, the Passion of Christ

is prefigured, and the redemption of the people from hell, when He

visits us after two days, that is, when the moon is most full, and the

age of Christ is perfect, that when no part at all of it is dark, we

may eat the flesh of the Lamb without spot, Who taketh away the sins of

the world, in one house, that is, in the Catholic Church, shod with

charity, and armed with virtue.

Bede: The difference according to the Old Testament between the

Passover and the feast of unleavened bread was, that the day alone on

which the lamb was slain in the evening, that is, the fourteenth moon

of the first month, was called Passover. But on the fifteenth moon,

when they came out of Egypt, the feast of unleavened bread came on,

which solemn time was appointed for seven days, that is, up to the

twenty-first day of the same month in the evening. But the Evangelists

indifferently use the day of unleavened bread for the Passover, and the

Passover for the days of unleavened bread. Wherefore Mark also here

says, "After two days was the feast of the Passover, and of unleavened

bread," because the day of the Passover was also ordered to be

celebrated on the days of unleavened bread, and we also, as it were,

keeping a continual passover, ought always to be passing out of this

world.

Pseudo-Jerome: But iniquity came forth in Babylon from the princes, who

ought to have purified the temple and the vessels, and themselves

according to the law, in order to eat the lamb.

Wherefore there follows: "And the Chief Priests and the Scribes sought

how they might take Him by craft, and put him to death."

Now when the head is slain, the whole body is rendered powerless,

wherefore these wretched men slay the Head. But they avoid the feast

day, which indeed befits them, for what feasting can there be for them,

who have lost life and mercy?

Wherefore it goes on: "But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there

be an uproar of the people."

Bede: Not indeed, as the words seem to imply, that they feared the

uproar, but they were afraid lest He should be taken out of their hands

by the aid of the people.

Theophylact: Nevertheless, Christ Himself had determined for Himself

the day of His Passion; for He wished to be crucified on the Passover,

because He was the true Passover.

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3. And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at

meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of

spikenard very ; and she brake the box, and poured it on His head.

4. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and

said, "Why was this waste of the ointment made?"

5. "For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and

have been given to the poor." And they murmured against her.

6. And Jesus said, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought

a good work on me."

7. "For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may

do them good: but Me ye have not always."

8. "She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint My

Body to the burying."

9. "Verily I say unto, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached

throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be

spoken of for a memorial to her."

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Bede: The Lord when about to suffer for the whole world, and to redeem

all nations with His Blood, dwells in Bethany, that is, in the house of

obedience.

Wherefore it is said, "And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the

leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman."

Pseudo-Jerome: For the fawn amongst the stags ever comes back to his

couch, that is, the Son, obedient to the Father even unto death, seeks

for obedience from us.

Bede: He says "of Simon the leper", not because he remained still a

leper at that time, but because having once been such, he was healed by

Our Saviour; his former name is left, that the virtue of the Healer may

be made manifest.

Theophylact: But although the four Evangelists record the anointing by

a woman, there were two women and not one; one described by John, the

sister of Lazarus; it was she who six days before the Passover anointed

the feet of Jesus; another described by the other three Evangelists.

Nay, if you examine, you will find three; for one is described by John,

another by Luke, a third by the other two. For that one described by

Luke is said to be a sinner and to have come to Jesus during the time

of His preaching; but this other described by Matthew and Mark is said

to have come at the time of the Passion, nor did she confess that she

had been a sinner.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., ii, 79: I however think that nothing else can

be meant, but that the sinner who then came to the feet of Jesus was

none other than the same Mary who did this twice; once, as Luke relates

it, when coming for the first time with humility and tears she merited

the remission of her sins. For John also relates this, when he began to

speak of the raising of Lazarus before He came to Bethany, saying, "It

was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet

with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick." [John 11:2]

But what she again did at Bethany is another act, unrecorded by Luke,

but mentioned in the same way by the other three Evangelists. In that

therefore Matthew and Mark say that the head of the Lord was anointed

by the woman, whilst John says the feet, we must understand that both

the head and the feet were anointed by the woman. Unless because Mark

has said that she broke the box in order to anoint His head, any one is

so fond of cavilling as to deny that, because the box was broken, any

could remain to anoint the feet of the Lord. But a man of a more pious

spirit will contend that it was not broken so as to pour out the whole,

or else that the feet were anointed before it was broken, so that there

remained in the unbroken box enough to anoint the head.

Bede: Alabaster is a sort of white marble, veined with various colors

which is often hollowed out for boxes of ointment, because it keeps

things of that nature most uncorrupt. Nard is an aromatic shrub of a

large and thick root, but short, black and brittle; though unctuous, it

smells like cypress, and has a sharp taste, and small and dense leaves.

Its tops spread themselves out like ears of corn, therefore, its gift

being double, perfumers make much of the spikes and the leaves of the

nard. And this is what is meant by Mark, when he says "spikenard very

precious", that is, the ointment which Mary brought for the Lord was

not made of the root of nard, but even, what made it more precious, by

the addition of the spikes and the leaves, the gratefulness of its

smell and virtue was augmented.

Theophylact, Matthew 26:2 : Or as is said in Greek, of pistic nard,

that is, faithful, because the ointment of the nard was made faithfully

and without counterfeit.

Augustine, de Con. Evan. ii, 78: It may appear to be a contradiction,

that Matthew and Mark after mentioning "two days" and "the Passover",

and afterwards that Jesus was in Bethany, where that precious ointment

is mentioned; whilst John, just before he speaks of the anointing,

says, that Jesus came into Bethany six days before the feast. [John

12:1] But those persons who are troubled by this, are not aware that

Matthew and Mark do not place that anointing in Bethany immediately

after that two days of which he foretold, but by way of recapitulation

at the time when there were yet six days to the Passover.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again in a mystic sense, Simon the leper means the

world, first infidel, and afterwards converted, and the woman with the

alabaster box, means the faith of The Church, who says, My spikenard

sendeth forth its smell. It is called pistic nard, that is, faithful

and precious. The house filled with the smell of it is heaven and

earth; the broken alabaster box is carnal desire, which is broken at

the Head, from which the whole body is framed together, whilst He was

reclining, that is, humbling Himself, that the faith of the sinner

might be able to reach Him, for she went up from the feet to the head,

and down from the head to the feet by faith, that is, to Christ and to

His members.

It goes on: "And there were some that had indignation within

themselves, and said, Why was this loss of the ointment?"

By the figure synecdoche, one is put for many, and many for one; for it

is the lost Judas who finds loss in salvation; thus in the fruitful

vine rises the snare of death. Under the cover of his avarice, however,

the mystery of faith speaks; for our faith is bought for three hundred

pence, in our ten senses (denarii, i.e. ten senses), that is, our

inward and outward senses which are again trebled by our body, soul and

spirit.

Bede: and in that he says, "And they murmured against her," we must not

understand this to be spoken of the faithful Apostles, but rather of

Judas mentioned in the plural.

Theophylact: Or else, it appears to be aptly implied that many

disciples murmured against the woman, because they had often heard our

Lord talking of alms. Judas, however, was indignant, but not with the

same feeling, but on account of his love of money, and filthy gain;

wherefore John also records him alone, as accusing the woman with a

fraudulent intent. But he says, "They murmured against her," meaning

that they troubled her with reproaches, and hard words. Then Our Lord

reproves His disciples, for throwing obstacles against the wish of the

woman.

Wherefore it goes on: "And Jesus said, Let her alone, why trouble ye

her?" For after she had brought her gift, they wished to prevent her

purpose by their reproaches.

Origen, on Matthew, 35: For they were grieved at the waste of the

ointment, which might be sold for a large sum and given to the poor.

This however ought not to have been, for it was right that it should be

poured over the head of Christ, with a holy and fitting stream;

wherefore it goes on, "She hath wrought a good work on me."

And so effectual is the praise of this good work, that it ought to

excite all of us to fill the head of the Lord with sweet-smelling and

rich offerings, that of us it may be said that we have done a good work

over the head of the Lord. For we always have with us, as long as we

remain in this life, the poor who have need of the care of those who

have made progress in the word, and are enriched in the wisdom of God;

they are not however able always day and night to have with them the

Son of God, that is, the Word and Wisdom of God.

For it goes on: "For ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever

ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always.

Bede: To me, indeed, He seems to speak of His bodily presence, that He

should by no means be with them after His Resurrection, as He then was

living with them in all familiarity.

Pseudo-Jerome: He says also, "She hath wrought a good work on me," for

whosoever believes on the Lord, it is counted unto Him for

righteousness. For it is one thing to believe Him, and to believe on

Him, that is, to cast ourselves entirely upon Him.

It goes on: "She hath done what she could, she is come aforehand to

anoint My Body to the burying."

Bede: As if the Lord said, What ye think is a waste of ointment is the

service of my burial.

Theophylact: For "She is come aforehand" as though led by God "to

anoint my body", as a sign of my approaching burial; by which He

confounds the traitor, as if He said, With what conscience canst thou

confound the woman, who anoints my body to the burial, and dost not

confound thyself, who wilt deliver me to death? But the Lord makes a

double prophecy; one that the Gospel shall be preached over the whole

world, another that the dead of the woman shall be praised.

Wherefore it goes on: "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel

shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath

done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

Bede: Observe, also, that as Mary won glory throughout the whole world

for the service which she rendered to the Lord, so, on the contrary, he

who was bold enough to reprove her service, is held in infamy far and

wide; but the Lord in rewarding the good the due praise has passed over

in silence the future shame of the impious.

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10. And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the Chief Priests,

to betray Him unto them.

11. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him

money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

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Bede: The unhappy Judas wishes to compensate with the price of his

Master for the loss which he thought he had made by the pouring out of

the ointment.

Where it is said: "And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the

Chief Priests to betray Him unto them."

Chrysostom, de Prod. Jud., Homily 1: Why dost thou tell me of his

country? would that I could also have been ignorant of his existence.

But there was another disciple called Judas the zealot, the brother of

James, and lest by calling him by this name there should arise a

confusion between the two, he separates the one from the other. But he

says not Judas the traitor, that he may teach us to be guiltless of

detraction, and to avoid accusing others. In that however he says, "one

of the twelve", he enhanced the detestable guilt of the traitor; for

there were seventy other disciples, these however were not so intimate

with Him, nor admitted to such familiar intercourse. But these twelve

were approved by Him, these were the regal band, out of which the

wicked traitor came forth.

Pseudo-Jerome: But he was one of the twelve in number, not in merit,

one in body, not in soul. But he went to the Chief Priests after he

went out and Satan entered into him. Every living thing unites with

what is like itself.

Bede: But by the words, "he went out", it is shown that he was not

invited by the Chief Priests, nor bound by any necessity, but entered

upon this design from the spontaneous wickedness of his own mind.

Theophylact: It is said, to "betray him unto them", that is, to

announce to them when He should be alone. But they feared to rush upon

Him when He was teaching, for fear of the people.

Pseudo-Jerome: And he promises to betray Him, as his master the devil

said before, "All this power I will give thee." [Luke 4:6]

It goes on, "And when they heard it they were glad, and promised to

give him money." They promise him money, and they lose their life,

which he also loses on receiving the money.

Chrysostom: Oh! the madness, yes, the avarice of the traitor, for his

covetousness brought forth all the evil. For covetousness retains the

souls which it has taken, and confines them in every way when it has

bound them, and makes them forget all things, maddening their minds.

Judas, taken captive by this madness of avarice, forgets the

conversation, the table of Christ, his own discipleship, Christ's

warnings and persuasion.

For there follows, "And he sought how he might conveniently betray

Him."

Pseudo-Jerome: No opportunity for treachery can be found, such that it

can escape vengeance here or there.

Bede: Many in this day shudder at the crime of Judas in selling his

Master, his Lord and his God, for money, as monstrous and horrible

wickedness. They however do not take heed, for when the sake of gain

they trample on the rights of charity and truth, they are traitors to

God, Who is Charity and Truth.

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12. And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the

Passover, His disciples said unto Him: Where wilt Thou that we go and

prepare that Thou mayest eat the Passover?

13. And He sendeth forth two of His disciples, and saith unto them: Go

ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of

water - follow him.

14. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house,

The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the

Passover with My disciples?

15. And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared:

there make ready for us.

16. And His disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as

He had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover.

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Chrysostom: Whilst Judas was plotting how to betray Him, the rest of

the disciples were taking care of the preparation of the Passover:

where it is said, "And the first day of unleavened bread, when they

killed the Passover, His disciples said unto Him, Where wilt thou that

we go and prepare where thou mayest eat the Passover?' "

Bede: He means by the first day of the Passover the fourteenth day of

the first month, when they throw aside leaven, and were wont to

sacrifice, that is, to kill the lamb at even. The Apostle explaining

this says, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." [1 Cor 5:7].

For although He was crucified on the next day, that is, on the

fifteenth moon, yet on the night when the lamb was offered up, He

committed to His disciples the Mysteries of His Body and Blood, which

they were to celebrate, and was seized upon and bound by the Jews; thus

He consecrated the beginning of His Sacrifice, that is, of His Passion.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the unleavened bread which was eaten with

bitterness, that is with bitter herbs, is our redemption, and the

bitterness is the Passion of Our Lord.

Theophylact: From the words of the disciples, "Where wilt thou that we

go?", it seems evident that Christ had no dwelling-place, and that the

disciples had no houses of their own; for if so, they would have taken

Him thither.

Pseudo-Jerome: For they say, "Where wilt thou that we go?", to shew us

that we should direct our steps according to the Will of God. But the

Lord points out with whom He would eat the Passover, and after His

custom He sends two disciples, which we have explained above; wherefore

it goes on, "And He sendeth forth two of His disciples, and He saith

unto them, Go ye into the city.' "

Theophylact: He sent two of His disciples, that is, Peter and John, as

Luke says, to a man unknown to Him, implying by this that He might, if

He had pleased, have avoided His Passion. For what could not He work in

other men, who influenced the mind of a person unknown to Him, so that

he received them? He also gives them a sign how they were to know the

house, when He adds, "And there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher

of water."

Augustine, de Con. Evan, ii, 80: Mark says a pitcher, Luke a two-handed

vessel; one points out the kind of vessel, the other the mode of

carrying it; both however mean the same truth.

Bede: And it is a proof of the presence of His divinity, that in

speaking with His disciples, He knows what is to take place elsewhere;

wherefore it follows, "And His disciples went forth, and came into the

city, and found as He had said unto them; and they made ready the

Passover."

Chrysostom: Not our Passover, but in the meanwhile that of the Jews;

but He did not only appoint ours, but Himself became our Passover. Why

too did He eat it? Because He was "made under the Law, to redeem them

that were under the Law," [Gal 4:4] and Himself gave rest to the Law.

And lest any one should say that He did away with it, because He could

not fulfil its hard and difficult obedience, He first Himself fulfilled

it, and then set it to rest.

Pseudo-Jerome: And in a mystical sense the city is The Church,

surrounded by the wall of faith, the man who meets them is the

primitive people, the pitcher of water is the law of the letter.

Bede: Or else, the water is the laver of grace, the pitcher points out

the weakness of those who were to shew that grace to the world.

Theophylact: He who is baptized carries the pitcher of water, and he

who bears baptism upon him comes to his rest, if he lives according to

his reason; and he obtains rest, as being in the house.

Wherefore it is added, "Follow Him."

Pseudo-Jerome: That is, him who leads to the lofty place, where is the

refreshment prepared by Christ. The lord of the house is the Apostle,

Peter, to who the Lord has entrusted His house, that there may be one

faith under one Shepherd. [ref John 21:15] The large upper-room is the

wide-spread Church, in which the Name of the Lord is spoken of,

prepared by a variety of powers and tongues.

Bede: Or else, the large upper-room is spiritually the Law, which comes

forth from the narrowness of the letter, and in a lofty place, that is,

in the lofty chamber of the soul, receives the Saviour. But it is

designedly that the names both of the bearer of the water, and of the

lord of the house, are omitted, to imply that power is given to all who

wish to celebrate the true Passover, that is, to be embued with the

Sacraments of Christ, and to receive Him in the dwelling-place of their

mind.

Theophylact: Or else, the lord of the house is the intellect, which

points out the large upper room, that is, the loftiness of

intelligences, and which, though it be high, yet has nothing of vain

glory, or of pride, but is prepared and made level by humility. But

there, that is, in such a mind Christ's Passover is prepared by Peter

and John, that is by action and contemplation.

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17. And in the evening He cometh with The Twelve.

18. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you,

one of you which eateth with me shall betray me."

19. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one, "Is

it I?" And another said, "Is it I?"

20. And He answered and said unto them, "It is one of The Twelve, that

dippeth with Me in the dish."

21. "The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him: but woe to

that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for that man

if he had never been born."

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Bede: The Lord Who had foretold His Passion, prophesied also of the

traitor, in order to give him room for repentance, that understanding

that his thoughts were known, he might repent. Wherefore it is said,

"And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did

eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me

shall betray me."

Chrysostom: Where it is evident that He did not proclaim him openly to

all, lest He should make him the more shameless; at the same time He

did not altogether keep it silent, lest thinking that he was not

discovered, he should boldly hasten to betray Him.

Theophylact: But how could they eat reclining, when the law ordered

that standing and upright they should eat the Passover? It is probable

that they had first fulfilled the legal Passover, and had reclined,

when He began to give them His own Passover.

Pseudo-Jerome: The evening of the day points out the evening of the

world; for the last, who are the first to receive the penny of eternal

life, come about the eleventh hour. All the disciples then are touched

by the Lord; so that there is amongst them the harmony of the harp, all

the well attuned strings answer with accordant tone; for it goes on:

"And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one, Is it

I?"

One of them however, unstrung, and steeped in the love of money, said,

"Is it I, Lord?", as Matthew testifies.

Theophylact: But the other disciples began to be saddened on account of

the word of the Lord; for although they were free from this passion,

yet they trust Him Who knows all hearts, rather than themselves.

It goes on: "And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the

twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish."

Bede: That is, Judas, who when the others were sad and held back their

hands, puts forth his hand with his Master into the dish. And because

He had before said, One of you shall betray me, and yet the traitor

perseveres in his evil, He accuses him more openly, without however

pointing out his name.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, He says, "One out of the twelve", as it were,

separate from them, for the wolf carries away from the flock the sheep

which he has taken, and the sheep which quits the fold lies open to the

bite of the wolf. But Judas does not withdraw his foot from his

traitorous design though once and again pointed at, wherefore his

punishment is foretold, that the death denounced upon him might correct

him, whom shame could not overcome; wherefore it goes on: "The Son of

Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him."

Theophylact: The word here used, "goeth", shews that the death of

Christ was not forced, but voluntary.

Pseudo-Jerome: But because many do good, in the way that Judas did,

without its profiting them, there follows: "Woe to that man by whom the

Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been

born."

Bede: Woe, too, to that man, today and forever, who comes to the Lord's

table with an evil intent. For he, after the example of Judas, betrays

the Lord, not indeed to Jewish sinners, but to his own sinning members.

It goes on: "Good were it for that man if he had never been born."

Pseudo-Jerome: That is, hidden in his mother's inmost womb, for it is

better for a man not to exist than to exist for torments.

Theophylact: For as respects the end for which he was designed, it

would have been better for him to have been born, if he had not been

the betrayer, for God created him for good works; but after he had

fallen into such dreadful wickedness, it would have been better for him

never to have been born.

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22. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it,

and gave to them, and said, "Take, eat: This is My Body."

23. and He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to

them, and they all drank of it.

24. And He said unto them, "This is My Blood of the New Testament,

which is shed for many."

25. "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the

vine, until that day that I drink It new in the Kingdom of God."

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Bede: When the rites of the old Passover were finished, He passed to

the new, in order, that is, to substitute the Sacrament of His own Body

and Blood, for the flesh and blood of the lamb. Wherefore there

follows: "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread"; that is, in order to

shew that He, Himself, is that person to whom the Lord swore, "Thou art

a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedec." [Ps 100:4]

There follows: "And blessed, and brake it."

Theophylact: That is, giving thanks, He brake it, which we also do,

with the addition of some prayers.

Bede: He Himself also breaks the bread, which He gives to His

disciples, to shew that the breaking of His Body was to take place, not

against His Will, nor without His intervention; He also blessed it,

because He with the Father and the Holy Spirit filled His human nature,

which He took upon Him in order to suffer, with the grace of Divine

power. He blessed bread and brake it, because He deigned to subject to

death His manhood, which He had taken upon Him in such a way as to shew

that there was within it the power of Divine immortality, and to teach

them that therefore He would the more quickly raise it from the dead.

There follows: "And gave to them, and said, Take, eat: This is My

Body.' "

Theophylact: That, namely, which I now give and which ye take. But the

bread is not a mere figure of the Body of Christ, but is changed into

the very Body of Christ. For the Lord said, "The bread which I give you

is My Flesh." But the Flesh of Christ is veiled from our eyes on

account of our weakness, for bread and wine are things to which we are

accustomed, if however we saw flesh and blood we could not bear to take

them. For this reason the Lord bending Himself to our weakness keeps

the forms of bread and wine, but changes the bread and wine into the

reality of His Body and Blood.

Chrysostom: Even now also that Christ is close to us; He Who prepared

that table, Himself also consecrates it. For it is not man who makes

the offerings to be the Body and Blood of Christ, but Christ Who was

crucified for us. The words are spoken by the mouth of the Priest, and

are consecrated by the power and the grace of God. By this word which

He spoke, "This is My Body", the offerings are consecrated; and as that

word which says, "Increase and multiply, and fill the earth," [Gen

1:28] was sent forth but once, yet has its effect throughout all time,

when nature does the work of generation; so also that voice was spoken

once, yet gives confirmation to the Sacrifice through all the tables of

The Church even to this day, even to His advent.

Pseudo-Jerome: But in a mystical sense, the Lord transfigures into

bread His Body, which is the present Church, which is received in

faith, is blessed in its number, is broken in its sufferings, is given

in its examples, is taken in its doctrines; and He forms His Blood in

the chalice of water and wine mingled together, that by one we may be

purged from our sins, by the other redeemed from their punishment

[formans sanguinem suum ap. I's eudo-Hier]. For by the blood of the

lamb our houses are preserved from the smiting of the Angel, and our

enemies perish in the waters of the Red Sea, which are the Sacraments

of the Church of Christ.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He took the cup, and when He had given

thanks, He gave it to them." For we are saved by the grace of the Lord,

not by our own deserts.

Gregory, Mor. ii, 37: When His Passion was approaching, He is said to

have taken bread and given thanks. He therefore gave thanks, Who took

upon Him the stripes of other men's wickedness; He Who did nothing

worthy of smiting, humbly gives a blessing in His Passion, to shew us,

what each should do when beaten for his own sins, since He Himself bore

calmly the stripes due to the sin of others; furthermore to shew us,

what we who are the subjects of the Father should do under correction,

when He Who is His equal gave thanks under the lash.

Bede: The wine of the Lord's cup is mixed with water, because we should

remain in Christ and Christ in us. For on the testimony of John, the

waters are the people, [Rev 17:15] and it is not lawful for any one to

offer either wine alone, or water alone, lest such an oblation should

mean that the head may be severed from the members, and either that

Christ could suffer without love for our redemption, and that we can be

saved or be offered to the Father without His Passion.

It goes on: "And they all drank of it."

Pseudo-Jerome: Happy intoxication, saving fulness, which the more we

drink gives the greater sobriety of mind!

Theophylact: Some say that Judas did not partake in these Mysteries,

but that he went out before the Lord gave the Sacrament. Some again say

that He gave him also of that Sacrament.

Chrysostom: For Christ offered His Blood to him who betrayed Him, that

he might have remission of his sins, if he had chosen to cease to be

wicked.

Pseudo-Jerome: Judas therefore drinks and is not satisfied, nor can he

quench the thirst of the everlasting fire, because he unworthily

partakes of the Mysteries of Christ. There are some in The Church whom

the Sacrifice does not cleanse, but their foolish thought draws them on

to sin, for they have plunged themselves in the stinking slough of

cruelty.

Chrysostom: Let there not be therefore a Judas at the table of the

Lord; this Sacrifice is spiritual food, for as bodily food, working on

a belly filled with humours which are opposed to it, is hurtful, so

this spiritual food if taken by one polluted with wickedness, rather

brings him to perdition, not by its own nature, but through the fault

of the recipient. Let therefore our mind be pure in all things, and our

thought pure, for that Sacrifice is pure.

There follows: "And He said unto them, This is My Blood of the New

Testament, which is shed for many.' "

Bede: This refers to the different circumstances of the Old Testament,

which was consecrated by the blood of calves and of goats; and the

lawgiver said in sprinking it, "This is the blood of the Testament

which God has injoined unto you." [Heb 9:19-20, ref. Ex 24:8]

It goes on: "Which is shed for many."

Pseudo-Jerome: For it does not cleanse all.

It goes on: "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit

of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Theophylact: As if He had said, I will not drink wine until the

Resurrection; for He calls His Resurrection "the kingdom", as He then

reigned over death. But after His Resurrection He ate and drank with

His disciples, shewing that it was He Himself who had suffered. But He

drank it "new", that is, in a new and strange manner, for He had not a

body subject to suffering, and requiring food, but immortal and

incorruptible.

We may also understand it in this way. The vine is the Lord Himself. By

the offspring (genimen) of the vine is meant mysteries, and the secret

understanding, which He Himself begets (gererat), Who teaches man

knowledge. But in the kingdom of God, that is, in the world to come, He

will drink with His disciples mysteries and knowledge, teaching us new

things, and revealing what He now hides.

Bede: Or else, Isaiah testifies that the synagogue is called the vine

or the vineyard of the Lord, saying, "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts

is the house of Israel." [Isa 5:7] The Lord therefore when about to go

to His Passion, says, "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine,"

as if He had said openly, I will no longer delight in the carnal rites

of the synagogue, in which also these rites of the Paschal Lamb have

held the chief place. For the time of My Resurrection shall come, that

day shall come, when in the kingdom of Heaven, that is, raised on high

with the glory of immortal life, I will be filled with a new joy,

together with you, for the salvation of the same people born again of

the fountain of spiritual grace.

Pseudo-Jerome: But we must consider that here the Lord changes the

sacrifice without changing the time; so that we never celebrate the

Caena Domini before the fourteenth moon. He who celebrates the

Resurrection on the fourteenth moon, will celebrate the Caena Domini on

the eleventh moon, which was never done in either Old or New Testament.

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26. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of

Olives.

27. And Jesus saith unto them, "All ye shall be offended because of me

this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep

shall be scattered."

28. "But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee."

29. But Peter said unto Him, "Although all shall be offended, yet will

not I."

30. And Jesus saith unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, that this day,

even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me

thrice."

31. But he spake the more vehemently, "If I should die with thee, I

will not deny thee in any wise." Likewise, also, said they all.

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Theophylact: As they returned thanks, before they drank, so they return

thanks after drinking; wherefore it is said, "And when they had sung an

hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives," to teach us to return

thanks both before and after our food.

Pseudo-Jerome: For by a hymn he means the praise of the Lord, as is

said in the Psalms [Ps 22, 26, 29], "The poor shall eat and be

satisfied; they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him." And again,

"All such as be fat upon earth have eaten and worshipped."

Theophylact: He also shews by this that He was glad to die for us,

because when about to be betrayed, He deigned to praise God. He also

teaches us when we fall into troubles for the sake of the salvation of

many, not to be sad, but to give thanks to God, Who through our

distress works the salvation of many.

Bede: That hymn in the Gospel of John may also be meant, which the Lord

sang, returning thanks to the Father, in which also He prayed, raising

His eyes to Heaven, for Himself and His disciples, and those who were

to believe, through their word.

Theophylact: Again, He went out into a mountain, that they might come

to Him in a lonely place, and take Him without tumult. For if they had

come to Him, whilst He was abiding in the city, the multitude of the

people would have been in an uproar, and then His enemies, who took

occasion against Him, should seem to have slain Him justly, because He

stirred up the people.

Bede: Beautifully also does the Lord lead out His disciples, when they

had tasted His Sacraments, into the mount of Olives, to shew typically

that we ought through the reception of the Sacraments to rise up to

higher gifts of virtue, and graces of the Holy Ghost, that we may be

anointed in heart.

Pseudo-Jerome: Jesus also is held captive on the mount of Olives,

whence He ascended to Heaven, that we may know, that we ascend into

Heaven from that place in which we watch and pray; there we are bound

and do not tend back again to earth.

Bede: But the Lord foretells to His disciples what is about to happen

to them, that when they have gone through it, they may not despair of

salvation, but work out their repentance, and be freed.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be

offended because of Me this night."

Pseudo-Jerome: All indeed fall, but all do not remain fallen. For shall

not he who sleeps also rise up again? [Ps 40:9] It is a carnal thing to

fall, but devilish to remain lying when fallen.

Theophylact: The Lord allowed them to fall that they might not trust in

themselves, and lest He should seem to have prophesied, what He had

said, as an open accusation of them, He brings forward the witness of

Zechariah the Prophet; wherefore it goes on: "For it is written, I will

smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." [Zech 13:7]

Bede: This is written in different words in Zecharias, and in the

person of the Prophet it is said to the Lord, "Smite the shepherd, and

the sheep shall be scattered."

Pseudo-Jerome: For the Prophet prays for the Passion of the Lord, and

the Father answers, I will smite the shepherd according to the prayers

of those below. The Son is sent and smitten by the Father, that is, He

is made Incarnate and suffers.

Theophylact: But the Father say, "I will smite the shepherd," because

He permitted him to be smitten. He calls the disciples sheep, as being

innocent and without guile. At last He consoles them, by saying, "But

after that I am risen I will go before you into Galilee."

Pseudo-Jerome: In which the true Resurrection is promised, that their

hope may not be extinguished. There follows: "But Peter said unto Him,

Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Lo a bird unfledged

strives to raise itself on high; but the body weighs down the soul, so

that the fear of the Lord is overcome by the fear of human death.

Bede: Peter then promised in the ardour of his faith, and the Saviour

as God knew what was to happen.

Wherefore it goes on: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee,

that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou

shalt deny me thrice."

Augustine, de Con. Even. iii, 2: Though all the Evangelists say that

the Lord foretold that Peter was to deny before the cock crew, Mark

alone has related it more minutely, wherefore some from inattention

suppose that he does not agree with the others.

For the whole of Peter's denial is threefold; if it had begun

altogether after the cock crew, the other three Evangelist would seem

to have spoken falsely, in saying, that before the cock crew, he would

deny Him thrice. Again, if he had finished the entire threefold denial

before the cock began to crow, Mark would in the person of the Lord

seem to have said needlessly, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shall

deny Me thrice."

But because that threefold denial began before the first cock-crowing,

the other three did not notice when Peter was to finish it, but how

great it was to be, that is, threefold, and when it was to begin, that

is, before the cock crew, although the whole was conceived in his mind,

even before the first cock crew; but Mark has related more plainly the

interval between his words themselves.

Theophylact: We are to understand that it happened thus; Peter denied

once, then the cock crew for the second time.

Pseudo-Jerome: Who is the cock, the harbinger of day, but the Holy

Ghost? by whose voice in prophecy, and in the Apostles, we are roused

from our threefold denial, to most bitter tears after our fall, for we

have thought evil of God, spoken evil of our neighbours, and done evil

to ourselves.

Bede: The faith of the Apostle Peter, and his burning love for our

Lord, is shewn in what follows.

For it goes on: "But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with

Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise."

Theophylact: The other disciples also shewed a fearless zeal. For there

follows, "Likewise also said they all," but nevertheless they acted

against the truth, which Christ had prophesied.

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32. And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and He saith

to His disciples, "Sit ye here, while I shall pray."

33. And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be

sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34. And saith unto them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death:

tarry ye here, and watch."

35. And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed

that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

36. And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take

away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou

wilt.

37. And He cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter,

"Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?"

38. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly

is ready, but the flesh is weak."

39. And again He went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40. And when He returned, He found them asleep, again, (for their eyes

were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer Him.

41. And He cometh the third time, and saith unto them, "Sleep on now,

and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of

Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

42. "Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand."

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Gloss: After that the Lord had foretold the offence of His disciples,

the Evangelist gives an account of His prayer, in which He is supposed

to have prayed for His disciples; and first describing the place of

prayer, he says, "And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane."

Bede: The place Gethsemane, in which the Lord prayed, is shewn up to

this day at the foot of the Mount of Olives. The meaning of Gethsemane

is, the valley of the fat, or of fatness. Now when our Lord prays on a

mountain, He teaches us that we should when we pray ask for lofty

things; but by praying in the valley of fatness, He implies that in our

prayer humility and the fatness of interior love must be kept. He also

by the valley of humility and the fatness of charity underwent death

for us.

Pseudo-Jerome: In the valley of fatness also, the fat bulls beset Him.

There follows, "And He saith to His disciples, Sit ye here, while I

shall pray;" they are separated from Him in prayer, who are separated

in His Passion; for He prays, they sleep, overcome by the sloth of

their heart.

Theophylact: It was also His custom always to pray by Himself, in order

to give us an example, to seek for silence and solitude in our prayers.

There follows: "And He taketh with Him Peter, and James and John." He

takes only those who had been witnesses of His glory on Mount Tabor,

that they who had seen His glory might also see His sufferings, and

learn that He is really man, in that He is sorrowful.

Wherefore there follows: "And began to be sore amazed, and very heavy."

For since He had taken on Himself the whole of human nature, He took

also those natural things which belong to man, amazement, heaviness,

and sorrow; for men are naturally unwilling to die.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He saith unto them, My soul is exceeding

sorrowful unto death."

Bede: As being God, dwelling in the body, He shews the frailty of

flesh, that the blasphemy of those who deny the Mystery of His

Incarnation might find no place; for having taken up a body, He must

needs also take up all that belongs to the body, hunger, thirst, pain,

grief; for the Godhead cannot suffer the changes of those affections.

Theophylact: but some have understood this, as if He had said, I am

sorrowful, not because I am to die, but because the Jews, My

countrymen, are about to crucify Me, and by these means to be shut out

from the kingdom of God.

Pseudo-Jerome: By this also we are taught to fear and to be sorrowful

before the judgment of death, for not by ourselves, but by Him only,

can we say, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."

[John 14:30]

There follows: "Tarry ye, here, and watch."

Bede: He does not mean natural sleep by the sleep which He forbids, for

the time of approaching danger did not allow of it, but the sleep of

unfaithfulness, and the torpor of the mind. But going forward a little,

He falls on His face, and shews His lowliness of mind, by the posture

of His body.

Wherefore there follows: "And He went forward a little, and fell on the

ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from

Him."

Augustine, de Con. iii, iv: He said not, if He could do it, but if it

could be done; for whatever He wills is possible. We must therefore

understand, "if it be possible," as if it were; if He is willing. And

lest any one should suppose that He lessened His Father's power, He

shews in what sense the words are to be understood; for there follows,

"And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee."

By which He sufficiently shows that the words, "if it be possible,"

must be understood not of any impossibility, but of the Will of His

Father. As to what Mark relates that He said not only Father, but

"Abba, Father", Abba is the Hebrew for Father. And perhaps the Lord

said both words, on account of some Sacrament contained in them;

wishing to shew that He had taken upon Himself that sorrow in the

person of His body, The Church, to which He was made the chief

cornerstone, and which came to Him, partly from the Hebrews, who are

represented by the word, "Abba", partly from the Gentiles, to whom

"Father" belongs.

Bede: But He prays, that the cup may pass away, to shew that He is very

man, wherefore He adds: "Take away this cup from Me." But remembering

why He was sent, He accomplishes the dispensation for which He was

sent, and cries out, "But not what I Will, but what Thou Wilt." As if

He had said, If death can die, without My dying according to the flesh,

let this cup pass away; but since this cannot be otherwise, "not what I

Will, but what Thou Wilt."

Many still are sad at the prospect of death, but let them keep their

heart right, and avoid death as much as they can; but if they cannot,

then let them say what the Lord said of us.

Pseudo-Jerome: By which also He ceases not up to the end to teach us to

obey our fathers, and to prefer their will to ours. There follows: "And

he cometh, and findeth them sleeping." For as they are asleep in mind,

so also in body.

Theophylact: But after His prayer, the Lord coming, and seeing His

disciples sleeping, rebukes Peter alone. Wherefore it goes on: "And

saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch with me

one hour?

As if He had said, If thou couldest not watch one hour with me, how

wilt thou be able to despise death, thou who promisest to die with Me?

It goes on: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," that

is, the temptation of denying Me.

Bede: He does not say, Pray that ye may not be tempted, because it is

impossible for the human mind not to be tempted, but that ye enter not

into temptation, that is, that temptation may not vanquish you.

Pseudo-Jerome: But he is said to enter into temptation, who neglects to

pray.

There follows: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Theophylact: As if He had said, Your spirit indeed is ready not to deny

me, and for this reason ye promise; but your flesh is weak, in that

unless God give power to your flesh through prayer, ye shall enter into

temptation.

Bede: He here represses the rash, who think that they can compass

whatever they are confident about. But in proportion as we are

confident from the ardour of our mind, so let us fear from the weakness

of our flesh.

For this place makes against those, who say that there was but one

operation in the Lord and one Will. For He shews two wills, one human,

which from the weakness of the flesh shrinks from suffering; one

divine, which is most ready.

It goes on: "And again He went away and prayed, and spake the same

words."

Theophylact: That by His second prayer He might shew Himself to be very

man. It goes on: "And when He returned, He found them asleep again;" He

however did not rebuke them severely. "For their eyes were heavy, (that

is, with sleep,) neither wist they what to answers Him." By this learn

the weakness of men, and let us not, whom even sleep can overcome,

promise things which are impossible to us. Therefore He goes away the

third time to pray the prayer mentioned above.

Wherefore it goes on: "And He cometh the third time, and saith unto

them, Sleep on now, and take your rest." He is not vehement against

them, though after His rebuke they had done worse, but He tells them

ironically, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," because He knew that

the betrayer was now close at hand. And that He spoke ironically is

evident, by what is added; "It is enough, the hour is come; behold, the

Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." He speaks this, as

deriding their sleep, as if He had said; Now indeed is a time for

sleep, when the traitor is approaching.

Then He says; "Arise, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand."

Augustine: Or else; In that it is said, that after He had spoken these

words, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," He added, "It is enough,"

and then, "the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed," we

must understand that after saying, "Sleep on now, and take your rest,"

our Lord remained silent for a short time, to give space for that to

happen, which He had permitted; and then that He added, "the hour is

come;" and therefore He puts in between, "it is enough," that is, your

rest has been long enough.

Pseudo-Jerome: The threefold sleep of the disciples points out the

three dead, whom our Lord raised up; the first, in a house; the second,

at the tomb; the third, from the tomb. And the threefold watch of the

Lord teaches us in our prayers, to beg for the pardon of past, future

and present sins.

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43. And immediately, while He yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the

twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the

Chief Priests and the Scribes and the elders.

44. And he that betrayed Him had given them a token, saying,

"Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away

safely."

45. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to Him, and saith,

"Master, master;" and kissed Him.

46. And they laid their hands on Him, and took Him.

47. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of

the High Priest, and cut off his ear.

48. And Jesus answered and said unto them, "Are ye come out, as against

a thief, with swords and with staves to take me?"

49. "I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took Me not:

but the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

50. And they all forsook Him, and fled.

51. And there followed Him a certain young man, having a linen cloth

cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him:

52. And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

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Bede: After that our Lord had prayed three times, and had obtained by

His prayers that the fear of the Apostles should be amended by future

repentance, He, being tranquil as to His Passion, goes to His

persecutors, concerning the coming of whom the Evangelist says, "And

immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas Iscariot, on of the

twelve."

Theophylact: This is not put without reason, but to the greater

conviction of the traitor, since though he was of the chief company

amongst the disciples, he turned himself to furious enmity against our

Lord.

There follows: "And with him a great multitude with swords and staves

from the Chief Priests and the Scribes and the elders."

Pseudo-Jerome: For he who despairs of help from God, has recourse to

the power of the world.

Bede: But Judas had still something of the shame of a disciple, for he

did not openly betray Him to His persecutors, but by the token of a

kiss.

Wherefore it goes on: "And he that betrayed Him had given them a token,

saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead

him away safely."

Theophylact: See how in his blindness he thought to deceive Christ by

the kiss, so as to be looked upon by Him as His friend. But if thou

wert a friend, Judas, how didst thou come with His enemies? But

wickedness is ever without foresight.

It goes on: "And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to Him,

and saith, Master, master; and kissed Him."

Pseudo-Jerome: Judas gives the kiss as a token, with poisonous guile,

just as Cain offered a crafty, reprobate sacrifice.

Bede: With envy and with a wicked confidence, he calls Him master, and

gives Him a kiss, in betraying Him. But the Lord receives the kiss of

the traitor, not to teach us to deceive, but lest he should seem to

avoid betrayal, and at the same time to fulfil that Psalm, "Among them

that are enemies unto peace, I labour for peace." [Ps 120:5]

It goes on: "And they laid hands on Him, and took Him."

Pseudo-Jerome: This is the Joseph who was sold by his brethren [Ps

105:18], and into whose soul the iron entered. [note: this passage not

found in the Venice ed. of the Pseudo-Jerome]

There follows: "And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a

servant of the High Priest, and cut off his ear."

Bede: Peter did this, as John declares, with the same ardent mind with

which he did all things; for he knew how Phineas had by punishing

sacrilegious persons received the reward of righteousness and of

perpetual priesthood.

Theophylact: Mark conceals his name, lest he should seem to be praising

his master for his zeal for Christ. Again, the action of Peter points

out that they were disobedient and unbelieving, despising the

Scriptures; for if they had ears to hear the Scriptures, they would not

have crucified the Lord of glory. But he cut off the ear of a servant

of the High Priest, for the Chief Priests especially passed over the

Scriptures, like disobedient servants.

It goes on: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as

against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me?"

Bede: As if He had said, it is foolish to seek with swords and staves

Him, who offers Himself to you of His own accord, and to search, as for

one who hides Himself, by night and by means of a traitor, for Him who

taught daily in the temple.

Theophylact: This, however, is a proof of His divinity, for when He

taught in the temple they were unable to take Him, although He was in

their power, because the time of His Passion had not yet come; but when

He Himself was willing, then He gave Himself up, that the Scriptures

might be fulfilled, "for he was led as a lamb to the slaughter," not

crying nor raising His voice, but suffering willingly.

It goes on: "And they all forsook Him and fled."

Bede: In this is fulfilled the word, which the Lord had spoken, that

all His disciples should be offended in Him that same night.

There follows: "And there followed Him a certain young man, having a

linen cloth cast about his naked body," that is, he had no other

clothing but this linen cloth.

It goes on: "And they laid hold on him, and he left the linen cloth,

and fled from them naked." That is, he fled from them, whose presence

and whose deeds he abhorred, not from the Lord, for Whom his love

remained fixed in his mind, when absent from Him in body.

Pseudo-Jerome: Just as Joseph left his mantle behind him, and fled

naked from the wanton woman; so also let him, who would escape the

hands of the evil ones, quit in mind all that is of the world, and fly

after Jesus.

Theophylact: It appears probable that this young man was of that house,

where they had eaten the Passover. But some say that this young man was

James, the brother of our Lord, who was called Just; who after the

ascension of Christ received from the Apostles the throne of the

bishopric of Jerusalem.

Greg., Mor. 14, 49: Or, he says this of John, who, although he

afterwards returned to the cross to hear the words of the Redeemer, at

first was frightened and fled.

Bede: For that he was a young man at that time, is evident from his

long sojourn in the flesh. Perhaps he escaped from the hands of those

who held him for the time, and afterwards got back his garment and

returned, mingling under cover of the darkness with those who were

leading Jesus, as though he was one of them, until he arrived at the

door of the High Priest, to whom he was known, as he himself testifies

in the Gospel. But as Peter, who washed away the sin of his denial with

the tears of penitence, shews the recovery of those who fall away in

time of martyrdom, so the other disciples who prevented their actual

seizure, teach the prudence of flight to those who feel themselves

unequal to undergo tortures.

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53. And they led Jesus away to the High Priest: and with him were

assembled all the Chief Priests and the elders and the Scribes.

54. And Peter followed Him afar off, even into the palace of the High

Priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55. And the Chief Priests and all the council sought for witness

against Jesus to put Him to death; and found none.

56. For many bare false witness against Him, but their witness agreed

not together.

57. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against Him,

saying,

58. "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with

hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands."

59. But neither so did their witness agree together.

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Gloss: The Evangelist had related above how our Lord had been taken by

the servants of the Priests. Now he begins to relate how He was

condemned to death in the house of the High Priest.

Wherefore it is said: "And they led Jesus away to the High Priest."

Bede: He means by the High Priest, Caiaphas, who (as John writes) was

High Priest that year, of whom Josephus relates that he bought his

priesthood of the Roman Emperor.

There follows: "And with him were assembled all the Chief Priests and

the elders and the scribes."

Pseudo-Jerome: Then took place the gathering together of the bulls

among the heifers of the people. [Ps 67:31, Vulgate]

It goes on: "And Peter followed Him afar off, even into the palace of

the High Priest."

For though fear holds him back, love draws him on.

Bede: But rightly does he follow afar off, who is just about to betray

Him; for he could not have denied Christ if he had remained close to

Him.

There follows: "And he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the

fire."

Pseudo-Jerome: He warms himself at the fire in the hall, with the

servants. The hall of the High Priest is the enclosure of the world,

the servants are the devils, with whom whosoever remains cannot weep

for his sins; the fire is the desire of the flesh.

Bede: For charity is the fire of which it is said, "I am come to send

fire on the earth," [Luke 12:49] which flame coming down on the

believers, taught them to speak with various tongues the praise of the

Lord. There is also a fire of covetousness, of which it is said, "They

are all adulterers as an oven:" [Hosea (Osee) 7:4] this fire, raised up

in the hall of Caiaphas by the suggestion of an evil spirit, was arming

the tongues of the traitors to deny and blaspheme the Lord. For the

fire lit up in the hall amidst the cold of the night was a figure of

what the wicked assembly was doing within; for because of the abounding

of iniquity the love of many waxes cold. [Matt 24:12] Peter, who for a

time was benumbed by this cold, wished as it were to be warmed by the

coals of the servants of Caiaphas, because He sought in the society of

traitors the consolation of worldly comfort.

It goes on: "And the Chief Priests and all the council sought for

witness against Jesus to put Him to death."

Theophylact: Though the law commanded that there should be but one High

Priest, there were then many put into the office, and stripped of it,

year by year, by the Roman emperor. He therefore calls chief priests

those who had finished the time alloted to them, and had been stripped

of their priesthood. But their actions are a sign of their judgment,

which they carried on as they had prejudged, for they sought for a

witness, that they might seem to condemn and destroy Jesus with

justice.

Pseudo-Jerome: But iniquity lied as the queen did against Joseph, and

the priests against Susannah, but a flame goes out, if it has no fuel.

Wherefore it goes on: "And found none. For many bare false witness

against Him, but their witness agreed not together."

For whatever is not consistent is held to be doubtful.

There follows: "And there arose certain, and bare false witness against

Him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made

with hands, and within three days I will build another made without

hands."

It is usual with heretics out of the truth to extract the shadow; He

did not say what they said, but something like it, of the temple of His

body, which He raised again after two days.

Theophylact: For the Lord had not said, I will destroy, but, "Destroy",

nor did He say, made with hands, but, "this temple."

Bede: He had said also, "I will raise up," meaning a thing with life

and soul, and a breathing temple. He is a false witness, who

understands words in a sense, in which they are not spoken.

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60. And the High Priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying,

"Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?"

61. But He held His peace, and answered nothing. Again the High Priest

asked Him, and said unto Him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the

Blessed?"

62. And Jesus said, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on

the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven."

63. Then the High Priest rent his clothes, and saith, "What need we any

further witnesses?"

64. "Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?" And they all

condemned Him to be guilty of death.

65. And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet

Him, and to say unto Him, "Prophesy:" and the servants did strike Him

with the palms of their hands.

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Bede: The more Jesus remained silent before the false witnesses who

were unworthy of His answer, and the impious priests, the more the High

Priest, overcome with anger, endeavoured to provoke Him to answer, that

he might find room for accusing Him, from any thing whatever which He

might say.

Wherefore it is said, "And the High Priest stood up in the midst, and

asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these

witness against thee?"

The High Priest, angry and impatient at finding no room for accusation

against Him, rises from his seat, thus shewing by the motion of his

body the madness of his mind.

Pseudo-Jerome: But our God and Saviour Himself, Who brought salvation

to the world, and assisted mankind by His love, is led as a sheep to

the slaughter, without crying, and remained mute and "kept silence yea

even from good words."

Wherefore it goes on, "But He held His peace, and answered nothing."

The silence of Christ is the pardon for the defence or excuse of Adam.

[Gen 3:10]

Theophylact: But He remained silent because He knew that they would not

attend to His words, wherefore He answered according to Luke, "If I

tell you, ye will not believe." [Luke 22:67]

Wherefore there follows: "Again the High Priest asked Him, and said

unto Him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

The High Priest indeed puts this question, not that he might learn of

Him and believe, but in order to seek occasion against Him. But he

asks, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed," because there were

many Christs, that is, anointed persons, as Kings and High Priests, but

none of these was called the Son of the Blessed God, that is, the

Ever-praised.

Pseudo-Jerome: But they looked from afar off for Him, whom though near

they cannot see, as Isaac from the blindness of his eyes does not know

Jacob who was under his hands, but prophecies long before things which

were to come to him.

It goes on: "Jesus said, I am;" namely, that they might be inexcusable.

Theophylact: For He knew that they would not believe, nevertheless He

answered them, lest they should afterwards say, If we had heard any

thing from Him, we would have believed on Him; but this is their

condemnation, that they heard and did not believe.

Augustine, de Con., iii, 6: Matthew, however, does not say that Jesus

answered, "I am," but, "Thou has said." But Mark shews that the words

"I am" were equivalent to "Thou hast said."

There follows: "And ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right

hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." [Matt 26:64]

Theophylact: As if He had said, Ye shall see Me as the Son of Man

sitting on the right hand of the Father, for He here calls the Father,

"power". He will not however come without a body, but as He appeared to

those who crucified Him, so will He appear in the judgment.

Bede: If therefore to thee, O Jew, O Pagan, and heretic, the contempt,

weakness, and cross in Christ are a subject of scorn, see how by this

the Son of Man is to sit at the right hand of the Father, and to come

in His majesty on the clouds of heaven.

Pseudo-Jerome: The High Priest indeed asks the Son of God, but Jesus in

His answer speaks of the Son of Man, that we may by this understand

that the Son of God is also the Son of Man; and let us not make a

quaternity (a reference to the charge brought by the Apollinarians

against the Catholics, that their doctrine of a divine human substance

in our Lord introduced a fourth Person into the Blessed Trinity; it is

also answered by St. Ambrose, de Incarnatione, 7, 77 [ed. note?]) in

the Trinity, but let man be in God and God in man.

And He said, "Sitting on the right hand of power," that is, reigning in

life everlasting, and in the Divine power. He says, "And coming with

the clouds of heaven." He ascended in a cloud, He will come with a

cloud; that is, He ascended in that body alone, which He took of the

Virgin, and He will come to judgment with the whole Church, which is

His body and His fulness.

Leo, Sermon 5, de Pass.: But Caiaphas, to increase the odiousness of

what they had heard, "rent his clothes," and without knowing what his

frantic action meant, by this madness, deprived himself of the honour

of the priesthood, forgetting that command, by which it is said of the

High Priest, "He shall not uncover his head or rend his clothes." [Lev

21:10]

For there follows: "The High Priest rent his clothes, and saith, What

need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think

ye?"

Theophylact: The High Priest does after the manner of the Jews; for

whenever any thing intolerable or sad occurred to them, they used to

rend their clothes. In order then to shew that Christ had spoken great

and intolerable blasphemy, he rent his clothes.

Bede: But it was also with a higher mystery, that in the Passion of our

Lord the Jewish priest rent his own clothes, that is, his ephod, whilst

the garment of the Lord could not be rent, even by the soldiers, who

crucified Him. For it was a figure that the Jewish priesthood was to be

rent on account of the wickedness of the priests themselves. But the

solid strength of the Church, which is often called the garment of her

Redeemer, can never be torn asunder.

Theophylact: The Jewish priesthood was to be rent from the time that

they condemned Christ as guilty of death.

Wherefore there follows: "And they all condemned Him to be guilty of

death."

Pseudo-Jerome: They condemned Him to be guilty of death, that by His

guiltiness He might absolve our guilt.

It goes on: "And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and

to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, Prophecy: and the servants did

strike Him with the palms of their hands;" that is, that by being spit

upon He might wash the face of our soul, and by the covering of His

face, might take away the veil from our hearts, and by the buffets,

which were dealt upon His head, might heal the head of mankind, that

is, Adam, and by the blows, by which He was smitten with the hands, His

great praise might be testified by the clapping of our hands and by our

lips, as it is said, "O clap your hands together, all ye people." [Ps

47:1]

Bede: By saying, "Prophesy, who is he that smote thee," they mean to

insult Him, because He wished to be looked upon as a prophet by the

people.

Augustine: We must understand by this, that the Lord suffered these

things till morning, in the house of the High Priest, whither He had

first been brought.

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66. And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the

maids of the High Priest:

67. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and

said, "And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth."

68. But he denied, saying, "I know not, neither understand I what thou

sayest." And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by,

"This is one of them."

70. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said

again to Peter, "Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean,

and thy speech agreeth thereto."

71. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not this man of

whom ye speak."

72. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the

word that Jesus said unto him, "Before the cock crew twice, thou shalt

deny me thrice." And when he thought thereon, he wept.

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Augustine: Concerning the temptation of Peter, which happened during

the injuries mentioned, all the Evangelists do not speak in the same

order. For Luke first relates the temptation of Peter, then these

injuries of the Lord; but John begins to speak of the temptation of

Peter, and then puts in some things concerning our Lord's

ill-treatment, and adds, that He was sent from there to Caiaphas the

High Priest, and then he goes back to unfold the temptation of Peter,

which he had begun.

Matthew and Mark, on the other hand, first notice the injuries done to

Christ, then the temptation of Peter.

Concerning which it is said, "And as Peter was beneath in the palace,

there cometh one of the maids of the High Priest."

Bede: But what can be meant by his being first recognized by a woman,

when men were more able to know him, if it be not that that sex might

be seen to sin in the death of our Lord, and that sex be redeemed by

His Passion?

It goes on: "But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I

what thou sayest."

Pseudo-Jerome: Peter when he had not the Spirit yielded and lost

courage at the voice of a girl, though with the Spirit he was not

afraid before princes and kings.

Theophylact: The Lord allowed this to happen to him by His providence,

that is, lest he should be too much elated, and at the same time, that

he might prove himself merciful to sinners, as knowing from himself the

result of human weakness.

There follows: "And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew."

Bede: The other Evangelists do not mention this crowing of the cock;

they do not however deny the fact, as also some pass over many other

things in silence, which others relate.

There follows: "And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that

stood by, This is one of them."

Augustine [ed. note: for a harmony of this portion of the Gospel, v.

Williams on the Passion, p.101]: This maid is not the same, but

another, as Matthew says. Indeed, we must also understand, that in this

second denial he was addressed by two persons, that is, by the maid

whom Matthew and Mark mention, and by another person, of whom Luke

takes notice.

It goes on: "And he denied it again."

Peter had now returned, for John says that he denied Him again standing

at the fire; wherefore the maid said what has been mentioned above, not

to him, that is, Peter, but to those who, when he went out, had

remained, in such a way however that he heard it; wherefore coming back

and standing again at the fire, he contradicted them, and denied their

words. For it is evident, if we compare the accounts of all the

Evangelists on this matter, that Peter did not the second time deny Him

before the porch, but within the palace at the fire, whilst Matthew and

Mark who mention his having gone out are silent, for the sake of

brevity, as to his return.

Bede: By this denial of Peter we learn, that not only he denied Christ,

who says that He is not the Christ, but he also, who although he is a

Christian, denies himself to be such. For the Lord did not say to

Peter, Thou shalt deny thyself to be my disciple, but, "Thou shalt deny

me;" he therefore denied Christ, when he said that he was not His

disciple.

There follows: "And a little after, they that stood by said again to

Peter, Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilaean, and thy

speech agreeth thereto."

Not that the Galilaeans spoke a different tongue from the inhabitants

of Jerusalem, for they were both Hebrews, but that each province and

region has its own peculiarities, and cannot avoid a vernacular

pronunciation.

Theophylact: Therefore Peter was seized with fear, and forgetting the

word of the Lord, which said, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men,

him will I confess before My Father," [Matt 30:32] he denied our Lord.

Wherefore there follows: "But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I

know not this man of whom ye speak."

Bede: How hurtful it is to speak with the wicked. He denies before

infidels that he knows the Man, whom amongst the disciples, he had

confessed to be God. But the Scripture is wont to point out a Sacrament

of the causes of things, by the state of the time; thus Peter, who

denied at midnight, repented at cock crew.

Wherefore it is added: "And the second time the cock crew. And Peter

called to mind the word which Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crew

twice, thou shalt deny me thrice."

Theophylact: For tears brought Peter by penitence to Christ. Confounded

then be the Novatians, who say that he who sins after receiving baptism

is not received to the remission of his sin. For behold Peter, who had

also received the Body and Blood of the Lord, is received by penitence;

for the failings of saints are written, that if we fall by want of

caution, we also may be able to run back through their example, and

hope to be relieved by penitence.

Pseudo-Jerome: But in a mystical sense, the first maid means the

wavering, the second, the assent, the third man is the act. This is the

threefold denial which the remembrance of the word of the Lord washes

away through tears. The cock then crows for us when some preacher stirs

up our hearts by repentance to compunction. We then begin to weep, when

we are set on fire within by the spark of knowledge, and we go forth,

when we cast out what we were within.

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Chapter 15

1. 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.

2. And Pilate asked Him, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" And He

answering said unto him, "Thou sayest it."

3. And the Chief Priests accused Him of many things: but he answered

nothing.

4. And Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Answerest thou nothing? behold

how many things they witness against thee."

5. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

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Bede, in Marc., 4, 44: The Jews had a custom of delivering him whom

they had condemned to death, bound to the judge. Wherefore after the

condemnation of Christ, the Evangelist adds: "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." But it must be observed, that they did

not then first bind Him, but they bound Him on first taking Him in the

garden by night, as John declares.

Theophylact: They then gave Jesus up to the Romans, but were themselves

given up by God into the hands of the Romans, that the Scriptures might

be fulfilled, which say, "Recompense them after the work of their

hands." [Ps 28:5]

It goes on: "And Pilate asked Him, Art thou the King of the Jews?"

Bede: By Pilate's asking Him about no other accusation, except whether

He was King of the Jews, they are convicted of impiety, for they could

not even find a false accusation against our Saviour.

It goes on: "And He answering said unto him, Thou sayest."

He answers in this way so as both to speak the truth, and yet not be

open to cavil.

Theophylact: For His answer is doubtful, since it may mean, Thou

sayest, but I say not so.

Bede: And observe that He does somewhere answer Pilate, who condemned

Him unwillingly, but does not choose to answer the priests and great

men, and judges them unworthy of a reply.

It goes on: "And the Chief Priests accused Him of many things."

Augustine, de. Con. Evan., iii, 8: Luke has also laid open the false

charges which they brought against Him; for he thus relates it: "And

they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the

nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he

himself is Christ a King." [Luke 23:2]

There follows: "And Pilate asked Him, saying, Answerest thou nothing?

behold how many things they witness against thee."

Bede: He indeed who condemns Jesus is a heathen, but he refers it to

the people of the Jews as the cause.

There follows: "But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate

marvelled."

He was unwilling to give an answer, lest He should clear Himself of the

charge, and be acquitted by the judge, and so the gain resulting from

the Cross should be done away.

Theophlyact: But Pilate wondered, because, though He was a teacher of

the law, and eloquent, and able by His answer to destroy their

accusations, He did not answer any thing, but rather bore their

accusations courageously.

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6. Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever

they desired.

7. And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had

made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the

insurrection.

8. And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had

ever done unto them.

9. But Pilate answered them, saying, "Will ye that I release unto you

the King of the Jews?"

10. For he knew that the Chief Priests had delivered Him for envy.

11. But the Chief Priests moved the people, that he should rather

release Barabbas unto them.

12. 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?"

13. And they cried out again, "Crucify him!"

14. Then Pilate said unto them, "Why, what evil hath he done?" And they

cried out the more exceedingly, "Crucify him!"

15. And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas

unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be

crucified.

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Bede: Pilate furnished many opportunities for releasing Jesus, in the

first place contrasting a robber with the Just One.

Wherefore it is said: "Now at that feast he released unto them one

prisoner, whomsoever they desired."

Gloss: Which indeed he was accustomed to do, to obtain favour with the

people, and above all, on the feast day, when the people of the whole

province of the Jews flocked to Jerusalem. And that the wickedness of

the Jews might appear the greater, the enormity of the sin of the

robber, whom they preferred to Christ, is next described.

Wherefore there follows: "And there was one Barabbas, who lay bound

with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder

in the insurrection."

In which words their wickedness is shewn both from the heinousness of

his signal crime, in that he had committed murder, and from the way in

which he did it, because he had in doing it raised a sedition and

disturbed the city, and also because his crime was notorious, for he

was bound with seditious persons.

It goes on: "And the multitude," when it had come up, "began to desire

him to do as he had ever done unto them."

Augustine: No one can feel it a difficulty that Matthew is silent as to

their asking some one to be released unto them, which Mark here

mentions; for it is a thing of no consequence that one should mention a

thing which another leaves out.

There follows: "But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I

release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the Chief

Priests had delivered Him for envy."

Some one may ask, which were the words of which Pilate made use, those

which are related by Matthew, or those which Mark relates; for there

seems to be a difference between, "Whom will ye that I release unto

you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?" as Matthew has it;

and, "Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" as is here

said. But since they gave to kings the name of Christs, he who said

this man or that must have asked whether they wished the King of the

Jews to be released unto them, that is, Christ. It makes no difference

to the sense that Mark has said nothing of Barabbas, wishing only to

mention what belonged to the Lord, since by their answer he

sufficiently shewed whom they wished to have released to them.

For there follows: "But the Chief Priests moved the people that he

should rather release unto them Barabbas."

Bede: This demand which the Jews made with such toil to themselves

still sticks to them. Because, when the choice was given to them, they

chose a robber instead of Christ, a murderer instead of the Saviour,

they deservedly lost their salvation and their life, and they subjected

themselves to such a degree to robbery and sedition, that they lost

their country and their kingdom which they preferred to Christ, and

never regained their liberty, body or soul.

Then Pilate gives another opportunity of releasing the Saviour, when

there follows, "And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will

ye then that I should do unto the King of the Jews?"

Augustine: It now is clear enough that Mark means by "King of the Jews"

what Matthew means by the word, "Christ"; for no kings but those of the

Jews were called Christs. For in this place according to Matthew it is

said, "What then shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" [Matt

27:22]

There follows: "And they cried out again, "Crucify him!"

Theophylact: Now see the wickedness of the Jews, and the moderation of

Pilate, though he too was worthy of condemnation for not resisting the

people. For they cried out, "Crucify"; he faintly tries to save Jesus

from their determined sentence, and again puts a question to them.

Wherefore there follows: "Then Pilate said unto them, "Why, what evil

hath he done?" For he wished in this way to find an opportunity for

releasing Christ, who was innocent.

Bede: But the Jews giving loose to their madness do not answer the

question of the judge. Wherefore it goes on, "And they cried out the

more exceedingly, Crucify him!," that those words of the Prophet

Jeremiah might be fulfilled, "Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the

forest, it crieth out against me." [Jer 12:8]

There follows: "And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released

Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to

be crucified."

Theophylact: He wished indeed to satisfy the people, that is, to do

their will, not what was agreeable to justice and to God.

Pseudo-Jerome: Here are two goats; one is the scape goat, that is, one

loosed and sent out into the wilderness of hell with the sin of the

people; the other is slain, as a lamb, for the sins of those who are

forgiven. The Lord's portion is always slain; the devil's part, (for he

is the master of those men, which is the meaning of Barabbas,) when

freed, is cast headlong into hell.

Bede: We must understand that Jesus was scourged by no other than

Pilate himself. For John writes: "Pilate took Jesus, and scourged Him,"

[John 19:1] which we must suppose that he did, that the Jews might be

satisfied with Him pains and insults, and cease from thirsting for His

blood.

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16. And the soldiers led Him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and

they called together the whole band.

17. And they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns,

and put it about His head.

18. And began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

19. And they smote Him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon Him,

and bowing their knees worshipped Him.

20. And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him,

and put His own clothes on Him.

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Theophylact: The vainglory of soldiers, ever rejoicing in disorder and

in insult, here displayed what properly belonged to them.

Wherefore it is said, "And the soldiers led Him away into the hall

called Praetorium, and they call together the whole band," that is, the

whole company of the soldiers, "and they clothed Him with purple as a

king."

Bede: For since He had been called King of the Jews, and the scribes

and priests had objected to Him as a crime that He usurped rule over

the Jewish people, they in derision strip Him of His former garments,

and put on Him a purple robe, which ancient kings used to wear.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., iii, 9: But we must understand that the words

of Matthew, they "put of Him a scarlet robe," Mark expresses by

"clothed Him in purple"; for that scarlet robe was used by them in

derision for the royal purple, and there is a sort of red purple, very

like scarlet. It may also be that Mark mentions some purple which the

robe had about it, though it was of a scarlet colour.

Bede: But instead of the diadem, they put on Him a crown of thorns,

wherefore it goes on, "And platted a crown of thorns, and put it about

His head." And for a royal sceptre they give Him a reed, as Matthew

writes, and they bow before Him as a king, wherefore there follows,

"And began to salute Him, Hail, King of the Jews!" And that the

soldiers worshipped Him as one who falsely called Himself God, is clear

from what is added: "And bowing their knees, worshipped Him," as though

He pretended to be God.

Pseudo-Jerome: His shame took away our shame; His bonds made us free;

by the thorny crown of His head, we have obtained the crown of the

kingdom; by His wounds we are healed.

Augustine: It appears that Matthew and Mark here relate things which

took place previously, not that they happened when Pilate had already

delivered Him to be crucified. For John says that these things took

place at Pilate's house; but that which follows, "And when they had

mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put on Him His own

clothes," must be understood to have taken place last of all, when He

was already being led to be crucified.

Pseudo-Jerome: But in a mystic sense, Jesus was stripped of His

clothes, that is, of the Jews, and is clothed in a purple robe, that

is, in the Gentile church, which is gathered together out of the rocks.

Again, putting it off in the end, as offending, He again is clothed

with the Jewish purple, [Rom 11:25] for when the fulness of the

Gentiles is come in, then shall all Israel be saved.

Bede: Or else, by the purple robe, with which the Lord is clothed, is

meant His flesh itself, which He gave up to suffering, and by the

thorny crown which He carried is meant, the taking upon Him of our

sins.

Theophylact: Let us also put on the purple and royal robe, because we

must walk as kings treading on serpents and scorpions, and having sin

under our feet. For we are called Christians, that is, anointed ones,

just as kings were then called anointed. Let us also take upon

ourselves the crown of thorns, that is, let us make haste to be crowned

with a strict life, with self-denials and purity.

Bede: But they smite the head of Christ, who deny that He is very God.

And because men are wont to use a reed to write with, they, as it were,

smite the head of Christ with a reed, who speak against His divinity,

and endeavour to confirm their error by the authority of Holy Writ.

They spit in His face, who spit from them by their accursed words the

presence of His grace. There are some also in this day, who adore Him,

with a sure faith, as very God, but by their perverse actions, despise

His words as though they were fabulous, and think the promises of that

word inferior to worldly allurements. But just as Caiaphas said, though

he knew not what it meant, "It is expedient for us that one man should

die for the people," [John 11:50] so also the soldiers do these things

in ignorance.

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20. ---- And led Him out to crucify Him.

21. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of

the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His cross.

22. And they bring Him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being

interpreted, The place of a skull.

23. And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but He received

it not.

24. And when they had crucified Him, they parted His garments, casting

lots upon them, what every man should take.

25. And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.

26. And the superscription of His accusation was written over: The King

of The Jews.

27. And with Him they crucify two thieves; the one on His right hand,

and the other on His left.

28. And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, "And he numbered with

the transgressors." [Isa 53:12]

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Gloss: After the condemnation of Christ, and the insults heaped upon

Him when He was condemned, the Evangelist proceeds to relate His

crucifixion, saying, "And led Him out to crucify Him."

Pseudo-Jerome: Here Abel is brought out into the field by his brother,

to be slain by him. Here Isaac comes forth with the wood, and Abraham

with the ram caught in the thicket. Here also Joseph with the sheaf of

which he dreamed, and the long robe steeped in blood. Here is Moses

with the rod, and the serpent hanging on the wood. Here is the cluster

of grapes, carried on a staff. Here is Elisha with the piece of wood

sent to seek for the axe, which had sunk, and which swam to the wood;

that is, mankind, which by the forbidden tree, fell down to hell, but

by the wood of the cross of Christ, and by the baptism of water, swims

to paradise. Here is Jonah out of the wood of the ship sent down into

the sea and into the whale's belly for three days [ed note: The Glossa

ordinaria has here preserved the right reading, de ligno navis foris,

which had been lost both in the editions of St. Jerome and in the

Catena.].

There follows: "And they compel Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming

out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His

cross."

Theophylact: Now John says that He Himself bare His cross, for both

took place; for He first bore the cross Himself, until some one passed,

whom they compelled, and who then carried it. But he mentioned the name

of his sons, to make it more credible and the affirmation stronger, for

the man still lived to relate all that had happened about the cross.

Pseudo-Jerome: Now since some men are known by the merits of their

fathers, and some by those of their sons, this Simon, who was compelled

to carry the cross, is made known by the merits of his sons, who were

disciples. By this we are reminded, that in this life, parents are

assisted by the wisdom and the merits of their children, wherefore the

Jewish people is always held worthy of being remembered on account of

the merits of the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles. But this Simon who

carries the cross, because he is compelled, is the man who labours for

human praise. For men compel him to work, when the fear and love of God

could not compel him.

Bede: Or, since this Simon is not called a man a Jerusalem, but a

Cyrenian, (for Cyrene is a city in Libya,) fitly is he taken to mean

the nations of the Gentiles, which were once foreigners and strangers

to the covenants, but now by obedience are heirs of God, and joint

heirs with Christ. Whence also Simon is fitly interpreted obedient',

and Cyrene an heir'. But he is said to come from a country place, for a

country place is called pagos' in Greek, wherefore those whom we see to

be aliens from the city of God, we call pagans. Simon then coming out

from the country carries the cross after Jesus, when the Gentile

nations leaving pagan rights embrace obediently the footsteps of our

Lord's Passion.

There follows: "And they bring Him unto the place Golgotha, which is

being interpreted, the place of Calvary."

There are places without the city and the gate, in which the heads of

condemned persons are cut off, and which receive the name of Calvary,

that is, of the beheaded. But the Lord was crucified there, that where

once was the field of the condemned, there the standards of martyrdom

might be lifted up.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the Jews relate that in this spot of the mountain

the ram was sacrificed for Isaac, and there Christ is made bald, that

is, separated from His flesh, that is, from the carnal Jews.

There follows: "And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh."

Augustine, de. Con. Evan., iii, 11: This we must understand to be what

Matthew expresses by, "mixed with gall"; for he put gall for anything

bitter, and wine mingled with myrrh is most bitter; although there may

have been both gall and myrrh to make the wine most bitter.

Theophylact: Or, they may have brought different things, in order [ed.

note. some problem with translation of "in order"], some vinegar and

gall, and others wine mixed with myrrh.

Pseudo-Jerome: Or else, "wine mingled with myrrh," that is, vinegar; by

it the juice of the deadly apple is wiped away.

Bede: Bitter the vine which bore the bitter wine, set before the Lord

Jesus, that the Scripture might be fulfilled which saith, "They gave me

gall to eat, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink."

[Ps 69:22]

Augustine: That which follows, "But He received it not," must mean, He

received it not to drink, but only tasted it, as Matthew witnesses. And

what the same Matthew relates, "He would not drink," Mark expresses by,

"He received it not," but was silent as to His tasting it.

Pseudo-Jerome: He also refused to take sin for which He suffered,

wherefore it is said of Him, I then paid the things that I never took.

[Ps 68:5]

There follows: "And when they had crucified Him, they parted His

garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take."

In this place salvation is figured by the wood; the first wood was that

of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the second wood is one of

unmixed good for us, and is the wood of life. The first hand stretched

out to the wood caught hold of death; the second found again the life

which had been lost. By this wood we are carried through a stormy sea

to the land of the living, for by His cross Christ has taken away our

torment, and by His death has killed our death.

With the form of a serpent [ed. note: This clause is not in

Pseudo-Jerome; its obscurity may be cleared up by comparing it with a

passage in St. Augustine's sixth sermon, where it is said that the

serpent signifies death, and that Moses' rod was changed into a serpent

because our Lord took upon Himself death for us. In St. Gregory Nyasen,

the serpent is said to signify sin, de vita Mosis, p.193, v. also St.

Ambrose, de Spiritu Sancto 3, 50.] He kills the serpent, for the

serpent made out of the rod swallowed up the other serpents. But what

means the shape itself of the cross, save the four quarters of the

world; the East shines from the top, the North is on the right, the

South on the left, the West is firmly fixed under the feet.

Wherefore the Apostle says: "That we may know what is the height, and

breadth, and length, and depth." [Eph 3:18]

Birds, when they fly in the air, take the shape of a cross; a man

swimming in the waters is borne up by the form of a cross. A ship is

blown along by its yards, which are in the shape of the cross. The

letter Tan is written as the sign of salvation and of the cross.

Bede: Or else, in the transverse beam of the cross, where the hands are

fixed, the joy of hope is set forth; for by the hands we understand

good works, by its expansion the joy of him who does them, because

sadness puts us in straits. By the height to which the head is joined,

we understand the expectation of reward from the lofty righteousness of

God; by the length, over which the whole body is stretched, patience,

wherefore patient men are called long-suffering; by the depth, which is

fixed in the ground, the hidden Sacrament itself. As long therefore as

our bodies work here to the destruction of the body of sin, it is the

time of the cross for us.

Theophylact: But their casting lots for His garments was also meant as

an insult, as though they were dividing the clothes of a king; for they

were coarse and of no great value. And John's Gospel shews this more

clearly, for the soldiers, though they divided every thing else into

four parts, according to their number, cast lots for the coat, which

"was without seam, woven from the top throughout." [John 19:23]

Pseudo-Jerome: Now the garments of the Lord are His commandments, by

which His body, that is, the Church is covered; which the soldiers of

the Gentiles divide amongst themselves, that there may be four classes

with one faith, the married, and the widowed, those who bear rule, and

those who are separate. [ed. note: The Catena, Glossa ordinaria, and

editions of St. Jerome, which often correct each other, here agree in

the reading "praepositi et separsti." It appears to be only another

instance of this writer's obscurity.] They cast lots for the undivided

garment, which is peace and unity.

It goes on: "And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him."

Mark has introduced this truly and rightly, for at the sixth hour

darkness overspread the earth, so that no one could move his head.

Augustine, de. Con. Evan., iii, 13: If Jesus was given up to the Jews

to be crucified, when Pilate sat down at his tribunal about the sixth

hour, as John relates, how could He be crucified at the third hour, as

many persons have thought from not understanding the words of Mark.

First then let us see at what hour He might have been crucified, then

we shall see why Mark said that He was crucified at the third hour. It

was about the sixth hour when He was given up to be crucified by Pilate

sitting on his judgment seat, as has been said, for it was not yet

fully the sixth hour, but about the sixth, that is, the fifth was over,

and some of the sixth had begun, so that those things which are related

to the crucifixion of our Lord took place after the finishing of the

fifth, and at the commencement of the sixth, until, when the sixth was

completed and He was hanging on the cross, the darkness which is spoken

of took place.

Let us now consider, why Mark has said, "It was the third hour." He had

already said positively, "And when they had crucified Him, they parted

His garments;" as also the others declare, that when He was crucified

His garments were divided. Now if Mark had wished to fix the time of

what was done, it would have been enough to say, "And it was the third

hour," why did He add, "and they crucified Him," unless it was that he

wished to point to something which had gone before, and which if

enquired into would be explained, since that same Scripture was to be

read at a time, when it was known to the whole Church at what hour our

Lord was crucified, by which means any error might be taken away, and

any falsehood be refuted. But because he knew that the Lord was fixed

to the cross not by the Jews but by the soldiers, as John very plainly

shews, he wished to intimate that the Jews had crucified Him, since

they cried out, "Crucify Him," rather than those who executed the

orders of their chief according to their duty. It is therefore implied,

that it took place at the third hour when the Jews cried out, "Crucify

Him," and it is most truly shewn that they crucified Him, when they so

cried out.

But in the attempt of Pilate to save the Lord, and the tumultuous

opposition of the Jews, we understand that a space of two hours was

consumed, and that the sixth hour had begun, before the end of which,

those things occurred which are related to have taken place from the

time when Pilate gave up the Lord, and the darkness overspread the

earth. Now he who will apply himself to these things, without the

hard-heartedness of impiety, will see that Mark has fitly placed it at

the third hour, in the same place as the deed of the soldiers who were

the executors of it is related.

Therefore lest any one should transfer in his thoughts so great a crime

from the Jews to the soldiers, he says "it was the third hour, and they

crucified Him," that the fault might rather by a careful enquirer be

charged to them, who, as he would find, had at the third hour cried out

for His crucifixion, whilst at the same time it would be seen that what

was done by the soldiers was done at the sixth hour. [ed. note: For

another explanation of this see Williams on the Passion, p. 257]

Pseudo-Augustine, Quaest. Vet. et Nov. Test. 65: Therefore he wishes to

imply that is was the Jews who passed sentence concerning the

crucifixion of Christ at the third hour; for every condemned person is

considered as dead, from the moment that sentence is passed upon him.

Mark therefore shewed that our Saviour was not crucified by the

sentence of the judge, because it is difficult to prove the innocence

of a man so condemned.

Augustine: Still there are not wanting persons who assert that the

preparation, mentioned by John, "Now it was the preparation about the

sixth hour," was really the third hour of the day. For they say that on

that day before the sabbath day, there was a preparation of the

passover of the Jews, because on that sabbath, they began the

unleavened bread; but however that the true passover, which is now

celebrated on the day of our Lord's Passion, that is, the Christian not

the Jewish passover, began to be prepared, or to have its "parasceue",

from that sixth hour of the night, when His death began to be prepared

by the Jews; for "parasceue" means preparation. Between that hour

therefore of the night and His crucifixion occurs the sixth hour of

preparation, according to John, and the third hour of the day,

according to Mark. What Christian would not give in to this solution of

the question, provided that we could find some circumstance, from which

we might gather that this preparation of our Passover, that is, of the

death of Christ, began at the ninth hour of the night? For if we say

that it began when our Lord was taken by the Jews, it was still early

in the night, but if when our Lord was carried away to the house of the

father in law of Caiaphas, where also He was heard by the chief

priests, the cock had not crowed; but if when He was given up to

Pilate, it is very plain that it was morning. It remains therefore that

we must understand the preparation of our Lord's death to have

commenced when all the Chief Priests pronounced, "He is guilty of

death." For there is nothing absurd in supposing that was the ninth

hour of the night, so that we may understand that Peter's denial is put

out of its order after it really happened.

It goes on: "And the superscription of His accusation was written over,

THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Theophylact: They wrote this superscription, as the reason why He was

crucified, thus wishing to reprove His vainglory in making Himself a

king, that so the passers by might not pity Him, but rather hate Him as

a tyrant.

Pseudo-Jerome: He wrote it in three languages, in Hebrew, "Melech

Jeudim"; in Greek, [ ]; in Latin, "Rex confessorum". These three

languages were consecrated to be the chief, in the superscription on

the cross, that every tongue might record the treachery of the Jews.

Bede: But this superscription on the cross shews, that they could not

even in killing Him take away the kingdom over them from Him who was

about to render unto them according to their works.

There follows: "And with Him they crucify two thieves, the one on His

right hand, the other on His left."

Theophylact: They did this that men might have a bad opinion of Him, as

though He also were a robber and a malefactor. But it was done by

Providence to fulfil the Scriptures.

There follows: "And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, And he was

numbered with the transgressors."

Pseudo-Jerome: Truth was numbered with the wicked; He left one on His

left hand, the other He takes on the right, as He will do at the last

day. With a similar crime they are allotted different paths; one

precedes Peter into Paradise, the other Judas into hell. A short

confession won for him a long life, and a blasphemy which soon ended is

punished with endless pain.

Bede: Mystically, however, the thieves crucified with Christ signify

those, who by their faith and confession of Christ undergo either the

struggle of martyrdom, or some rules of a stricter discipline. But

those who do these deeds for the sake of endless glory, are signified

by the faith of the right hand robber; those again who do them for

worldly praise copy the mind and the acts of the left hand robber.

Theophylact: Or else; the two robbers were meant to point out the two

people, that is, the Jews and the Gentiles, for both were evil, the

Gentile as transgressing natural law, but the Jew by breaking the

written law, which the Lord had delivered to them; but the Gentile was

penitent, the Jew a blasphemer unto the end. Between whom our Lord is

crucified, for He is the corner stone, which binds us together.

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29. And they that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads, and

saying, "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three

days,

30. Save thyself, and come down from the cross."

31. Likewise also the Chief Priests mocking said among themselves with

the Scribes, "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

32. "Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we

may see and believe." And they that were crucified with Him reviled

Him.

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Pseudo-Jerome: The foal of Judah has been tied to the vine, and his

clothes dyed in the blood of the grape, [Gen 49:11] and the kids tear

the vine, blaspheming Christ, and wagging their heads.

Wherefore it is said: "And they that passed by railed on Him, wagging

their heads and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple."

Theophylact: For the passers by blasphemed Christ, reproaching Him as a

seducer. But the devil moved them to bid Him come down from the Cross;

for he knew that salvation was being won by the Cross, therefore he

again proceeded to tempt Christ, so that if He came down from the

Cross, he might be certain that He is not truly the Son of God, and so

the salvation, which is by the Cross, might be done away. But He being

truly the Son of God, did not come down; for if He ought to have come

down, He would not have ascended there at all; but since He saw that in

this way salvation must be effected, He underwent the crucifixion, and

many other sufferings, unto the finishing of His work.

It goes on: "Likewise also the Chief Priests mocking said among

themselves with the Scribes, He saved others, himself he cannot save."

They said this, to do away with His miracles, as though those which He

had done were but the semblance of them, for by working miracles He

saved many.

Bede: Thus also they confess, though against their will, that He saved

many. Therefore your words condemn you, for He who saved others could

have saved Himself.

It goes on: "Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross,

that we may see and believe."

Pseudo-Jerome: Afterwards they saw Him arise from the grave, though

they would not believe that He could come down from the tree of the

Cross. Where, O Jews, is your lack of faith? Your own selves I appeal

to; your own selves I bring as judges. How much more wonderful is it

that a dead man should arise, than that one yet living should choose to

come down from the cross. Ye asked but small things, till greater

should have come to pass; but your want of faith could not be healed by

signs much greater than those for which you sought. Here "all have gone

out of the way, all are become abominable." [Ps 13:3]

Wherefore it goes on: And they that were crucified with Him reviled."

Augustine, de. Con. Evan. 3, 16: How can this be, when according to

Luke one only reviled Him, but was rebuked by the other who believed on

God; unless we understand that Matthew and Mark, who touched but

slightly on this place, put the plural for the singular number?

Theophylact: Or else, both at first reviled Him, then one recognizing

Him as innocent, rebukes the other for blaspheming Him.

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33. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole

land until the ninth hour.

34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi,

Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is, being interpreted, My God, My God,

why hast Thou forsaken me?

35. And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, "Behold,

he calleth Elias."

36. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a

reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, "Let alone; let us see whether

Elias will come to take him down."

37. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

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Bede: This most glorious light took away its rays from the world, lest

it should see the Lord hanging, and lest the blasphemers should have

the benefit of its light.

Wherefore it goes on: "And when the sixth hour was come, there was

darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour."

Augustine, de. Con. Evan. 3, 17: Luke added to this account the cause

of the darkness, that is, the darkening of the sun.

Theophylact: If this had been the time for an eclipse, some one might

have said that this which happened was natural, but it was the

fourteenth moon, when no eclipse can take place.

There follows: "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice,

saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani."

Pseudo-Jerome: At the ninth hour, the tenth piece of money which had

been lost is found, by the overturning of the house.

Bede: For when Adam sinned, it is also written that he heard the voice

of the Lord, walking in paradise, in the cool after mid-day [Gen 3:8];

and in that hour when the first Adam by sinning brought death into the

world, in that same hour the second Adam by dying destroyed death. And

we must observe, that our Lord was crucified, when the sun was going

away from the center of the world; but at sunrise He celebrated the

Mysteries of His Resurrection; because He died for our sins, but rose

again for our justification.

Nor need you wonder at the lowliness of His words, at the complaints as

of one forsaken, when you look on the offense of the cross, knowing the

form of a servant. For as hunger, and thirst, and fatigue were not

things proper to the Divinity, but bodily afflictions; so His saying,

"Why hast Thou forsaken me?" was proper to a bodily voice, for the body

is never naturally wont to wish to be separated from the life which is

joined to it. For although our Saviour Himself said this, He really

shewed the weakness of His body; He spoke therefore as man, bearing

about with Him my feelings, for when placed in danger we fancy that we

are deserted by God.

Theophylact: Or, He speaks this as man crucified by God for me, for we

men have been forsaken by the Father, but He never has. For hear what

He says; "I am not along, because the Father is with me." [John 16:32]

Though He may also have said this as being a Jew, according to the

flesh, as though He had said, Why hast thou forsaken the Jewish people,

so that they have crucified Thy Son? For as we sometimes say, God has

put on me, that is, my human nature, so here also we must understand

"Thou hast forsaken me," to mean my nature, or the Jewish people.

It goes on: "And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said,

Behold, he calleth Elias."

Bede: These however I suppose were Roman soldiers who did not

understand the peculiarity of the Hebrew tongue, but, from His calling

Eloi, thought that Elias was called by Him. But if the Jews are

understood to have said this, they must be supposed to do this, as

accusing Him of folly in calling for the aid of Elias.

It goes on: "And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put

it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, Let along; let us see

whether Elias will come to take Him down."

John shews more fully the reason why the vinegar was given to the Lord

to drink, saying, that Jesus said, "I thirst," [John 19:28] that the

Scriptures might be fulfilled. They however applied a sponge full of

vinegar to His mouth.

Pseudo-Jerome: Here he points out a similitude for the Jews; a sponge

on a reed, weak, dry, fit for burning; they fill it with vinegar, that

is, with wickedness and guile.

Augustine: Matthew has not related, that the man who brought the sponge

filled with vinegar, but that the others spoke about Elias; from whence

we gather that both said it.

Pseudo-Jerome: Though the flesh was weak, yet the heavenly voice, which

said, "Open me the gates of righteouness," [Ps 117:19] waxed strong.

Wherefore there follows: "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave

up the ghost."

We who are of the the earth die with a very low voice, or with no voice

at all; but He who descended from heaven breathed His last with a loud

voice.

Theophylact: He who both rules over death and commands it dies with

power, as its Lord. But what this voice was is declared by Luke:

"Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." For Christ would have us

understand by this, that from that time the souls of the saints go up

into the hands of God. For at first the souls of all were held in hell,

till He came, who preached the opening of the prison to the captives.

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38. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the

bottom.

39. And when the centurion, which stood over against Him, saw that He

so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, "Truly this man was the

Son of God."

40. There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary

Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and

Salome;

41. (Who also, when He was in Galilee, followed Him, and ministered

unto Him;) and many other women which came up with Him unto Jerusalem.

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Gloss: After the Evangelist has related the Passion and the death of

Christ, he now goes on to mention those things which followed after the

death of our Lord.

Wherefore it is said: "And the veil of the temple was rent in twain

from the top to the bottom."

Pseudo-Jerome: The veil of the temple is rent, that is, the heaven is

opened.

Theophylact: Again, God by the rending of the veil implied that the

grace of the Holy Spirit goes away and is rent from the temple, so that

the Holy of holies might be seen by all; [ed. note: The sense of the

passage by reference to Theophylact appears to be, that as the Jews

used to rend their clothes as a sign of grief, so the temple by the

rending of its veil might be said to mourn.] also that the temple will

mourn amongst the Jews, when they shall deplore their calamities, and

rend their clothes.

This also is a figure of the living temple, that is, the body of

Christ, in whose Passion His garment is torn, that is, His flesh.

Again, it means another thing; for the flesh is the veil of our temple,

that is, of our mind. But the power of the flesh is torn in the Passion

of Christ, from the top to the bottom, that is, from Adam even down to

the latest man; for also Adam was made whole by the Passion of Christ,

and his flesh does not remain under the curse, nor does it deserve

corruption, but we all are gifted with incorruption.

"And when the centurion who stood over against Him saw." He who

commands a hundred soldiers is called a centurion. But seeing that He

died with such power as the Lord, he wondered and confessed.

Bede: Now the cause of the centurion's wonder is clear, that seeing

that the Lord died in that way, that is, sent forth His Spirit, he

said, "Truly this man was the Son of God." For no one can send forth

his own spirit, but He who is the Creator of souls.

Augustine: This also he most of all wondered at, that after that voice

which He sent forth as a figure of our sin, He immediately gave up His

Spirit. For the Spirit of the Mediator shewed that no penalty of sin

could have had power to cause the death of His flesh; for it did not

leave the flesh unwillingly, but as it willed, for it was joined to the

Word of God in the unity of person.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the last are now made the first. The Gentile people

confesses. The blinded Jew denies, so that their error is worse than

the first.

Theophylact: And so the order is inverted, for the Jew kills, and the

Gentile confesses; the disciples fly, and the women remain.

For there follows: "There were also women looking on afar off, amongst

whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of

Joses, and Salome."

Origin, in Matt. Tract. 35: But it seems to me, that here three women

are chiefly named, by Matthew and Mark. Two indeed are set down by each

Evangelist, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James; the third is

called by Matthew, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, but by Mark she

is called Salome.

Bede: He means by James the Less, the son of Alphaeus, who was also

called the brother of our Lord, because he was the son of Mary, our

Lord's mother's sister, whom John mentions, saying, "Now there stood by

the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Mary of

Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." [John 19:25]

And he seems to call her Mary of Cleophas, from her father or some

relation. But he was called James the Less, to distinguish him from

James the Great, that is, the son of Zebedee, who was called amongst

the first of the Apostles by our Lord. Further, it was a Jewish custom,

nor was it thought blamable after the manners of an ancient people,

that women should furnish to teachers food and clothing out of their

substance.

Wherefore there follows: "Who also when He was in Galilee followed Him,

and ministered unto Him."

They ministered unto the Lord of their substance, that He might reap

their carnal things whose spiritual things they reaped, and that He

might shew forth a type for all masters, who ought to be content with

food and clothing from their disciples. But let us see what companions

He had with Him, for it goes on: "And many other women which came up

with Him into Jerusalem."

Pseudo-Jerome: As the female sex through the Virgin Mary is not shut

out from salvation, so it is not thrust away from the knowledge of the

Mystery of the Cross, and of the Resurrection, through the widow Mary

Magdalene, and the others, who were mothers.

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42. And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation,

that is, the day before the sabbath,

43. Joseph of Arimathaea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited

for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and

craved the body of Jesus.

44. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him

the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46. And he brought fine linen, and took Him down, and wrapped Him in

the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock,

and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where He was

laid.

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Gloss: After the Passion and Death of Christ, the Evangelist relates

His burial, saying, "And now when the even was come, because it was the

preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of

Arimathaea."

Bede: What is called "parasceue" in Greek, is in Latin "praeparatio";

by which name those Jews, who lived amongst Greeks, used to call the

sixth day of the week, because on that day they used to prepare what

was necessary for the rest of the sabbath day. Because then man was

made on the sixth day, but on the seventh the Creator rested from all

His work, fitly was our Saviour crucified on the sixth day, and thus

fulfilled the mystery of man's restoration.

But on the sabbath, resting in the tomb, He was waiting for the event

of the Resurrection, which was to come on the eighth day. So we must

also in this age of time be crucified to the world; but in the seventh

day, that is, when a man has paid the debt to death, our bodies indeed

must rest in the grave, but our souls after good works in hidden peace

with God; till in the eighth period, even our bodies themselves,

glorified in the resurrection, receive incorruption together with our

souls. But the man who buried the body of the Lord must needs by his

righteous merits have been worthy, and by the nobility of worldly power

able to perform this service.

Therefore it is said, "An honourable counsellor, which also waited for

the kingdom of God." He is called in Latin, "decurio", because he is of

the order of the "curia", and served the office of a provincial

magistracy; this officer was also called "curialis", from his care of

civic duties. Arimathaea is the same as Ramathain, the city of Elkanah

and Samuel.

Pseudo-Jerome: It it interpreted, "taking down," of which was Joseph,

who came to take down the body of Christ from the cross.

There follows: "Came and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the

body of Jesus."

Theophylact: He was bold with a praiseworthy boldness; for he did not

consider within himself, I shall fall from my rich estate, and I shall

be expelled by the Jews, if I beg for the body of Him, who was

condemned as a blasphemer.

It goes on: "And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead." For he

thought that He should continue long alive upon the cross, as also the

thieves used to live long, upon the instrument of their execution.

It goes on: "And calling unto him the centurion, he asked him if he had

been any while dead;" that is, before the time when other executed

persons usually died.

There follows: "And when he knew it of the centurion, (that is, that He

was dead,) he gave the body to Joseph."

Bede: But it was not an obscure person, nor a man of mean rank, who

could come to the governor and obtain the body.

There follows: "And he brought fine linen, and took Him down, and

wrapped Him in the linen."

Theophylact: Burying the precious body preciously; for being a disciple

of our Lord, he knew how greatly the Lord's body ought to be honoured.

Bede: By this however, according to a spiritual meaning, we may

understand that the body of the Lord should not be wrapped in gold or

gems, or silk, but in a clean linen cloth. Hence it became a custom in

the Church that the sacrifice of the altar should not be celebrated in

silk, or in a dyed cloth, but in linen produced from the earth, just as

the body of the Lord was wrapped in clean linen; as, we read in the

Pontifical acts, it was ordered by the blessed Sylvester [ed. note: St.

Sylvester was Pope from 314 to 335. On his decree respecting the

Corporal used in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, see Bona de

Rebns Lit., i.e. 25. 11].

Though it has also another meaning, that he who receives Jesus in a

pure mind wraps Him in a clean linen. There follows: "And laid Him in a

sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the

door of the sepulchre."

It is said that the sepulchre of the Lord is a round cell, hewn out of

the rock which was around it, so high, that a man standing upright

could scarcely touch the roof with his outstretched hand; and it has an

entrance to the east, to which the great stone was rolled, and placed

upon it. In the northern part of it is the tomb itself, that is, the

place where our Lord's body lay, made of the same rock, seven feet in

length, raised three palms higher than the floor. It is not open from

above, but on the south side, the whole of which is open, and through

which the body was brought in. The colour of the sepulchre and of the

recess is said to be a mixed white and red.

Pseudo-Jerome: By the burial of Christ we rise again, by His going down

into hell we mount up into heaven; here is found the honey in the mouth

of the dead lion.

Theophylact: Let us too imitate Joseph, taking to ourselves the body of

Christ by Unity, and let us place it in a sepulchre, hewn out of the

rock, that is, in a soul recollected, never forgetful of God; for this

is a soul hewn out of the rock, that is, out of Christ, for He is our

rock, who holds together our strength. We ought also to wrap Him in

linen, that is, to receive Him in a pure body; for the linen is the

body which is the clothing of the soul. We must, however, not throw

open, but wrap Him up; for He is secret, closed and hidden.

There follows: "And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld

where he was laid."

Bede: We read in Luke, that His acquaintances and the women who had

followed Him stood afar off. When these then who were known to Jesus

returned home after the burial of His body, the women alone, who were

bound to Him with a closer love, after following the funeral, took care

to see how He was laid, that they might be able at a fitting season to

offer Him the sacrifice of their devotion.

But on the day of the "parasceue", that is, of the preparation, the

holy women, that is, humble souls, do the same, when they burn with

love for the Saviour, and diligently follow the steps of His Passion in

this life, where their future rest is to be prepared; and they weigh

with a pious minuteness the order in which His Passion was

accomplished, if perchance they be able to imitate it.

Pseudo-Jerome: These things also fit the Jewish people, which finally

is believing, which is ennobled by faith to become the child of

Abraham. It lays aside its despair, it waits for the kingdom of God, it

goes in to the Christians, that is may be baptized; which is implied by

the name of Pilate, which is interpreted.

One who works with a hammer,' that is, he who subdues the iron nations,

that he may rule them with a rod of iron. It seeks for the Sacrifice,

that is, the Viaticum, which is given to penitents at their last end,

and wraps it up in a heart clean and dead to sin; it makes it firm in

the safeguard of faith, and shuts it up with the covering of hope,

through works of charity; (for the end of the commandment is charity;

[1 Tim 1:5]) whilst the elect, who are the stars of the sea, are

looking on from afar, for, if it be possible, the very elect shall be

offended.

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Chapter 16

1. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother

of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come

and anoint Him.

2. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came

unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3. And they said among themselves, "Who shall roll us away the stone

from the door of the sepulchre?"

4. And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for

it was very great.

5. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the

right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6. And he saith unto them, "Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of

Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen; He is not here; behold the

place where they laid Him."

7. "But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before

you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, and He said unto you."

8. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they

trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for

they were afraid.

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Pseudo-Jerome: After the sadness of the sabbath, a happy day dawns upon

them, which holds the chief place amongst days, for in it the chief

light shines forth, and the Lord rises in triumph.

Wherefore it is said: "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene,

and Mary the mother of James and Salome, had brought sweet spices."

Gloss: For these religious women after the burial of the Lord, as long

as it was lawful to work, that is, up to sunset, prepared ointment, as

Luke says. And because they could not finish their work from the

shortness of the time, when the sabbath was over, that is, at sunset,

as soon as the time for working came round again, they hastened to buy

spices, as Mark says, that they might go in the morning to anoint the

body of Jesus. Neither could they come to the sepulchre on the evening

of the sabbath, for night prevented them.

Wherefore it goes on: "And very early in the morning the first day of

the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

Severianus, ap. Chrysologum, sermon 89: The women in this place run

abroad with womanly devotion, for they do not bring Him faith as though

He were alive, but ointments as to one dead; and they prepare the

service of their grief for Him as buried, not the joys of heavenly

triumph for Him as risen.

Theophylact: For they do not understand the greatness and dignity of

the wisdom of Christ. But they came according to the custom of the Jews

to anoint the body of Christ, that it might remain sweet-smelling, and

might not burst forth into moisture, for spices have the property of

drying up, and absorb the moisture of the body, so that they keep the

body from corruption.

Greg., Hom. in. Evan., 21: But if we believe on Him who is dead, and

are filled with the sweet smell of virtue, and seek the Lord with the

fame of good works, we come to His sepulchre with spices.

There follows: "And very early in the morning the first day of the

week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

Augustine, Con. Evang., iii, 24: What Luke expresses by "very early in

the morning," and John by "early when it was yet dark," Mark must be

understood to mean, when he says, "very early in the morning, at the

rising of the sun," that is, when the sky was growing bright in the

east, as is usual in places near the rising sun; for this is the light

which we call the dawning. Therefore there is no discrepancy with the

report which says, "while it was yet dark."

For when the day is dawning, the remains of darkness lessen in

proportion as the light grows brighter; and we must not take the words

"very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun," to mean that the

sun himself was seen upon the earth, but as expressing the near

approach of the sun into those parts, that is, when his rising begins

to light up the sky.

Pseudo-Jerome: By "very early in the morning," he means what another

Evangelist expresses by at the dawning [Luke 24:1, dilueulo]. But the

dawn is the time between the darkness of night, and the brightness of

day, in which the salvation of man is coming forth with a happy

closeness, to be declared in the Church, just as the sun, when he is

rising and the light is near, sends before him the rosy dawn, that with

prepared eyes she may bear to see the graciousness of his glorious

brightness, when the time of our Lord's Resurrection has dawned; that

then the whole Church, after the example of the women, may sing the

praises of Christ, since He has quickened the race of man after the

pattern of His Resurrection, since He has given life, and has poured

upon them the light of belief.

Bede, in Marc., 4, 40: As then the women shew the great fervency of

their love, by coming very early in the morning to the sepulchre, as

the history relates, according to the mystical sense an example is

given to us, that with a shining face, and shaking off the darkness of

wickedness, we may be careful to offer the fragrance of good works and

the sweetness of prayer to the Lord.

Theophylact: He says, On the first of the sabbaths, that is, on the

first of the days of the week. For the days of the week are called

sabbaths, and by the word "una" is meant "prima".

Bede: Or else, by this phrase is meant the first day from the day of

sabbaths, or rests, which were kept on the sabbath.

There follows: "And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away

the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"

Severianus, Chrysologus: Your breast was darkened, your eyes shut, and

therefore ye did not before see the glory of the opened sepulchre.

It goes on: "And they looked, and saw that the stone was rolled away."

Bede: Matthew shews clearly enough, that the stone was rolled away by

an Angel. This rolling away of the stone means mystically the opening

of the Christian Sacraments, which were held under the veil of the

letter of the law; for the law was written on stone.

I goes on: "For it was very great."

Severianus, Chrysologus: Great indeed by its office rather than its

size, for it can shut in and throw open the body of the Lord.

Greg.: But the women who came with spices see the Angels; because those

minds who come to the Lord with their virtues, through holy desires,

see the heavenly citizens.

Wherefore it goes on: "And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a

young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment;

and they were affrighted."

Theophylact: Though Matthew says that the Angel was sitting on stone,

whilst Mark relates that the women entering into the sepulchre saw a

young man sitting, yet we need not wonder, for they afterwards saw

sitting within the sepulchre the same Angel as sat without on the

stone.

Augustine: Either let us suppose that Matthew was silent about that

Angel, whom they saw on entering, whilst Mark said nothing of him, whom

they say outside sitting on the stone, so that they saw two and heard

separately from two, the things which the Angels said concerning Jesus;

or we must understand by "entering into the sepulchre," their coming

within some inclosure, by which is it probable that the place was

surrounded a little space before the stone, by the cutting out of which

the burial place had been made, so that they saw sitting on the right

hand in that space him whom Matthew designates as sitting on the stone.

Theophylact: But some say the women mentioned by Matthew were different

from those in Mark. But Mary Magdalene was with all parties, from her

burning zeal and ardent love.

Severianus: The women, then, entered the sepulchre, that being buried

with Christ, they might rise again from the tomb with Christ. They see

the young man, that is, they see the time of the Resurrection, for the

Resurrection has no old age, and the period, in which man knows neither

birth nor death, admits of no decay, and requires no increase.

Wherefore what they saw was a young man, not an old man, nor an infant,

but the age of joy.

Bede: Now they saw a young man sitting on the right side, that is, on

the south part of the place where the body was laid. For the body,

which was lying on its back, and had its head to the west, must have

had its right to the south.

Greg.: But what is meant by the left hand, but this present life, and

what by the right, but everlasting life? Because then our Redeemer had

already gone through the decay of this present life, fitly did the

Angel, who had come to announce His everlasting life, sit on the right

hand.

Severianus, Chrysologus: Again, they saw a young man sitting on the

right, because the Resurrection has nothing sinister in it. They also

see him dressed in a long white robe; that robe is not from mortal

fleece, but of living virtue, blazing with heavenly light, not of an

earthly dye, as saith the Prophet, "Thou deckest thyself with light as

with a garment;" [Ps 104:2] and of the just it is said, "Then shall the

righteous shine forth as the sun." [Matt 13:43]

Greg.: Or else, he appeared covered with a white robe, because he

announced the joys of our festivity, for the whiteness of the robe

shews the splendour of our solemnity.

Pseudo-Jerome: The white robe is also true joy, now that the enemy is

driven away, the kingdom won, the King of Peace sought for and found

and never let go by us. This young man then shews an image of the

Resurrection to them who feared death. But their being frightened shews

that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the

heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them

that love Him." [1 Cor 2:9]

There follows: "And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted."

Greg.: As though he had said, Let them fear, who love not the coming of

the inhabitants of heaven; let them fear, who, weighed down with carnal

desires, despair that they can ever attain to their company; but why

should ye fear, ye who see your own fellow citizens.

Pseudo-Jerome: For there is no fear in love. Why should they fear, who

had found Him whom they sought?

Greg.: But let us hear what the Angel adds; "Ye seek Jesus of

Nazareth." Jesus means the Saviour, but at that time there may have

been many a Jesus, not indeed really, but in name, therefore the place

Nazareth is added, that it might be evident of what Jesus it was

spoken. And immediately he subjoins the reason, "Which was crucified."

Theophylact: For he does not blush at the Cross, for in it is the

salvation of men, and the beginning of the Blessed.

Pseudo-Jerome: But the bitter root of the Cross has disappeared. The

flower of life has burst forth with its fruits, that is, He who lay in

death has risen in glory.

Wherefore he adds, "He is risen; He is not here."

Greg.: "He is not here," is spoken of His carnal presence, for He was

not absent from any place as to the presence of His majesty.

Theophylact: As if he had said, Do ye wish to be certain of His

Resurrection, he adds, "Behold the place where they laid Him."

This too was the reason why he had rolled away the stone, that he might

shew them the place.

Pseudo-Jerome: But immortality is shewn to mortals as [debita, ap.

Pseudo-Hier.] due to thankfulness, that we may understand what we were,

and that we may know what we are to be.

There follows: "But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He

goeth before you into Galilee."

The women are ordered to tell the Apostles, that as by a woman death

was announced, so also might life rising again. But He says specially

unto Peter, because he had shewn himself unworthy of being a disciple,

since he had thrice denied his Master; but past sins cease to hurt us

when they cease to be pleasing to us.

Greg.: If again the Angel had not expressly name him who had denied his

Master, he would not have dared to come amongst the disciples; he is

therefore called by name, lest he should despair on account of his

denial.

Augustine, de. Con. Evan., iii, 25: By saying, "He will go before you

into Galilee, there shall ye see Him, and He said unto you," he seems

to imply, that Jesus would not shew Himself to His disciples after His

Resurrection except in Galilee, which shewing of Himself Mark himself

has not ['s ec', ap. Aug. (?)] mentioned. For that which He has

related, "Early the first day of the week He appeared to Mary

Magdalene," and "after that to two of them as they walked and went into

the country," we know took place in Jerusalem, on the very day of the

resurrection; then he comes to His last manifestation, which we know

was on the Mount of Olives, not far from Jerusalem.

Mark therefore never relates the fulfilment of that which was foretold

by the Angel; but Matthew does not mention any place at all, where the

disciples saw the Lord after He arose, except Galilee, according to the

Angel's prophecy. But since it is not set down when this happened,

whether first, before He was seen any where else, and since the very

place where Matthew says that He went into Galilee to the mountain,

does not explain the day, or the order of the narration, Matthew does

not oppose the account of the others, but assists in explaining and

receiving them.

But nevertheless, since the Lord was not first to shew Himself there,

but sent word that He was to be seen in Galilee, where He was seen

subsequently, it makes every faithful Christian on the look out, to

find out in what mysterious sense it may be understood.

Greg.: For Galilee mean a passing over' [transmigratio]; for our

Redeemer had already passed from His Passion to His Resurrection, from

death unto life, and we shall have joy in seeing the glory of His

Resurrection, if only we pass over from vice to the heights of virtue.

He then who is announced at the tomb, is shewn in passing over,'

because He who is first known in mortification of the flesh, is seen in

this passing over of the soul.

Pseudo-Jerome: This sentence is but short in the number of syllables,

but the promise is vast in its greatness. Here is the fountain of our

joy, and the source of everlasting life is prepared. Here all that are

scattered are brought together, and the contrite hearts are healed.

There, he says, ye shall see Him, but not as ye have seen Him.

Augustine: It is also signified that the grace of Christ is about to

pass over from the people of Israel to the Gentiles, by whom the

Apostles would never have been received when they preached, if the Lord

had not gone before them and prepared a way in their hearts; and this

is what is meant by, "He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye

see Him," that is, there shall ye find His members.

There follows: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre,

for they trembled and were amazed."

Theophylact: That is, they trembled because of the vision of Angels,

and were amazed because of the Resurrection.

Severianus, Chrysologus: The Angel sits on the sepulchre, the women fly

from it; he, on account of his heavenly substance, is confident, that

are troubled because of their earthly frame. He who cannot die, cannot

fear the tomb, but the women both fear from what was then done, and

still, as being mortals, fear the sepulchre as mortals are wont.

Pseudo-Jerome: This also is spoken of the life to come, in which grief

and groaning will flee away. For the women prefigure before the

Resurrection all that is to happen to them after the Resurrection,

namely, they flee away from death and fear.

There follows: "Neither said they any thing to any man, for they were

afraid."

Theophylact: Either on account of the Jews, or else they said nothing

because the fear of the vision prevented them.

Augustine, de Con. Evan., iii, 24: We may however enquire how Mark can

say this, when Matthew says, "they departed quickly from the sepulchre

with fear and great joy, and did run to bring His disciples word,"

[Matt 28:8] unless we understand it to mean, that they did not dare to

say a word to any of the Angels themselves, that is, to answer the

words which they had spoken to them; or else to the guards whom they

saw lying there; for that joy of which Matthew speaks is not

inconsistent with the fear which Mark mentions. For we ought to have

understood that both feelings were in their minds, even though Matthew

had not mentioned the fear. But since he has also said that they came

out with fear and great joy, he does not allow room for any question to

be raised.

Severianus, Chrysologus: It is said also in a marked manner, that they

said nothing to any one, because it is the part of women to hear, and

not to speak, to learn, not to teach.

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9. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He

appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.

10. And she went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned

and wept.

11. And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen

of her, believed not.

12. After that He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they

walked, and went into the country.

13. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they

them.

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Augustine, de Con. Evan., iii, 25: Now we must consider how the Lord

appeared after the Resurrection. For Mark says, "Now when Jesus was

risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary

Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils."

Bede: John tells us most fully how and when this appearance took place.

But the Lord rose in the morning from the sepulchre in which He had

been laid in the evening, that those words of the Psalm might be

fulfilled, "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the

morning." [Ps 29:6]

Theophyact: Or else put a stop at, "Now when Jesus was risen," and then

read, "early the first day of the week He appeared," &c.

Greg.: For as Samson at midnight not only left Gaza, but also carried

away the gates of it, so also our Redeemer rising before the light, did

not only come out free from hell, but destroyed also the very gates of

hell.

[Hom. in Evan., 33] But Mark here testifies that seven devils were cast

out of Mary; and what is meant by "seven devils" save all vices? for as

by seven days is understood all time, so by the number seven [see note

d, p.149] a whole is fitly figured.

Theophylact: But Mary had seven devils, because she was filled with all

vices. Or else, by seven devils are meant seven spirits contrary to the

seven virtues, as a spirit without fear, without wisdom, without

understanding, and whatsoever else is opposed to the gifts of the Holy

Ghost.

Pseudo-Jerome: Again, He is shewn to her, out of whom He had cast seven

devils, because harlots and publicans shall go before the synagogue

into the kingdom of heaven, as the thief reached it before the

Apostles.

Bede: In the beginning also woman brought man into sin, now she, who

first tasted death, first sees the Resurrection, lest she should have

to bear the reproach of perpetual guilt amongst men; and she who had

been the channel of guilt to man, now has become the first channel of

grace.

For it goes on: "And she went and told them that had been with Him as

they mourned and wept."

Pseudo-Jerome: They mourn and weep because they had not yet seen, but

after a short time they shall receive a consolation. For blessed are

they that weep now, for they shall be comforted.

Bede: Fitly too is this woman, who was the first to announce the joy of

our Lord's Resurrection, said to have been cured of seven devils, lest

any one worthily repenting of his sins should despair of pardon for

what he had done, and that is might be shewn that "where sin abounded,

grace did much more abound." [Rom 5:20]

Severianus, Chrysologus: Mary brings the news, not now as a woman, but

in the person of the Church, so that, as above woman was silent, here

as the Church she might bring tidings and speak.

There follows: "And they when they heard that He was alive and had been

seen by her, believed not."

Greg.: That the disciples were slow in believing our Lord's

Resurrection was not so much a weakness of theirs as it is our

strength. For the Resurrection itself through their doubts was

manifested by many proofs; and whilst we read and acknowledge them,

what do we but become firmer through their doubting?

There follows: "After this He appeared in another form unto two of them

as they walked and went to a farm house."

Augustine: Luke relates the whole story respecting these two, one of

whom was Cleophas, but Mark here touches but slightly upon it. That

village of which Luke speaks may without absurdity be supposed to be

what is here called a farm house, and indeed in some Greek manuscripts

it is called, the country. But by this name are understood not only

villages, but also boroughs and country towns, because they are without

the city, which is the head and mother of all the rest.

That which Mark expresses by the Lord's appearance "in another form,"

is what Luke means by saying that "their eye were holden that they

could not know Him." For something was upon their eyes, which was

allowed to remain there, until the breaking of bread.

Severianus, Chrysologus: But let no one suppose that Christ changed the

form of His face by His Resurrection, but the form is changed when of

mortal it becomes immortal, so that this means that He gained a

glorious countenance, not that He lost the substance of His

countenance. But He was seen of two; because faith in the Resurrection

is to be preached and shewn to two people, that is, the Gentiles and

the Jews.

There follows: "And they went and told it unto the residue, neither

believed they them."

How are we to understand the words of Mark compared with the account of

Luke, that they then said, "The Lord hath risen indeed, and hath

appeared unto Simon," [Luke 24:34] if we do not suppose that there were

some there who would not believe?

Theophylact: For he does not say this of the eleven, but of some

others, whom He calls the residue.

Pseudo-Jerome: But in a mystic sense we may understand that faith here

labours, leading the active life, but there it reigns secure in the

contemplative vision. Here we see His face through a glass, there we

shall see the truth face to face, wherefore He was shewn to them as

they were walking, that is, labouring, in another form. And when it was

told, the disciples did not believe, because they saw, like Moses, that

which was not enough for them, for he said, "Shew me Thyself;" [Ex

33:18] forgetting his flesh, he prays in this life for that which we

hope for in the life to come.

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14. Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and

upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they

believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.

15. And He said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the

Gospel to every creature."

16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that

believed not shall be damned."

17. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall

they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;"

18. "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing,

it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they

shall recover."

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Gloss: Mark, when about to finish his Gospel, relates the last

appearance of our Lord to His disciples after His Resurrection, saying,

"For the last time He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat."

Greg.: We should observe that Luke says in the Acts, "As He was eating

with them [convescens] He commanded that they should not depart from

Jerusalem," [Acts 1:4] and shortly afterwards, "while they beheld He

was taken up." [Acts 1:9] For He ate, and then ascended, that by the

act of eating, the truth of the flesh might be declared.

Wherefore it is also here said that "He appeared to them for the last

time as they sat at meat."

Pseudo-Jerome: But He appeared when all the eleven were together, that

all might be witnesses, and relate to all men what they had seen and

heard in common.

It goes on: "And upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of

heart, because they believed not them who had seen Him after His

Resurrection."

Augustine: But how was this done "the last time?" The last occasion on

which the Apostles saw the Lord upon earth happened forty days after

the Resurrection; but would He then have upbraided them for not

believing those who had seen Him risen, when they themselves had so

often seen Him after His Resurrection? It remains therefore that we

should understand that Mark wished to say it in few words, and said

"for the last time," because it was the last time that He shewed

Himself that day, as night was coming on, when the disciples returned

from the country into Jerusalem, and found, as Luke says, [Luke 24:33]

the eleven and those who were with them, speaking together concerning

the Resurrection of our Lord.

But there were some there who did not believe; when these then were

sitting at meat, (as Mark says,) and were still speaking, (as Luke

relates,) "The Lord stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them,

Peace be unto you;" [Luke 24:36] as Luke and John [John 20:19] say. The

rebuke therefore which Mark here mentions must have been amongst those

words, which Luke and John say, that the Lord at that time spoke to the

disciples. But another question is raised, how Mark says that He

appeared when the eleven sat at meat, if the time was the first part of

the night on the Lord's day, when John plainly says that Thomas was not

with them, who, we believe, had gone out, before the Lord came in to

them, after those two had returned from the village, and spoken with

the eleven, as we find in Luke's Gospel. But Luke in his relation

leaves room for supposing that Thomas went out first, while they spoke

these things, and that the Lord entered afterwards; Mark however from

his saying, "for the last time He appeared to the eleven as they sat at

meat," forces us to believe that he was there, unless indeed, though

one of them was absent, he chose to call them, the eleven, because the

company of the Apostles was then called by this number, before Matthias

was chosen into the place of Judas.

Or if this be a harsh way of understanding it, let us understand that

it means that after many appearances, He shewed Himself for the last

time, that is, on the fortieth day, to the Apostles, as they sat at

meat, and that since He was about to ascend from them, He rather wished

on that day to reprove them for not having believed those who had seen

Him risen before seeing Him themselves, because after His ascension

even the Gentiles on their preaching were to believe a Gospel, which

they had not seen.

And so the same Mark immediately after that rebuke says, "And He said

unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every

creature." And lower down, "He that believeth not shall be condemned."

Since then they were to preach this, were not they themselves to be

first rebuked, because before they saw the Lord they had not believed

those to whom He had first appeared?

Greg.: Another reason also why our Lord rebuked His disciples, when He

left them as to His bodily presence, was, that the words which He spoke

on leaving them might remain more deeply impressed upon the hearts of

His hearers.

Pseudo-Jerome: But He rebukes their want of faith, that faith might

take its place; He rebukes the hardness of their stony heart, that the

fleshy heart, full of love, might take its place.

Greg.: After rebuking the hardness of their hearts, let us hear the

words of advice which He speaks. For it goes on: "Go ye into all the

world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Every man must be

understood by "every creature;" for man partakes something of every

creatures; he has existence as have stones, life as trees, feeling as

animals, understanding as have Angels. For the Gospel is preached to

every creature, because He is taught by it, for whose sake all are

created, whom all things are in some way like, and from whom therefore

they are not alien.

By the name of every creature also every nation of the Gentiles may be

meant. For it had been said before, "Go not into the way of the

Gentiles." [Matt 10:5] But now it is said, "Preach the Gospel to every

creature," so that the preaching of the Apostles which was thrust aside

by Judaea, might be an assistance to us, since Judaea had haughtily

rejected it, thus witnessing to her own damnation.

Theophylact: Or else; to every creature, that is, whether believing or

unbelieving.

It goes on: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." For it

is not enough to believe, for he who believeth and is not baptized, but

is a catechumen, has not yet attained to perfect salvation.

Greg.: But perhaps some one may say in himself, I have already

believed, I shall be saved. He says what is true, if he keeps his faith

by works; for that is a true faith, which does not contradict by its

deeds what it says in words.

There follows: "But he that believeth not shall be damned."

Bede: What shall we say here about infants, who by reason of their age

cannot yet believe; for as to older persons there is no question. In

the Church then of our Saviour, children believe by others, as also

they drew from others the sins which are remitted to them in baptism.

It goes on: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name

shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they

shall take up serpents."

Theophlyact: That is, they shall scatter before them serpents, whether

intellectual or sensible, as it is said, Ye shall tread upon serpents

and scorpions, [Luke 10:19] which is understood spiritually. But it may

also mean sensible serpents, as when Paul received no hurt from the

viper.

There follows: "And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt

them." We read of many such cases in history, for many persons have

drank poison unhurt, by guarding themselves with the sign of Christ.

It goes on: "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Greg.: Are we then without faith because we cannot do these signs? Nay,

but these things were necessary in the beginning of the Church, for the

faith of believers was to be nourished by miracles, that it might

increase. Thus we also, when we plant groves, strong in the earth; but

when once they have firmly fixed their roots, we leave off irrigating

them.

These signs and miracles have other things which we ought to consider

more minutely. For Holy Church does every day in spirit what then the

Apostles did in body; for when her Priests by the grace of exorcism lay

their hands on believers, and forbid the evil spirits to dwell in their

minds, what do they, but cast out devils?

And the faithful who have left earthly words, and whose tongues sound

forth the Holy Mysteries, speak a new language; they who by their good

warnings take away evil from the hearts of others, take up serpents;

and when they are hearing words of pestilent persuasion, without being

at all drawn aside to evil doing, they drink a deadly thing, but it

will never hurt them; whenever they see their neighbours growing weak

in good works, and by their good example strengthen their life, they

lay their hands on the sick, that they may recover.

And all these miracles are greater in proportion as they are spiritual,

and by them souls and not bodies are raised.

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19. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up

into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working

with them, and confirming the word with signs following.

Amen.

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Pseudo-Jerome: The Lord Jesus, who had descended from heaven to give

liberty to our weak nature, Himself also ascended above the heavens;

wherefore it is said, "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He

was received up into heaven."

Augustine: By which words He seems to shew clearly enough that the

foregoing discourse was the last that He spake to them upon earth,

though it does not appear to bind us down altogether to this opinion.

For He does not say, After He had thus spoken unto them, wherefore it

admits of being understood not as if that was the last discourse, but

that the words which are here used, "After the Lord had spoken unto

them, He was received into heaven," might belong to all His other

discourses. But since the arguments which we have used above make us

rather suppose that this was the last time, therefore we ought to

believe that after these words, together with those which are recorded

in the Acts of the Apostles, our Lord ascended into heaven.

Greg.: We have seen in the Old Testament that Elias was taken up into

heaven. But the ethereal heaven is one thing, the aerial is another.

The aerial heaven is nearer the earth, Elias then was raised into the

aerial heaven, that he might be carried off suddenly into some secret

region of the earth, there to live in great calmness of body and

spirit, until he returns at the end of the world, to pay the debt of

death. We may also observe that Elias mounted up in a chariot, that by

this they might understand that a mere man requires help from without.

But our Redeemer, as we read, was not carried up by a chariot, not by

angels, because He who had made all things was borne over all by His

own power.

We must also consider what Mark subjoins, "And sat at the right hand of

God," since Stephen says, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man

standing at the right hand of God." Now sitting is the attitude of a

judge, standing of one fighting or helping. Therefore Stephen, when

toiling in the contest, saw Him standing, whom he had for his helper;

but Mark describes Him as sitting after His assumption into heaven,

because after the glory of His assumption, He will in the end be seen

as a judge.

Augustine, de Symbolic, 7: Let us not therefore understand this sitting

as though He were placed there in human limbs, as if the Father sat on

the left, the Son on the right, but by the right hand itself we

understand the power which He as man received from God, that He should

come to judge, who first had come to be judged. For by sitting we

express habitation, as we say of a person, he sat himself down in that

country for many years; in this way then believe that Christ dwells at

the right hand of God the Father. For He is blessed and dwells in

blessedness, which is called the right hand of the Father; for all is

right hand there, since there is no misery.

It goes on: "And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord

working with them, and confirming the word with signs and wonders."

Bede: Observe that in proportion as Mark began his history later, so he

makes it reach in writing to more distant times, for he began from the

commencement of the preaching of the Gospel by John, and he reaches in

his narrative those times in which the Apostles sowed the same word of

the Gospel throughout the world.

Greg.: But what should we consider in these words, if it be not that

obedience follows the precept and signs follow the obedience? For the

Lord had commanded them, "Go into all the world preaching the Gospel,"

and, Ye shall be witnesses even unto the ends of the earth.

Augustine, Epist., CXCIX [199], 12: But how was this preaching

fulfilled by the Apostles, [Acts 1:8] since there are many nations in

which it has just begun, and others in which it has not yet begun to be

fulfilled? Truly then this precept was not so laid upon the Apostles by

our Lord, as though they alone to whom He then spoke were to fulfil so

great a charge; in the same way as He says, "Behold, I am with you

always, even unto the end of the world," apparently to them alone; but

who does not understand that the promise is made to the Catholic

Church, which though some are dying, others are born, shall be here

unto the end of the world?

Theophylact: But we must also know from this that words are confirmed

by deeds as then, in the Apostles, works confirmed their words, for

signs followed. Grant then, O Christ, that the good words which we

speak may be confirmed by works and deeds, so that at the last, Thou

working with us in word and in deed, we may be perfect, for Thine as is

fitting is the glory both of word and deed.

Amen.

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83. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ix-p227.1

84. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xi-p85.2

85. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p47.1

86. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xi-p92.1

87. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p148.1

88. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p20.1

89. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p9.1

90. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ix-p65.1

91. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiii-p95.1

92. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p102.1

93. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiii-p112.1

94. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p97.1

95. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p93.1

96. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p80.2

97. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p261.1

98. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.x-p90.1

99. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p238.1

100. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p165.1

101. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p93.2

102. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.viii-p166.1

103. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p260.1

104. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ix-p116.1

105. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ii-p51.2

106. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p84.2

107. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xvi-p112.1

108. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p89.1

109. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p46.1

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111. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.viii-p91.1

112. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p193.1

113. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xvi-p37.2

114. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p141.1

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116. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p80.1

117. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vii-p92.1

118. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.viii-p14.1

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122. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.x-p19.1

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127. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p71.2

128. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.x-p163.1

129. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.viii-p91.1

130. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xi-p91.1

131. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xii-p41.1

132. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p259.2

133. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiii-p44.1

134. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiii-p123.1

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137. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p43.1

138. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iv-p160.1

139. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iv-p167.1

140. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xvi-p66.1

141. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p326.1

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143. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ix-p208.1

144. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ix-p11.1

145. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xi-p30.1

146. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p54.1

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152. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.v-p42.1

153. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p79.1

154. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p202.1

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157. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xvi-p119.1

158. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.x-p83.2

159. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vii-p140.2

160. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ix-p197.1

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163. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p259.1

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166. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p281.1

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171. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xvi-p106.1

172. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xii-p27.1

173. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p77.1

174. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p124.1

175. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p124.2

176. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.ii-p51.1

177. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.vi-p207.1

178. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p157.1

179. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p146.1

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182. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xii-p38.1

183. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p227.1

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186. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p67.1

187. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p29.1

188. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p182.1

189. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p147.1

190. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-p182.2

191. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p51.1

192. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p99.1

193. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p175.1

194. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xv-p151.1

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234. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.iii-p24.1

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264. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.xiv-p0.1

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269. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_7

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275. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_13

276. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_14

277. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_15

278. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_16

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282. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_20

283. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_21

284. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_22

285. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_23

286. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_24

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292. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_30

293. file://localhost/ccel/a/aquinas/catena2/cache/catena2.html3#iii.i-Page\_31

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